



## Microcredentials – A New Path for Capacity Building in VET MC.VET

### Analysis of the implementation of microqualification at the level of partner countries

Country: **Slovenia**

Organization: **School centre Novo mesto**

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## Introduction

According to the project proposal, at the start of the project, an analysis of the implementation of microqualifications (microcredits) at the level of partner countries is planned. This analysis should include three dimensions:

1. an overview of vocational education and training (VET) and a description of the connection with the national qualifications frameworks and the European qualifications framework (NQF-EQF) from levels 2 to 5;
2. review of regulations defining vocational education, its implementation and connection with EQF;
3. review and description of strategic documents at the national level and their connection with the objectives of the European Union in the field of vocational education and training.

The analysis should show the connection between the system of vocational education and training in the partner countries and the priorities of EU policies related to the implementation of microqualifications. The development of microqualifications and their inclusion in national qualification systems varies between different European countries. In some countries they are in the initial phase, in others structural tools for the installation of microqualifications are being developed, in some countries they have been included in educational reforms and national strategies, and in some countries the system is already built and legally built. One of the more important questions is related to the extent to which the use of microqualifications is linked to national qualifications frameworks.

Through these analyses, it was possible to identify inspiring practices and perceived difficulties in the implementation process in different national education systems. Project activities should help to use the experience of partner organizations, benefit from their good experiences and avoid the obstacles they face. The creation of the analysis is based on the understanding of the microqualifications as defined in Council Recommendations of 16 June 2022 on a European approach to microqualifications for lifelong learning and employability (2022/C 243/02)<sup>1</sup>. In this document, microqualifications are defined as follows:

»A microqualification means a record of the learning outcome that the participant has obtained on the basis of a small amount of learning. These learning outcomes are evaluated according to transparent and clearly defined criteria. The learning experiences through which microqualifications are obtained are designed to provide the participant with certain knowledge, skills and competences that correspond to social, personal and cultural needs or the needs of the labor market. Microqualifications are owned by participants, exchangeable and transferable. They can be independent or combined into higher level certifications. They are based on quality assurance in accordance with agreed standards in the relevant sector or field of activity;"(p., 2).

These recommendations emphasize that microqualifications can complement existing qualifications, thereby providing added value, but do not compromise the basic principle of initial education and training programs that end in a full qualification. Microqualifications could be designed and issued by

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<sup>1</sup> <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/HR/TXT/?uri=CELEX:52021DC0770>

<sup>2</sup> Ref Recc



different service providers in different learning environments (formal, informal and informal learning environments).

Research conducted by CEDEFOP(2023)<sup>3</sup> shows the advantages and challenges of using microqualifications precisely in the relationship between microqualifications and comprehensive qualifications. They point to two sets of tensions inherent in qualifications. The first is the tension between flexibility and stability. Another question is whether they should be driven by the supply or demand for qualifications. It has been established that microqualifications are a flexible response to the educational needs arising from the demands of the labor market. However, they may lack the same trust and recognition that full qualifications enjoy. Therefore, the important question is: how to place them in qualification systems so that they can ensure their value and be accepted without undermining their own flexibility and the stability and reliability of established qualifications (p. 16).

In accordance with the Council's recommendations from 2022, the following elements are mandatory when using microqualifications:

- identification of the participant;
- name of the microqualification;
- country(s)/region(s) of the issuer;
- the body/bodies that awarded the microqualification;
- date of issue;
- learning outcomes;
- the nominal workload required to achieve the learning outcomes (under the European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS), whenever possible);
- the level (if necessary and the cycle) of the learning experience used to obtain the micro-qualification (European Qualifications Framework, Qualifications Framework in the European Higher Education Area), if applicable;
- type of assessment;
- form of participation in learning activities;
- the type of quality assurance used to support micro-qualification;

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<sup>3</sup> Cedefop (2023). *Microcredentials for labour market education and training: microcredentials and evolving qualifications systems*. Luxembourg: Publications Office. Cedefop research paper, No 89. <http://data.europa.eu/doi/10.2801/566352>





## Analysis of the possibility of implementing microqualification

Please answer all questions. Along with your opinion or description of your experience, please provide the key documents (laws, strategies, regulations) that regulate the individual elements that you describe in your answer. In addition to the document name, include a link to a website or other resource.

### I. LEVEL OF IMPLEMENTATION AND INCLUSION OF MICROQUALIFICATIONS IN THE NATIONAL EDUCATION SYSTEM

#### 1. According to your knowledge, at what stage is the implementation of micro-qualification in your educational system?

