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POLISH NATIONAL AGENCY
FOR ACADEMIC EXCHANGE



Online course catalogues and databases for transparency and recognition 2 (OCTRA 2)
01.01.2023 – 31.12.2024

Exploration of information provision on Bologna Cycle study programmes and micro-credentials

Content of the presentation

1. Comparative Report – findings of the desk research on:

- Course catalogues
- Information provision on micro-credentials

2. Guidelines on improvement of course catalogues and information provision on micro-credentials for the use in credential evaluation

Structure of the Comparative Report

Chapter I. Analysis of Country Reports

1. Outline of HE systems in the project partner countries
 - 1.1. Information on recognition / validation of previous learning
2. Legal framework on publicly available information about study programmes, courses and micro-credentials
 - 2.1. Providing information on study programmes and national level recommendations on development of course catalogues
 - 2.3. Providing information and national level recommendations on smaller learning units leading to micro-credentials
3. NQDs and alternative information sources on qualifications
4. Results of HEIs survey
 - 4.1. Results of HEIs survey on course catalogues
 - 4.2. Results of HEIs survey on micro-credentials
5. Results of the in-depth case studies on course catalogues and micro-credentials
 - 5.1. In-depth case studies on course catalogues
 - 5.2. In-depth case studies on micro-credentials

Chapter II. Information on qualifications valued by credential evaluators

Conclusions

Guidelines on improvement of course catalogues and information provision on micro-credentials for the use in credential evaluation

Methodology of Comparative Report

Information for the Comparative Report gathered in 2 project periods: OCTRA and OCTRA 2

Country Reports of OCTRA (2020-2022) by:

- Academic Information Centre (**Latvia**)
- Centre for Information and Recognition of Qualifications in Higher Education (**Bosnia and Herzegovina**)
- National Centre for Information and Documentation (**Bulgaria**)
- Agency for Science and Higher Education (**Croatia**)
- Education and Youth Board of Estonia (**Estonia**)

Country Reports of OCTRA 2 (2023-2024) by:

- Academic Information Centre (**Latvia**)
- Centre for Information and Recognition of Qualifications in Higher Education (**Bosnia and Herzegovina**)
- National Centre for Information and Documentation (**Bulgaria**)
- National Information Center for Academic Recognition and Mobility (**Armenia**)
- National Centre for Recognition and Equivalence of Diplomas (**Romania**)

Information sources (Country Reports)

























On course catalogues

- National level legislation (definition, information provision)
- Survey of HEIs
- Case studies of course catalogues
- Interviews with ENIC/NARIC credential evaluators

On information provision on learning leading to micro-credentials

- National legislation (definition, information provision, recognition and validation practices)
- Survey of HEIs
- Interviews with HEIs

National legislation (2023)

Country	Course catalogues	Micro-credentials / smaller learning units	National level guidelines / recommendations	Public information provision
Armenia				
Bosnia and Herzegovina				
Bulgaria				
Latvia				
Poland				
Romania				

Survey data on course catalogues

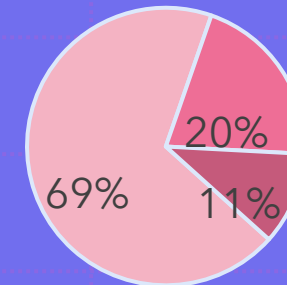
Main statistics

- 272 questionnaires in 8 countries
- 184 HEIs have a course catalogue, 29 are developing, 55 HEIs do not have a course catalogue
- 57% are only in national language/-es (29% also available in EN; 29% also in other language/-es)

Content of the course catalogues:

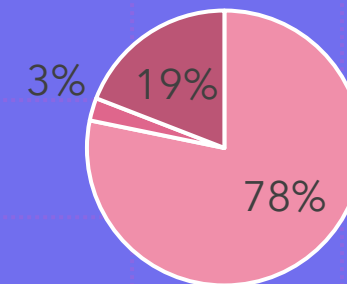
- Title of study course (88%)
- ECTS credits or other credit points (87%)
- Short description of study course (76%)
- Field of study (74%)
- Learning outcomes (68%)

Presence of course catalogue
(total responses 272; question 2)



■ Yes ■ No ■ In development

Availability of online course catalogues
(total responses 224; question 4)



