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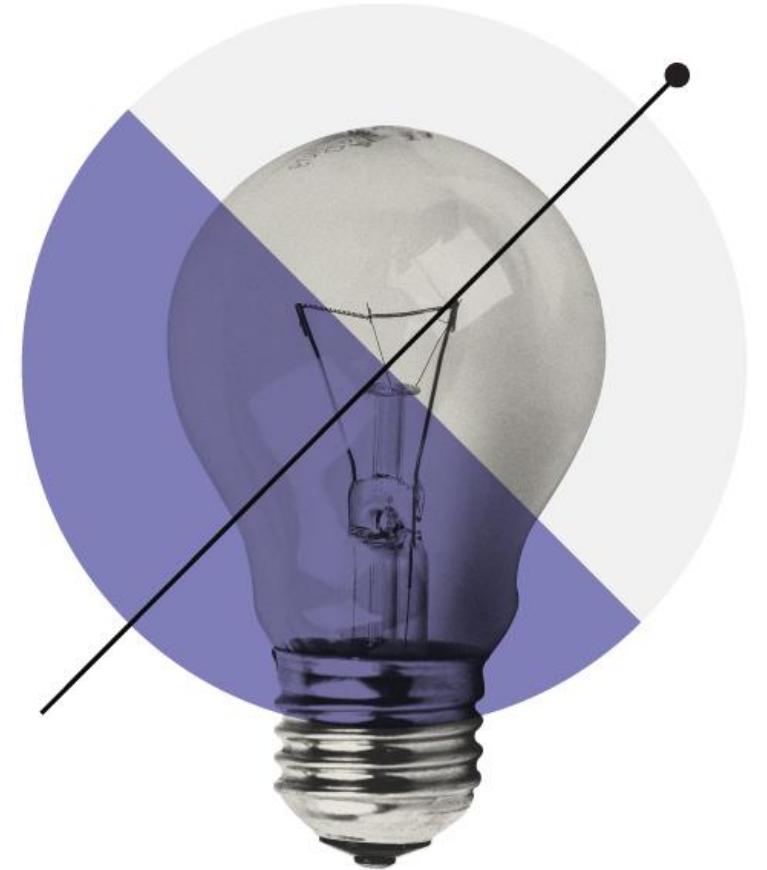
The State of Microcredentials in Canada

**Denise Amyot, Colleges and Institutes Canada
2022**

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Who is Colleges and Institutes Canada?

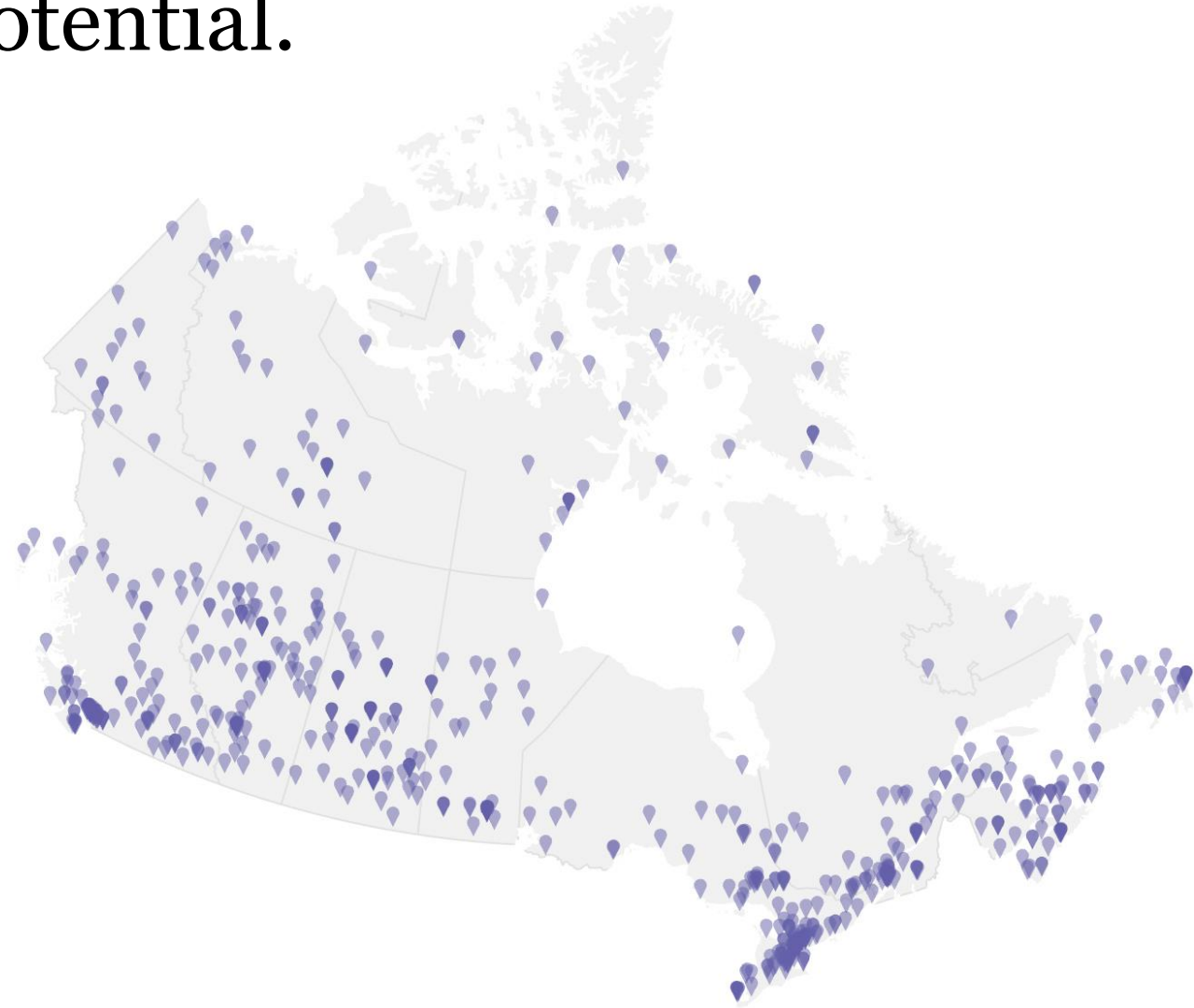
- We are the national and international voice of Canada's largest post-secondary education network.
- We advocate, build capacity, and drive knowledge to strengthen Canada's publicly supported colleges, institutes, CEGEPs, and polytechnics.
- **This year, we are also celebrating our 50th anniversary!**