List the initiatives that exist (if any), what level of education they relate to (secondary or higher education), what decisions have been made and who made them, whether implementation has begun.

In Slovenia, there is still a lot of ambiguity regarding the definition of micro-evidence and the concept itself. The definition is unclear as to when a training certificate constitutes a microcredential. The dilemma arises to what level we are still talking about micro-evidence, and from where onward it is about specific trainings that are not transferable outside companies/organizations and do not include verification. The question arises whether micro-evidence should be restricted by entry conditions or freely available. **There is a lack of definition of what small-scale learning is supposed to mean.** One suggestion was that this education or training in the range of 5 to 15 KT or from 100 to 150 hours. On the other hand, this can be too restrictive. There are cases where universities have a minimum of 3 ECTS for an individual subject, and for education study programs we have up to 60 ECTS, i.e. a maximum of one year. Some see microcredentials as an additional qualification, information for the employer, and recognition depends on the individual institution, with the remark that this is relevant for microcredentials that are not offered by accredited educational institutions. Some point out that it makes more sense to formalize the procedures a little less, so that employers can judge for themselves whether someone suits them. Employers should see interest in microcredentials and thus build trust in such credentials.

**The potential purposes of micro-certificates at the national level could be: upgrading of skills, retraining, re-qualification, adaptation of training to vulnerable groups...** Free programs for obtaining micro-certificates for vulnerable groups should be enabled, the use of micro-certificates as a mechanism to prevent dropout and unemployment, should be placed in an active policy employment for both the general and vulnerable groups, to connect with an open curriculum in educational programs. Micro-evidence could be part of study programs. Formal education could be shortened in this way by recognizing the microcredentials that the individual already has, enabling transfer between programs, individualized educational paths, greater flexibility of the educational system, openness of educational paths (as encouraged by the national/EQAVET indicator - Promoting better access to VET). The purpose of micro-evidence is not to influence existing education systems, but to complement them - according to the proposal for recommendations on micro-evidence. The employer can use various measures to encourage employees to acquire relevant knowledge and skills through micro-certificates - e.g. with salary increases, performance awards, etc. We emphasize that additional education can sometimes be a condition for getting or keeping a job. As part of defining the definition, it is necessary to separate micro-evidence from other forms of non-formal education.





Entering micro-evidence into Europass is a lovely idea; it makes sense for the employer to see the whole person, as well as the other knowledge and skills he has. From the point of view of the movement of labor within Europe, microcredentials should be portable: something you take across the border if you move and use it. In addition, portability is defined in the Recommendation as ownership by the learner, digital storage and digital sharing of the certificate.

This principle is supported by the need for interoperability of systems to ensure efficient sharing and verification of microevidence. The existing offer of national professional qualifications (NPK) is large - of the 500 registered, 100 are currently being implemented. 12 additional qualifications are also being implemented. The added value of micro-proofs in relation to NPK and additional qualifications is the possible composition of micro-proofs into a formal qualification. For example, we could work out one educational program and thus see if it is possible to divide it into micro-units. An example is the additional qualification druggist in DM: it is transferable throughout Europe. We also have an NPK drugstore. Micro-evidence must not be new evidence. Vulnerable groups: our recognition system has stalled and is closed. Such a system could help migrants.

## 2. Does your national legislation allow the recognition of microqualifications or some other form of recognition of sets of learning outcomes?

Provide more details about laws, regulations and educational strategies and a link to relevant laws or other regulations (if any). If any equivalents to microqualifications are used, describe them in which they match the microqualifications).

Current legislation does not allow recognition of micro-evidence.  
However, below we list two options:

1. However, we could include NPK certificates as micro-evidence (see the **NPK Act**<sup>4</sup>). Article 5 of the Act refers to "public documents" that are obtained by completing a program or completing part of a program. In this way, the law opens up the possibility for NPK to be part of a certain whole (as part of a program). Of course, the law further states that the NPK certificate is issued only on the basis of the catalog. However, **it could be said that the law opens some possibilities for micro-evidence**. Even if we know that the existing sets of learning outcomes defined by some NPK are also rather "micro", that is, narrower sets compared to broad educational programs.

