

MICROCREDENTIALS: TOWARDS FLEXIBLE LEARNING PATHWAYS

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Micro-credentials: What can we learn from the foreign experience?

Juraj Vantuch

Microcredentials: What can we learn from the foreign experience?

There is not such thing as a policy borrowing.
There is only policy learning!

Why? Context matters: Culture and roots (history)

- ❖ VET culture different from „rugby“ states inducing innovations (i.a. MC, NQF)
- ❖ Different understanding of „qualifications“ ∴
a different functionality of qualification frameworks (so far?)
- ❖ „Czechoslovak roots“ of VET ∴
subject of inevitable change: (DE?/EN?/FR? - sort of synthesis?)

Books story: about the pile of books on the carpet, a shelf above the bed and
a large bookcase along the entire wall of the room up to the ceiling.

„Microcredentials for VET and labour market learning“

Cedefop project and studies mapping development worldwide

<https://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/projects/microcredentials-labour-market-education-and-training>

Defining MC: a **‘dual’ perspective** regarding qualifications

- ‘qualified’ in the sense of having obtained a formal qualification
- ‘qualified’ by virtue of having showed the ability to carry out a job effectively

Microcredentials discussion at national policy level → Advanced policy discussions: **NL-PL-SK**

SK discussion

2017 Learning Slovakia strategy paper (not adopted by the government) ↘

2021-2030 Lifelong learning and Counselling strategy (adopted 24/11/2021) ↘

Policy paper in support of the new LLL legislation requested ↘

Paper focusing on MC and Individual Learning Accounts conducted by State institute of VET :
Gálová, L. et al., (2023). *Nové prvky kvalifikačných systémov na rozvoj zručností.* [**New elements of qualification systems for skills development**] <https://europass.sk/wp-content/uploads/2023/03/EUROPASS-DOKUMENT-NOVE-PRVKY.pdf> ↘

Experience from abroad – Policy recommendaton – **Definition of MC proposed for legislation**

Definition of a microcredential (suggested for the draft Act on LLL)

1. A „**MIKROOSVEDČENIE**“ is **a record of learning outcomes** that a natural person has obtained on the basis of a **small volume of learning in a formal, nonformal or informal setting**, which leads to the acquisition of knowledge, skills and competences corresponding to current individual social, personal and cultural needs or the current needs of the labour market.
2. A „mikrosvedčenie“ is issued by an educational institution or other authorized institution and is owned by an individual being educated, it can be made available and it is **portable**. It can be **used alone or in combination with other certificates**.
3. **A „mikrosvedčenie“ that meets the conditions specified in the qualification standard gives a PROFESSIONAL QUALIFICATION*. Inclusion of the „mikrosvedčenie“ in the register of qualifications and determination of the appropriate SKKR level will be carried out by the education ministry.**
4. An **educational program of at least 10 hours** leading to the obtaining of a „mikrosvedčenie“ , **which gives a professional qualification***, **is assessed by** a secondary school that provides education in the relevant field of education, or a higher education **institution that has an accredited relevant programme**.
5. The **education ministry maintains a list of educational institutions (?!)** providing education leading to a „mikrosvedčenie“ **which gives a professional qualification ***, which it publishes on its website.
6. & 7. (Technicalities on obligatory info and details to be set by the bylaw)

* *Fourth framework of SKKR/NQF related qualification (a „microqualification / MIKROKVALIFIKÁCIA“)*

What is done

2021-2030 Strategy & Policy paper Gálová, Ľ. et al., (2023)

- **Double approach in terminology** („MC/MQ“: Mikrosvedčenie/Mikro kvalifikácia) embedded in paragraph wording of the draft law – **preventing overregulation crucial**
 - MC in general („mikrosvedčenie“) **softly regulated**
Quality assurance (reliability level) indicated by the awarding institution (e.g. course completion, accredited course completion, internal/external examination, internal/external QA system... QR code as a vehicle?)
 - MC certifying qualification („mikro kvalifikácia“) listed in the National Qualifications Register **strictly regulated and QUALITY ASSURED** via SKKR/NQF (fully functional in future)
- Alternatives concerning the introduction of Digital Badges presented (NL/FI)
- Alternatives of individual learning accounts/vouchers presented (SCO)

What to do

➤ Quality assurance/Zabezpečenie kvality

Slovakia: Internal system of QA (standards) in higher education only

Building trust in Microcredentials (and in qualification certificates in general)

Making National Qualification Framework SKKR fully functional

Universal coverage of quality assurance (and legislative backing) needed – rugby states?

➤ Digitálne odznaky/Digital badges

Open Badges - Mozilla project (the world's leading format for digital badges)

Open Badge Factory provides versatile tools for creating and implementing an efficient and sustainable Open Badge strategy: <https://openbadgefactory.com/en/>

FREE trial for 60 days: <https://openbadgefactory.com/en/service-levels/>

Institutional backing needed (capacity and financing) – Polish experience (IBE Warsaw)!

➤ Financing and financial incentives

Vivid private (online) initiatives endangering traditional education providers vs free education

ILA or **voucher style schemes** KOMPAS+/REPAS+/"Nestráť prácu vzdelávaj sa" project

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Thank you

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vantuch2011@gmail.com