An incredible reach – and potential.

CICan member colleges and institutes across Canada:

- **Over 95% of Canadians and over 86% of Indigenous people in Canada live within 50km of a college or institute location.**



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We contribute to positive change.

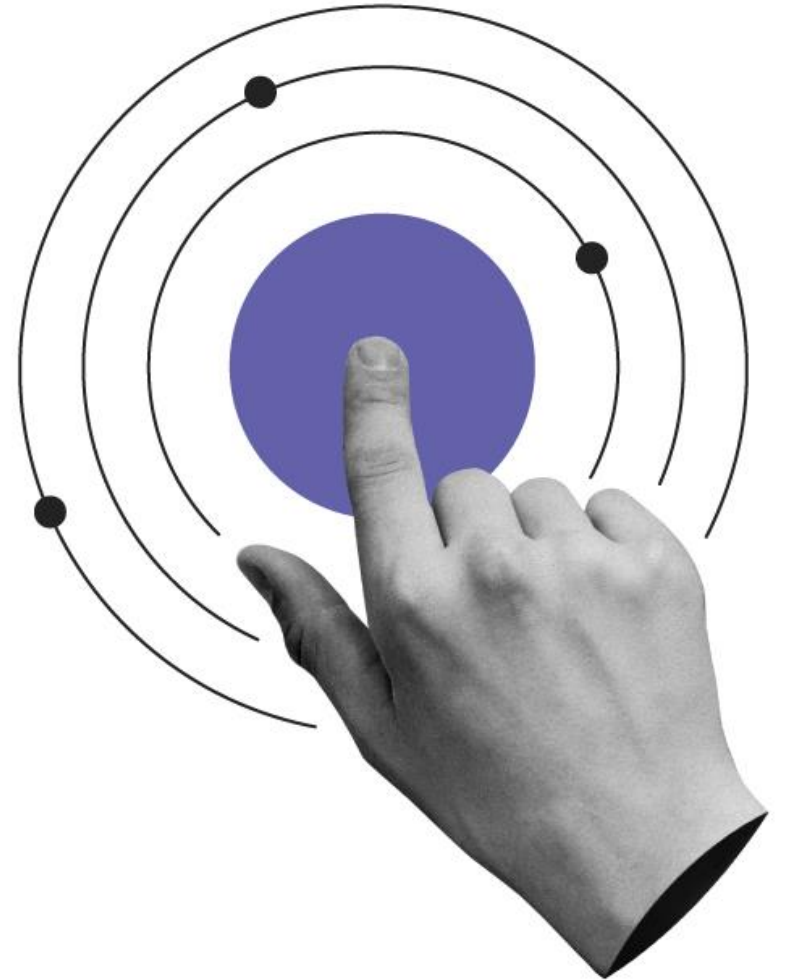
We use the 17 United Nations Sustainable Development Goals as a framework for collaboration to ensure that our actions contribute to positive change for people, communities, and the planet.