2. Articles 51 and 64 of the **Vocational and Professional Education Act**<sup>5</sup>, which refer to "previously acquired knowledge that is proven by a public document, or informally acquired knowledge that is proven by an exam or in another way" in the case of transcripts and education adults. Here, too, **it could be said that the law opens the possibility for the recognition of micro-evidence**. Here, too, we know that currently in practice, only proofs of years completed and proofs of completed exam subjects are available. But this could also be considered micro-evidence.

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<sup>4</sup> Zakon o NPK <http://pisrs.si/Pis.web/pregledPredpisa?id=ZAKO1626>

<sup>5</sup> Zakon o poklicnem in strokovnem izobraževanju: <http://pisrs.si/Pis.web/pregledPredpisa?id=ZAKO4325>





### 3. What is the attitude of individual actors in the implementation of microqualification?

Which actors support the implementation the most and which oppose it? What forms of support are the most useful (political, professional, scientific, support of implementers or users, financial support of the EU or something else)? State which ministry or agency deals with microqualifications or similar initiatives and how coordination with other ministries takes place, what is the relationship between employers and contractors. To what extent are EU funds used to support the introduction of microqualifications (provide a link to these tenders)?

In Slovenia, all the main actors in the field of education, training and employment have started a broad discussion about micro-evidence and their use in our system. On 10th of May 2022, the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Labor and the Center for Vocational Education organized an expert consultation on micro-evidence, which was also attended by the Minister of Education and the representatives of the Ministry of Higher Education and all other key stakeholders at in the field of microevidence.

The summary of the consultation and the materials are published on the website "Slovenian tool of qualifications (SOK) - Expert consultation on micro proofs"<sup>6</sup>.

Summary of expert consultation<sup>7</sup>:

*The participants of the Expert Consultation recognized that certain educations and trainings already meet the conditions for micro-evidence. It is necessary to define the scope of education and training that will lead to micro-evidence (points, hours). In the field of higher education, there is support from the participants of the consultation for compiling micro-evidence into a larger document (diploma).*

*The participants of the consultation support the use of existing quality assurance systems at the appropriate level of education or training. A nationally competent authority is needed for the accreditation of providers, programs and everything else related to microcredentials, including a registry. It is necessary to use information tools that enable portability and rapid (automatic) verification of the quality of microevidence. Greater awareness among employers about micro-evidence is important.*

*As examples of micro-evidence, the participants cite some types of qualifications that are already included in the SOK, such as e.g. additional qualifications, study programs for improvement... At the same time, they point out that there is a wide range of shorter training courses on the labor market that are not included in SOK. Opinions regarding the reasonableness of placing microevidence in the SOK are divided. Some participants are of the opinion that the placement of micro-evidence in SOK would make sense from the point of view of transparency, quality, trust, but at the same time it is necessary to establish clear relationships with other qualifications and to ensure that the placement procedures are not too bureaucratic. Regarding the method of placement in SOK, the proposals also differ, from placement in existing pillars to the establishment of a fourth pillar.*

<sup>6</sup> SOK – Strokovni posvet o mikrodokazilih: <https://www.nok.si/aktualno/strokovni-posvet-o-mikrodokazilih>

<sup>7</sup> Poročilo – Strokovni posvet o mikrodokazilih 10.5.2022:

[https://www.nok.si/sites/www.nok.si/files/documents/porocilo\\_strokovni\\_posvet\\_o\\_mikrodokazilih.pdf](https://www.nok.si/sites/www.nok.si/files/documents/porocilo_strokovni_posvet_o_mikrodokazilih.pdf)





The Ministry of Higher Education is also preparing certain solutions. The "Resolution on the National Program of Higher Education until 2030"<sup>8</sup> was drawn up, which places the flexibility of EU higher education, enables digital and permanent transformation and thus also micro-evidence.

"Strategies of the University of Ljubljana 2022-2027"<sup>9</sup> on page 11, point 3.4 introduces microqualifications.

Also the "National Program of Higher Education (NPVŠ) 2021-2030"<sup>10</sup> on page 11, in point U3.11 introduces microqualifications into the system of higher education. An entire strategy for placing lifelong learning in higher education has been prepared.

*The development of the accreditation system and the recognition of microqualifications ('microcredentials') and the system of recognition and evaluation of previously acquired knowledge will also be included, as well as a plan to promote the importance and necessity of acquiring diverse, but high-quality, modern higher education knowledge and skills throughout the individual's active life.*

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<sup>8</sup> Resolucija o nacionalnem programu visokega šolstva do 2030:

<http://www.pisrs.si/Pis.web/pregledPredpisa?id=RESO139>

<sup>9</sup> Strategija: <file:///C:/Users/Uporabnik/Downloads/Strategija%20UL%202022-2027.pdf>

<sup>10</sup> Nacionalni program visokega šolstva NPVŠ 2021–2030:

<http://www.pisrs.si/Pis.web/pregledPredpisa?id=NACP33>





#### 4. Which groups do you think would benefit most from the introduction of microqualifications and what goals would be achieved by their full introduction?

