

# ACQF

African Continental  
Qualifications Framework

[www.acqf.africa](http://www.acqf.africa)



# Seychelles Micro-credentials Survey Report

Support implementation of the African Continental Qualifications Framework (ACQF-II)



## Disclaimer

This Seychelles Micro-Credentials Survey Report is elaborated in the context of the Implementation Plan of the project “Supporting Implementation of the African Continental Qualifications Framework” (ACQF-II).

Views and opinions expressed in the document are the responsibility of the authors and should in no way be attributed to the institutions to which they are affiliated, or to the African Union Commission and the project implementation institution – the European Training Foundation.

We acknowledge all contributions from institutions and experts who expressed views, comments and recommendations during the consultation process and supported the authors’ team in the accomplishment of this mission.

Comments and additional information can be sent to Eduarda Castel-Branco ([ecb@etf.europa.eu](mailto:ecb@etf.europa.eu)).

Authors: Zalán Tamás Jakab, Greta Kirdulyté

Reviewers: Eduarda Castel-Branco (ACQF), Noella Baker-Albert (SQA), Fiona Ernesta (SQA)

Date of this version: 15 October 2024

## Contents

1.	Introduction.....	7
1.1	Background of the survey .....	7
1.2	Objective of the survey .....	8
2.	Methodology .....	9
2.1	Definition of micro-credentials.....	9
2.2	Data collection and survey techniques used .....	10
3.	Respondent overview .....	11
4.	Analysis of micro-credentials landscape .....	13
4.1	Basic characteristics of micro-credentials .....	13
4.1.1	Types and definitions of micro-credentials .....	13
4.1.2	Main characteristics and features of micro-credentials .....	14
4.1.3	Design and provision of micro-credentials .....	22
4.1.4	Quality assurance and assessment .....	24
4.1.5	Target groups .....	26
4.2	Perceived benefits and added value .....	30
4.3	Challenges and barriers.....	32
4.4	Future directions and recommendations.....	34
4.4.1	General perceptions .....	34
4.4.2	Integration with SNQF .....	39
4.5	Comparison with ACQF Survey on Micro-credentials.....	41
5.	Analysis of learners .....	44
5.1	Demographic characteristics .....	44
5.2	Characteristics of micro-credentials .....	46
5.3	Respondent expectations.....	48
6.	Summary .....	51
7.	Sources.....	55
8.	Annex .....	56
8.1	Summary tables.....	56
8.2	List of registered part qualifications in Seychelles.....	57

## Table of figures

Figure 1. Type of organisation .....	11
Figure 2. Size of organisation in terms of number of employees (single choice, frequency of organisations) ....	12
Figure 3. Number of total micro-credential recipients per year (single choice, frequency of organisations) .....	12
Figure 4. Education and training sectors in which micro-credentials are offered (frequency of organisations) ..	13
Figure 6. Which of the industries below is the credential offered? (single choice, frequency of credentials) .....	15
Figure 7. What is the notional workload (duration) required to achieve the credential? (single choice, frequency of credentials).....	15
Figure 8. Is the credential assigned credits? (single choice, frequency of credentials) .....	16
Figure 9. Plans to register or link the credential to the Seychelles National Qualifications Framework (SNQF) (single choice, frequency of credentials) .....	16
Figure 10. Is the credential accredited / quality assured by a competent body? (single choice, frequency of credentials).....	17
Figure 11. Can the credential be stacked or combined? (single choice, frequency of credentials) .....	18
Figure 12. Is there a pre-defined curriculum for the learning activity / programme? (single choice, frequency of credentials).....	18
Figure 13. What is the mode of learning for the activity / programme? (single choice, frequency of credentials) .....	19
Figure 14. Requirements or prerequisites for entering the learning experience / programme (single choice, frequency of credentials) .....	20
Figure 15. Type of credential is issued at the completion of the learning experience / programme (single choice, frequency of credentials) .....	20
Figure 16. Information elements included on the issued micro-credentials (multiple choice, frequency of organisations).....	21
Figure 17. Skills and knowledge that micro-credential learning outcomes focus on (multiple choice, frequency of organisations) .....	23
Figure 18. Cost of the micro-credential is covered by the recipient (single choice, frequency of organisation) ..	23
Figure 19. Options for storing and sharing micro-credentials (multiple choice, frequency of organisations) .....	24
Figure 20. Which of the following would best characterise the assessment practices? (single choice, frequency of credentials).....	25
Figure 21. Implemented internal quality assurance measures (multiple choice, frequency of organisations) ....	26
Figure 22. Recipient groups are most frequently awarded micro-credentials (multiple choice, frequency of	

organisations).....	27
Figure 23. Typical age group of recipients (multiple choice, frequency of organisations) .....	28
Figure 24. Level of educational attainment among recipients of your micro-credential (frequency of organisations).....	29
Figure 25. Incidence of recipients of micro-credentials across various employment statuses .....	30
Figure 26. Advantages of micro-credentials over more traditional forms of qualifications and competence recognition (multiple choice, frequency of organisations) .....	31
Figure 27. Reasons for offering micro-credentials (multiple choice, frequency of organisations) .....	32
Figure 28. Main barriers/challenges to the uptake of micro-credentials in terms of policy-making (multiple choice, frequency of organisations) .....	33
Figure 29. Main barriers/challenges to the uptake of micro-credentials in case of potential recipients (multiple choice, frequency of organisations).....	34
Figure 30. How should the development of micro-credentials be promoted? (multiple choice, frequency of organisations).....	35
Figure 31. What should the primary purposes of a cross-industry dialogue for the development of micro-credentials? (multiple choice, frequency of organisations).....	36
Figure 32. For what purposes should the use of micro-credentials be promoted in employment and labour market settings? (multiple choice, frequency of organisations) .....	37
Figure 33. Target groups that could benefit the most from micro-credentials (multiple choice, frequency of organisations).....	38
Figure 34. What are the primary purposes for which recipients use the micro-credentials offered by your organisation? (multiple choice, frequency of organisations).....	39
Figure 35. Views regarding the need for a common policy and guidelines on micro-credentials for lifelong learning and employability in Seychelles.....	40
Figure 36. Main and mandatory principles should be when designing and recognising a micro-credential in the national qualifications framework (multiple choice, frequency of organisations) .....	41
Figure 37. Age distribution of learners (single choice, frequency).....	45
Figure 38. Employment status of learners (single choice, frequency).....	45
Figure 39. Providers that issue the micro-credentials (single choice, frequency).....	46
Figure 40. Support for obtaining micro-credentials (single choice, frequency).....	47
Figure 41. Micro-credentials by various industries (single choice, frequency) .....	48
Figure 42. Main recipient objectives for taking up micro-credentials (multiple choice, frequency) .....	49
Figure 43. Respondents' main recommendations to improve micro-credentials in Seychelles by micro-credential	

recipients (multiple choice, frequency) .....50

# 1. Introduction

## 1.1 Background of the survey

Micro-credentials have emerged as a significant innovation in the field of education and training, offering flexible, modular, and targeted learning opportunities that can be tailored to the specific needs of learners and employers.<sup>1</sup> When talking about micro-credentials, as a working definition, we refer to certifications of short courses and other short learning experiences that are used for skills development, lifelong learning and upskilling and reskilling.

In Seychelles, there is growing interest in understanding how micro-credentials can be integrated into the national qualifications framework to enhance skill development, employability, and lifelong learning as well. Therefore, as an initial step towards generating this understanding, there is a need to establish the state-of-play of micro-credentials among various education and training providers and other organisations and entities providing education and training in the country.

The African Continental Qualifications Framework-II supports the development of National Qualifications Frameworks (NQF) and related policies in African countries, working in close cooperation and coordination with the relevant national authorities and with the Regional Economic Communities (RECs).

In line with the objectives of the project, the survey aligns with the goals of the African Continental Qualifications Framework (ACQF) by providing valuable insights into the implementation and impact of micro-credentials in Seychelles. The survey will serve as a pilot study in mapping the current provision of micro-credentials and will further several objectives:

- Support quality assurance by mapping current practices and identifying gaps, the survey will contribute to the development of quality assurance mechanisms for micro-credentials, ensuring they meet national, regional and international standards.
- Enhance recognition: the findings will facilitate the development and implementation of mechanisms for the recognition and portability of micro-credentials, promoting greater mobility for learners and workers.
- Assist in policy-making by providing an overview of the current state, which can be utilised by policy-makers to see how the current usage of micro-credentials aligns and fits with NQF requirements. Furthermore, the survey will provide information on the preferences and future plans of stakeholders with regard to the development, offering and uptake of micro-credentials.
- Supporting capacity building: the survey will create a knowledge base that supports capacity building in the area of micro-credentials among education and training providers, policymakers, and other stakeholders in Seychelles. This contributes to ACQF's objective of strengthening the capacity of national qualifications frameworks.

ACQF-II acknowledges the excellent cooperation with the Seychelles Qualification Authority (SQA) and recognises the policy-leading role of SQA and the valuable inputs to ensure the relevance and quality of all deliverables.

---

<sup>1</sup> For more information see: Cedefop, *Microcredentials for Labour Market Education and Training – First Look at Mapping Microcredentials in European Labour-Market-Related Education, Training and Learning – Take-up, Characteristics and Functions* (Publications Office of the European Union, 2022), <https://doi.org/10.2801/351271>.

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>

Cedefop, (2023). *Microcredentials for labour market education and training: the added value for end users*. Publications Office of the European Union. Cedefop research paper.

## **1.2 Objective of the survey**

The primary objective of this survey is to discover existing micro-credentials in the landscape of training offered in Seychelles, and map them against a set of key features allowing an in-depth understanding of the current types, target audiences, opportunities and challenges of micro-credentials.

The survey aimed to identify existing micro-credentials and any similar credentials that would be applicable under the national definition of micro-credentials, understanding their usage and characteristics, the learner groups, quality assurance methods, their relationship to the national qualifications framework as well as the possible purposes and policy preferences of education and training providers. The findings will inform policy recommendations and support the development of a micro-credentialing system, also aligned with the African Continental Qualifications Framework (ACQF).



## 2. Methodology

### 2.1 Definition of micro-credentials

Considering that various terms and definitions of micro-credentials are used across the globe, the survey design introduced respondents to an easy-to-understand, general definition in order to capture the highest possible share of credentials that could be considered applicable by the Seychelles Qualifications Authority.

The survey made use of two definitions of micro-credentials, cited below. These were presented to respondents, along with a more simplified explanation,<sup>2</sup> at the beginning of the survey, to ensure that respondents are cognisant of various terms and definitions used for micro-credentials.

National governments and regional and international organisations have intensified debate and research with the aim of defining the role and place of micro-credentials in national education systems and qualifications frameworks, enhancing their benefits for lifelong learning and employability. In 2022 UNESCO proposed a common definition of micro-credentials<sup>3</sup>, based on a process of experts' consultation of global scope. In June 2022 the European Union approved the Council Recommendation<sup>4</sup> on a European Approach to Micro-credentials for lifelong learning and employability. All definitions emphasise: assessment, quality assurance and focused learning achievement.

- The proposed UNESCO definition is:
  - “A micro-credential:
    - Is a record of focused learning achievement verifying what the learner knows, understands or can do.
    - Includes assessment based on clearly defined standards and is awarded by a trusted provider.
    - Has standalone value and may also contribute to or complement other micro-credentials or macro-credentials, including through recognition of prior learning
    - Meets the standards required by relevant quality assurance.”
- The definition agreed in the European Union is:
  - ‘Micro-credential’ means the record of the learning outcomes that a learner has acquired following a small volume of learning. These learning outcomes will have been assessed against transparent and clearly defined criteria. Learning experiences leading to micro-credentials are designed to provide the learner with specific knowledge, skills and competences that respond to societal, personal, cultural or labour market needs. Micro-credentials are owned by the learner, can be shared and are portable. They may be stand-alone or combined into larger credentials. They are underpinned by quality assurance following agreed standards in the relevant sector or area of activity.

---

<sup>2</sup> As cited here: Micro-credentials are short training programmes that give proof of specific skills or knowledge. They can range from short courses, workshops to online classes, but their most important characteristic is that they are short, focused learning experiences. These credentials are valuable on their own but can also be combined with others to build up to larger qualifications. They can often be digital and belong to the person who earned them, making them easy to share. Micro-credentials can come from various sources and do not always need to meet official quality standards or be registered in formal qualification frameworks. We want to know about all types of training programmes that provide a short learning experience, regardless of other characteristics. For further information and formal definitions, please see information provided at the end of this sheet.

<sup>3</sup> UNESCO (2022). Towards a common definition of micro-credentials. <https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000381668>

<sup>4</sup> Council Recommendation of 16 June 2022 on a European approach to micro-credentials for lifelong learning and employability 2022/C 243/02 ST/9790/2022/INIT [https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/DE/TXT/?uri=uriserv:OJ.C\\_.2022.243.01.0010.01.ENG](https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/DE/TXT/?uri=uriserv:OJ.C_.2022.243.01.0010.01.ENG)

## 2.2 Data collection and survey techniques used

The survey was distributed online by the Seychelles Qualifications Authority, via an email campaign. The data collection period lasted from July 16 until August 19, 2024, including a week-long extension.

The survey has targeted two main groups: providers of micro-credentials and learners in Seychelles, which have been targeted via two different questionnaires. The providers' questionnaire was prepared using an Excel sheet, in order to allow for an easily usable format to fill in various and complex details on each micro-credentials. The learners' questionnaire was distributed with the use of an online survey tool.

The providers' survey has collected responses from 15 organisations, which have submitted details on 140 different credentials. Furthermore, the learners' survey collected 65 complete responses.

The survey questionnaires were developed with the cooperation of PPMI, the ACQF-II Project Coordinator and the Seychelles Qualifications Authority (SQA). Both surveys were conducted in English.

The report primarily presents results by frequencies and absolute values, instead of percentages. This choice is motivated by the number of responses, which does not exceed the one-hundred limit, generally considered the lowest threshold for presenting non-distorted results in percentages. However, we keep providing percentages in parentheses, which have an added value of interpretation, especially where details on individual credentials are provided with a large number of data points.

The data collected during the survey exercise was examined using descriptive analysis, cross-tabulation analysis and qualitative content analysis.

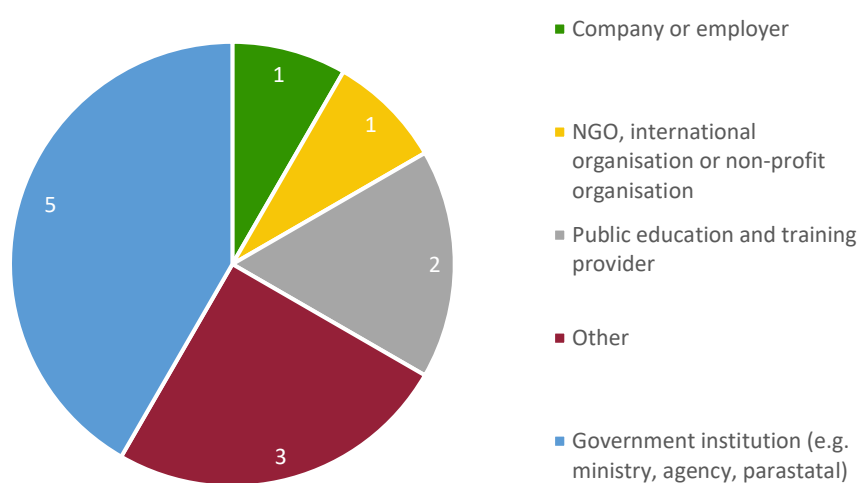
### 3. Respondent overview

This chapter presents data on the basic characteristics of the survey respondents.

In total, **15 providers of micro-credentials** from Seychelles filled out the survey, submitting details on **140 micro-credentials**.

Results reveal that the **majority of respondents represent the public sector**, of which most are from government institutions (5 or 42%) and a smaller share from public education and training providers (2). Additionally, other types of organisations, among which were a maritime training provider, an institute for distance and open learning, and a non-specified education and training organisation are the third most frequent group. The wider distribution underscores that micro-credentials are spread out into various sectors within the country.

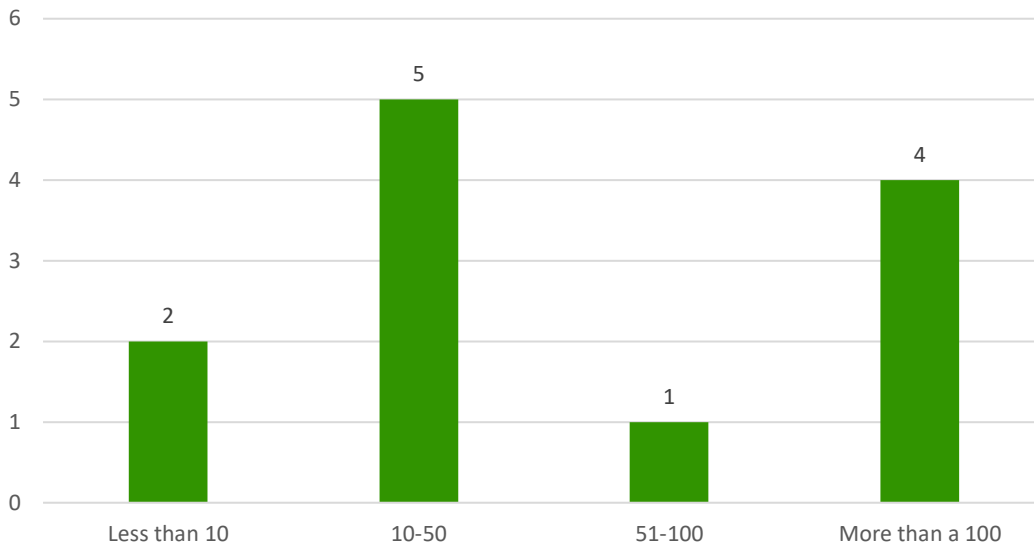
**Figure 1. Type of organisation**



**A significant number of these organisations are small in terms of the number of employees** (see figure below). More than half of the organisations (7, or 58%) have less than 50 employees. However, four organisations that issue micro-credentials have more than 100 employees.

