

A European Approach to Micro-credentials



**BUILD UP
SKILLS EUROPEAN EXCHANGE**

30 NOVEMBER 2021

Proposal for Council Recommendation on Micro-credentials for lifelong learning and employability

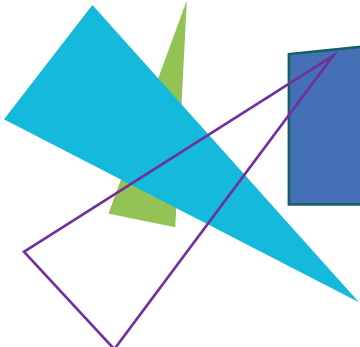
EU Definition of Micro-credentials

Standard Elements

Principles for Design and Issuance of Micro-credentials

Recommendations to Member States

Recommendations to Commission



Objectives

- **Supporting Individuals**
- **Preparing Providers of MCs**
- **Supporting inclusion and social fairness**



Evidence gathering and analysis

April – July 2021

Open Public Consultation
- >500 replies
- >90 position papers

Empirical evidence:
NESET, OECD,
Cedefop,
Erasmus+
projects

- Wide consultation with education, training, lifelong learning, labour market stakeholders
- Questions on key building blocks:
 - A common **definition**
 - **Critical information elements** to describe micro-credentials
 - **Quality assurance**
 - Alignment to **National Qualifications Frameworks (NQFs)**
 - **Learning outcomes** and notional workload
 - **Recognition**: for further studies and/or employment purposes
 - Portability: **issuing, storage and sharing** of micro-credentials

Outcomes of consultation

High-level messages

- Interest and use of micro-credentials **expected to grow**
- **Broad welcome** for the EU action
- Clear potential in MCs but fundamental questions (e.g. on definition and purpose) must be clarified
- Importance of ensuring the **flexibility** of micro-credentials
- **Different expectations** from stakeholder groups, e.g. university perspective v employer perspectives