■ Yes ■ No ■ In development

Main conclusions of survey on course catalogues

- Most HEIs have already **developed a course catalogue** that has public access and is not limited to internal use
- **Content and function of the course catalogues varies** regardless of the country of location and on a national level
- Data on external **quality assurance is rarely provided** in course catalogues
- Varied results on the content of the catalogue leading to the conclusion that there is a need to **reach a common understanding on the content**
- The **ECTS User's Guide** does not ensure sufficient methodological support in terms of designing online course catalogues

Survey data on micro-credentials

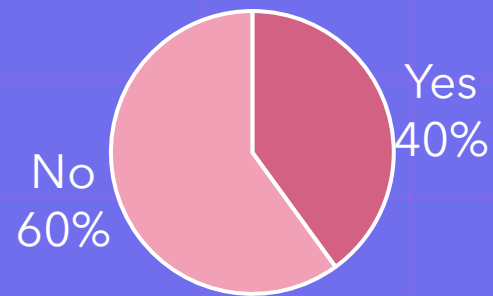
Main statistics

- 146 questionnaires in 7 countries
- 58 of 146 HEIs implement smaller learning units leading to micro-credentials
- Type of smaller learning units:
 - Stand alone units (24)
 - Part of the study programmes (8)
 - Both (24)
 - Other (2)

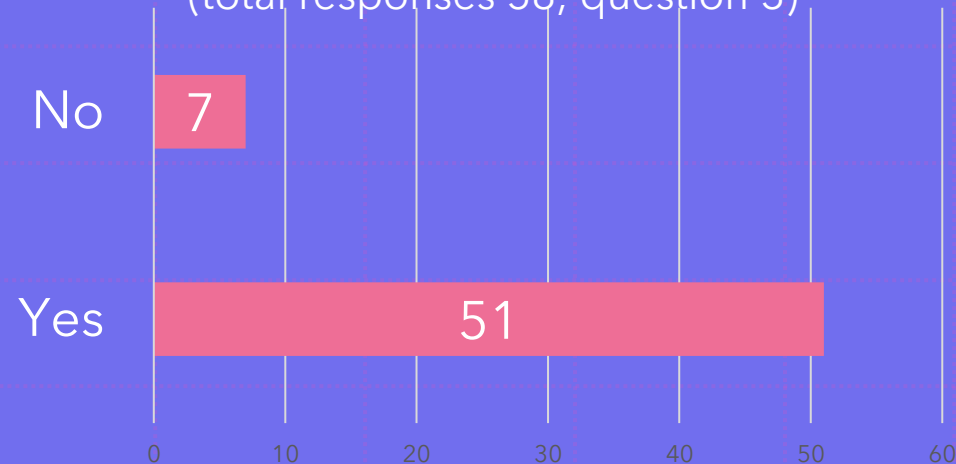
Content of the information

- Title of learning opportunity (45 of 58),
- Short description (44 of 58),
- Mode of learning (in-person / online / blended) (39 of 58)
- ECTS / credits (if applicable) (37 of 58)
- Learning outcomes (36 of 58)

Provision of micro-credentials / smaller learning units
(total responses 146; question 1)



Information provision on HEIs' website
(total responses 58; question 3)



Main conclusions of survey on smaller learning units leading to micro-credentials

- Results allow summarising that there is still a lack of understanding on a national level on the **concept of a micro-credential** and what type of learning can be considered to be a micro-credential
- Many HEIs provide **learning opportunities outside formal study programmes**, these learning units not always are part of existing study programmes
- Information on learning opportunities outside formal study programmes can be found either on **HEIs' websites or other information platforms**
- Information provided by HEIs on micro-credentials / smaller learning units offered by HEIs in many, but not all cases, covers information highlighted by **Council Recommendation of 16 June 2022 on a European approach to micro-credentials for lifelong learning and employability**

In-depth case studies

In-depth analysis of 32 course catalogues in 7 countries

Main conclusions:

- Course catalogues provide information on study programmes and courses, information on study related matters can be found elsewhere on the HEIs websites;
- Information for applicants and students are provided in different places in website;
- Information in national language/-es and information in foreign language might be different and structured differently

28 semi-structured interviews with HEI representatives

Purpose:

- implementation practices of micro-credentials on a national level
- information provision on this type of learning by HEIs

Main conclusions:

- HEIs provide various smaller learning units
- HEIs representatives primarily see that smaller learning units were chosen by learners because they give a chance to improve person's professional qualification in a shorter time
- HEIs implement this type of learning as it is additional revenue for many HEIs and there is a demand

Information on qualifications valued by credential evaluators

Based on:

interviews with ENIC and NARIC experts

Lisbon Recognition Convention Committee and European Area for Recognition Manual (2012 and 2023)