- **4 (Quality education)**
 - **5 (Gender equality)**
 - **8 (Decent work and economic growth)**
 - **10 (Reduced inequalities)**
 - **13 (Climate action)**
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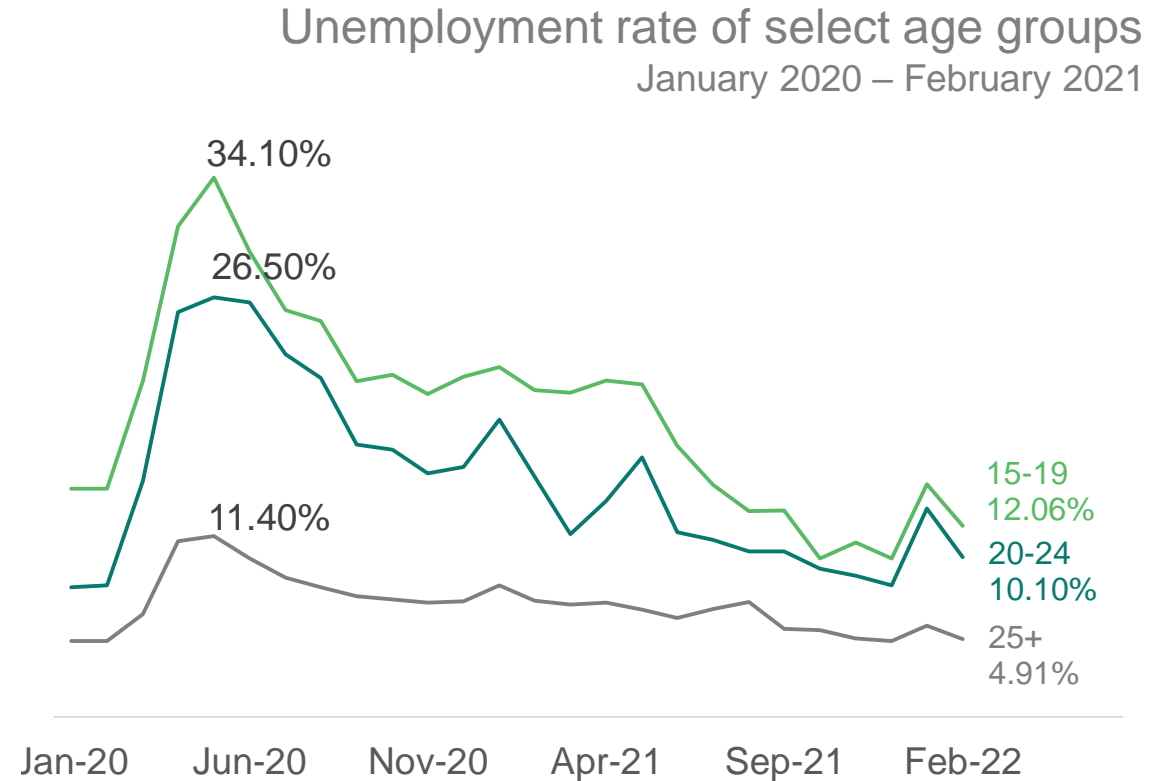
Microcredentials

1. Background: Labour Market Trends
2. Why Microcredentials?
3. The Canadian Context & Challenges
4. Our Environmental Scan
5. National Framework & Guiding Principles
6. Next Steps & Policy Recommendations



Background: Labour Market Trends

- **Demand for workers** reaches record levels during the second half of 2021.
- 50%: The share of unemployed workers who **returned to work in the same industry** as their last job.



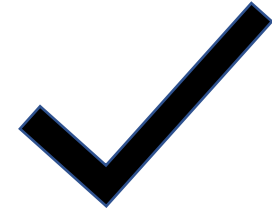
Background: Labour Market Trends

40%

About 40% of Canadians hold permanent, pandemic-resilient jobs that are **less likely to be impacted by automation** (called “triple-protected jobs”).

7x

Couples with postsecondary degrees were **seven times more likely** to hold triple-protected jobs than couples without postsecondary credentials.



Colleges and institutes are the preferred option for **displaced workers looking to reskill**.

Reskilling and upskilling

- **Data from StatsCan shows that 10% of post-secondary educated Canadians faced with job loss went back to school within three years of losing their job.**



Why Microcredentials?