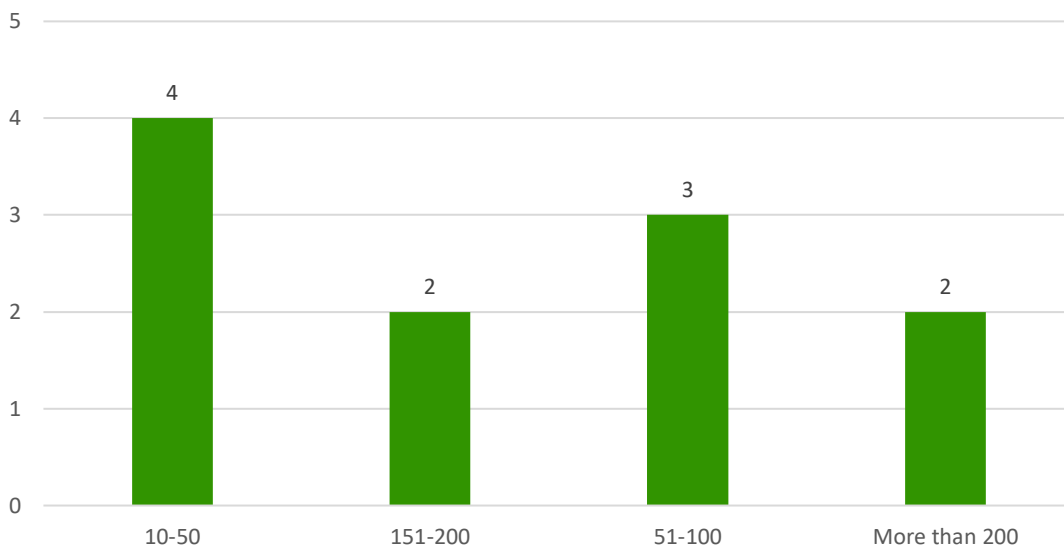
This trend suggests that micro-credentials are being leveraged by a wide array of entities. The involvement of larger organisations further indicates that micro-credentials are becoming integral across various organisational sizes, enhancing their relevance and applicability.

**Figure 2. Size of organisation in terms of number of employees (single choice, frequency of organisations)**



Further, the responses have captured a **wide range of variety in terms of the number of learners receiving a micro-credential**. Accordingly, the plurality of organisations issued approximately between 10-50 micro-credentials a year (4 responses). This variation implies micro-credentials are gaining traction across organisations of various capacities. There were no obvious correlations observed between the size of the organisations and the number of yearly recipients.<sup>5</sup> The spread across different recipient volumes also underlines the adaptable nature of micro-credentials to different operational scales.

**Figure 3. Number of total micro-credential recipients per year (single choice, frequency of organisations)**



---

<sup>5</sup> This could be also due to the low number of data points for the analysis.

## 4. Analysis of micro-credentials landscape

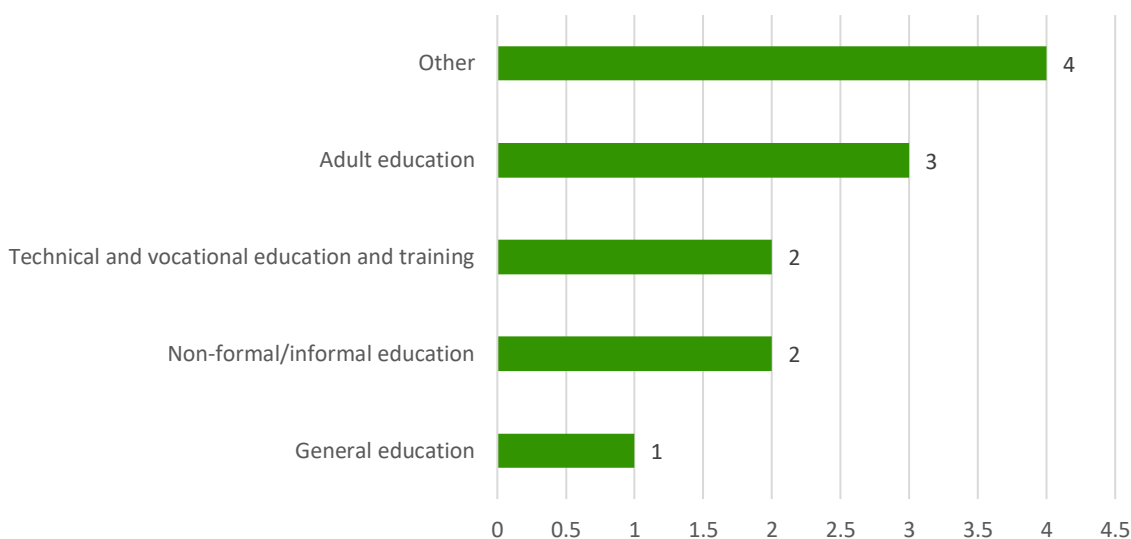
This chapter presents the results of the survey targeting providers of micro-credentials. In Subchapter 4.1 the report discusses the various types and terms of micro-credentials, the main characteristics such as the costs, workload associated, quality assurance and assessment. It also looks into who the main target groups for these micro-credentials are. Subchapter 4.2 presents the perceived benefits and added value of micro-credentials, while Subchapter 4.3 covers the challenges and barriers to the uptake of micro-credentials and policy implementation. Lastly, Subchapter 4.4 extends on the future directions and recommendations of respondents on the design of micro-credentials.

### 4.1 Basic characteristics of micro-credentials

#### 4.1.1 Types and definitions of micro-credentials

**Micro-credentials are spread fairly evenly across various education and training sectors**, as represented by the organisations that are present in virtually the entire gamut of the education and training field. Other organisations included: one working in the fashion, textiles, soft furnishing industries, maritime training organisations and a post-secondary institution and work organisation as well as an organisation from the online and overseas courses field.

**Figure 4. Education and training sectors in which micro-credentials are offered (frequency of organisations)**



These organisations listed **140 different types of credentials that could be considered micro-credentials**. Among these two organisations have further reported to be offering more than 20 types of different micro-credentials, two between 10 and 20, while nine organisations are providing between 1 and 10 credentials.

In comparison, the **Seychelles National Qualifications Framework (SNQF) currently has 19 registered “part qualifications”**, that are proxies to micro-credentials. Most are on Level 3 of the framework (13), which corresponds to a National Certificate.<sup>6</sup> Others are Level 4 (1), Level 5 (3) and Level 6 (2) qualifications. Thus, virtually all of the included certificates are part of Further Education and Training.

---

<sup>6</sup> Level descriptors can be found here: [Regulations on the National Qualifications Framework \(sqa.sc\)](#)

Of the **registered part qualifications, the average number of credits is 8**, which corresponds to 80 notional hours of learning.<sup>7</sup> Part-qualifications are spread over between 3 and 14 credits, those having 6 and 8 credits are the most frequent. Providers tend to use several different terms for micro-credentials. Most often **“Short courses”** were mentioned (4 times), along with other general terms such as “In-house training”, “Workshop”, “Training” “Skills development programme” and more specific denominations that are connected to the topic or skills of the credential, such as “Coastal Yachtmaster” or “First aid CPR and AED Training”.

The diversity of credentials listed suggests a wide range of focus areas, indicating that micro-credentials are being used to address various educational and training needs across multiple sectors. This diversity also highlights the adaptability of micro-credentials to specific organisational objectives, whether in niche industries or broader educational contexts.

#### 4.1.2 Main characteristics and features of micro-credentials

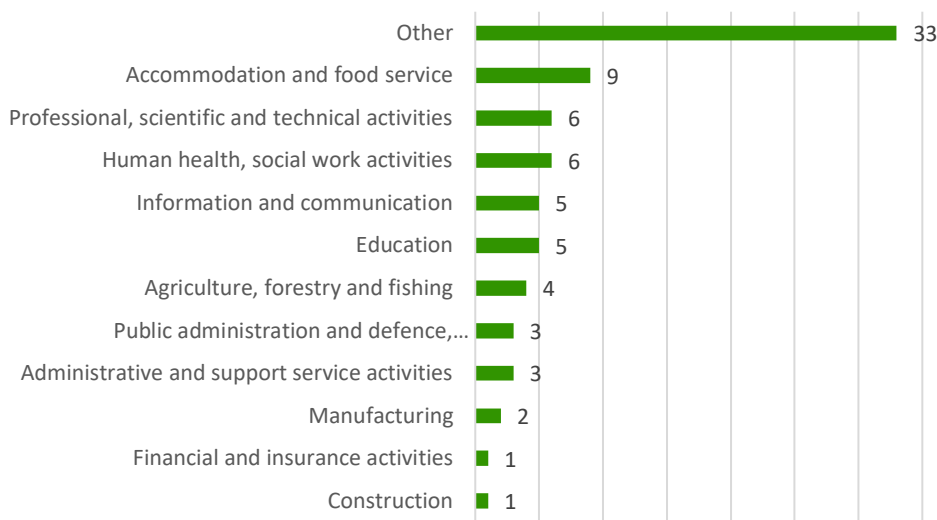
The denomination of micro-credentials varies across national contexts over the world, and, due to the lack of centralised policy, various terms might be used within a country as well. As discussed previously, the current mapping showed that providers tend to call micro-credentials short courses most frequently, but for the purposes of this report, we will continue using the term micro-credentials.

Data shows significant representation from **sectors** such as **accommodation and food services** (9 credentials are offered in this industry), **professional, scientific and technical activities** (6), **human health and social work activities** (6) and **information and communication** (5), reflecting the critical role micro-credentials play in sectors that require continuous skill development and certification. The involvement of industries ICT, education and public administration underscores the relevance of micro-credentials in both technical fields and governance-related areas. Nonetheless, other sectors were the most often selected option, signalling that micro-credentials are covering an even wider range of industries. Based on these results, the **mapped micro-credentials tend to be of different sectors than those included in the national qualifications framework**. The SNQA registered part-qualifications are in the Culture and Arts (8), Laws and Security (4), Health Sciences and Social Services (3), Business Commerce and Management Studies (3), and Environment and Natural Resources (3) fields of education. Two of the latter are credentials in the fisheries sector. Many of these part-qualifications are related to Safety in Society, Generic management and Communication and Languages, based on their sub-fields.

---

<sup>7</sup> 1 credit in the SNQF equals to 10 notional hours of learning

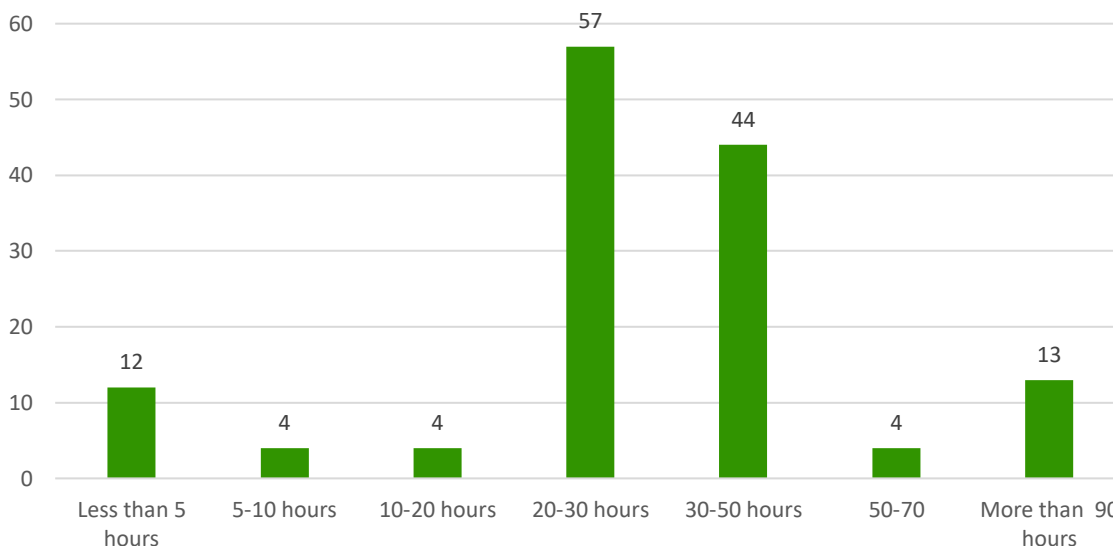
**Figure 5. Which of the industries below is the credential offered? (single choice, frequency of credentials)**



Furthermore, the results show a clear trend of the identified credentials' **workload being between 20 and 50 hours**. Out of this, 57 have a workload of 20-30 hours and 44 have 30-50 hours, or around three-quarters of all the credentials entered in the survey. Credentials with a lower and higher workload are much less represented. Only 20 credentials have 20 or fewer hours of workload, while only 17 do have more than 50 hours of necessary workload to achieve the credential.

In contrast, as we presented before, part-qualifications registered in the SNQF, are the closest proxies for micro-credentials in the NQF. On average, these have 80 hours of notional workload. Thus, many of the identified credentials are of substantially short duration.

**Figure 6. What is the notional workload (duration) required to achieve the credential? (single choice, frequency of credentials)**

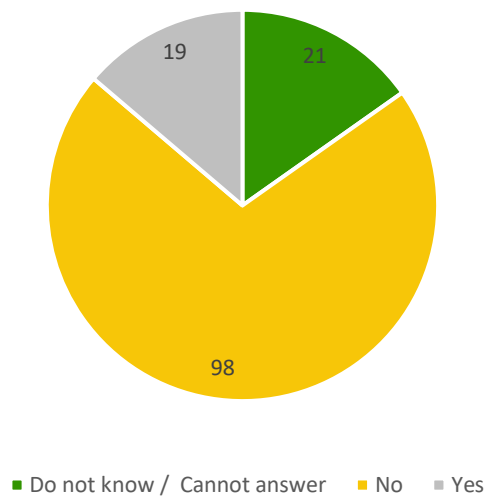


**A notable portion of micro-credentials is not credit-bearing as of the time of the survey (98 or 71%),** which may indicate that while these credentials are valued for their practical application, there is still progress to be made in integrating them into formal education frameworks. However, the presence of credit-bearing micro-credentials

points to a potential growing recognition of these credentials within more formal educational structures, which could enhance their portability and acceptance across different learning systems.

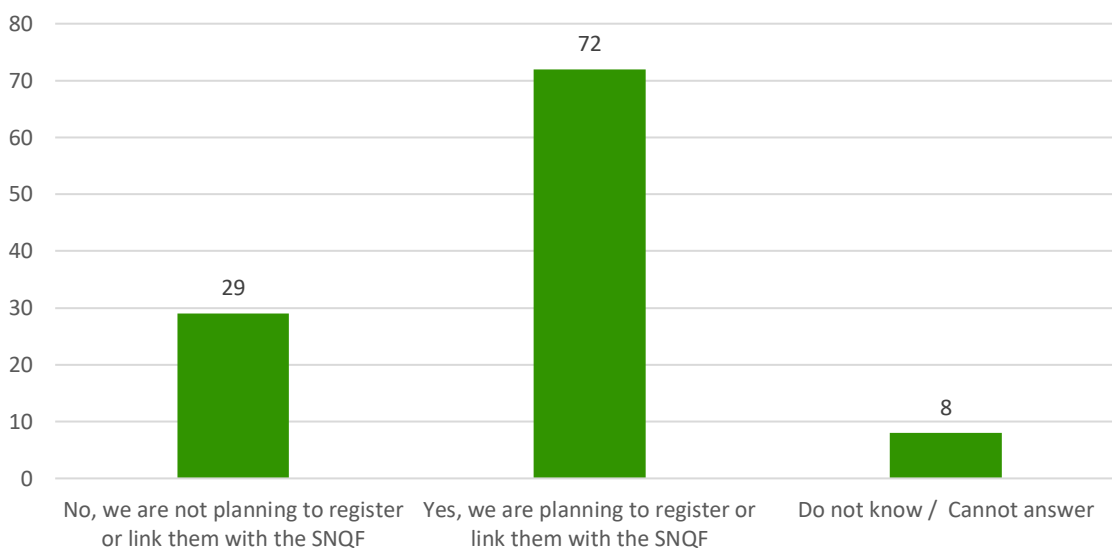
In a similar way, **most of the surveyed micro-credentials are not registered in the Seychelles National Qualifications Framework (SNQF)**, meaning that around two-thirds (90 or 65%) are not registered, while respondents could not answer the question in the case of 23 credentials.

**Figure 7. Is the credential assigned credits? (single choice, frequency of credentials)**



On the flipside, the data shows a positive trend, with **many organisations planning to register their credentials, indicating a move towards greater formalisation and recognition of micro-credentials** within the national framework. This trend highlights the growing integration of micro-credentials into the broader qualifications landscape, essential for their wider acceptance and utilisation. Accordingly, two-thirds (66.1% or 72) of the micro-credentials are planned to be registered, while a much smaller share is not planned to be registered (26.6% or 29) or its status is not yet decided.

