

# POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

## MICRO-CREDENTIALS IN EUROPEAN PROJECTS

If CSA and all Partners could make a recommendation to the EU Commission to improve adult learning and education, **it would be to make LAILA more relevant**. Through an institutional recognition of all activities related to LAILA, and with specific fundings.

### 1. Microcredentials for labour market education and training

The **LAILA project will provide a better understanding of the role played by micro-credentials in supporting labour-market-related and employment-relevant ADULT education**, training and learning. The LAILA project findings will offer new knowledge on the characteristics of micro-credentials, their added value to individual learners and employees, as well as their impact on existing qualifications and recognition systems.

#### **Micro-credential, definition by:**

**OECD:** *a sub-unit of a credential or credentials, which converses a minimum of 5 ECTS points and could accumulate into a larger credential or be part of a portfolio and part of the Bologna Process.*

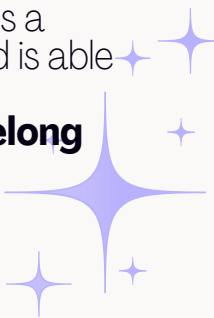
**Commission, 2018:** *Digitally-signed credentials are electronic documents which are awarded by qualified bodies to individuals to confirm and provide proof of their learning outcomes achieved in formal, informal and nonformal settings. They may often be referred to as 'digital certificates' as well.*

**Commission, 2023:** *The European approach to micro-credentials is a key component of the Commission's vision to achieve a European Education Area by 2025.*

### 2. Aim of the micro-credentials for LAILA project

To address the limited evidence that exists on the general labour market value attached to microcredentials, Cedefop has launched a new study on **the role of microcredentials in facilitating learning for employment**, as part of its future of VET agenda. The new study will attempt to offer new and valuable knowledge on the characteristics of microcredentials, their added value to individual learners, employees and employers, as well as their **impact on existing qualifications and recognition systems**. Transparent and scalable recognition and quality assurance processes can accelerate uptake and further the trust of micro-credentials in the EU.

### 3. Paving the way to better learning opportunities

**Qualifications frameworks (EQF):** are tools for describing qualifications of an education or training system by classifying them into levels. Each level provides a clear description of what the holder of a qualification knows, understands and is able to do. They are important tools for making qualifications **transparent and comprehensible, within and across borders, and for promoting lifelong learning**. 

#### 4. Practice political context



Micro-credentials are frequently portrayed and promoted as a new way **for individuals to build their own skills-profile (portfolio) by collecting and ‘stacking’ learning in a flexible way**, at their own pace and according to their own priorities. The increasing attention given to microcredentials is demonstrated in the **2020 EU skills agenda**, which sees developments in this area as directly supporting adult upskilling and reskilling policies.

#### 5. Benefits of microcredentials for training providers during this peer-learning activity



One key challenge will probably be to set a common and global standards about non-formal learning experiences provided by the employment system that enable employers to compare and adequately assess their added value for their business needs. Another challenge might be the profitability for private training centres of these short and **rapidly changing training courses**.

#### 6. Ensuring gender-balance in upskilling and reskilling



The 2023 European Year of Skills<sup>5</sup>, moreover, represents an opportunity to further highlight the importance of **ensuring gender balance in up- and reskilling**. Stakeholders working together under the LAILA project can greatly contribute to ensure that lifelong learning opportunities are accessible to all. Increased uptake of upskilling and reskilling opportunities, including a more balanced gender participation,

#### 7. Implementation of the upskilling pathways Recommendation



At **national level**, to identify country-specific strengths and challenges and a set of policy options for ensuring systematic, coherent and coordinated approaches to upskilling pathways.

At the **European level**, to increase the evidence base which can support EU stakeholders at different levels.

Expand knowledge on the topic, enriching it with a higher level of details, including suggestions for factors determining or hampering success of upskilling pathways approaches in different national contexts.