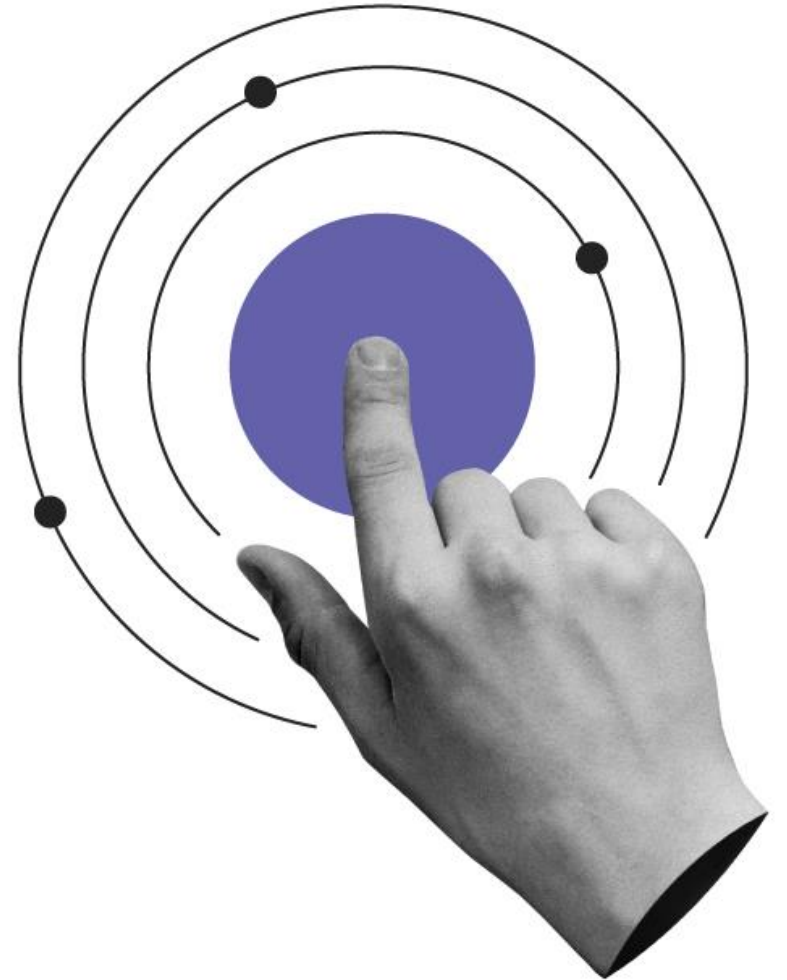
- 1. More and more jobs are at risk of automation**
- 2. Workers need options to upgrade their skills to align with technological change**
- 3. Employers need workers with new competencies**



The Canadian Context & Challenges

1. No federal ministry of education
2. No national consensus on definition
3. Employers don't know what they're getting

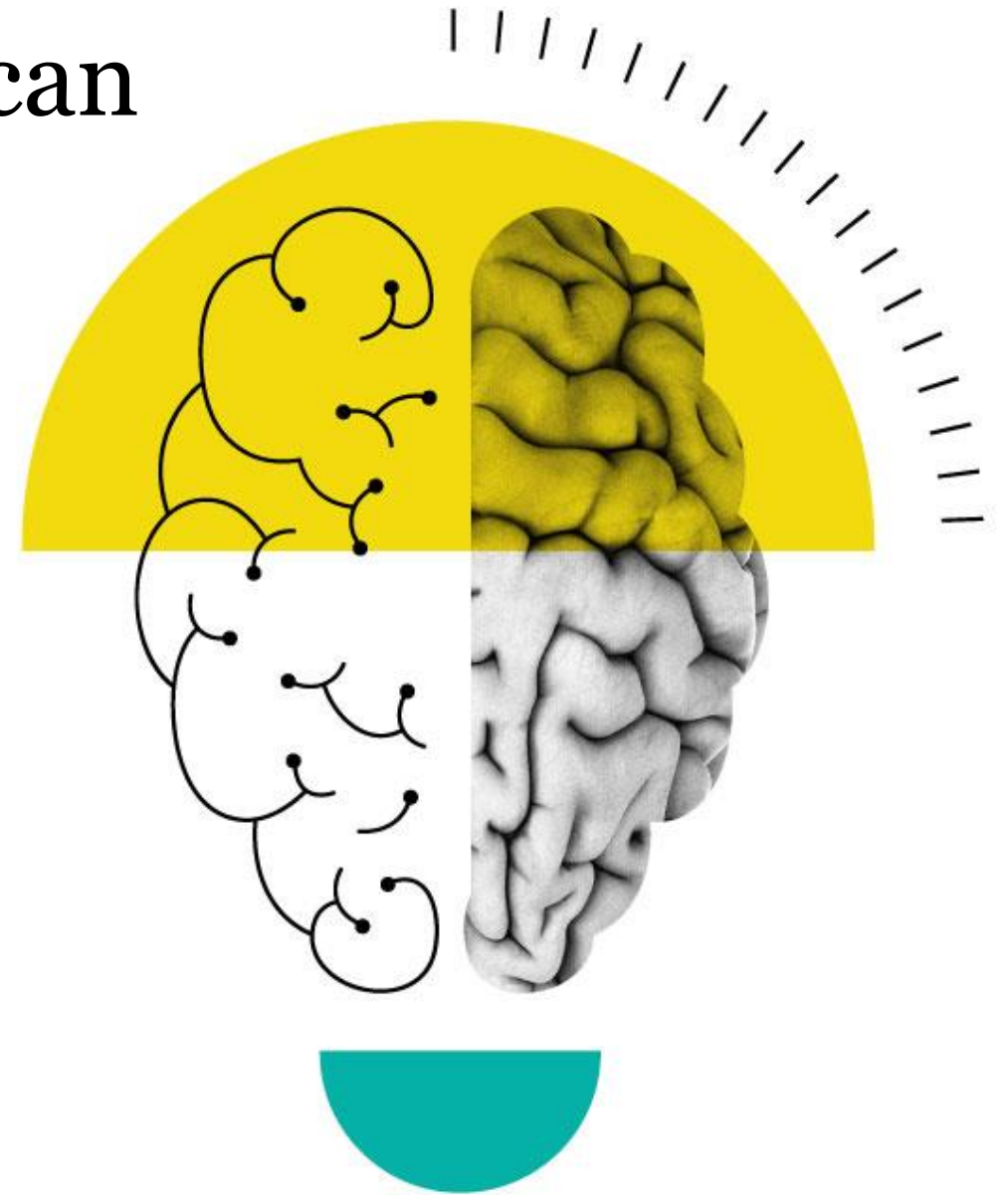
That's why CIGan stepped in as the national association.