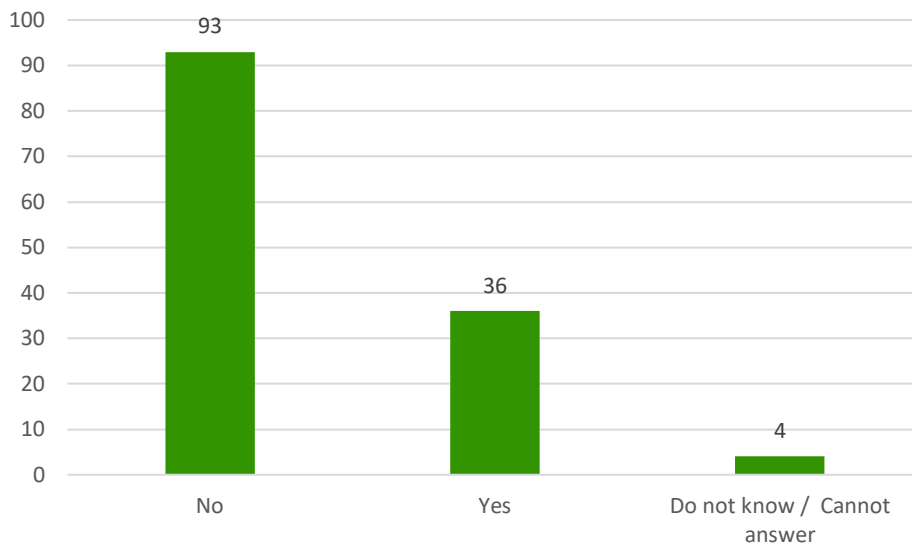
**Figure 8. Plans to register or link the credential to the Seychelles National Qualifications Framework (SNQF) (single choice, frequency of credentials)**





The results indicate that while **a number of credentials have received some form of accreditation, there remains a significant portion that has not**. Thus, while micro-credentials are fairly widespread across industries and is planned to be registered in the SNQF, quality assurance and legitimacy remain critical areas for development. More than two-thirds of all the credentials that were submitted for the survey do not have accreditation or are not quality assured by a competent body (69.9% or 93), in contrast to which, around a third (27.1% or 36) is verified by a competent body. Thus, a push towards greater accreditation will likely enhance the credibility and trust in micro-credentials among both employers and learners.

**Figure 9. Is the credential accredited / quality assured by a competent body? (single choice, frequency of credentials)**

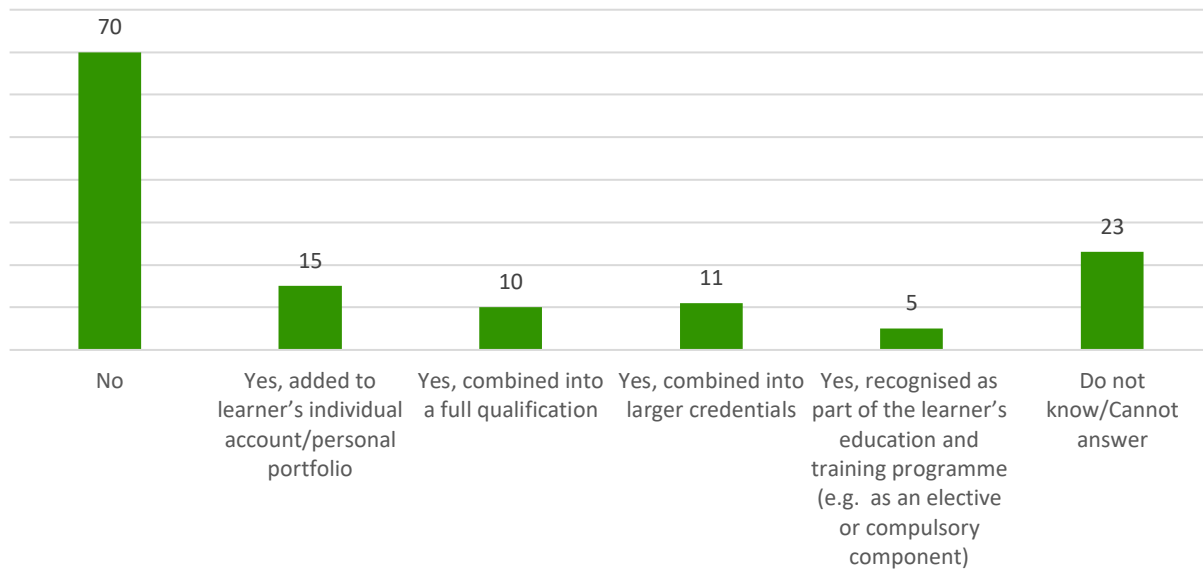


Stackability or the possibility to combine multiple micro-credentials is often seen as a cornerstone and one of the main benefits of micro-credentials, providing learners with flexibility and tailored learning opportunities. The ability to stack micro-credentials enhances their appeal as a pathway for continuous professional development. In Seychelles, **half of the surveyed micro-credentials (52.2% or 70) lack stackability options**. Around a third of the credentials have some kind of options to be stacked or combined (30.6% or 36). A significant number, 23 respondents, chose "Do not know/Cannot answer." This indicates that there is a considerable amount of uncertainty or lack of awareness regarding the stackability options of micro-credentials among the surveyed group.

Nevertheless, stackability options could be realised in various ways:

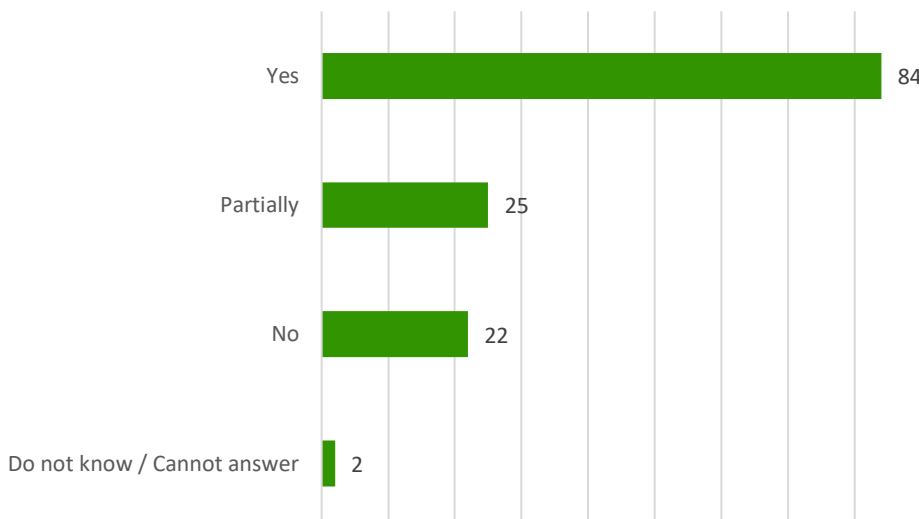
- **Stackability into personal portfolios or accounts:** a smaller portion, 15 credentials, can be added to a learner's individual account or personal portfolio. This indicates that for some credentials, there is an option for personal aggregation, possibly allowing learners to showcase their achievements independently.
- **Combination into full qualifications:** 10 credentials can be combined into a full qualification. This option offers a clear pathway for learners who are aiming to accumulate smaller credentials towards earning a comprehensive qualification, such as a degree or diploma.
- **Combination into larger credentials:** 11 credentials can be combined into larger credentials, providing learners with the opportunity to progress to more advanced certifications by building upon the smaller credentials they have earned.
- **Incorporation into formal education and training:** 5 credentials are recognised as part of the learner's education and training program, either as elective or compulsory components. This reflects a more formal integration of micro-credentials into traditional educational systems, though it appears to be a less common option based on the survey results.

Figure 10. Can the credential be stacked or combined? (single choice, frequency of credentials)



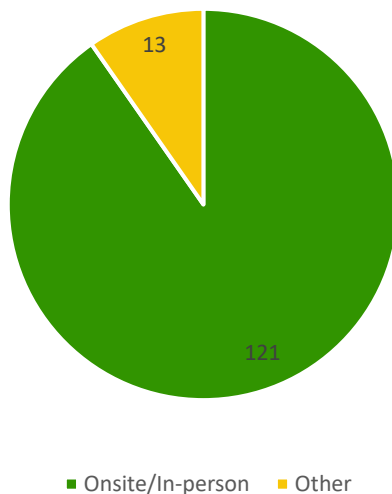
The presence of a structured curriculum for many of the micro-credentials suggests a focus on ensuring that these learning experiences are well-organised and targeted towards specific learning outcomes. While only a small portion of the credentials do not have a curriculum (16.5% or 22), most credentials either have a partial or complete pre-defined curriculum for the duration of the learning activity (82% or 109). This structured approach contributes to the clarity and effectiveness of micro-credentials, making them more reliable as tools for skill development and competency recognition.

Figure 11. Is there a pre-defined curriculum for the learning activity / programme? (single choice, frequency of credentials)



The data shows a predominant preference for onsite, in-person learning (90.3% or 121 credentials). This preference for in-person learning might reflect the practical and hands-on nature of many micro-credentials, particularly in sectors where physical presence and direct interaction are crucial. In contrast, a much smaller share of credentials (9.7% or 13) are employing either work experiences, blended forms of learning or fully online learning.

Figure 12. What is the mode of learning for the activity / programme? (single choice, frequency of credentials)



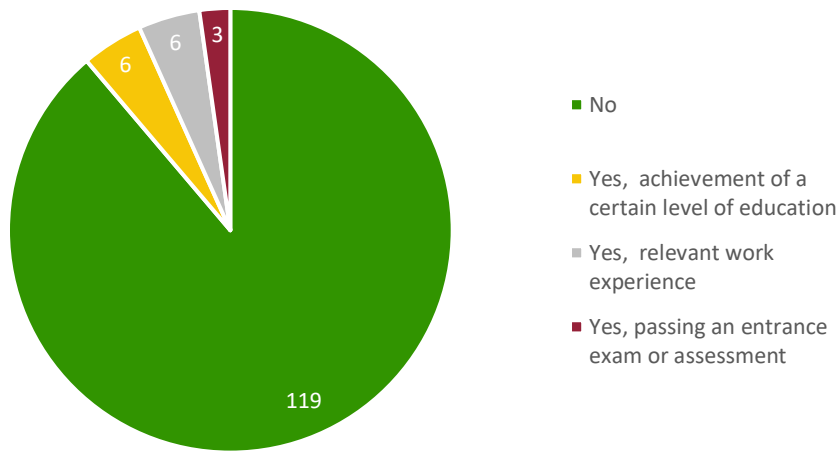
The data shows that **while most micro-credentials do not require prerequisites, there are instances where prior education, relevant work experience, or passing an entrance assessment is necessary** (see figure below).

The vast majority of the micro-credentials (119 or 88.% out of the total surveyed credentials), have no prerequisites. This indicates that most micro-credentials are highly accessible and designed to be inclusive, allowing a wide range of learners to participate without needing to meet specific entry requirements. This approach aligns with the goal of making micro-credentials an accessible tool for skill development and lifelong learning.

- **Achievement of a certain level of education:** 6 credentials require the achievement of a certain level of education as a prerequisite. This means that for these credentials, learners must have attained a specific educational background before they can enrol, potentially ensuring that participants have the foundational knowledge necessary to succeed in the course.
- **Relevant work experience:** another 6 credentials require relevant work experience. This prerequisite ensures that learners have practical experience in the field, which may be crucial for understanding and applying the course content effectively.
- **Passing an entrance exam or assessment:** only 3 credentials require to pass an entrance exam or assessment. This is the most restrictive prerequisite, ensuring that only learners who demonstrate a certain level of knowledge or skill can access the program. However, it is the least common requirement, which further emphasises the inclusive nature of most micro-credentials.

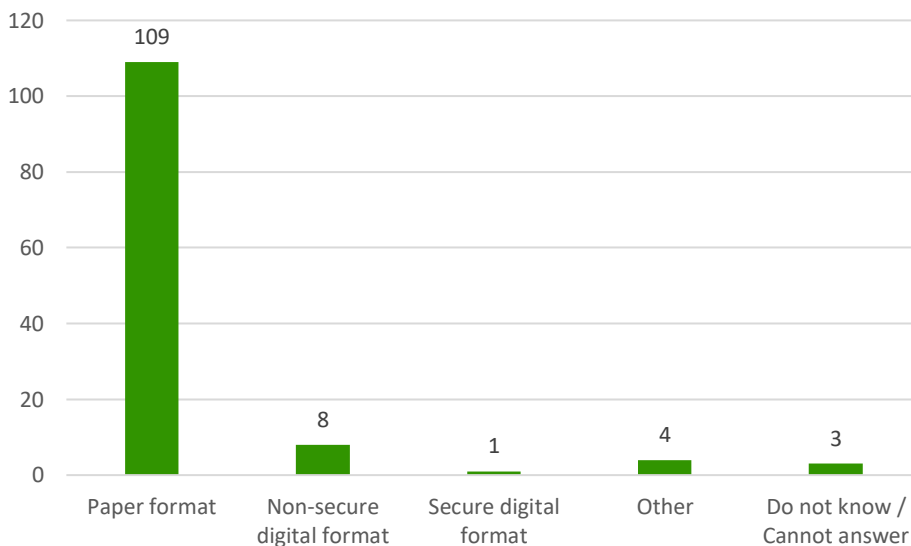
The lack of strict entry requirements for most micro-credentials suggests that they are designed to be inclusive and accessible, appealing to a broad audience of learners seeking to enhance their skills without significant barriers to entry.

**Figure 13. Requirements or prerequisites for entering the learning experience / programme (single choice, frequency of credentials)**



The results indicate a variety of credential types being issued, with the **traditional paper format** (87.2% or 109) being the **clear preference of providers**. Other types of formats such as non-secure digital credentials (6.4% or 8 credentials), secure digital credentials are used sporadically. This overwhelming reliance on paper suggests that many institutions or providers still favour conventional methods, possibly due to familiarity, perceived credibility, or ease of issuance. Furthermore, the lack of knowledge regarding digital credentials is an exacerbating component. Providers are not familiar with the procedure of issuing digital credentials, while beneficiaries are not accustomed to storing and using digital credentials. The lack of formal recognition of these digital credentials is another potential explanatory factor for the lack of digital solutions.

**Figure 14. Type of credential is issued at the completion of the learning experience / programme (single choice, frequency of credentials)**

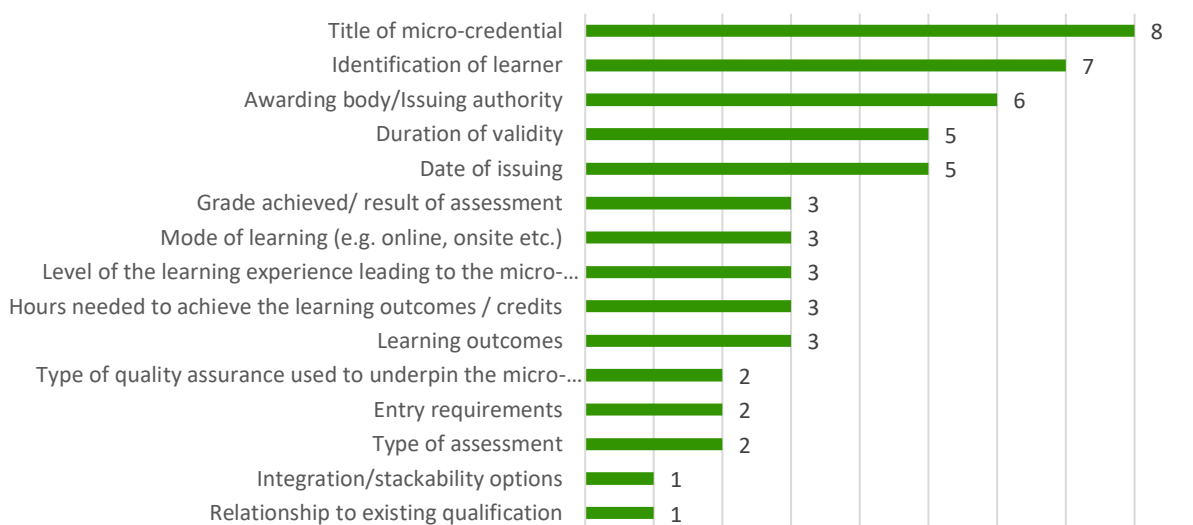


The figure below provides insights into the various information **elements typically included on issued micro-credentials**, highlighting the key components that organisations consider important for ensuring the transparency and credibility of these credentials.

- The **most commonly included information element** is the **title of the micro-credential**, with 8 organisations indicating it.
- Following closely, 7 organisations include the **identification of the learner on the micro-credential**, to ensure that the achievement is verifiable and cannot be misrepresented.
- The **awarding body or issuing authority** is also prominently featured on 6 micro-credentials, reinforcing the importance of identifying the institution or organisation that granted the credential. This provides an additional layer of trust and authority, particularly if the issuing body is well-regarded.
- **Other important elements** include the **duration of validity** and the **date of issuing**, both included by 5 organisations. These details ensure that the credential is current and relevant, providing context about when the skills were acquired and how long they remain applicable.
- Additionally, elements like learning outcomes, level of the learning experience, hours of learning, mode of learning, and grade achieved (each included by 3 organisations) are somewhat less frequently present.
- Lastly, the least frequently included elements are the type of quality assurance used, entry requirements and type of assessment (2), as well as integration/stackability options and the relationship to existing qualifications (each only included by 1 organisation), suggest that while these aspects are considered less critical by some organisations, they may be valuable in specific contexts where the micro-credential is part of a larger educational framework or pathway.

Overall, the figure illustrates that while there is a **core set of information elements that are widely recognised as essential for micro-credentials**, there is also variability in the additional details included. This variability may reflect different priorities among organisations depending on the intended use of the credential, the audience it is aimed at, and the context in which it will be applied. As micro-credentials continue to evolve, the inclusion of comprehensive information as well as the establishment of a necessary minimum set of information elements will likely play a significant role in their acceptance and portability across different sectors.