#### 8. TCR methodology



##### Decision-making:

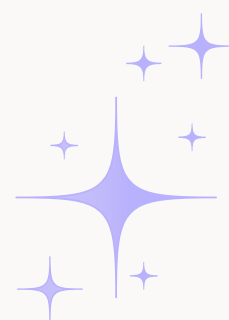
- Integrated approach to upskilling pathways
- Strategy for identification of target groups Governance (Multilevel/Multi-stakeholder)
- Monitoring and Evaluation .

##### Support:

- Financial and non financial support
- Outreach Guidance.

##### Implementation:

- Skills assessment
- Tailored learning offer
- Validation and recognition



## 9. Core Indicators



- Inclusive, participatory and collaborative approach
- Unlocks synergies and fosters complementarities
- Evolving and iterative approach grounded in a lifelong learning perspective and focused on individual empowerment .
- Steering group of 3 country partners endorsed with a informal mandate – actively involved in all LAILA project activities and facilitate the delivery of results

## 10. Evolving and interactive approach



**Italy, Spain and Portugal are country-driven** micro-credentials review processes of countries' upskilling pathways approach characterised by close cooperation between INDIRE and the Ministry/ies responsible for the implementation of upskilling pathways.

**Set of policy recommendations** to support fieldwork design.

**Mutual learning (Policy Learning Final transnational meeting in Aveiro 2024 on Upskilling micro-credentials pathways)**

## 11. Tools in recognition processes of online learning

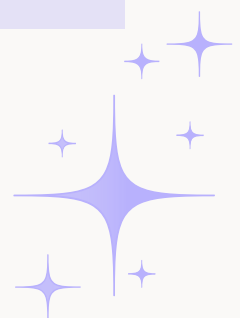


The **LAILA project** can formulate recommendations to support ADULT centres which want to assess the outcomes of what they call “eclectic learning” such as massive open online courses **MOOCs**. In the absence of common practice within the LAILA partners on the recognition of MOOC certificates, LAILA project aimed to develop an assessment framework. Seven criteria were identified which should be taken into account when assessing MOOCs;

## 12. The LAILA project-assessment framework for MOOCs



- quality of the study programme
- verification of the certificate
- level of the study programme
- learning outcomes
- workload
- the way study results are tested
- identification of the participant





### **Programme to improve interpersonal skills for business management: Getxo Town Council**

When it comes to entrepreneurship, there has to be a balance between technical and management knowledge and entrepreneurial skills. In many cases, this balance does not exist because the latter are lacking. However, as the European framework Entrecomp states, today we know that they can be taught, which is why Getxo Town Council has set up a pilot programme to teach them to entrepreneurs and small business owners.

As Norris Krueger, an entrepreneurship researcher and professor at the University of Boise, said in 2007, "Behind entrepreneurial action are entrepreneurial intentions. Behind entrepreneurial intentions are known entrepreneurial attitudes. Behind entrepreneurial attitudes are deep cognitive structures. Behind deep cognitive structures are deep beliefs." The aim of this work is to try to operate on these cognitive structures and deep beliefs. To this end, the Emotional Intelligence model of Daniel Goleman and his teacher, David McClelland, has been chosen as a base structure, with the practice of Mindfulness and Positive Psychology as tools and theoretical pillars. The framework used is Entrecomp, which identifies the competences needed for a person wishing to become an entrepreneur. The Entrecomp model is based on the "interpretive/integrative" approach, considering that entrepreneurial competence involves a set of skills and aptitudes, which are learned through experience and training (Bird, 1995). The underlying philosophy of this model is that entrepreneurial competences can be developed throughout life (they can be learned) and that the basic skills required are socio-emotional (Lifecomp model).

The programme details these skills and basic strategies as well as tools for their development. For each of the 14 competences identified, a connection to Goleman's framework is established with a working process to develop it. These show different learning resources, recommendations and difficulties when putting them into practice, based on research that supports this connection as well as the validity of each tool. For example, we know that Mindfulness helps to manage difficult emotions such as fear and anger linked to stress, a fundamental skill to develop the risk management competence contained in the Entrecomp framework.

