



Current state of play of micro-credentials: perspectives across the Atlantic - Europe

18 April 2024

Dr. Monica Bravo Granström



Akademie für
Wissenschaftliche Weiterbildung
PH Weingarten



Micro-credentials – the European approach

Objective MC: a means of achieving the goal of more flexible learning pathways

Heterogeneity regarding the definition

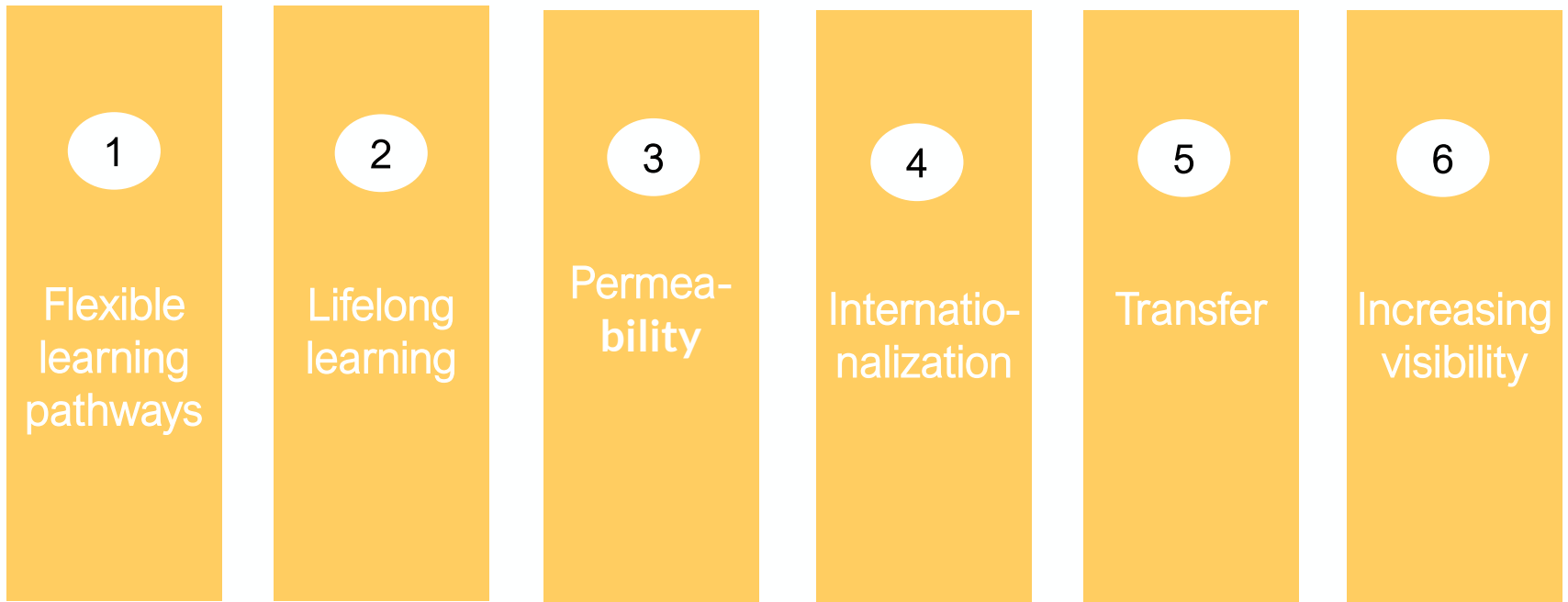
- The Council of the EU (2022, p.13): "Micro-credential' means the record of the learning outcomes that a learner has acquired following a small volume of learning"
<https://education.ec.europa.eu/education-levels/higher-education/micro-credentials>
- Several approaches around Europe - a variety of projects (e.g. <https://microcredentials.eu/about-2/microbol/>)
- No uniformly meaningful definition

Reasons for MC

- The ongoing changes in European labour market - increasingly calling for more **flexible possibilities** for up- and reskilling of all types of learners throughout life. Half of the current workforce, at all qualification levels, will need to update their skills within the next five years.
- More flexible and modular learning pathways to better adapt to the **needs of a wider range of learners**.
- **Digital and green transitions** influencing the way we work - a tendency towards increasingly frequent job changes on the labour market.