**Figure 15. Information elements included on the issued micro-credentials (multiple choice, frequency of organisations)**



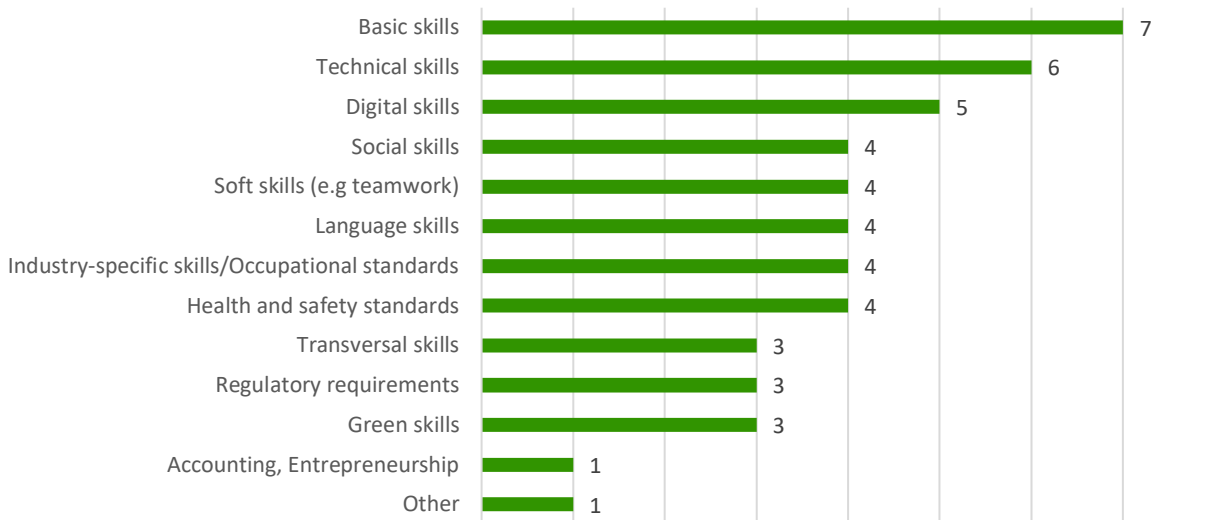
#### 4.1.3 Design and provision of micro-credentials

Out of the 15 providers 7 have provided an answer on whether a catalogue of learning experiences is available. **Three have responded that they provide a catalogue or information about the learning experiences available leading to micro-credentials to a limited extent.** In turn, four organisations do not provide any such information at all.

Of the 7 organisations that responded to the survey's question on learning outcomes, **the majority (6) designed the activities leading to micro-credentials based on learning outcomes.** The figure below provides insights into the skills and knowledge areas that micro-credential learning outcomes focus on, based on the frequency of organisations that target each area. The analysis reveals several key trends in the priorities of micro-credential programs.

- **Basic skills:** The most frequently targeted area is basic skills, used by 7 organisations. This focus indicates a foundational approach where learners are equipped with essential skills that are likely necessary for a wide range of job roles or further learning.
- **Technical skills and digital skills** are the next most emphasised areas, cited by 6 and 5 organisations respectively. This reflects the growing importance of technology and technical proficiency in the modern workforce. The focus on these skills aligns with current job market trends, where employers are often looking for candidates who can navigate technical environments and contribute to innovation.
- **Soft skills** (e.g. teamwork) and **social skills** are each addressed by 4 organisations. These skills are crucial for effective communication, collaboration, and leadership in the workplace.
- **Industry-specific skills and occupational standards:** used by 4 organisations are industry-specific skills/occupational standards and health and safety standards. This focus suggests that micro-credentials are often tailored to meet the specific needs of particular industries, ensuring that learners gain relevant and applicable knowledge that aligns with professional standards and regulatory requirements. These credentials likely aim to prepare learners for specific roles or to meet the exacting standards required in certain sectors.
- **Other skills and knowledge areas:** transversal skills, regulatory requirements, and green skills are each mentioned by 3 organisations, indicating a broader awareness of the diverse competencies needed in today's workforce. Meanwhile, accounting/entrepreneurship and "other" categories are the least cited, with only 1 organisation focusing on each, suggesting these are more niche or specialised areas within the broader landscape of micro-credentials.

**Figure 16. Skills and knowledge that micro-credential learning outcomes focus on (multiple choice, frequency of organisations)**

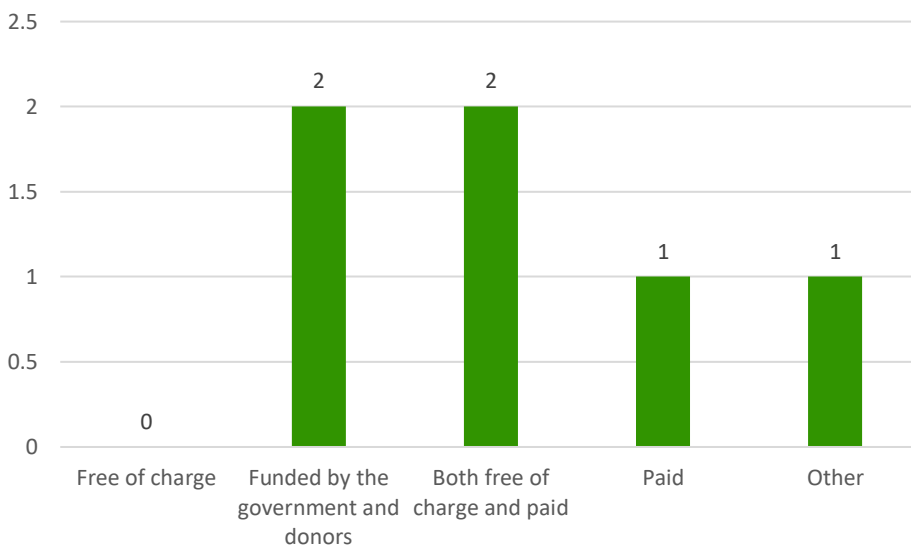


According to the survey results, there are **no evident patterns regarding how the cost of micro-credentials are supported**. In two cases each, providers either have micro-credentials funded by the government and donors or it is provided both paid and free of charge. In another case, a provider reported that the learning experience is paid, while in one case, the ‘other’ option was selected. In the latter, 90-100% of the cost is being funded by the learner.

In a few cases, respondents have also submitted indications on the average price range of the costs borne by recipients. The price, however, showed a wide range of variation from 500 SCR, to 2500 and to even between 8000-25000 SCR in one case.

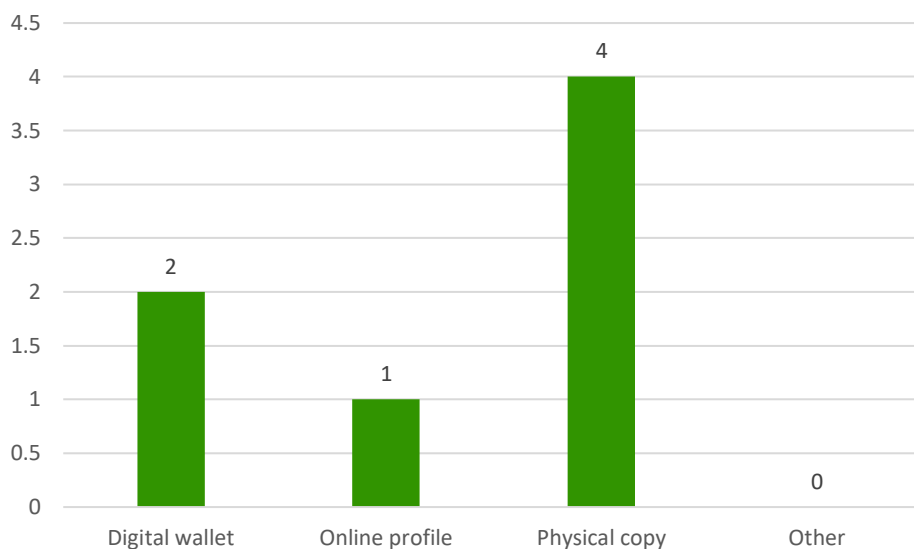
Thus, while in some cases micro-credentials are easily accessible, cost may be a barrier for some potential learners, particularly in contexts where financial support is limited. The prevalence of self-funded credentials indicates a strong personal investment by learners in their professional development, but it also highlights the need for more funding options to broaden access.

**Figure 17. Cost of the micro-credential is covered by the recipient (single choice, frequency of organisation)**



The survey reveals that the **most common method for storing and sharing micro-credentials is through a physical copy** (4 providers have selected this option). **Digital wallets and online profiles are less commonly used** but are emerging as alternative methods. The reliance on physical copies suggests that while digital transformation is underway, there remains a significant preference for tangible documentation. However, the growing interest in digital storage options might signal a need for a shift towards more modern, accessible, and portable ways of managing credentials, which could enhance the mobility and usability of these qualifications in various contexts.

**Figure 18. Options for storing and sharing micro-credentials (multiple choice, frequency of organisations)**



#### 4.1.4 Quality assurance and assessment

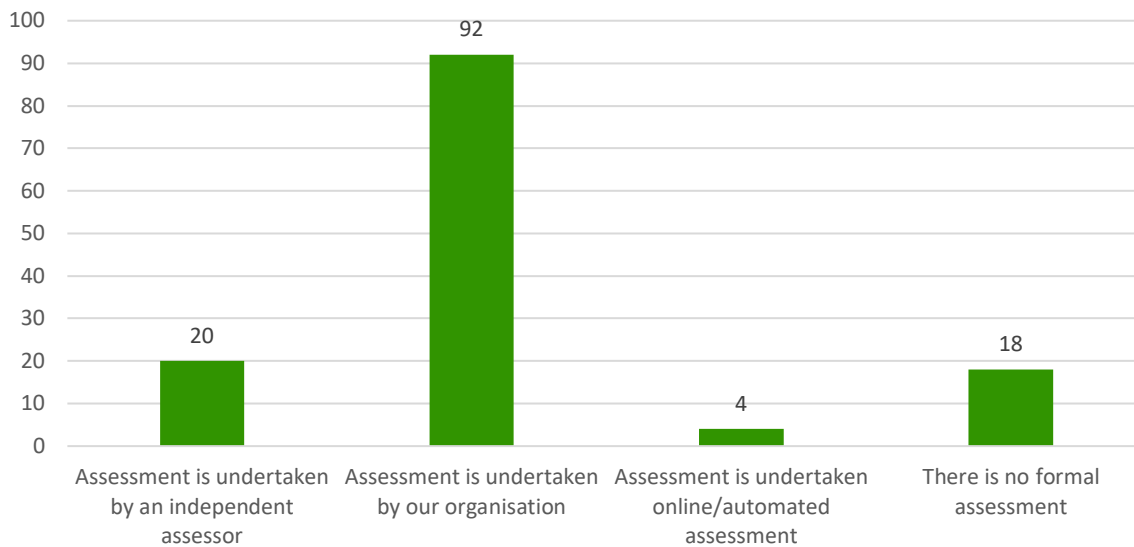
A cornerstone for the popularity of micro-credentials rests in the trustworthiness of these credentials, which are in turn highly influenced by quality assurance. The figure below highlights the predominant assessment practices used in micro-credentialing, with **a clear preference for internal assessments**. The majority of credentials (68.7% or 92 of the micro-credentials) are assessed by the issuing organisation itself, indicating a strong inclination to maintain control over the evaluation process.

In contrast, much fewer credentials (14.9% or 20) **are assessed by independent assessors and a handful use automated or online assessment methods** (3% or 4 credentials). The relatively low use of independent assessors suggests that while external validation can enhance credibility, it may be less feasible due to cost or logistical challenges. Additionally, 18 credentials are issued without formal assessment, which may undermine their perceived value, as these credentials lack a standardised measure of the learner's competencies.

Overall, the data reveals a landscape where internal control over assessments is paramount, with less emphasis on external or automated methods. This approach may provide consistency but also suggests opportunities for expanding the use of independent and innovative assessment practices to enhance the credibility and scalability of micro-credentials.



**Figure 19. Which of the following would best characterise the assessment practices? (single choice, frequency of credentials)**



The survey indicates that **most organisations have implemented internal quality assurance mechanisms for their micro-credentials** (12 organisations or 85.7% of the organisations that responded), while 1-1 organisations responded that there are no internal quality assurance mechanisms implemented or that the respondent could not answer the question.

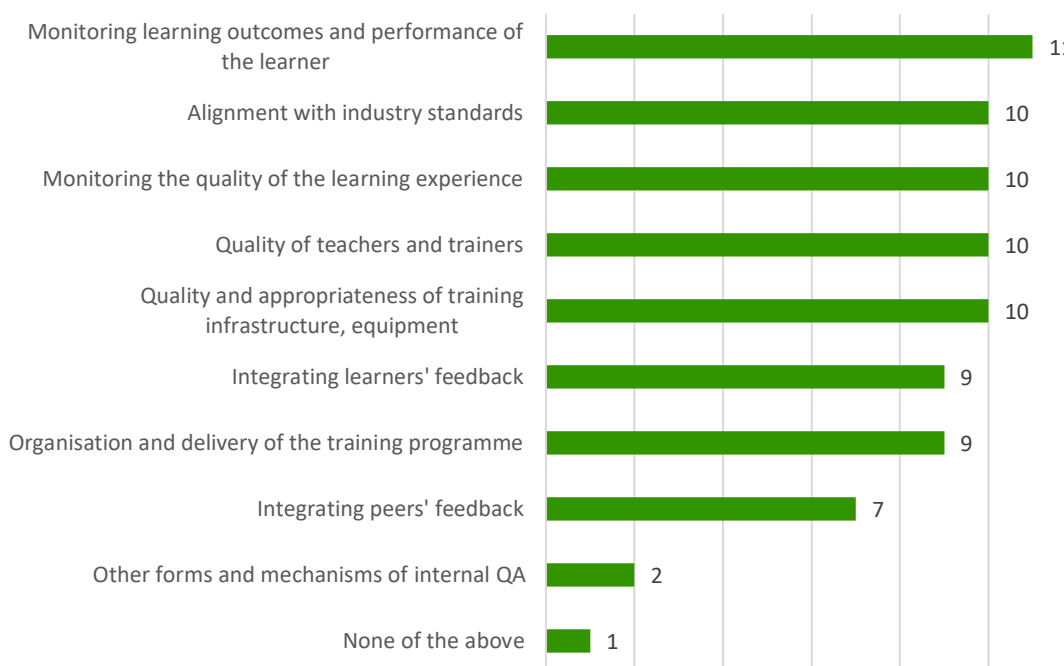
Those who applied quality assurance were asked to give further details on the different mechanisms and processes implemented. The figure below outlines the various internal quality assurance (QA) measures, indicating a broad commitment to maintaining high standards across various aspects of the learning experience.

- **Monitoring learning outcomes and the performance of the learner** is the most frequently cited measure (implemented by 11 of the 15 organisations, or 73.3%). This focus reflects the importance of ensuring that learners achieve the desired educational outcomes, which is central to the credibility and effectiveness of micro-credentials.
- **Alignment with industry standards, monitoring the quality of the learning experience, quality of teachers and trainers, and quality and appropriateness of training infrastructure and equipment**—are each selected by the majority of organisations (10 of the 15, or 66.7%). These measures highlight a comprehensive approach to quality assurance that spans the entire educational process, from ensuring that the content is relevant to industry needs, to maintaining high standards in teaching and the learning environment.
- Additionally, measures such as **integrating learners' feedback and organisation and delivery of the training program** (both selected by 9 organisations or 60%) underscore the importance of continuous improvement and responsiveness to learners' experiences.
- The **integration of peers' feedback**, implemented by almost half of the providers (7 or 46.7%) further emphasises collaborative quality assurance practices.
- Other forms and mechanisms of internal QA are much less frequently used (2 organisations). An organisation reported using none of the listed measures, suggesting that while most organisations have robust QA processes, there is variability in the comprehensiveness and methods of quality assurance applied.

In conclusion, while many providers are committed to quality assurance, results also highlight areas where a more holistic and innovative approach could be beneficial. Expanding QA practices to include more comprehensive feedback mechanisms and diverse evaluation methods could help organisations better meet the

evolving needs of learners and industries, thereby enhancing the overall impact and credibility of micro-credentials.

**Figure 20. Implemented internal quality assurance measures (multiple choice, frequency of organisations)**



**External quality assurance for micro-credentials is much less common**, with only a few organisations reporting regular audits, evaluations, or accreditation (altogether 5 out of the 15 organisations). The limited use of external quality measures suggests that while internal quality assurance is robust, there is room for greater external validation to enhance the credibility and recognition of micro-credentials (5 of the organisations reported not making use of external quality assurance by SQA or another quality assurance body and another 5 did not respond to the question). This could be particularly important for increasing the acceptance of these credentials across different sectors and regions of Africa.

#### 4.1.5 Target groups

The target group characteristics were surveyed both in the case of the providers as well as the recipients (the latter is summarised in section 5.1).