List the target groups (unemployed, low-skilled employees, disabled, etc.) and the reasons why their inclusion is important. List the main objectives and the actors or sectors for which they are relevant.

We see micro-evidence in the labor market and in already existing systems, e.g. ICT training, teacher training, pedagogic-andragogic training, language training, training for court interpreters and all other short professional training. Some are market-oriented, others are regulated by departmental legislation. Additional qualifications can be seen as an example of micro-evidence (as defined by SOK).

Examples of microevidence:

- various shorter training courses at the level of higher education,
- study programs for improvement,
- language training,
- training for digital competences,
- professional training and advanced training at the secondary and higher education level,
- massive open online courses such as Coursera (online platform).

In the field of adult education, these can be informal programs through which participants acquire general competences (so far the certificate lists the contents of the program, but there is no verification), they are organized according to the needs of companies, e.g. communication, personal relationships..., and are generally at a high quality level. In this case, after the completion of the program, the individual would demonstrate his competences before the committee and obtain a certificate for this. An important part is also represented by UŽU programs (i.e. training for life success), which are intended for vulnerable target groups; with verification and recognition, this could be a good option for obtaining a primary education.

We also have examples of vocational courses. Example of the Slovenian army module: it involves the integration of some content in the scope of 22 ECTS (approximately one semester), which ensures that the individual is guaranteed employment in the Slovenian army. The rest of the study program is optional, usually at the first Bologna level, where the candidate chooses a basic education. As these programs are run by accredited institutions, this module is accredited valid, accepted.

As an example of possible micro-evidence, the training offered by the Building and Civil Engineering Institute (ZRMK Institute of Construction) could also be included. For completed training, the participant receives a certificate, which is not publicly valid, but is necessary for performing certain tasks within the profession. In a similar way, this is also the case in the field of electrical engineering.



## 5. How best to present the advantages of microqualification to providers and users?

List ways of informing the public about the introduction of microqualification (add links to this information), indicate whether there are effective communication options that have not yet been used.

We note that certain educations and trainings already meet the conditions for micro-evidence. It is necessary to define the scope of education and training that will lead to micro-evidence (points, hours). In the field of higher education, there is support for compiling micro-proofs into a larger proof (diploma).

There is support for the use of existing quality assurance systems at the appropriate level of education or training. A nationally competent authority is needed for the accreditation of providers, programs and everything else related to microcredentials, including a registry. **It is necessary to use information tools that enable portability and rapid (automatic) quality verification of microevidence. Greater awareness among employers about micro-evidence is important.**

As examples of micro-evidence, we have some types of qualifications that are already included in SOK, such as e.g. additional qualifications, study programs for improvement... But we also have a wide range of shorter training courses on the labor market, which are not included in SOK.

Information should be significantly better. In particular, employers do not have enough information. Information should be provided through a single national portal, which would follow what is happening in other countries and at EU institutions. Notifications should go through the notification systems of chambers, folk universities and others that provide education and training for adults.

An example of how, via the CEDEFOP portal, Poland informs how it has arranged micro-evidence - with Open Badge:

[https://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/news/poland-badge-testing-new-tool-digital-badges?utm\\_campaign=w-20230605&utm\\_term=weekly&mtm\\_source=notifications&mtm\\_medium=email&utm\\_content=title&mtm\\_placement=content&mtm\\_group=ced\\_news](https://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/news/poland-badge-testing-new-tool-digital-badges?utm_campaign=w-20230605&utm_term=weekly&mtm_source=notifications&mtm_medium=email&utm_content=title&mtm_placement=content&mtm_group=ced_news)

We, as an institution, also see the main path of Slovenia in this way.

## 6. If you have reached this level of implementation, do you have an official record or register of microqualifications and service providers in your country? (multiple answers are possible)

If you choose the first two answers, attach a link to the records.