(European Commission, 2020)

Opportunities

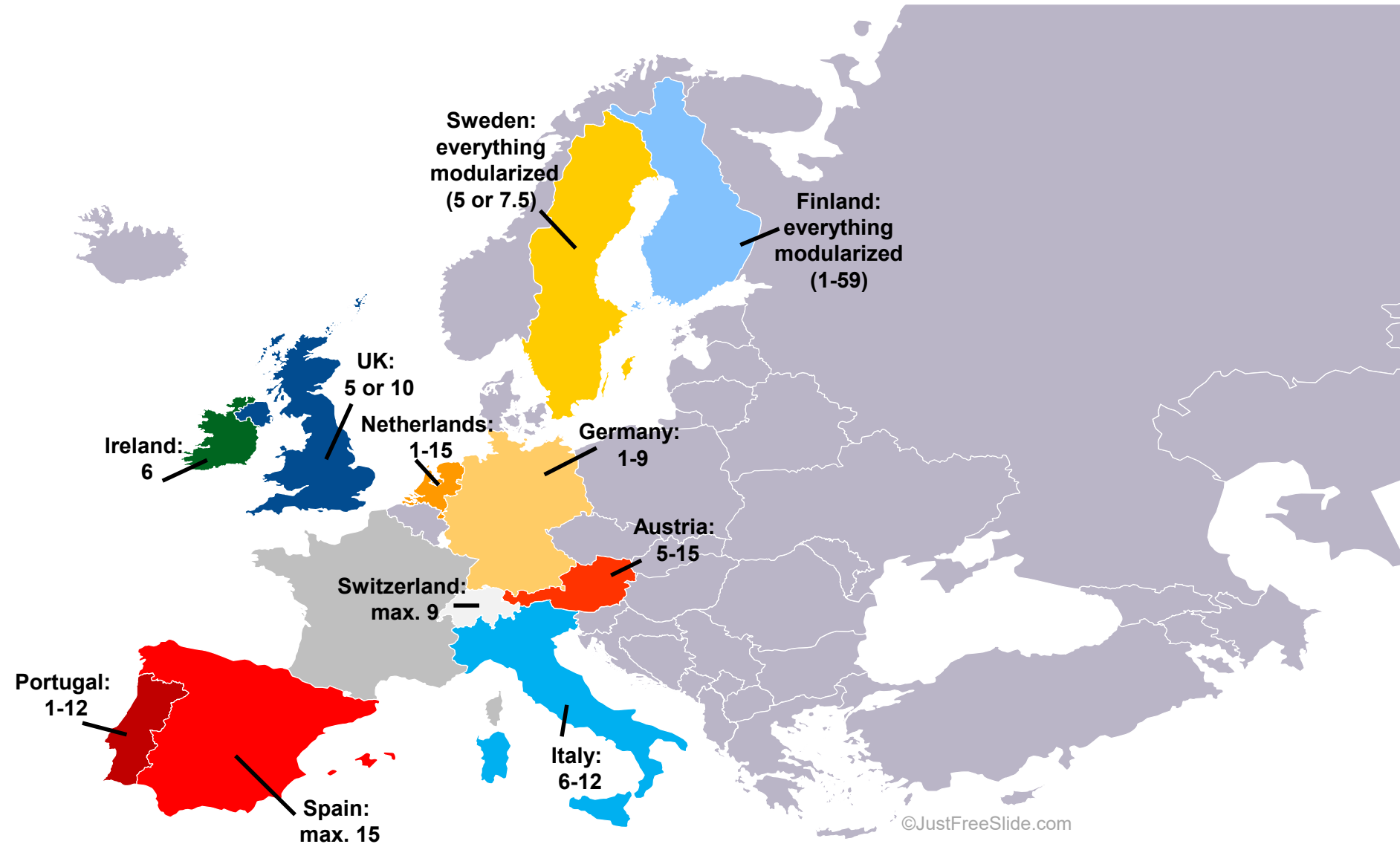


(Wissenschaftsrat, 2022, P. 32; HRK 2023, P. 9-10)

Challenges

- Legal frameworks
- Funding logic – costs for developing MCs
- Recognition and credits – **stackability**
- Quality assurance: lack of uniform understanding of quality
- „The canon of knowledge is in danger of becoming fragmented“ (HRK, 2020, S.4 - translation); The principle of holism and structure should not be "replaced by the arbitrary accumulation of small and very small learning units“ (Bundesrat 2022, S. 2, translation)
- No uniformly meaningful definition

MC: ECTS in Europe (some examples)