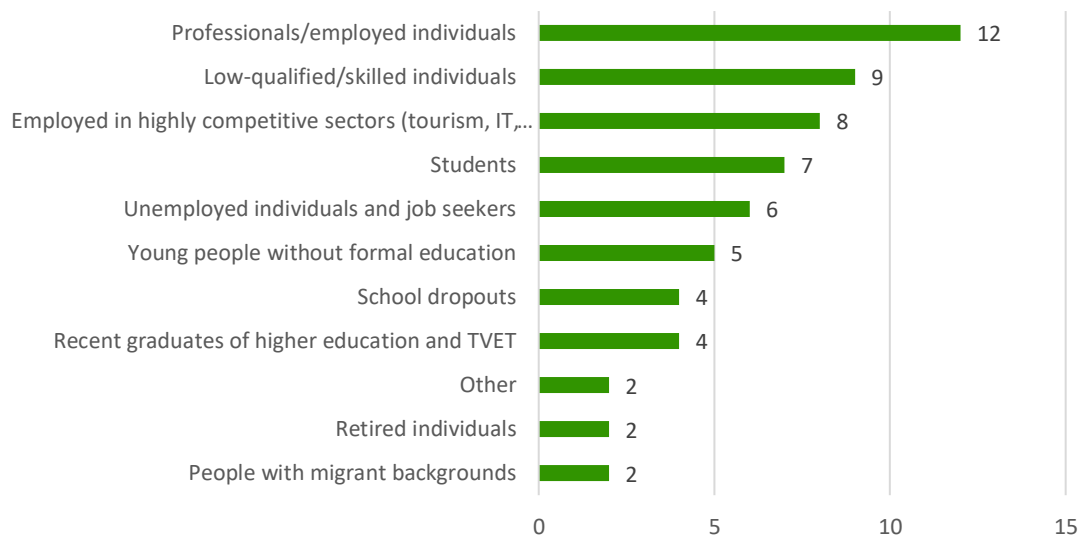
- **Professionals/employed individuals** are the most frequent group awarded with micro-credentials (reported by 12 or 80% of the providers). This reflects a significant focus on enhancing the skills of individuals who are already in the workforce, likely to help them stay competitive, advance in their careers, or adapt to new job roles in a rapidly changing market.
- There is also a strong focus on upskilling and reskilling, with **low-qualified/skilled individuals being a frequently targeted group** (selected by 9 organisations). This suggests that micro-credentials are being utilised as a tool to enhance the skills of those who may lack formal qualifications, helping them improve their employability and adapt to the changing job market.
- The third most targeted group is those **employed in highly competitive sectors like tourism and IT** (8 organisations). This indicates that micro-credentials are also being used to help workers in fast-paced industries stay current with evolving industry standards and technologies, ensuring they remain competitive in their fields.

- **Students** are another key recipient group targeted by almost half of the providers (7 or 46.7% of them), likely as a way to supplement formal education and provide additional, market-relevant skills that may not be covered in traditional curricula.

Furthermore, the figure also shows that other vulnerable or marginalised groups, such as unemployed individuals and job seekers (6 or 40%), young people without formal education (5 or 33.3%) and school dropouts (4 or 26.7% of the providers) are also being targeted, though to a slightly lesser extent. This focus on diverse groups underscores the potential of micro-credentials to serve as an inclusive educational tool, offering pathways to employment and further education for those who might otherwise be left behind.

Notably, less emphasis is placed on recent graduates of higher education and TVET (4 organisations each, 26.7%), as well as retired individuals and people with migrant backgrounds (2 or 13.3%). Similarly, the ACQF Micro-credentials survey also showed that retired individuals are much less frequent recipients. This suggests that while micro-credentials are being used to address a broad range of needs, there may be opportunities to expand their reach to other groups who could benefit from additional skills training, lifelong learning and reskilling. Other groups, not captured in the survey options, were business owners and secondary school students aspiring to follow a programme.

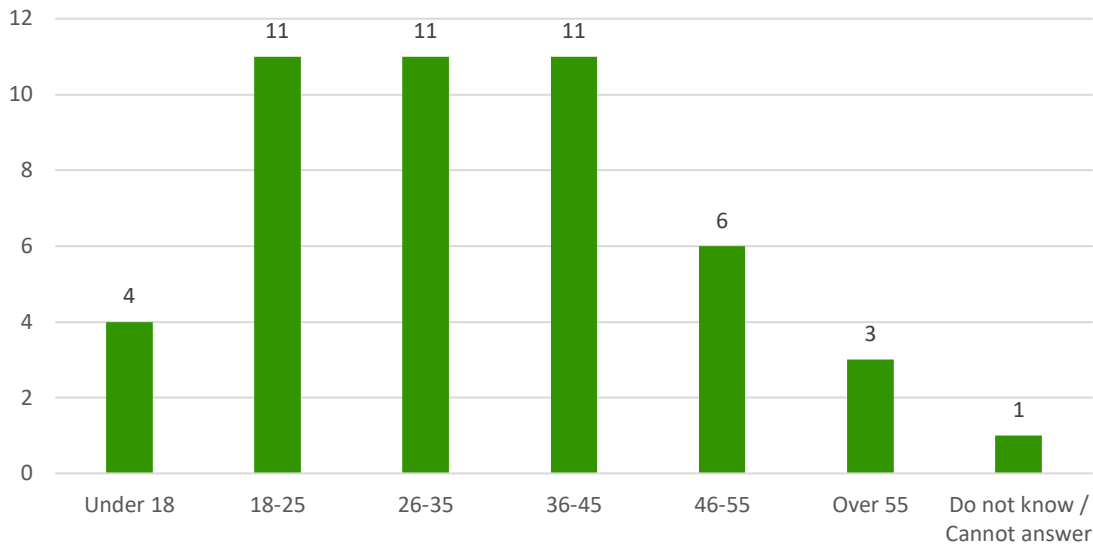
**Figure 21. Recipient groups are most frequently awarded micro-credentials (multiple choice, frequency of organisations)**



In terms of the different age cohorts, the **highest concentration of micro-credential recipients is found in the 18-45 age range**, with the three different age categories within this interval selected by three-quarters of the providers (11 or 73.3%). Corroborating the results discussed above, older age categories are less frequently engaged. Those between 46-55 were selected by less than half (6 or 40%) of the providers, while only a small part targeted those over 55 (3 or 20%).

This trend suggests that **micro-credentials are particularly appealing to mid-career professionals who are looking to advance their skills or pivot into new roles**. The presence of younger recipients also indicates that micro-credentials are being adopted early in careers or to enter certain professions and industries.

Figure 22. Typical age group of recipients (multiple choice, frequency of organisations)



The figure below provides an analysis of the educational attainment levels among recipients of micro-credentials, from the perspective of providers. The results suggest that **micro-credentials are being awarded across a broad spectrum of educational attainment**, from those with no formal education to individuals with tertiary degrees.

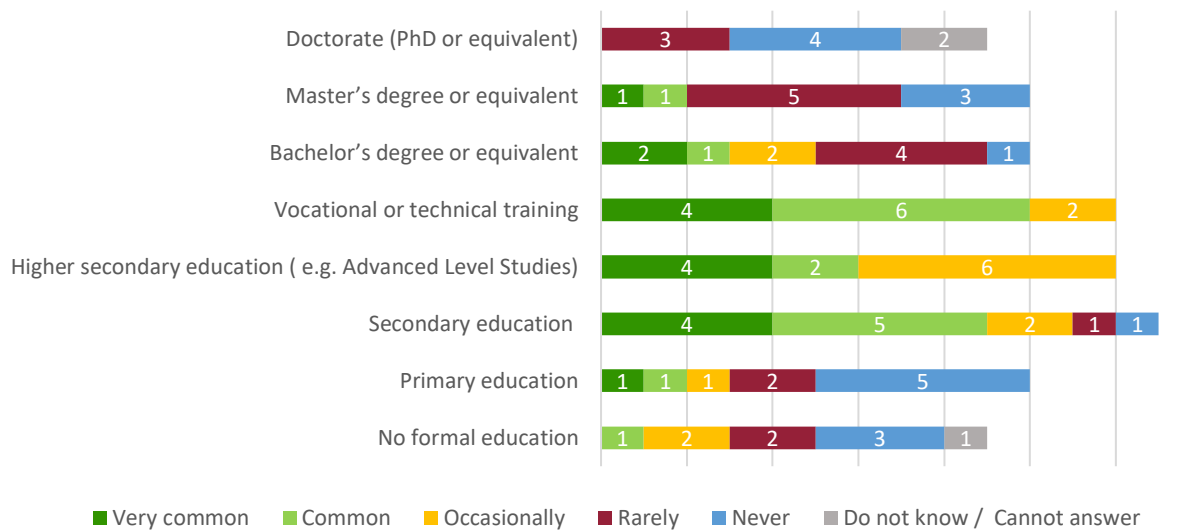
In terms of the most common educational attainment, **vocational or technical training, secondary education and higher secondary education are the most commonly reported educational levels among recipients** (4 have selected "very common").

Those with bachelor's degrees, master's degrees or a doctorate are less frequently targeted, with these groups being labelled as "rarely" or "occasionally" receiving micro-credentials by most organisations. This could reflect

the fact that individuals with advanced degrees may already possess a high level of specialisation and may not be the primary audience for most micro-credentialing programs.

At the lower end of the educational spectrum, primary education and no formal education are even less frequently represented, with several organisations indicating that recipients from these backgrounds are "rare" or "never" encountered.

**Figure 23. Level of educational attainment among recipients of your micro-credential (frequency of organisations)**



The stratification of the recipients by employment status is illustrated in the figure below.

Results show that **a significant portion of the recipients of micro-credentials are already in the workforce**. The **most common group receiving micro-credentials are those employed full-time** (with 10 organisations indicating that these individuals are "very common" recipients and 2 organisations stating they are "common"). This reflects that micro-credentials are widely used by full-time workers, likely to enhance job performance or achieve career advancement.

**Part-time employees** (4 organisations find them to be "common" recipients) **and the self-employed** ("common" recipients for 4 organisations, but 3 organisations indicate they "never" receive micro-credentials) **are also notable recipients of micro-credentials**, but there is a significant variation when compared to full-time workers. These findings suggest that while micro-credentials do appeal to individuals with non-traditional or flexible working arrangements, the uptake is more variable than among full-time workers.

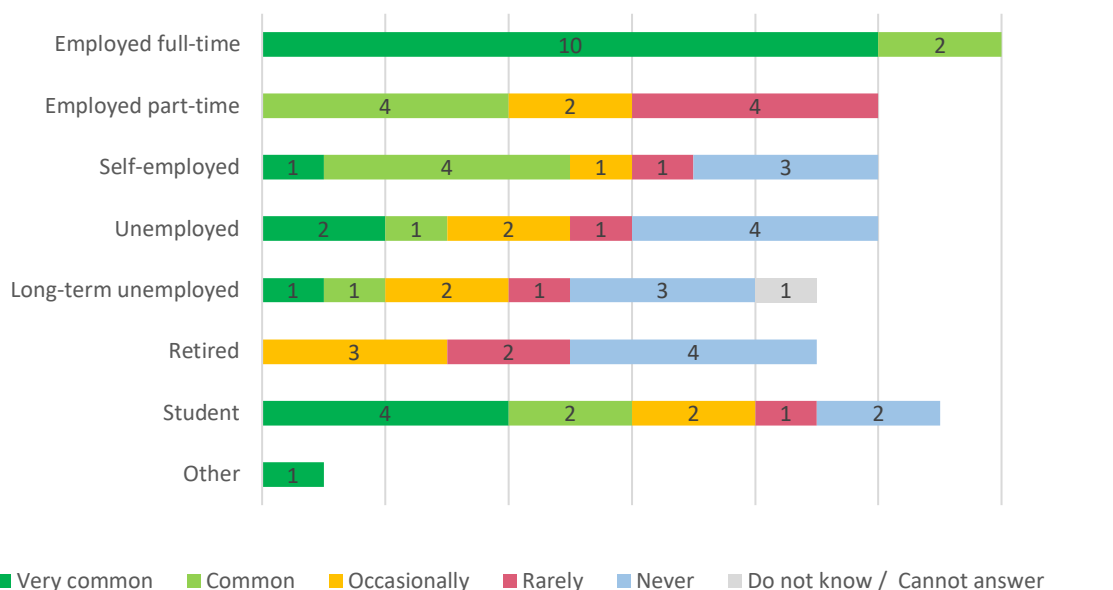
Aside from the individuals taking part in the labour force, **students are another notable and frequent group among recipients** (4 organisations reported them to be "very common" and 2 to be "common"). Unemployed and long-term unemployed individuals also receive micro-credentials frequently, though in smaller numbers. In the case of the unemployed, 2 organisations noted that the group is "very common" and one organisation that it is "common", suggesting that micro-credentials play a role in enhancing employability for job seekers in some cases.

Nonetheless, in the case of the self-employed, the unemployed, the long-term unemployed and the retired, there was also a large share of organisations that reported never providing micro-credentials for these groups.

Overall, the data shows that micro-credentials primarily serve employed individuals, both full-time and part-time, but also have relevance for job seekers and those outside the traditional workforce. Thus, the presence of micro-

credentials among persons not in education, employment or training (NEETs) could be further strengthened to leverage the opportunities provided by these types of credentials.

**Figure 24. Incidence of recipients of micro-credentials across various employment statuses**



## 4.2 Perceived benefits and added value

This section of the report focuses on the perception and attitudes of the respondents on various aspects of micro-credentials, such as the advantages they bring and the main reasons for being offered within their organisation.

The overwhelming majority of the respondents reported that the **main benefit is that micro-credentials are accessible to diverse learning groups** (12 or 80% of the providers surveyed). This suggests that one of the key strengths of micro-credentials is their inclusivity, offering learning opportunities to a broader audience compared to traditional educational pathways.

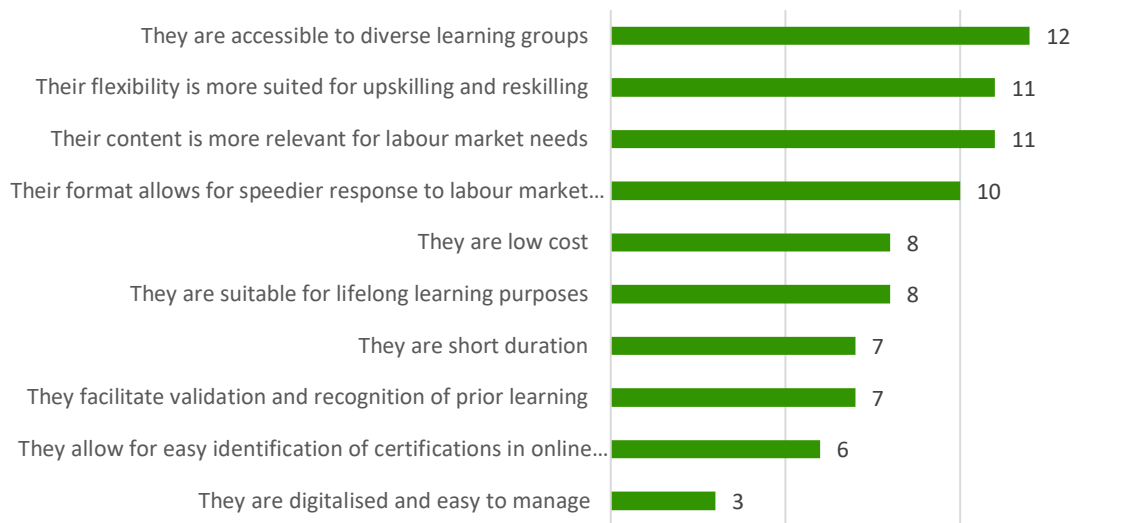
**Flexibility for upskilling and reskilling and relevance to labour market needs are also highly valued** (both selected by 11 or 73.3%). These findings underline that micro-credentials are designed to adapt quickly to the needs of workers and industries, making them ideal for continuous professional development and keeping pace with the evolving job market. In line with this finding, the possibility to quickly respond to labour market needs (selected by 10 organisations or 66.7%) reflects the agility of micro-credentials in delivering timely and relevant training, an advantage over slower, more rigid traditional qualifications.

Other notable advantages include **low cost and their suitability for lifelong learning** which were selected by the majority of providers (both cited by 8 organisations or 53.3%), which make micro-credentials an attractive option for those seeking affordable, flexible learning solutions that can be pursued at different stages of life. The short duration and ability to validate prior learning (both cited by 7 organisations or 46.7% of them) to a lesser extent, but were also seen as a characteristic benefit of micro-credentials.

Interestingly, fewer providers (6) see the advantage of easy identification in the online format, and only 3 note the benefits of micro-credentials being digitalised and easy to manage.

In summary, the data demonstrates that the main strengths of micro-credentials lie in their flexibility, accessibility, and responsiveness to labour market needs. In comparison, the advantages offered relating to the short duration, the validation and recognition of prior learning, the possibility to identify certification in online format and the benefits of digitalisation are less likely to be recognised as important benefits.

**Figure 25. Advantages of micro-credentials over more traditional forms of qualifications and competence recognition (multiple choice, frequency of organisations)**



The figure below shows the various reasons organisations offer micro-credentials, highlighting the primary motivations for integrating them into their educational and training programs.

The most frequently cited reason is to **train or onboard prospective or new employees** (9 providers, 60%). This indicates that micro-credentials are highly valued for their practical application in workforce development, particularly for introducing new hires to essential skills and knowledge. It shows how micro-credentials are used to fill immediate needs in professional settings, ensuring that employees can quickly adapt to their roles.

The second most common reasons are to **respond to the needs of employers for specific education and training** and to **respond to the needs of learners for specific education and training opportunities** (each chosen by 8 organisations or 53.3% of all the respondents).

Other notable reasons, not selected by a majority of the survey respondents, including keeping up with educational innovations and increasing awareness about services and branding opportunities, (7 or 46.7% of the providers). This reflects how micro-credentials are also seen as a way to remain competitive and innovative in the educational space while simultaneously enhancing organisational visibility.

The data also shows that organisations use micro-credentials to upskill or reskill their own employees (6 or 40%) and to facilitate cooperation with other education and training providers or to increase the speed with which various education and training needs are being met (5 or 33.3%).

The least amount organisations focus on reasons like securing additional funding or facilitating cooperation with labour market actors (both cited by 4 organisations or 26.7%), indicating that these considerations are much less central for providers.

In summary, the main drivers for offering micro-credentials revolve around their utility in workforce development and their adaptability to specific training needs, while also playing a role in innovation and organisational branding.