It is also known that if a person has a high emotional intelligence, it does not mean that he or she has learned the competences of the Entrecomp framework, but only that he or she is well prepared to do the job. Therefore, once the practices have been carried out with each underlying skill, we apply it to develop the corresponding entrepreneurial competence. For example, a person may be highly socially aware but if they have not yet developed the competence of working in a team with other people, they may not be a good collaborator.



This is an 8-week programme with a maximum number of participants of 15, working in groups on intrapersonal and interpersonal competences for business management, complemented by individual coaching afterwards.

A novelty of this programme is that its effectiveness is assessed by the ESCI evaluation tool, an initial test and another carried out at the end of the journey (it is a validated self-assessment test).

The programme also aims to raise awareness of the importance of self-care for entrepreneurs. Entrepreneurs' most valuable asset is themselves and, if they are not operating at 100%, neither will their businesses.

The programme is structured into 9 sessions with the following contents:

1. Self-awareness, ethics, sustainability, motivation and perseverance.
2. Self-awareness, vision, mobilisation of internal resources, identification of opportunities, assessment of ideas.
3. Self-awareness, learning from experience, initiative.
4. Initiative, sustainability, perseverance and managing uncertainty and risk.
5. Mobilising and working with others.
6. Creativity, learning from experience, planning and management.
7. Motivation and perseverance, vision, planning and management.
8. Planning and management, taking the initiative, working with others.
9. Project end.

**Programme news:** <https://www.getxo.eus/es/promocion-economica/noticias/1153>

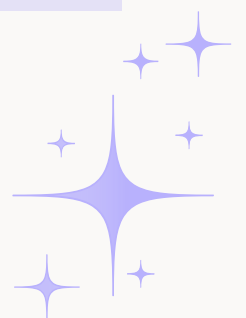
### **Result:**

The tests given before and after the sessions indicate that the process generally improved all the competences worked on.

The people who attended the training evaluated the process as highly satisfactory.

A high percentage of the participants managed to unblock issues related to their work environment with this process and were able to analyse it from a different point of view.

The programme was seen as necessary for the entrepreneurship process.





### Implementing Emotional Intelligence Training in the Workplace

**Description:** A Portuguese SME, Dialogue Diversity, Lda., implemented a comprehensive emotional intelligence training program for employees in the several enterprises which they work with. The program aimed to enhance employees' interpersonal skills, teamwork, and overall emotional intelligence, creating a more positive and productive work environment.

#### Key Components:

##### 1. Needs Assessment:

- Conducted a thorough assessment to identify specific emotional intelligence skills that employees needed to develop. This included areas such as empathy, communication, conflict resolution, and self-awareness.

##### 2. Customized Training Workshops:

- Designed customized training workshops focused on developing emotional intelligence skills. Workshops included interactive activities, role-playing scenarios, and group discussions to facilitate learning and practical application.

##### 3. Incorporating Real-life Scenarios:

- Incorporated real-life workplace scenarios into training sessions. Employees were encouraged to apply emotional intelligence concepts to these scenarios, enabling them to practice newly acquired skills in a familiar context.

##### 4. Leadership Involvement:

- Involved company leaders in the training sessions to emphasize the importance of emotional intelligence at all levels of the organization. Leadership support reinforced the value of these skills in the workplace.

##### 5. Continuous Learning:

- Implemented a continuous learning approach by offering regular follow-up sessions and refresher courses. This ensured that employees could reinforce their emotional intelligence skills over time.

##### 6. Evaluation and Feedback:

- Conducted regular evaluations and gathered feedback from participants to measure the effectiveness of the training program. Adjustments were made based on feedback to enhance the relevance and impact of the training.

##### 7. Promotion of Emotional Well-being:

- Integrated emotional intelligence principles into the company's overall approach to employee well-being. This included promoting work-life balance, stress management, and mental health support services.

**Outcome:** The emotional intelligence training program with Dialogue Diversity, Lda. resulted in improved workplace relationships, enhanced communication, and a more positive organizational culture. Employees reported higher job satisfaction, and the companies observed a decrease in conflicts and an increase in collaborative efforts among teams.



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