DE: DGWF definition for continuing education

OVERVIEW GRID



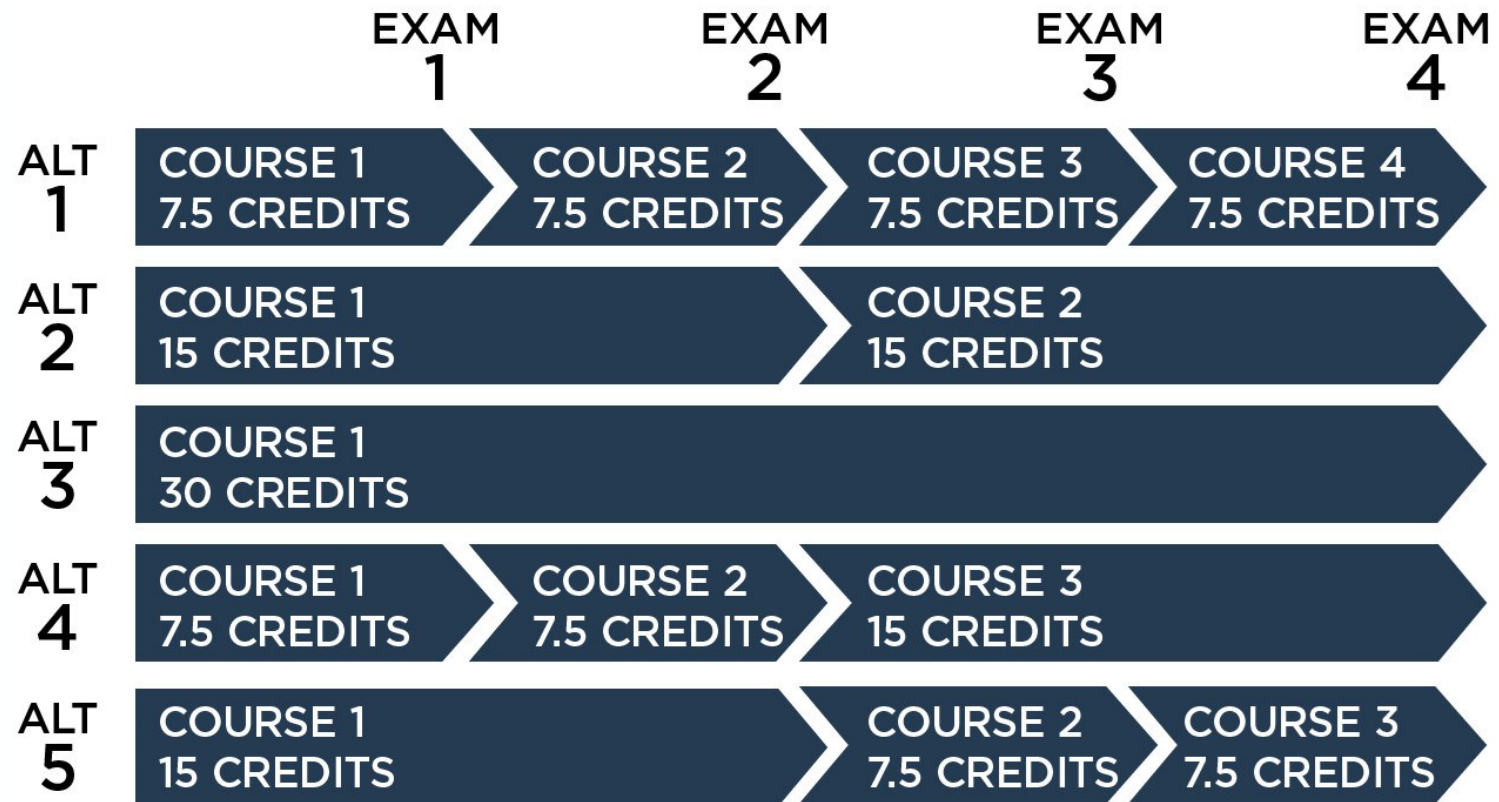
Degree	Format	Credit Points (ECTS)	Level (DQR)
Master's	Master's programme	60 – 120	7
Bachelor's	Bachelor's programme	180 – 240	6
Certificate*	Diploma of Advanced Studies (DAS)	min. 30	7
	Certificate of Advanced Studies (CAS)	min. 10	7
	Diploma of Basic Studies (DBS)	min. 30	6
	Certificate of Basic Studies (CBS)	min. 10	6
	Microcredentials (MC)	1 – 9	6 or 7
	Short course with exam*	none	6 or 7
Participation confirmation	Short course without exam* https://dgwf.net/publikationen.html	none	6 or 7

CP = Credit Point | ECTS = European Credit Transfer System

* For the variety of common designations of the individual offers, see above.