**Figure 26. Reasons for offering micro-credentials (multiple choice, frequency of organisations)**



### 4.3 Challenges and barriers

The figure below identifies the **main barriers and challenges to the uptake of micro-credentials in terms of policy-making**, highlighting significant structural and regulatory obstacles.

- The most frequently mentioned and evident challenge is the **lack of integration of micro-credentials into the national qualifications framework** (selected by 11 organisations or 73.3%). This reflects a major gap, as the absence of formal recognition within existing educational and certification systems limits the value and portability of micro-credentials.
- Two other significant challenges are the **lack of legislation regulating micro-credentials and the lack of strategic policies promoting micro-credentials** (each mentioned by 9 organisations). Without clear legal frameworks and government-backed initiatives, the growth and widespread acceptance of micro-credentials are hindered. This points to the need for stronger policy efforts to formalise micro-credentials within educational and employment structures.
- The **lack of general elements and principles for the design and issuance of micro-credentials** (mentioned by 7 organisations or 46.7%), highlights concerns around standardisation. Without agreed-upon guidelines, the consistency and credibility of micro-credentials may vary, potentially undermining their value across different sectors and regions.
- A group of three obstacles challengers were mentioned with equal frequency. The **lack of international or regional collaboration, the lack of guiding support documents and the lack of available data on the outcomes and impact of micro-credentials** (all three mentioned in 6 cases) suggest that micro-

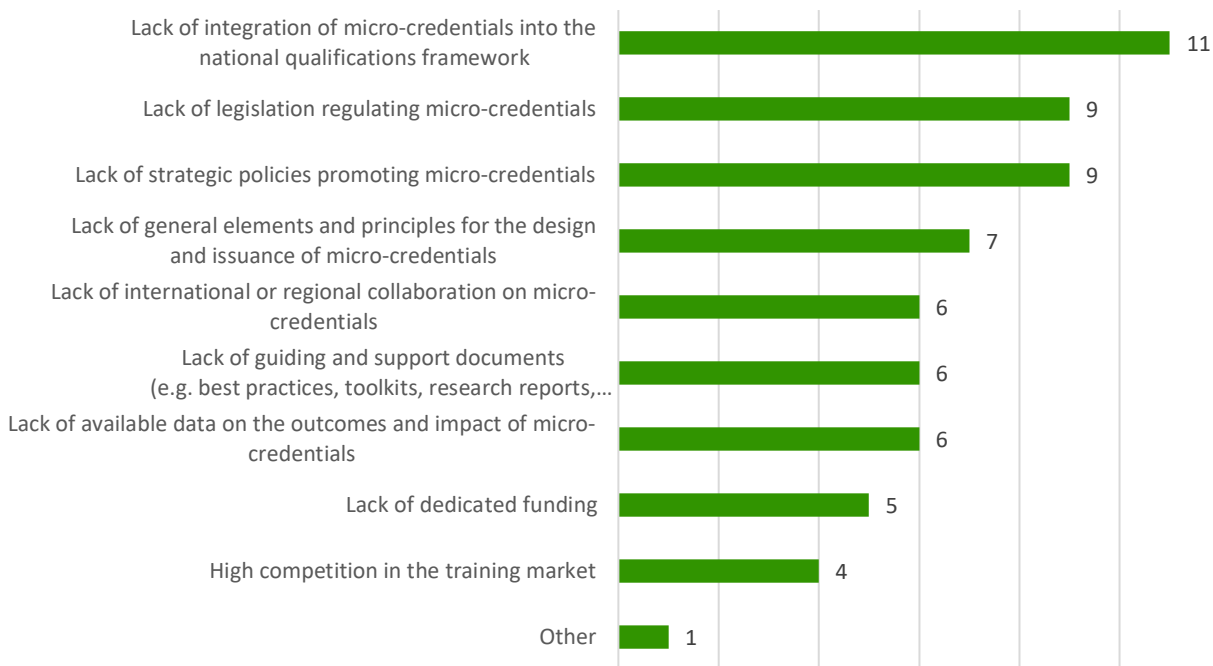


credentials would benefit from more cohesive, cross-border efforts to establish best practices and shared understanding, as well as more systematic data collection and monitoring.

- Other barriers, such as dedicated funding, and high competition in the training market were the least often occurring elements among providers.

In conclusion, the data shows that **instead of financial constraints, a more robust regulatory framework, policy support, and international collaboration could facilitate the growth of micro-credentials.** Addressing these challenges could help unlock the full potential of micro-credentials, ensuring they are recognised, standardised, and effectively integrated into existing education and training ecosystems.

**Figure 27. Main barriers/challenges to the uptake of micro-credentials in terms of policy-making (multiple choice, frequency of organisations)**



Providers were also surveyed about the main barriers and challenges to the uptake of micro-credentials among potential recipients. Results show a clear focus on the lack of recognition as the most significant issue, complementing the results discussed above.

An **overwhelming majority of the organisations** (12 or 80%) cite **the lack of recognition of micro-credentials as the top barrier to the uptake of micro-credentials.** Thus, providers agree that without formal acknowledgement from employers, educational institutions, or regulatory bodies, micro-credentials may be viewed as less valuable or reliable, which deters potential learners from pursuing them.

Another major challenge, that the majority of providers agree about, is that **micro-credentials are not compatible with the national qualifications framework** (8 organisations or 53.3%). This reflects a structural issue where micro-credentials are not fully integrated into existing systems, limiting their perceived legitimacy and usefulness.

Both the **lack of financial support and the lack of awareness among potential recipients** (each cited by 7 organisations or 46.7%) highlight further practical barriers that hinder access to micro-credentials, but are ranked lower than matters related to NQF integration and recognition.

Other challenges include quality concerns (6 organisations or 40%), which point to hesitations regarding the rigour and standardisation of micro-credentials, as well as insufficient support for lifelong learning and limited availability of programs (both mentioned by 5 organisations). These issues suggest that, while micro-credentials are gaining traction, their widespread implementation may be hindered by the quality and accessibility of the offerings.

Lastly, from the perspective of providers, it seems that portability concerns and the high cost of micro-credentials (each cited by 4 organisations) are ranked as the least important barriers to uptake.

**Figure 28. Main barriers/challenges to the uptake of micro-credentials in case of potential recipients (multiple choice, frequency of organisations)**



## 4.4 Future directions and recommendations

### 4.4.1 General perceptions

The results shown below illustrate how organisations believe the development of micro-credentials should be promoted, with multiple options selected by respondents.

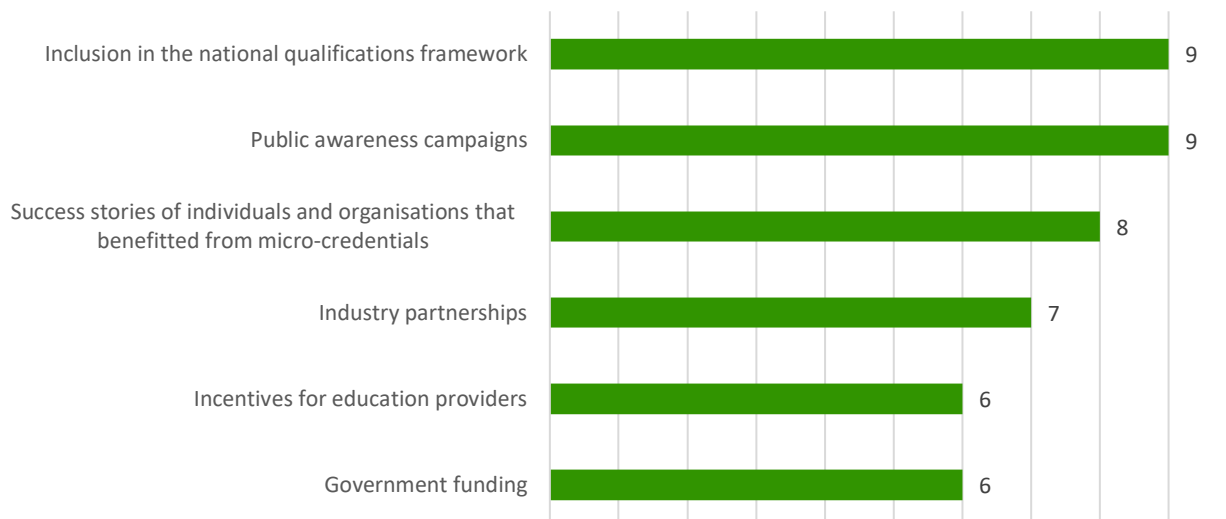
The data reveals that the most commonly cited methods, each mentioned by the majority, are:

- **Inclusion in the national qualifications framework**, highlighting the importance of aligning micro-credentials with recognised educational standards (mentioned by 9 or 60% of the providers)
- **Public awareness campaigns**, suggesting that raising the general public's understanding of micro-credentials is critical to their adoption and success (mentioned by 9 or 60% of the providers)
- **Success stories of individuals and organisations** that benefited from micro-credentials This indicates that showcasing tangible benefits and outcomes is another key method for promoting their development (mentioned by 8 or 53.3% of the providers)

Although not selected by a majority, industry partnerships (selected by 7 organisations) underscore the role of collaboration between educational providers and industry to ensure that micro-credentials are relevant and beneficial in the job market.

Finally, the ranking of incentives for education providers and government funding (each mentioned by 6 organisations), suggest that financial support and incentives are important, but perhaps not seen as vital as awareness, recognition, and industry engagement.

**Figure 29. How should the development of micro-credentials be promoted? (multiple choice, frequency of organisations)**



10 of the 15 organisations (66.7%) responded that **authorities or associations should promote sectoral and cross-industry dialogue for the development of micro-credentials.**

Furthermore, the survey has probed respondents about the primary purposes of cross-industry dialogue for the development of micro-credentials, highlighting key areas that organisations view as essential for collaboration. In general, most question items were selected by almost the majority of respondents.

Accordingly, **more than half of the organisations identified that the most central purpose is identifying needs for micro-credentials (73.3%).** This indicates a strong consensus that cross-industry discussions should focus on determining the specific skill gaps and areas where micro-credentials can have the most impact.

The **second most common purpose** (noted by 10 organisations or 66.7%), **is assessing the impact of micro-credentials on upskilling and reskilling.** This reflects the importance of understanding how micro-credentials contribute to workforce development, particularly in helping individuals gain new skills or improve existing ones to remain competitive in the job market.

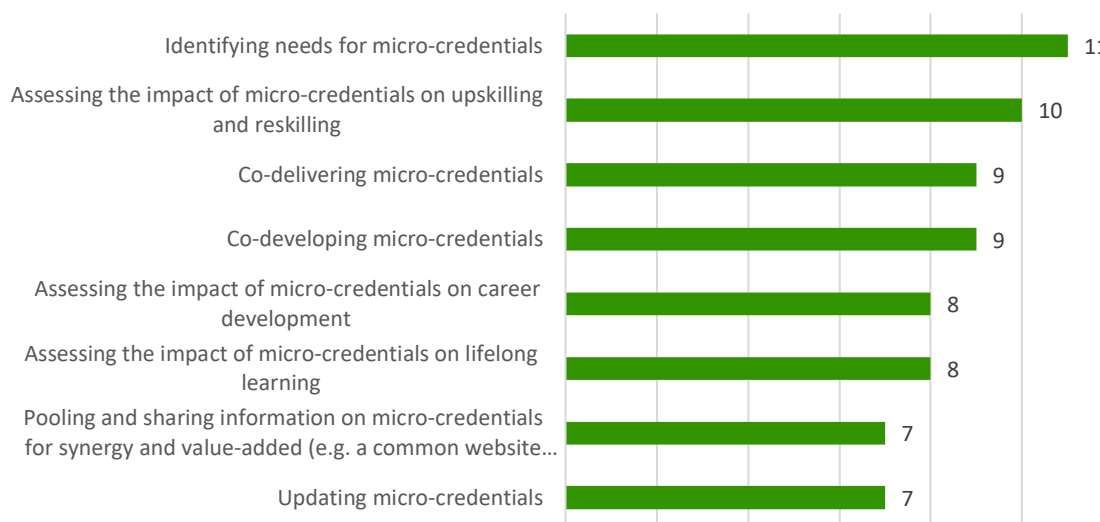
**Co-delivering and co-developing micro-credentials also rank highly as critical objectives,** having an identical ranking (both selected by 9 or 60% of the providers). These responses suggest that collaboration between industries and educational institutions is essential for creating and delivering relevant and effective micro-credentials. Working together ensures that these credentials meet the needs of both learners and employers, while also fostering innovation in the design and implementation of micro-credentials.

Additionally, **assessing the impact of micro-credentials on career development and on lifelong learning** (each cited by 8 organisations or 53.3%) are aspects of cross-industry dialogue that are important for the majority of the providers. These points highlight the need to understand how micro-credentials affect long-term career progression and their role in supporting continuous learning throughout an individual's professional life.

The other elements, although also selected by many respondents, were selected by less than half of the respondents. As follows, pooling and sharing information on micro-credentials and updating micro-credentials

(both selected by 7 respondents) are viewed by some organisations as valuable for ensuring that these educational tools remain current and aligned with industry needs.

**Figure 30. What should the primary purposes of a cross-industry dialogue for the development of micro-credentials? (multiple choice, frequency of organisations)**



The figure shown below summarises the key purposes for which the use of micro-credentials in employment and labour market settings should be promoted.

Overall, **there is not much variation between the various question items listed, all of them being selected by 46.7-66.7% of the providers.** Naturally, many of these purposes can enter into synergies with each other, thus, their popularity is indicative that micro-credentials are accepted to fulfil various, complementary purposes.

The **most frequently cited purpose** (mentioned by 10 organisations or 66.7%), is **to address skills needs in emerging sectors of the economy where qualifications are not yet formalised.** This suggests that micro-credentials are particularly valuable in fast-growing industries where traditional qualifications have not yet caught up with the rapid pace of change, providing an agile solution to meet new skill demands. Moreover, smaller countries, like Seychelles, do not always have the necessary resources ready (be it human, infrastructure, technology etc) to develop and offer full qualifications in some sectors. Credentials of a smaller scope can, however, mitigate these issues to a certain degree.

**Several purposes are ranked equally by 9 organisations** (or 60% of the respondents), including **supplementing existing learning opportunities, providing more affordable education and training opportunities, providing access to education for a greater diversity of learners and better responding to labour market needs.** These responses highlight the versatility of micro-credentials as a tool to broaden access to education, lower the cost barrier, and complement traditional learning pathways by offering more specialised, flexible options.

Purposes such as **upskilling and reskilling the workforce, facilitating digital transformation, and addressing structural unemployment, selected by a majority** (each cited by 8 organisations or 53.3%), show that micro-credentials are seen as a means to boost employability and productivity, particularly in sectors undergoing technological changes. They can play a key role in addressing unemployment by equipping individuals with in-demand skills.

Additionally, 7 organisations (or 46.7%) mention promoting micro-credentials to sustain labour market reforms, support transitions to higher education, facilitate greening of the economy, and assist new graduates in entering the labour market. These responses indicate that micro-credentials are also viewed as an important element in

long-term labour market strategies, environmental sustainability, and helping recent graduates transition more smoothly into the workforce.

**Figure 31. For what purposes should the use of micro-credentials be promoted in employment and labour market settings? (multiple choice, frequency of organisations)**



Below we summarised the results on **which target groups organisations believe could benefit the most from micro-credentials**. Six types of groups, in particular, received a much higher share than the other listed options.

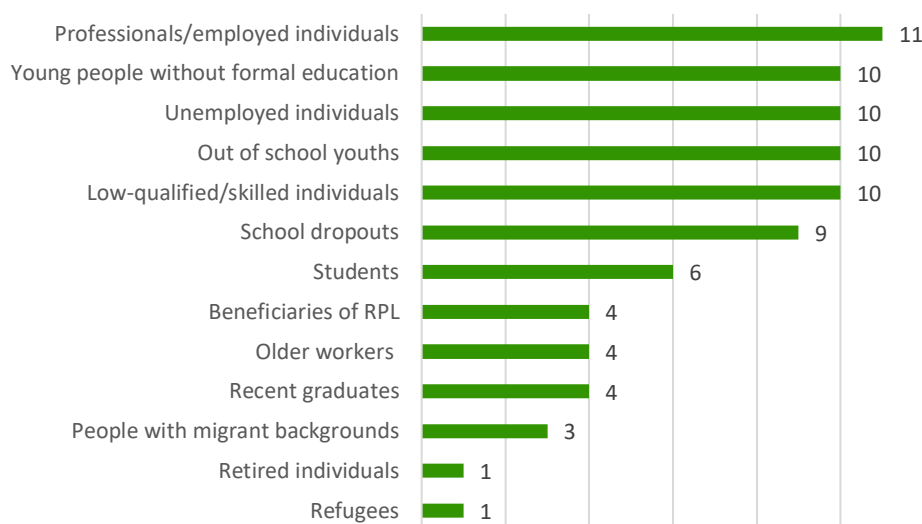
- The most frequently cited group are **professionals/employed individuals** (mentioned by 11 organisations or 73.3%). This suggests that micro-credentials are particularly valuable for individuals already in the workforce who are looking to upskill or reskill in response to changing industry demands, technological advancements, or career progression opportunities.
- Following closely behind, organisations identify **young people without formal education, unemployed individuals, out-of-school youths, and low-qualified/skilled individuals** (each selected 10 times or in 66.7% of the cases) as groups that could significantly benefit from micro-credentials. These demographics likely face barriers to accessing traditional education or employment opportunities, and micro-credentials offer a flexible and accessible way for them to gain marketable skills. The emphasis on these groups reflects the role of micro-credentials in providing educational opportunities to those who may not have followed conventional educational pathways.
- **School dropouts are also a key target group** (selected by 9 organisations or 60%), who could benefit from an alternative route for individuals who are outside of the formal education system.