- Yes, we have a record/register of (most) service providers
- Yes, we have a record/register of (most) (accredited) microqualifications on offer
- **No, we do not have a record/register or service provider registry**
- No, we do not offer a record/register of microqualifications
- I do not know



## II. MICROQUALIFICATIONS AND QUALIFICATION FRAMEWORKS

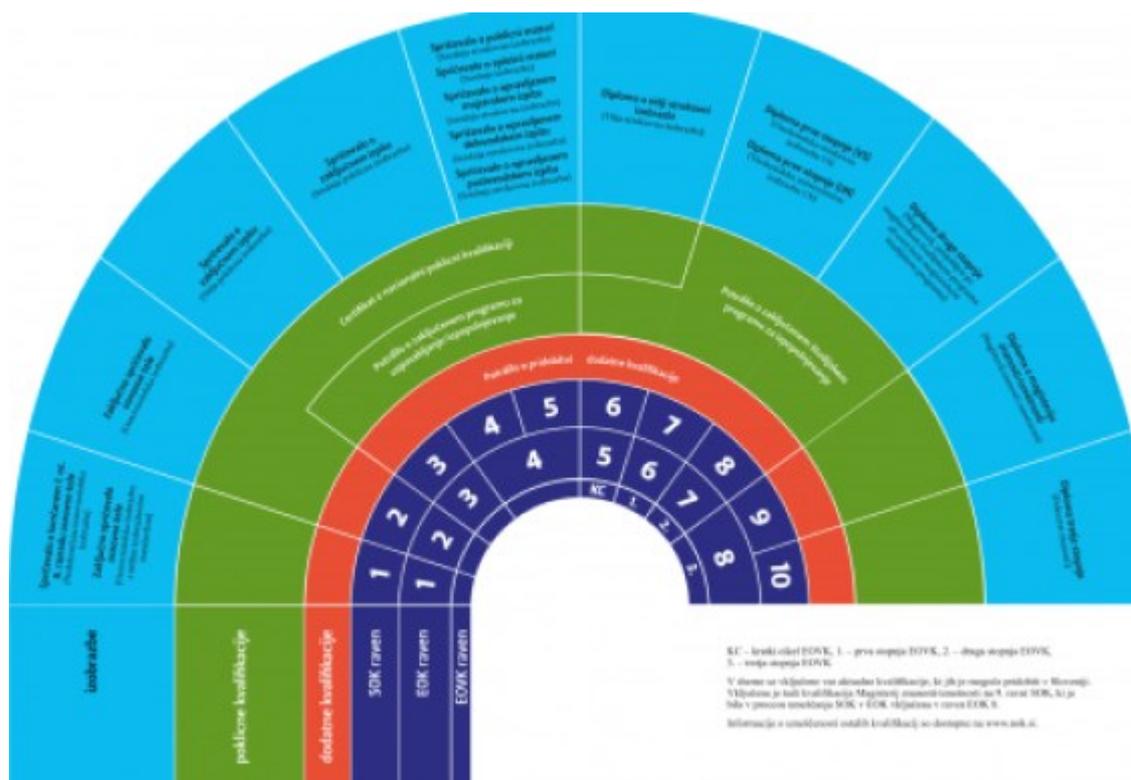
### 7. Has a National Qualifications Framework been developed for your country?

Provide the legal basis for the implementation of the qualifications framework and the strategy on the basis of which it is implemented. Briefly describe the current stage of building the qualifications framework and what are the key implementation goals.

SOK<sup>11</sup> is the unified system of qualifications in the Republic of Slovenia for classifying qualifications in terms of learning outcomes. The purpose of SOK is to achieve transparency and transparency of qualifications in Slovenia.

The fundamental goals are:

- support lifelong learning,
- connect and coordinate the Slovenian qualifications subsystems,
- improve the transparency, accessibility and quality of qualifications according to the needs of the labor market and civil society.



Micro-evidence could be included in the existing pillars of the Slovenian Framework of Qualifications. We already have examples of qualifications that are already placed in SOK and have similar characteristics to microcredentials. **These are e.g. additional qualifications placed in the third pillar of the SOK, study programs for improvement, placed in the second pillar of the SOK, etc.** There is also a wide range of training on the labor market **that is not included in SOK.**

<sup>11</sup> Slovensko ogrodje kvalifikacij (SOK) <https://www.nok.si/>



The second pillar, which includes national vocational qualifications and advanced training programs, is currently very limited, as each of these types of qualifications is clearly defined in legislation. The second pillar offers few options with regard to the concept of micro-evidence.