The Learner Voice



Motivation

- Personal Situation
- Costs
- Support from employer

Barriers to Learning

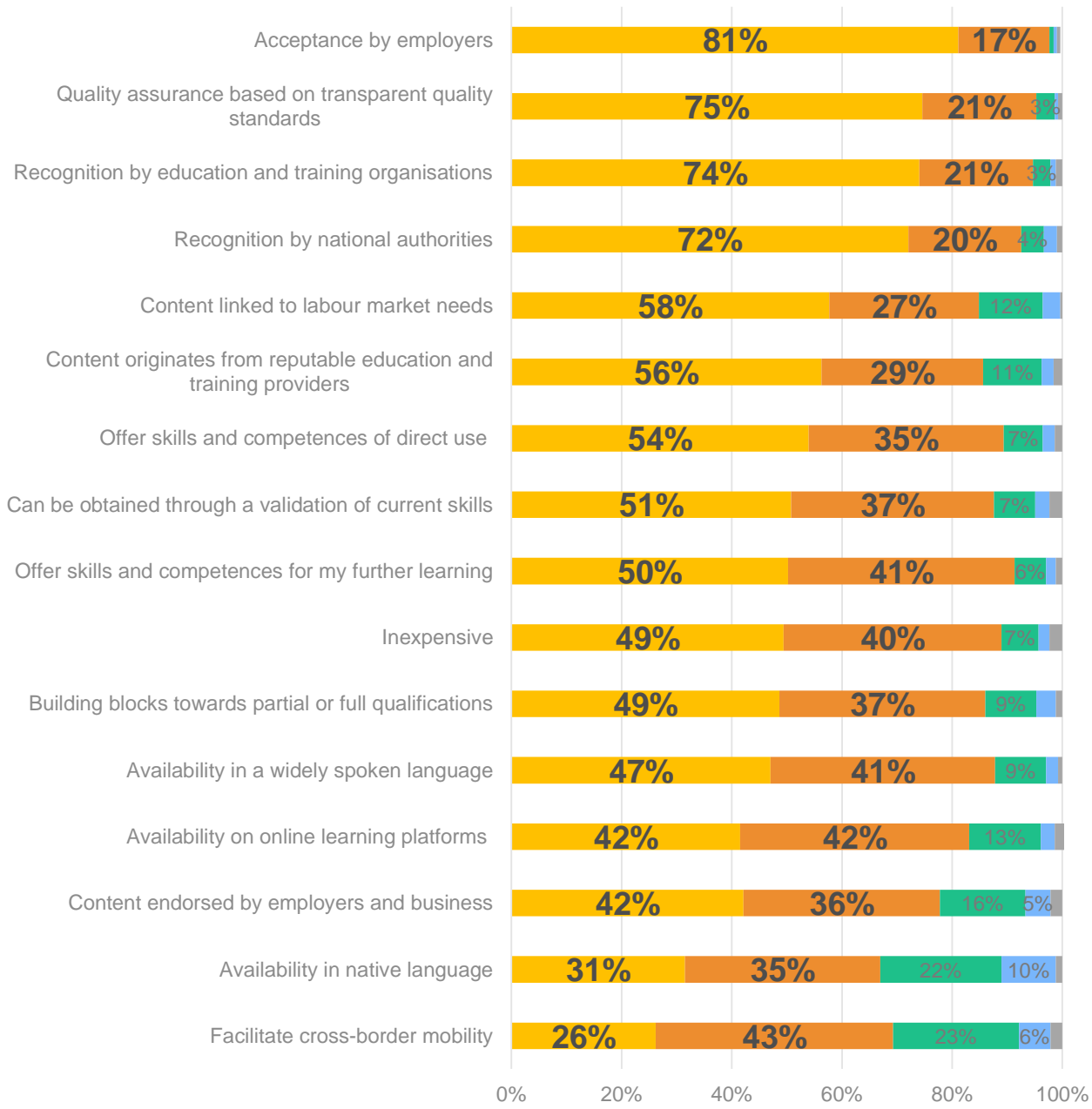
- Lack of time
- Lack of support from employers
- Uncertainty about recognition of MC by employers

- Those most effectively engaging in micro-credentialing already have degrees and jobs
- Those without the knowledge or cultural capital to navigate the market are likely to invest in training that is not actually valued by employers
- Digital learning tends to favour individuals who possess complex multi-literacy skills and have experience of self-regulated learning.
- Some industry-led micro-credentialing initiatives have been successful at attracting non-traditional learners (e.g Google IT Support Professional Certificate).



Most important aspects of high-quality micro-credentials (n=508)