Other groups, such as students (6 or 40%), older workers, beneficiaries of recognition of prior learning (RPL), and recent graduates (each cited by 4 organisations or 26.7%) are not perceived by stakeholders as primary target groups. Less frequently mentioned groups include people with migrant backgrounds (3 organisations), retired individuals, and refugees (each cited by 1 organisation). This could point to a possible lack of knowledge or

awareness regarding certain features of micro-credentials, for example, the possible synergies with RPL and lifelong learning.

In sum, the figure demonstrates that micro-credentials are seen as particularly beneficial for employed individuals looking to upskill, as well as for marginalised groups such as young people without formal education and the unemployed. These findings highlight the potential of micro-credentials to offer flexible, accessible learning opportunities across diverse demographics, supporting both career advancement and social inclusion.

**Figure 32. Target groups that could benefit the most from micro-credentials (multiple choice, frequency of organisations)**



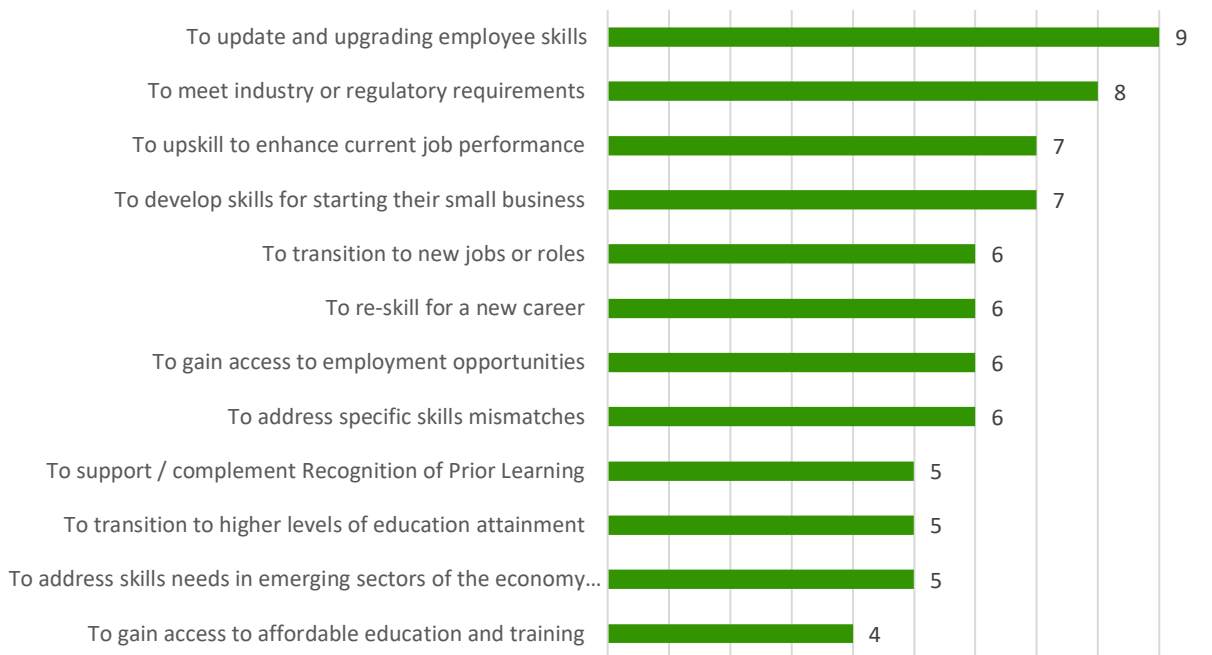
The figure presents the **primary purposes for which recipients use micro-credentials**, as reported by the providers. The options have been chosen by at least a quarter of the providers and two purposes were selected by more than half of the organisations.

- The most commonly cited reason is to **update and upgrade employee skills** (9 organisations or 60%). This indicates that micro-credentials are viewed as a valuable tool for continuous professional development, helping workers stay current in their fields or adapt to new industry standards.
- Following closely, the majority selected to use micro-credentials to **meet industry or regulatory requirements** (53.3%), highlighting their role in ensuring that employees maintain compliance with sector-specific standards. This demonstrates the practical utility of micro-credentials in sectors where ongoing certification or knowledge updates are mandatory.

In comparison, other options have been selected by less than the absolute majority. Two other prominent use cases are upskilling to enhance current job performance and developing skills for starting a small business (each selected by 7 organisations or 46.7% of the respondents). Several organisations (6 each or 40%) also report that micro-credentials are used to transition to new jobs or roles, to re-skill for a new career, to gain access to employment opportunities, and to address specific skills mismatches. These responses underline the versatility of micro-credentials as tools for career mobility.

Less commonly, some organisations note that micro-credentials support Recognition of Prior Learning, help individuals transition to higher levels of education, or address skills needs in emerging sectors (5 or 33.3% of organisations). Finally, a quarter of the organisations mention that micro-credentials provide access to affordable education and training, indicating that cost-effective learning is an important consideration for some recipients.

**Figure 33. What are the primary purposes for which recipients use the micro-credentials offered by your organisation? (multiple choice, frequency of organisations)**



#### 4.4.2 Integration with SNQF

The section outlines the main principles that should guide the design and recognition of micro-credentials in the national qualifications framework, according to the responses collected from providers.

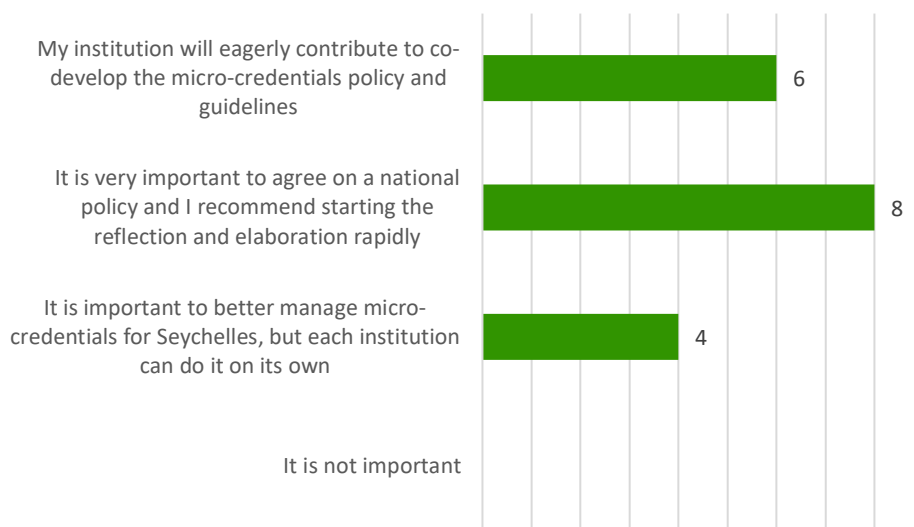
Altogether, **all those responding to the question** (10 organisations 66.7%) **indicated that the SNQF should be opened up to micro-credentials either to a large or to a very large extent** while the remaining organisations did not answer the question. This is a clear sign that micro-credentials have a place in NQFs, according to the providers, the conception of this integration differs slightly across the respondents.

In a number of open questions, respondents were asked to explain their **preferred approach to the integration of micro-credentials in the SNQF** (answers are presented in the Annex). According to the respondents' suggestions, the integration should take a structured approach to recognition, with clear procedures for accreditation, assessment and promotion. Furthermore, one response explained that "The National Qualification Framework should have a clear explanation of what micro-credentials are and should be open to working with institutions and organisations to have these training sessions recognised. The process should be simple bearing in mind that it is not only educational institutions with educators providing these training sessions." Similarly, other suggestions also focused on the importance of providing some kind of recognition for short trainings, quality assurance and facilitating employment and career progression.

Further, the survey asked about the minimum and maximum notional workload for a micro-credential to be included into or recognised in the national qualifications framework. In this case, respondents took a different approach, some of them choosing quite **low thresholds, with around a minimum of 4-10 hours** and a maximum of 15-30 or 36 hours (4 answers). Others opted for a **higher threshold of a minimum of 20-40 hours** and a maximum of 100-150 hours (2 answers), while one respondent opted for a minimum of 90 hours.

Finally, two respondents think that all types of micro-credentials should be opened to the NQF, while one respondent would include those focusing on technical skills, basic digital skills and soft skills. Others would like to include those that focus on job training and would provide certifications for it.

**Figure 34. Views regarding the need for a common policy and guidelines on micro-credentials for lifelong learning and employability in Seychelles**



In the survey, respondents were asked to rank and evaluate the importance of certain purposes that micro-credentials could fulfil. Some purposes were ranked much higher than others, almost all have been selected by at least half of the organisations.

The **overwhelming share selected recognition of micro-credentials** (12 or 80%), which emphasises the importance of micro-credentials having a clear value for learning outcomes in smaller, modular formats. This highlights the necessity for micro-credentials to effectively communicate the skills or knowledge gained to both employers and educational institutions.

**Quality assurance is the second most important principle** (selected by 11 or 73.3%). This principle underscores the need for both internal and external quality checks to ensure the credibility and value of the micro-credentials being issued. Closely following are authenticity and transparency, each selected to equal measure (10 or 66.7%). Authenticity focuses on the verification of the credential holder's identity and learning, while transparency ensures that micro-credentials are measurable, comparable, and understandable, with clear information on learning outcomes.

Several other principles were also highly ranked (each mentioned by 9 or 60%), indicating that organisations would focus on including **learner-centred design, support for flexible learning pathways, valid assessment, and relevance**. These principles highlight the adaptability and targeted nature of micro-credentials, ensuring they meet the needs of learners while aligning with broader educational and labour market requirements. Learner-centred design, in particular, focuses on making the micro-credentials suitable for the specific needs of the target group, while flexible learning pathways allow for customisation based on individual learning journeys.

Further down the list, **portability is also cited by the majority** (8 or 53.3%) emphasises the importance of learners being able to store and share their micro-credentials easily. This principle is key for the transferability of micro-credentials across different sectors and institutions. Lastly, information and guidance were placed at the bottom, selected by almost half of the organisations (46.7% or 7).

To sum up, the principles of recognition, quality assurance, authenticity, and transparency are seen as essential for the successful integration of micro-credentials into national qualifications frameworks. These principles ensure that micro-credentials maintain their value, relevance, and reliability in both educational and employment contexts.



**Figure 35. Main and mandatory principles should be when designing and recognising a micro-credential in the national qualifications framework (multiple choice, frequency of organisations)**



## 4.5 Comparison with ACQF Survey on Micro-credentials

A comparison of key results shows similarities and differences between the state of play and features of micro-credentials captured by this survey of country scope (Seychelles) and the wider picture of micro-credentials at continental level as unveiled by the ACQF-II Micro-credentials survey conducted from September 2023 to January 2024<sup>8</sup>. The survey of micro-credentials in Seychelles allowed a more detailed mapping of the current provision of micro-credentials and their exact characteristics.

This comparison focuses on seven main common variables across the two surveys:

1. Scope: education and training sub-sectors providing micro-credentials
2. Proxies / types of micro-credentials
3. Main characteristics of micro-credentials
4. Target groups of micro-credentials
5. Linkage of micro-credentials with the NQF
6. Main objectives of micro-credentials
7. Principles and elements for designing micro-credentials

**Scope: education and training sub-sectors providing micro-credentials**

<sup>8</sup> ACQF-II (2024). At: <https://acqf.africa/resources/surveys-acqf-ii-nqf-rpl-micro-credentials/micro-credentials-in-africa-results-of-the-survey-2024-full-report>

The comparison of results show substantial differences between the two sets of data, especially in regard to the weight of TVET, sector which is predominant in the wider continental mapping, and limited in the context of Seychelles.

The Seychelles micro-credentials survey has observed that micro-credentials are spread fairly evenly across different education and training sectors. In comparison, the ACQF-II Micro-credentials survey results showed higher frequency of provision from the TVET sector, professional bodies as well as from the private sector via companies and online learning platforms. In turn, according to the mapping in Seychelles, the TVET sector is less strongly represented in the country.<sup>9</sup>

### **Proxies / types of micro-credentials**

The comparison highlights the wide diversity of types and proxies of micro-credentials and visible differences between the continental and the country-specific panorama.

Short courses and part qualifications are among the most frequent, currently existing instances of micro-credentials in Seychelles. However, the continental survey shows that these denominations and types of micro-credentials are indeed not harmonised. More explicitly, the mapping of the ACQF Micro-credentials survey showed that in Africa, professional certificates, skills programmes and vocational certificates tend to be the most common types of micro-credentials.<sup>10</sup>

### **Main characteristics of micro-credentials**

The two surveys reached some similarity of results.

Delving deeper into the characteristics of micro-credentials, a similar set of standard elements have been mapped in the ACQF Micro-credentials survey as well, except for the duration of validity of the credential, which has been ranked higher in the current survey.<sup>11</sup> While results are somewhat limited in the case of the continental survey, both surveys mapped various stackability options that providers offer, but these often do not expand to all of the micro-credentials, leaving areas for improvement in this regard.

### **Target groups of micro-credentials**

The two surveys displayed some similarity of results.

Mapping the target groups of micro-credentials (as reported by providers) showed that employed individuals, students and unemployed individuals were common groups shared across both surveys.<sup>12</sup> However, the comparability is somewhat limited due to the different answer options across the two surveys. In contrast to the country-specific survey Seychelles, individuals and non-formal and informal learners are slightly more clearly represented in the ACQF Micro-credentials survey, these being the main recipient groups.

### **Challenges and linkages of micro-credentials with the NQF**

The identified challenges related to micro-credentials share a number of common features in both surveys.

Similar to Seychelles, many other countries provide the possibility to include certain kinds of micro-credentials in their NQFs. Nonetheless, **much of the mapped micro-credentials are not yet linked to national frameworks.** As follows, similar problems and challenges were identified in both data collection exercises, which at least partly

---

<sup>9</sup> ACQF-II (2024a)

<sup>10</sup> ACQF-II (2024a)

<sup>11</sup> ACQF-II (2024a)

<sup>12</sup> ACQF-II (2024a)

stemmed from the extent of linkages of micro-credentials to the NQFs. The continental survey has shown that prevailing challenges related to micro-credentials revolve around the questions of recognition, standardisation and quality assurance. To cite results, most respondents in the ACQF Micro-credentials survey identified the lack of agreed standards on quality assurance as the main challenge to the uptake of micro-credentials.<sup>13</sup> Furthermore, the challenge of a lack of national policies promoting micro-credentials has been a common pattern in both surveys.

### **Main objectives of micro-credentials**

Despite specificities in both surveys, results share common traits.

The main priorities identified in this country-specific survey are largely aligned with the ACQF Micro-credentials survey as well. Although the set of pre-defined responses was not identical, one can conclude that the objectives consistently on the top of the agenda in both surveys include: better response to labour market needs, provision of reskilling and upskilling opportunities, and supporting lifelong learning.<sup>14</sup>

### **Principles and elements for designing micro-credentials**

The two sets of data collected at continental and country-specific levels share similar findings regarding the two key principles for design of micro-credentials.

The overwhelming majority of the respondents have selected the recognition of micro-credentials and the provision of clear signalling value of learning outcomes as one of the main and mandatory principles for designing and recognising micro-credentials in the NQF. In a similar vein, the ACQF Micro-credentials survey has also unequivocally indicated that recognition by relevant authorities is the number one priority of high-quality micro-credentials., followed by the importance of appropriate quality assurance standards.<sup>15</sup> Hence, **both surveys agree on the high-level priorities and challenges connected to micro-credentials.**

---

13 ACQF-II (2024a)

14 ACQF (2024a)

15 ACQF (2024a).

## 5. Analysis of learners

Chapter 5 of the report summarises the results of the survey targeting learners. These respondents were reached via the contacted providers, for the details of the learners' survey please see Chapter 3. Of the 65 respondents, 28, or 43.1% have obtained or are in the process of obtaining a credential that would fit the definition of micro-credentials. In the following chapter, we differentiate between learners in general, who have not yet acquired a micro-credential and are not currently doing so, and recipients, who have already acquired a micro-credential or are learning towards one currently. Respondents are used to refer to the entire set of collected answers.

### 5.1 Demographic characteristics

The current section discusses and presents the demographic characteristics of the learners' survey, particularly the age and employment status of the group.

Overall, the **age distribution shows a spread more skewed toward middle- and young-age learners.**

In the case of those who received or are currently in the process of receiving a micro-credential, the **most common age cohort for receiving micro-credentials is 35-44** (14 recipients or 50%), indicating that individuals in mid-career are the primary users of micro-credentialing opportunities. This suggests that professionals in this age group are seeking to enhance their skills, stay competitive in their industries, or potentially shift careers.

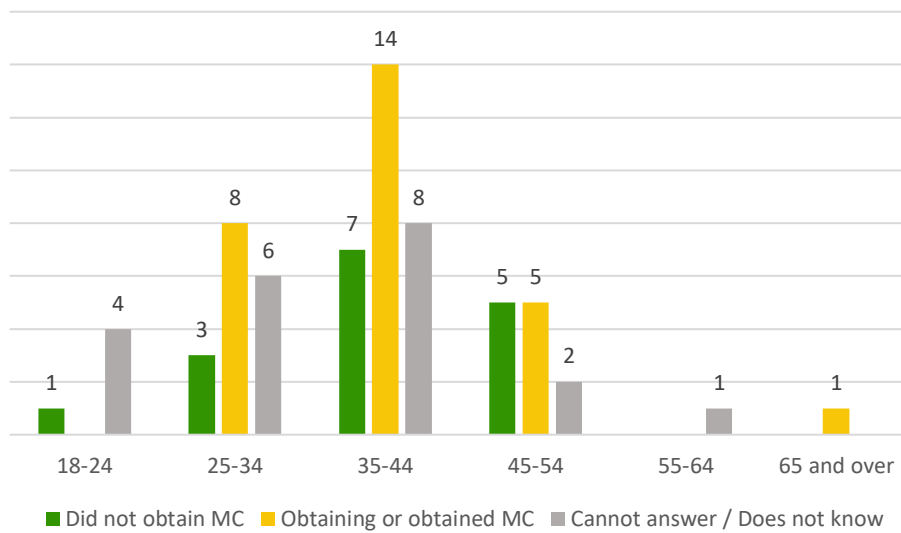
The **next largest group is 25-34** (with 8 recipients or 28.6% of all the respondents). This age range often includes early-career professionals who may be using micro-credentials to advance their skills or transition into new job roles.