A national Environmental Scan

The Status of Microcredentials in Canadian Colleges and Institutes

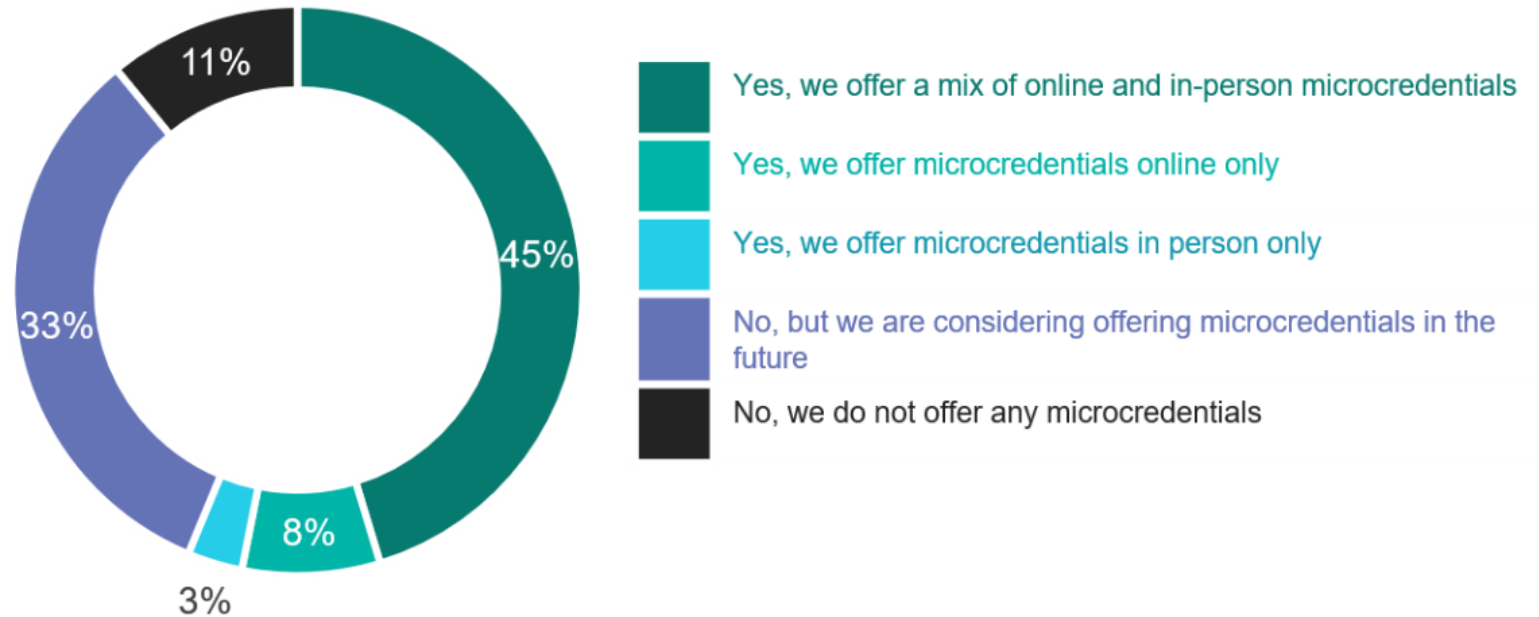
- **Completed April 2021**
- Two phases:
 1. A survey of CICan members
 2. Interviews with institutional representatives