The possibilities of placing micro-evidence in the third pillar are also very limited, given the currently set conditions for placing additional qualifications in the SOK. Also, in the third pillar, there is no system of external verification of the learning outcomes of the qualifications. Example: an individual who attends a 3-year vocational school and has passed 10 exams, but has not successfully completed schooling; passed exams are micro-evidences, but they are not included in SOK.

### **Do we want to put every microevidence in SOK?**

It does not fit into the current framework, but SOK may change. If we place micro-evidence in SOK, trust, transparency, quality assurance and a recognition system are necessary. The inclusion of micro-evidence in SOK has support in principle, it makes sense, but with caveats. **They could be included in the second or third pillar or established the fourth pillar, in any case the law must also be adjusted.** You would have an overview of all micro-evidence. This would instill confidence, because matters would be regulated, an appropriate level of quality would be ensured behind the scenes. On the other hand, according to the practical experience of the participants, this entails: lengthy procedures, a series of administrative obstacles, additional administrative procedures, additional costs and regulation of micro-evidence.

The question is whether this fulfills the purpose of micro-evidence - a response to the needs of the economy.

### **We propose placing the micro-evidence in a new column, which would not have a level.**

It is also necessary to examine **alternative registry options** in addition to SOK. On the other hand, opinions were also expressed that micro-evidence should not be placed in SOK and expanded with the fourth pillar. What we already have needs to be perfected and used. Micro-evidence should be placed in SOK for comparability. Concern about placement in EOK: there may be mistrust if we put formal qualifications and informally acquired knowledge in EOK. Some countries have it and there is a lot of confusion about recognition.





## 8. What is the connection between the proposed or developed national qualifications framework and the EQF?

Please indicate how the levels of your qualifications framework relate to the EQF levels.

In the report "Placing the Slovenian Qualifications Framework in the European Qualifications Framework for Lifelong Learning and the European Qualifications Framework for Higher Education"<sup>12</sup> there are links:

*Page 29: The Slovenian qualifications framework (SOK) is a communication framework with a smaller reform scope. The starting points for the classification of qualifications in SOK are departmental legislation and the Education and Training Classification System (hereinafter: KLASIUS). Since SOK establishes the relationship between formal level education and the qualification structure in a slightly different way, it changes the number of levels from eight (with two sub-levels) to ten (without sub-levels). However, there is no change in the logic of the level itself, which is still tied to certain criteria for determining the level of education or the level of difficulty of the professional standard.*

*Page 31: The SOK contains ten levels, which enables a flexible connection between the educational and qualification structure. The coordination and at the same time the flexibility of the two structures provide a basis for easier recognition of qualifications and recognition of knowledge/skills/competences acquired informally and casually. This element represents the reform character of the framework. SOK, in accordance with KLASIUS, connects two concepts, namely the concept of educational activities/programs and the concept of learning outcomes. Such a solution is consistent with the communicative role of the framework (more under EOK criterion 3; place of learning outcomes in SOK). The descriptor for each level contains three categories of learning outcomes: knowledge, skills and competences (see Annex 2). Each qualification that fits into the framework contains all three categories, but each category within a qualification does not necessarily have equal weight. Such a choice of categories makes it possible to "capture" all the diversity - otherwise comparable in terms of complexity - of learning outcomes and qualifications at an individual level, obtained in different environments and for different purposes. Each higher level also contains knowledge, skills and competences at a lower level. This does not mean that the knowledge, skills, competences and responsibilities at lower levels do not contain or should not also contain elements of higher levels, since the purpose of the learning process is also preparation for a higher level, which cannot be done without the inclusion of higher elements in the learning process. That is why we include knowledge, skills and competences of higher difficulty levels (higher taxonomic levels according to scales such as Bloom's, Marza's, etc.) in the learning process itself and the goals of education (including knowledge standards).*

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<sup>12</sup> Zaključno poročilo o...:<https://www.nok.si/gradiva>





### 9. Is your National Qualifications Framework (currently under development) open to microqualifications?

Please indicate whether there are already examples where the implementation of microqualifications is linked to national qualifications frameworks and add a link to these examples. Is there a possibility, where this connection does not yet exist, to include microqualifications in the national system of qualifications.

**It does not fit into the current framework, but SOK may change.** If we place micro-evidence in SOK, trust, transparency, quality assurance and a recognition system are necessary. The inclusion of micro-evidence in SOK has support in principle, it makes sense, but with caveats. They could be included in the second or third pillar or established the fourth pillar, in any case the law must also be adjusted. You would have an overview of all micro-evidence. This would instill confidence, because matters would be regulated, an appropriate level of quality would be ensured behind the scenes. On the other hand, according to the practical experience of the participants, this entails: lengthy procedures, a series of administrative obstacles, additional administrative procedures, additional costs and regulation of micro-evidence.