Council Recommendation of 16 June 2022 on a European approach to micro-credentials for lifelong learning and employability

On Bologna cycle programmes

Identified **10** mandatory
6 optional information elements

On micro-credentials

Identified **12** information elements

Bologna cycle programmes

Mandatory:

- Level of the study programme and the study course
- Formal rights persons are granted by successfully completing study programme
- Workload
- Information on external quality assurance
- The status of awarding institution
- The composition of the study programme
- Access and admission requirements
- Graduation requirements
- Nominal length of the full-time programme
- Speciality or field of study

Optional:

- Learning outcomes
- Grading system
- Certificates issued to graduates
- Form of studies
- Detailed information on awarding institution
- Description of study programme

Lisbon Recognition Convention Committee and European Area for Recognition Manual (2023):

- Level of smaller learning unit
- Quality assurance underpinning smaller learning unit
- Learning outcomes of the smaller learning unit
- Workload
- Assessment criteria

Council Recommendation of 16 June 2022 on a European approach to micro-credentials for lifelong learning and employability:

- Title of the learning opportunity
- NQF/EQF level or Bologna cycle
- Short description
- Workload expressed in measurable manner
- Learning outcomes
- Field(s) of study
- Specific admission requirements
- Mode of learning (in-person / online / blended)
- Assessment
- Grading scale
- Possibilities for further learning / combining / stacking
- Type of quality assurance used to underpin the micro-credential / smaller unit of learning

Guidelines on **improvement of course catalogues and information provision on micro-credentials** for the use in credential evaluation



Co-funded by the
European Union

Guidelines based on the findings of the Comparative Report in OCTRA and OCTRA 2

Structure of the guidelines:

- Platforms of the information (useful for credential evaluation)
- Content of the information necessary for credential evaluation

Online course catalogue is a publicly available data system developed and maintained by a higher education institution, which includes organised, detailed and descriptive information on the higher education institution and study components that form study programmes offered by the higher education institution

Course catalogues may include information on various conceptual layers - institutional, study programme and course/module layer

The type and detail of provided information varies by the conceptual layers

These conceptual layers should be interlinked when possible

Mandatory:

- Full title of the qualification
- Level of the study programme and the study course
- Formal rights persons are granted by successfully completing study programme
- Workload
- Information on external quality assurance
- The status of awarding institution
- The composition of the study programme
- Access and admission requirements
- Graduation requirements
- Nominal length of the full-time programme
- Speciality or field of study

Content of the information

Optional:

- Learning outcomes;
- Grading system;
- Certificates issued to graduates;
- Form of studies;
- Detailed information on awarding institution;
- Description of study programme

Platform of the information:

Using already existing online information provision platforms will ensure that information on all learning opportunities provided by HEI could be found using one access point

Dedicated section on existing information provision platform to ensuring accessibility of historic information for the purposes of credential evaluation should be developed

Two aspects of the technical solutions for providing information on micro-credentials should be taken into account:

1. Online platform(-s) where the information is made publicly available
2. Availability of historic information

MICRO-credentials

- Title of the learning opportunity (including title of the issued credential)
- NQF/EQF level or Bologna cycle
- Short description
- Workload expressed in measurable manner (if possible, in ECTS / number of credits)
- Learning outcomes
- Field(s) of study
- Specific admission requirements (if applicable)
- Mode of learning (in-person / online / blended)
- Assessment (if applicable)
- Grading scale (if applicable)
- Possibilities for further learning / combining / stacking
- Type of quality assurance used to underpin the micro-credential / smaller unit of learning

Recommendations and Guidelines on Micro-Credentials

Prepared in the terms of EHEA TPG A Working Group on Micro-Credentials (2023)

Importance of the transparency of the micro-credentials:

HEIs should include programmes leading to micro-credentials in course catalogues, clearly explaining all the opportunities, conditions, rules and procedures in relation to micro-credentials. Description of micro-credentials should be easily available online for all users

HEIs as well as alternative providers should keep the all the records and store all the data as regards micro-credentials in the same manner as they keep data on students and graduates of degree programmes. This is important for reliability of credentials awarded, verification of credentials whenever required and for improving transparency and trust between the stakeholders



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Republic of Austria
Education, Science
and Research



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AND RESEARCH



[More
information here](#)

Erasmus+ project "Qualifications Frameworks for trust, transparency and diversity – TPG A"



Thank you!

OCTRA 2 website
<https://aic.lv/en/par-aic/projects/octra-2>



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