Results of the Environmental Scan (national)

Figure 3: Microcredential availability

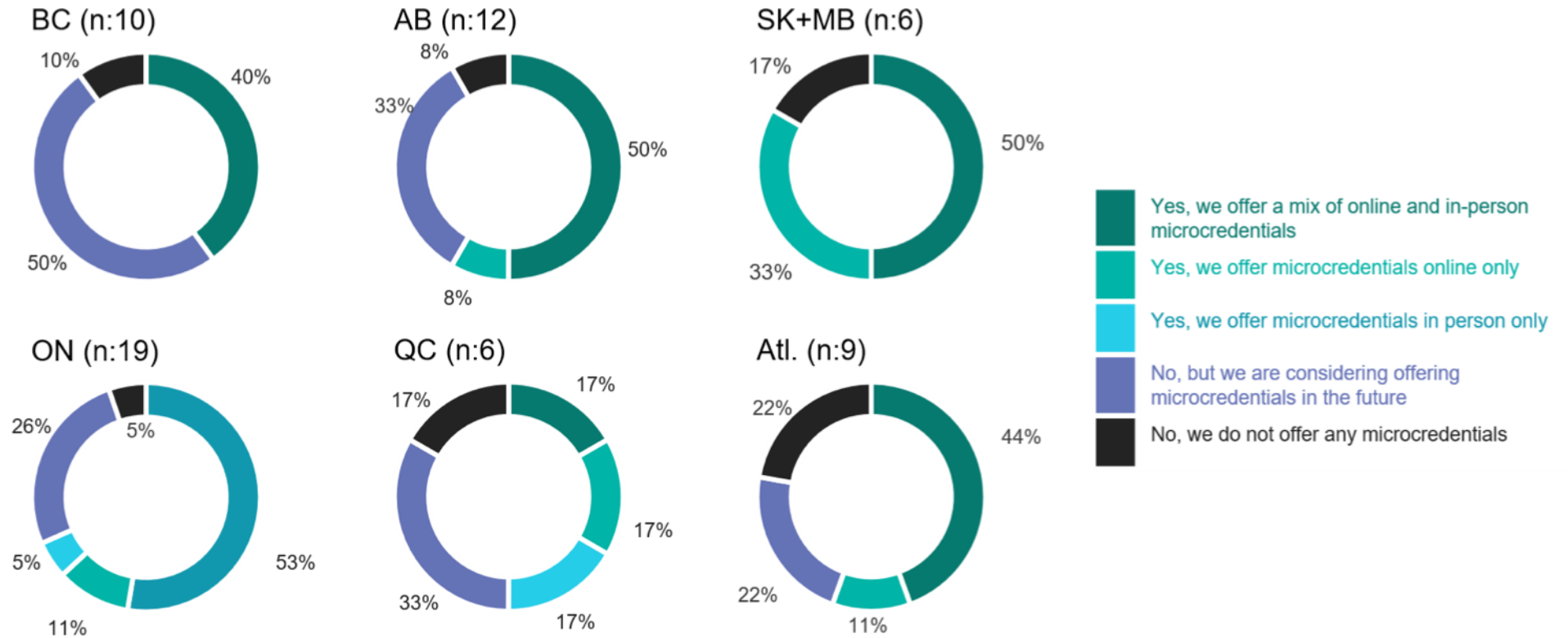
Q: Is your institution currently offering any kind of microcredential
(Excludes duplicate mentions from the same institution)



Results of the Environmental Scan (regional)

Figure 3b: Microcredential availability by region

Q: Is your institution currently offering any kind of microcredential
(excludes duplicate mentions from the same institution)



Results of the Environmental Scan

Preferred features of microcredentials:

1. Industry-aligned
2. Competency-based
3. Short
4. Common definitions
5. Stackable

Figure 6: Microcredential features from favourable to unfavourable

Q: The following questions will ask you to rate potential features of microcredentials to help us understand what you, in your role at a Canadian postsecondary institution, consider important.