The question is whether this fulfills the purpose of micro-evidence - a response to the needs of the economy.

### 10. If microqualifications have been elaborated, are microqualifications reflected in ECVET or other credit systems (in terms of learning outcomes and workload)?

Indicate whether any of these systems are used and give an example (if any) of what the charge is for one credit point.

We suggest that microqualifications should also be evaluated according to the European transferable credit system (hereinafter: ECTS). ECTS enables the evaluation of acquired competences and learning outcomes, as defined in the program, taking into account the Slovenian and European framework of qualifications. ECTS also enables the recognition of knowledge, skills and abilities acquired through informal learning, as well as the dissemination and enforcement of lifelong learning.

A credit point is a unit of measurement for evaluating the work that an education participant does on average. **1 credit point means 25 to 30 hours of training participant workload.**

For example, lectures, exercises and other forms of organized work education (practical training, internships, performances, field work, etc.), independent work are considered part of the training participant's workload.

The proposal is made in order to compare it with other forms of education and training, which are mostly evaluated with ECTS.

Our proposal that this education or training (micro-evidence) in the scope of up to 5 KT or up to 150 hours.

**This would mean learning on a smaller scale.**





### III. PROCESS OF RECOGNITION OF MICRO QUALIFICATIONS

#### 11. Have you and your organization implemented policies and practices related to the recognition of microqualifications?

##### a. Yes - partially in trial phase

Also provide a link to relevant information and documentation if available.

In the Coble project, which we are implementing together with Finland, Germany and Italy, we are developing programs to increase the competence of teachers for collaborative learning in combined learning environments. Finland requires clear learning outcomes for such programs. All programs have specified contents, competences, evaluation criteria and supporting documents that must be attached to prove that the competences have been achieved. The programs have open badges - micro-proofs (Open Badge). This means that after the end of the training, the participants upload evidence of acquired competences to the appropriate address and, after checking with the program preparer, receive an open badge - a digital microcredential. They then upload these badges to Open Badge Passport, which they open for free.

We made these Open Badge programs in Slovenia as well.

**The start of one of the options for issuing micro-evidence is - it works on the project stage.**

Project website: <https://coble.eu/>

Examples of programs: <https://coble.eu/modules/>

Open Badge: <https://coble.eu/open-badge/>

Open Badge Passport: <https://openbadgepassport.com/>

We currently run four Open Badge microcredential programs involving just over 40 teachers.

**Example program - Micro-evidence:**



# EPORTFOLIO EXPERT



CoBle project (Individualized Learning in Collaborative and Blended Learning Environments)

anne-maria.korhonen@hamk.fi

During the CoBle project Individualized Learning in Collaborative and Blended Learning Environments are studied. Achieved competences are demonstrated and assessed as well as recognized with the open badge concept. The project time is 01/2022-12/2023. Project partners: HAMK University of Applied Sciences, Finland IFOA, Italy ITECH, Germany The School of Novo Mesto, Slovenia CPI - The institute of republic of Slovenia vocational education and training, Slovenia

**Tags:** competence, design, ePortfolio, learning, professional

According to the principle of continuous learning ePortfolios are implemented in learning processes and a learning design is created based on this phenomenon. Students' competences are described in digital format into ePortfolios and professional field in question is considered. Teacher advises their students that competences are accumulated during a life time and they will be documented in ePortfolios. ePortfolio activities require own specific competence objectives and assessment criteria.

### Competence objective

The earner of the badge is able to

- create a learning design in which ePortfolios are implemented in students learning process
- knows digital tools that can be used with students to create ePortfolios
- formulate assessment criteria for ePortfolios
- Implement ePortfolio practices in learning processes

### Assessment criteria

The earner of the badge

- Creates a learning design for ePortfolio processes implemented in professional field (discipline) studies
- Suggests ePortfolio tools for their students and guides how to use them in ePortfolio processes
- Creates competence objective and assessment criteria for ePortfolio work
- Assess students' competences based on their performance in ePortfolio documentation

### Skills demonstration

Attach a link to your learning design where it is described an implemented ePortfolio activities in students' learning process, formulated competence objectives and assessment criteria for ePortfolios, and teacher's assessment process.