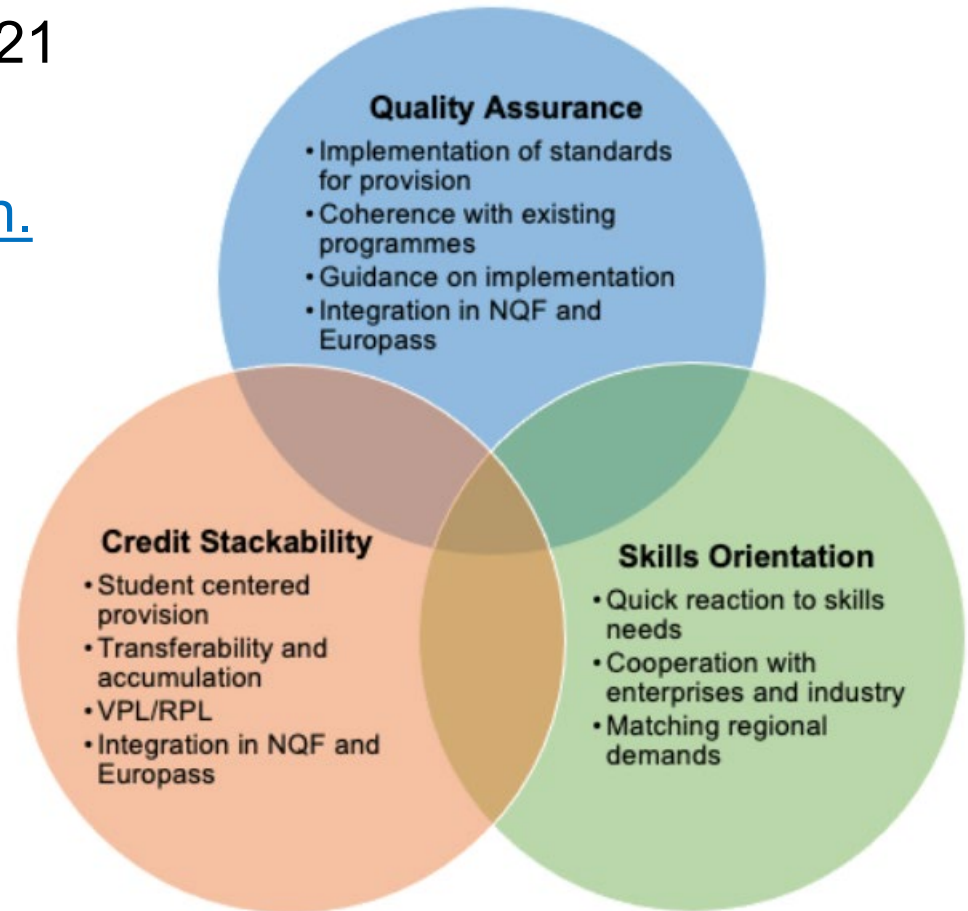
Example Sweden



The Eucen Initiatives

- Positions paper on MC 2021
 - currently being updated

<https://eucenstudies.eucen.eu/position-papers/>
- Continuing discussions in different forums, e.g. Eucen conferences (next one upcoming in Cork, Ireland, May/June 2024)



For discussion

In which direction do we want to go?

- Ideal **credit range**, especially for stackability?
- Safeguards needed regarding the stacking of micro-credentials towards full degrees?
- Link to the **European Qualifications Framework (EQF)**?: defined levels, standards for describing learning outcomes





Danke! / Thank you! / Tack! / ¡Gracias!

bravo@ph-weingarten.de

www-phweingarten.de

[Akademie für Wissenschaftliche
Weiterbildung PH Weingarten](#)

[Akademie für wissenschaftliche
Weiterbildung PH Weingarten/
Academy for Continuing Education](#)





References

- Bundesrat. (2022). *Vorschlag für eine Empfehlung des Rates über einen europäischen Ansatz für Microcredentials für lebenslanges Lernen und Beschäftigungsfähigkeit: SWD(2021) DE 367 final*. www.bundesrat.de/SharedDocs/drucksachen/2022/0001-0100/14-22.html
- Deutscher Akademischer Austauschdienst. (2022). *Microcredentials als Teil der Internationalisierung - DAAD*. www.daad.de/de/der-daad/kommunikation-publikationen/presse/pressemitteilungen/umfragen-microcredentials-als-teil-der-internationalisierung/
- European Union (2020). Towards a European approach to micro credentials: a study of practices and commonalities in offering micro-credentials in European higher education.
- European Commission (2022). A Council Recommendation on a European approach to micro-credentials for lifelong learning and employability <https://education.ec.europa.eu/education-levels/higher-education/micro-credentials>
- Hochschulrektorenkonferenz (2020). Micro-Degrees und Badges als Formate digitaler Zusatzqualifikation: Empfehlung der 29. Mitgliederversammlung der HRK am 24. November 2020. <https://www.hrk.de/positionen/beschluss/detail/micro-degrees-und-badges-als-formate-digitaler-zusatzqualifikation/> (Videokonferenz). <https://data.consilium.europa.eu/doc/document/ST-9237-2022-INIT/de/pdf>
- Wissenschaftsrat. (2022). *Empfehlungen für eine zukunftsfähige Ausgestaltung von Studium und Lehre*.