(Includes responses from duplicated members)



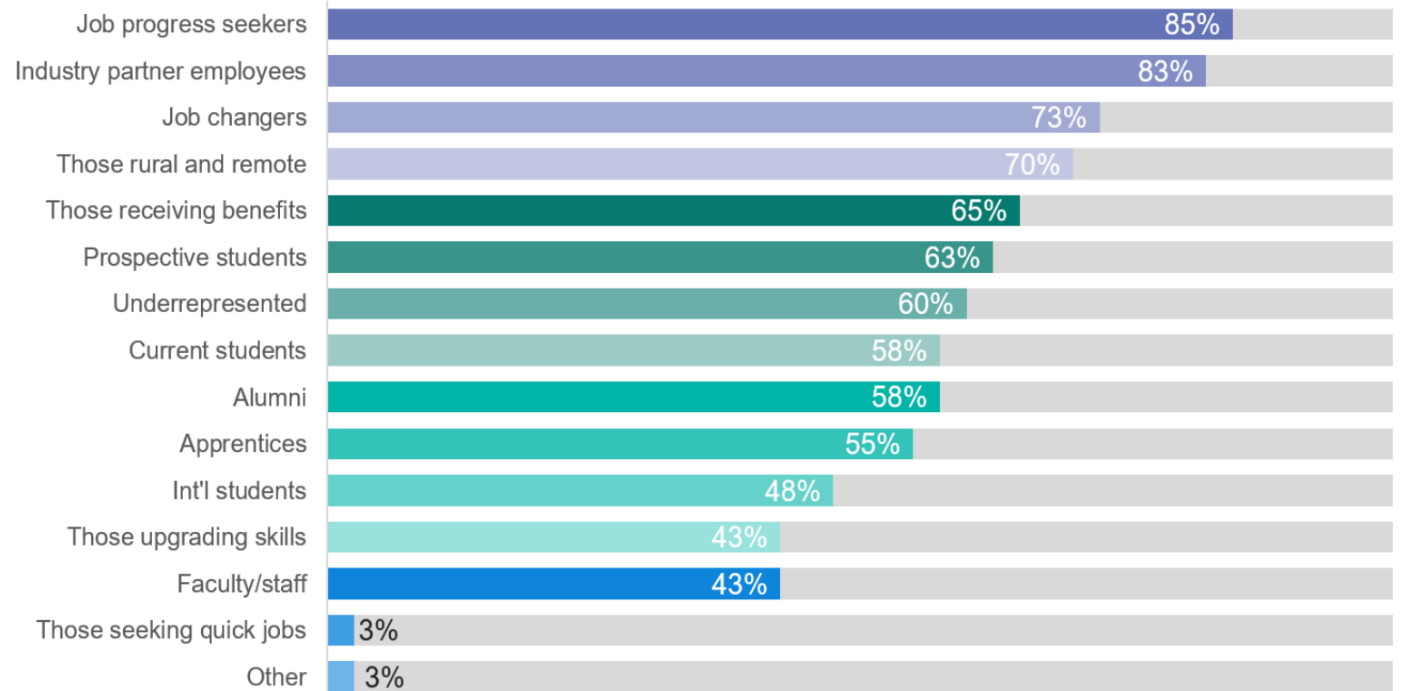
Results of the Environmental Scan

Target markets

1. Job progress seekers
(upgrading)
2. Industry partner employees
3. Job changers
4. Rural and remote communities

Figure 9: What is the target market for microcredentials?

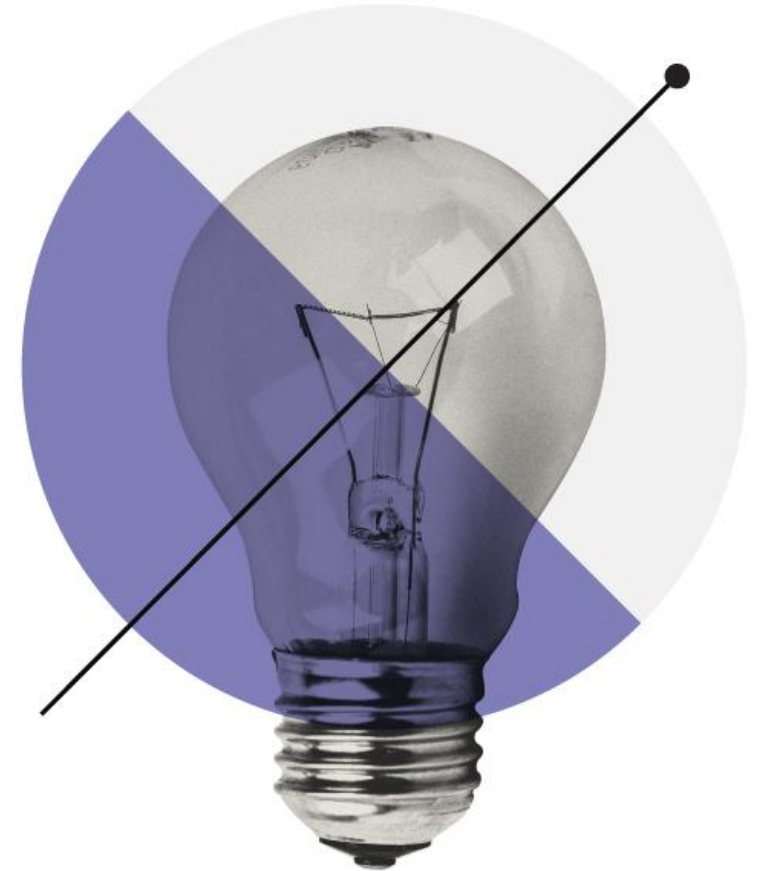
Q: Who is/would likely be the target market for your institution's microcredentials?