Would you like to have additional support (e.g. collegial support, exchange of practice with experts from other countries, online seminars, etc.) in the recognition of microqualifications?

Yes





#### IV. QUALITY ASSURANCE

In this section we want to gather information about the quality assurance systems in your country.

##### **12. What quality assurance systems are used in vocational and adult education systems in your country.**

Briefly describe the basic quality indicators, who performs quality control and whether there are sanctions for not implementing the quality system.

In the area of quality assurance in vocational and adult education systems, Slovenia uses CEDEFOP<sup>13</sup> recommendations.

The Vocational and Professional Education Act (ZPSI) of 2006 and the Education Organization and Financing Act of 2007 recognized the importance of quality assurance and self-evaluation as mandatory and key methods for quality assurance (QA) and quality development (QD), while strengthening autonomy and development role of VET. Schools must establish a quality committee consisting of at least a president and five members, representatives of teachers and other school professionals, employers, students and parents. The commission is obliged to publish the annual quality report on the school's website. The structure and content of the report is left to the school. Vocational education providers must monitor 11 national quality indicators (including 10 EQAVET indicators), and must send the data to the RS Institute for Vocational Education and Training (CPI) (EQAVET NRP in Slovenia) upon request, but they do not have to, data on 11 national indicators are public.

There is a national reference point for quality assurance in secondary vocational education (EQAVET NRP in Slovenia within the EQAVET network at the CPI). It collects information on quality assurance in vocational schools, monitors quality indicators at the national level ([35]) and supports VET schools with training, publications (CPI, 2007, CPI 2017, ŠR 2019 and participation in national and international projects in the field of QA and QD. In accordance with the legislation, CPI is obliged to regularly prepare and publish the National Report on the Quality of VET.

In 2017, the Ministry of Education prepared guidelines on a common national framework for quality assurance, covering the levels of education from pre-school to the end of secondary school, which are expected to be implemented in the following years.

On this basis, the Ministry of Education appointed 4 national institutes for the further development of the national framework for quality assurance. Quality standards and indicators were developed in 5 areas, which are presented in the "Collection of quality in kindergartens and schools". The common national framework for quality assurance includes 11 national (including 10 EQAVET) indicators for vocational schools. In "Quality assessment and quality assurance through self-evaluation" process quality standards/indicators are defined and the role of school workers in the quality committee (quality team) as well as the required competences of its members and key tasks in the process are described. The quality team and school management lead the process of identifying and ensuring quality through self-evaluation at the school level and are also responsible for establishing a functional quality system/framework in the school.

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<sup>13</sup> Priporočila CEDEFOP: <https://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/tools/vet-in-europe/systems/slovenia-2019>





In accordance with the Act on Higher Professional Education (2004, 2013), higher professional schools also require a quality commission consisting of five lecturers and two students, while the Agency of the Republic of Slovenia for Quality in Higher Education (NAKVIS) monitors the quality assurance of higher professional schools.

The responsibilities/tasks of the quality committee are:

- creates conditions for promoting and developing the quality of educational work at school;
- establish mechanisms for continuous monitoring and evaluation of the quality and efficiency of work in the school;
- plan, organize and coordinate monitoring and quality assurance in the school;
- cooperate with NAKVIS and carry out comparisons between schools at home and abroad;
- monitors the employment opportunities of graduates,
- makes proposals for improvements based on the employers' answers; and
- prepare evaluation reports for consideration by NAKVIS.

VET knowledge centre (CVET) work carried out by adult education institutions and financed by the state is subject to the quality assurance regulation included in the Adult Education Act (2018). It requires VET providers to establish an internal quality assurance system managed by a quality committee. This includes regular monitoring and self-evaluation, participation in external evaluation and public presentation of the internal quality assurance system on websites.

## V. OPINION ON THE INTRODUCTION OF MICROQUALIFICATIONS

### 13. What are your thoughts on microqualifications?

(circle no more than two answers)

- a) **Microqualifications are a way to make vocational education and training more flexible and inclusive in the future**
- b) **Microqualifications are a new initiative and should remain, but they must be properly regulated and integrated**
- c) Microqualifications are good for some further vocational education programmes, but not for initial vocational education
- a) Microqualifications are good for vocational schools as part of formal educational programs, but not useful for informal educational programs in societies and similar organizations.
- b) Microqualifications are a short-term trend that we have had until now
- c) Microqualifications have no place in vocational education institutions and should not be included in the relevant legislation
- d) I have no feeling for microqualifications
- e) Do you have another answer:

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