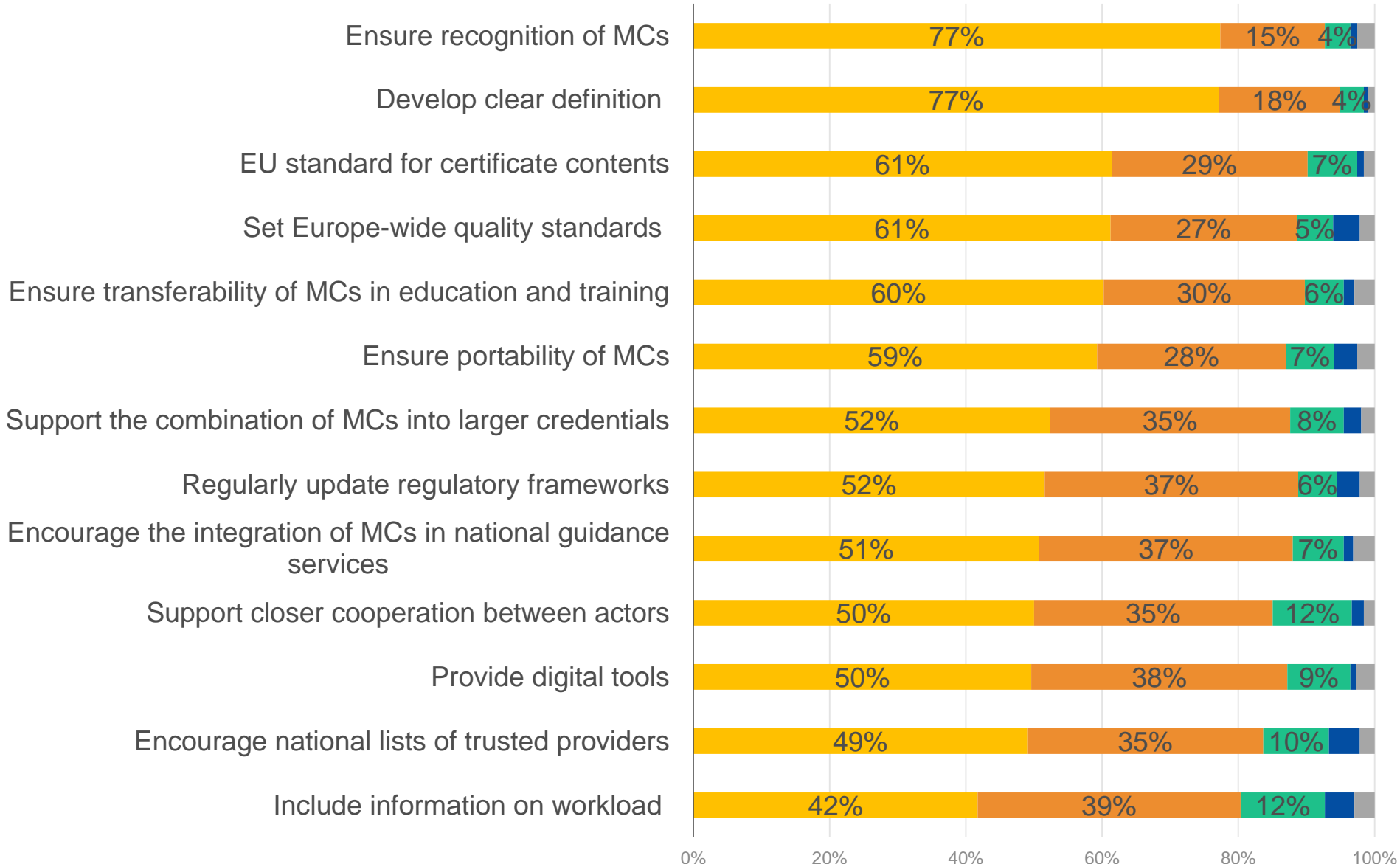
■ Very important
 ■ Rather important
 ■ Rather not important
■ Not important
 ■ I don't know/don't wish to answer



Most-important aspects of micro-credentials

EU-level actions and measures which facilitate the take-up of micro-credentials (n=508)

- Very important
- Rather important
- Rather not important
- Not important
- I do not know/do not wish to answer



Open questions

Differentiation between MCs and qualifications (esp. re: stackability)

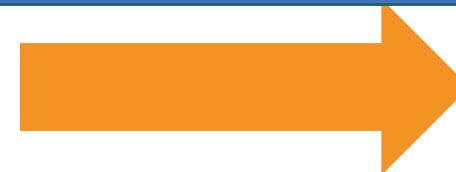
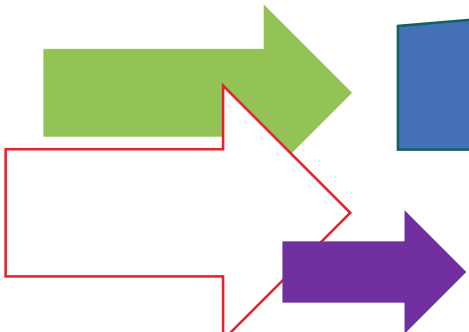
Approach to QA

Links with labour market

Role in inclusion

Platforms/providers/courses

Awareness and understanding



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WILLIAM O'KEEFFE

WILLIAM.OKEEFFE@EC.EUROPA.EU