Results of the Environmental Scan

Role of Provincial & Territorial Governments:

1. In some provinces (BC, ON, QC), governments have funded pilot projects to develop microcredentials
2. 74% of survey respondents indicated that their provincial government is encouraging microcredentials.



A national framework

Microcredential (*noun*): a certification of assessed competencies that is additional, alternate, complementary to, or a component of a formal qualification.

- Seven guiding principles that help educators create nimble and responsive microcredentials that meet high quality standards and help learners choose the right credential for them.



For example:

At **Conestoga College**, the Continuing Education department offers **60 microcredentials** that are short, flexible, innovative, timely, and based on industry needs (in areas like basic web design, business-to-business sales skills, Indigenous values and identity, conflict management, and inclusive teaching practices).



The Supportive Care Assistant program

At CICan, the **Supportive Care Assistant program** is a new fully-subsidized micro-certificate developed to quickly address acute labour shortages in the long-term care sector.



Building Capacity
in **Long-term Care**

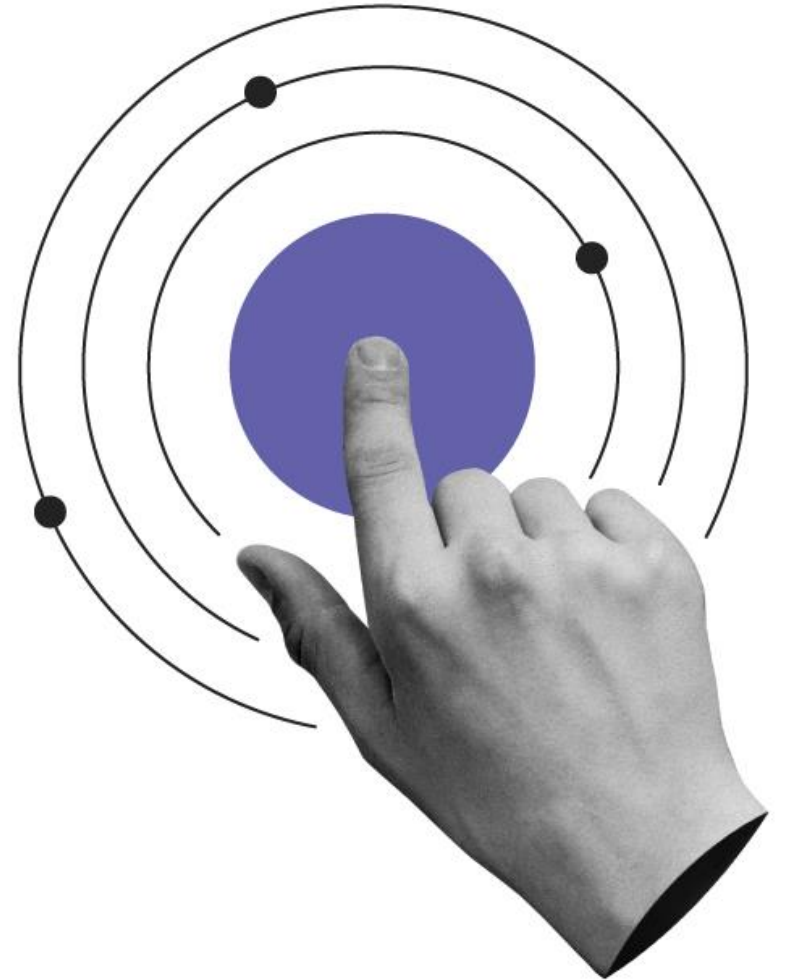
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Next steps:



Recommendations to ESDC

1. Engage a national dialogue.
2. Develop a national database.
3. Track microcredential demographics.
4. Develop common national curricula.
5. Extend student financial assistance.



How can we make sure upskilling and reskilling is successful?

- **Are our programs designed with employers in mind?**
 - **Are women represented in my classrooms?**
 - **Is the delivery method flexible? Is it available part-time or online?**
 - **Does this program require high-speed internet connection?**
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Thank You!

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