Following closely is the 45-54 age group (5 recipients or 17.9%), showing that there is also a significant interest in upskilling or reskilling among older professionals who may be preparing for new challenges or changes in their work environments.

Interestingly, there are no recipients in the case of the 18-24 cohort, which may indicate that younger individuals, particularly those in traditional education, are not yet adopting micro-credentials as extensively. Similarly, there is only one recipient from the 65 and older category.

In conclusion, the data suggests that micro-credentials are most popular among mid-career professionals in the 35-44 age group, but there is notable engagement across a broad range of ages, especially among younger cohorts. Contrasting results to the continental survey show that the share of younger individuals (between 18 and 24) tends to be lower in Seychelles and that those over 55 are also less likely to be recipients. Keeping in mind that the survey is non-representative, this might show that micro-credentials in Seychelles have not yet been exploited by the youngest and oldest cohorts.

Figure 36. Age distribution of learners (single choice, frequency)

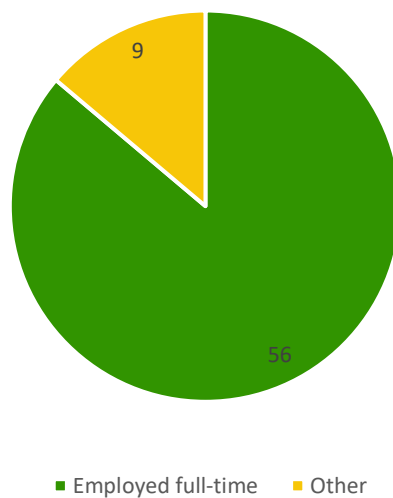


The **vast majority of respondents are employed full-time** both among the learners in general (56 or 86.2%) and the recipients of micro-credentials (24 or 85.7% of the recipients). This result highlights that **micro-credentials are primarily being utilised by those who are already actively engaged in the workforce**. This suggests that many full-time workers are seeking opportunities to upskill or reskill to remain competitive in their careers or to advance within their current roles.

Regardless of whether the respondents have received a micro-credential or not, 9 respondents fall into the other categories. This includes self-employed (2), students (2), part-time employed (1), unemployed (1), retired (1) and other individuals. This relatively smaller proportion indicates that, while there is some engagement with micro-credentials among these groups, the primary focus remains on full-time employees.

In summary, the data shows that micro-credentials are predominantly used by full-time workers, reflecting their relevance and appeal for professional development within existing job roles.

Figure 37. Employment status of learners (single choice, frequency)



## 5.2 Characteristics of micro-credentials

To reiterate, 28 respondents have received or are in the process of obtaining a micro-credential. Out of these, most have received the credential in 2024 (13) or 2023 (8), thus **evidencing an upward trend**. From the respondent group that has not and is currently not in the process of receiving a credential, 8 (50%) are planning to obtain a micro-credential in the future.

Recipients were surveyed about the providers of their micro-credentials, showing that the landscape of providers is quite heterogeneous.

**Online learning platforms are the most common issuers** (7 or 25% of the recipients obtained a micro-credential) highlighting the growing trend of digital education and the convenience and accessibility offered by online platforms for credentialing. This finding is more in line with the results of the ACQF Micro-credentials survey, in contrast to the mapped providers in the survey. Naturally, the discrepancy can be explained by the local focus of the Seychelles survey, meaning the MOOCs and other online learning platforms were not within the scope of the dissemination effort.

Following closely, **public education and training providers, private education and training providers, and companies or employers tend to be the other major providers** (each account for 5 organisations or 17.9%). This indicates a broad distribution of micro-credential issuance across different sectors, with educational institutions (both public and private) and employers recognising the value of micro-credentials in formal education and professional development.

Smaller groups of issuers include NGOs, international organisations, non-profit organisations and government institutions (both cited by 2 organisations). Finally, employer associations and other providers are each mentioned by 1 organisation, suggesting that while less common, industry-specific bodies and alternative providers also play a role in the issuance of micro-credentials, possibly in more niche areas.

**Figure 38. Providers that issue the micro-credentials (single choice, frequency)**



Recipients reported on the different support methods for obtaining micro-credentials.

The **most common source of support comes from employers fully funding the micro-credentials** (mentioned by 12 or 42.9% of those who obtained or are in the process of obtaining a micro-credential). This suggests that employers are very much willing to invest in their employees' development with the use of micro-credentials.

Policymakers could encourage this trend by offering tax incentives or subsidies to companies that invest in micro-credentialing, thereby reinforcing the partnership between the education and employment sectors.

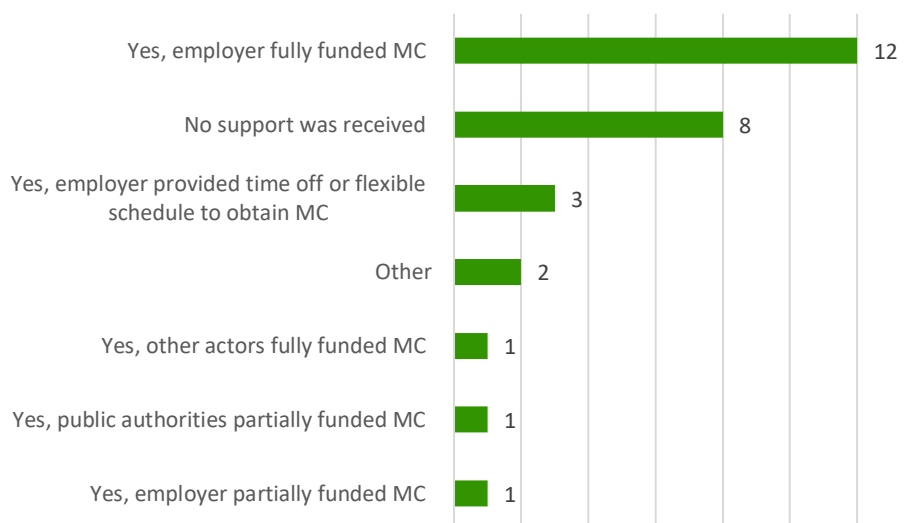
On the other hand, a **quarter of the recipients indicated that no support was received** (8 or 28.6%). This suggests that a significant portion of individuals pursuing micro-credentials are doing so without external assistance, likely shouldering the financial burden themselves. This could point to gaps in awareness, access, or available funding mechanisms for learners.

Other types of support are much less frequent. The provision of time off or flexible schedules by employers (reported by 3 organisations or 10.7%) indicates that some employers are supporting employees' learning through non-monetary means. While this number is relatively small, it highlights an opportunity for policymakers to incentivise employers to offer more flexible working arrangements that facilitate lifelong learning.

Other forms of support, such as partial funding by employers, public authorities, or other actors (mentioned by 1 organisation each), show limited involvement from these sectors.

In conclusion, while employer funding plays a significant role in supporting micro-credentials, a notable proportion of learners receive no support. Financial incentives for employers, expanding public funding options, and promoting flexible work arrangements could be strengthened to render micro-credentials more widely accessible and affordable for all learners.

**Figure 39. Support for obtaining micro-credentials (single choice, frequency)**



As in the case of providers, recipients were also surveyed regarding where the issued micro-credentials belong to.

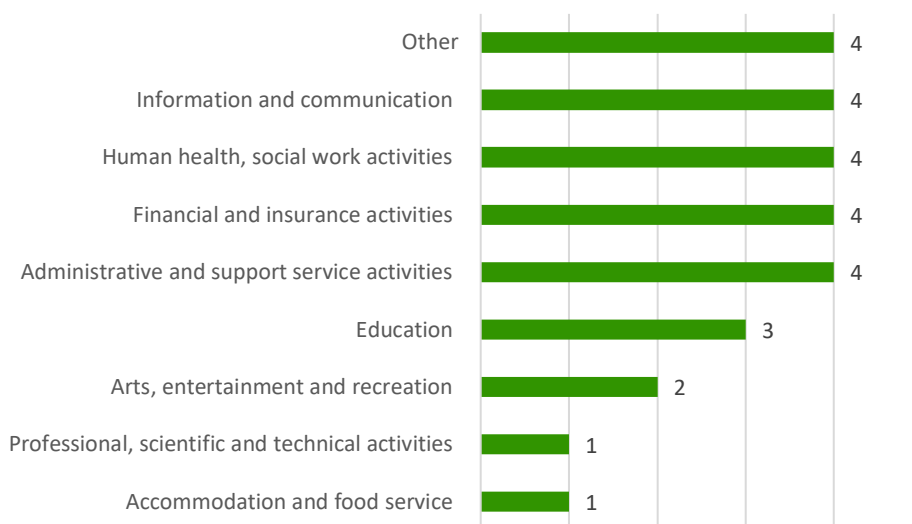
According to the results, **micro-credentials are provided in a wide range of industries**. Four industries, in particular, have been ranked equally in terms of frequency. **Information and communication, human health and social work activities, financial and insurance activities, administrative and support service activities, and other industries**, were each cited by 4 recipients, making up 74.1% of all recipients.

The **education sector is another significant user** (mentioned by 3 recipients or 11.1%), indicating that educators and institutions are also leveraging micro-credentials to enhance professional development and teaching skills, as well as to provide students with relevant, supplementary qualifications.

In contrast, industries such as arts, entertainment and recreation (reported by 2 recipients or 7.4%), and professional, scientific and technical activities and accommodation and food service (each selected by 1 recipient) appear to be less reliant on micro-credentials among the respondents.

In summary, micro-credentials are being used across a wide variety of industries, with notable engagement from sectors such as information and communication, health, finance, and education. However, there is room for further growth in areas like the arts, scientific fields, and hospitality, where adoption may currently be lower.

**Figure 40. Micro-credentials by various industries (single choice, frequency)**



### 5.3 Respondent expectations

The chapter covers the main expectations of recipients when it comes to their objectives for deciding to acquire micro-credentials as well as their recommendations for the improvement of micro-credentials.

With a clear lead, the **main objectives for taking up micro-credentials were personal development and the goal to gain new skills being the most common motivations**, as seen in the figure below (each reported by 22 recipients 78.6%). This highlights that many individuals are pursuing micro-credentials not only for career advancement but also for self-improvement and skill enhancement. For policymakers, this signals an opportunity to promote micro-credentials as a tool for lifelong learning and personal growth, beyond their immediate relevance to job performance. Public campaigns and educational policies could emphasise these broader benefits of micro-credentials to a wider audience, not just professionals.

**Enhancing current job performance is another significant motivation** (17 recipients or 60.7%), suggesting that micro-credentials are increasingly used for career development. Thus, integrating micro-credentialing into workforce development strategies could be a viable strategy for companies to incentivise professional development.

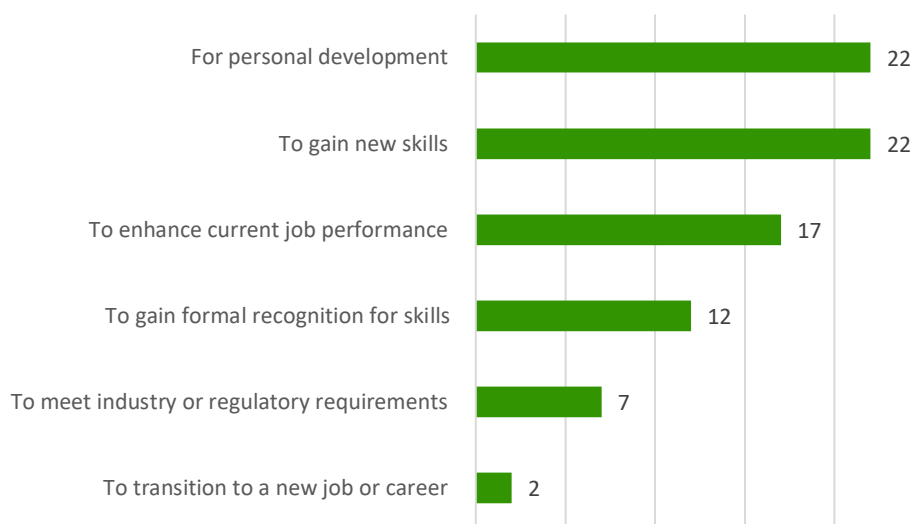
**Formal recognition for skills** (selected by 12 or 42.9% of recipients) was another, although somewhat less frequently selected item, pointing to the importance of validating skills that individuals may have gained through informal or non-traditional learning pathways.

Fewer, a quarter of all the recipients (7) cited meeting industry or regulatory requirements, and only 2 of them mentioned using micro-credentials to transition to a new job or career. These values suggest that micro-credentials are not yet widely seen as a tool for job mobility or regulatory compliance.



In summary, the key objectives for pursuing micro-credentials focus on personal growth, skill acquisition, and job performance enhancement. Policymakers can support these aims by integrating micro-credentials into broader educational and workforce strategies, increasing recognition, and ensuring they serve both professional development and personal enrichment needs.

**Figure 41. Main recipient objectives for taking up micro-credentials (multiple choice, frequency)**



The figure below presents valuable insights into how respondents in general believe micro-credentials can be improved in Seychelles.

The most prominent suggestion, **to increase awareness and information** (cited by 42 respondents in total and 19 or 67.9% of the recipients), signals a clear gap in communication and the population’s level of knowledge.

The call to **improve the accessibility and availability of courses** (39 respondents in total, 20 or 71.4% of recipients of credentials) reflects potential structural barriers that need to be addressed. Aligning with this recommendation, financial incentives or subsidies could make these programmes more accessible to a wider demographic, as the recommendation to offer more funding options for learners proves (27 respondents in total and 14 recipients or 50%).

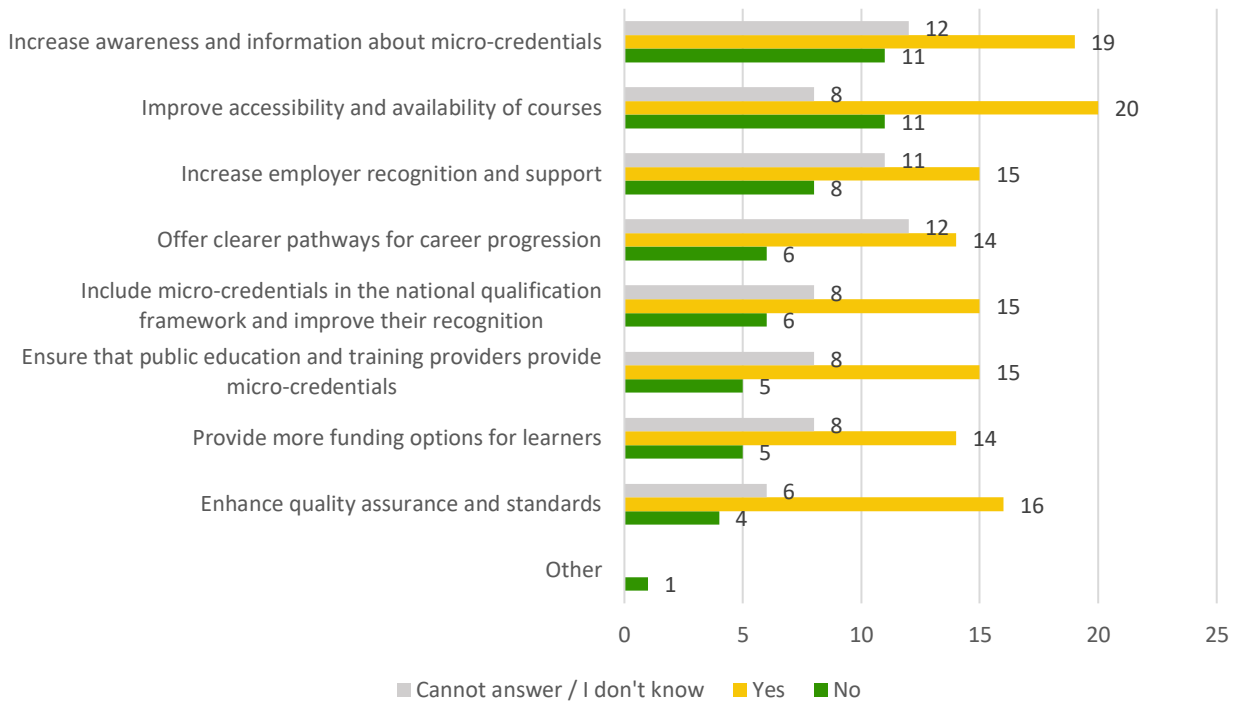
The emphasis on **increasing employer recognition and support** (34 respondents and 15 or 67.9% of the recipients selected this option) suggests that micro-credentials may not yet be fully integrated into workforce development strategies, for example in terms of standards for recognising micro-credentials within recruitment, professional development, and promotions. Further supporting the importance of recognition, respondents also selected in large numbers that clearer career progression pathways should be provided (32 respondents, 15 recipients or 50%).

Moreover, the desire to **include micro-credentials in the national qualifications** framework (29 respondents, 15 or 53.6% of recipients) reflects the need for formal integration. Ensuring that micro-credentials are recognised alongside traditional qualifications would enhance their legitimacy and utility. Along this line, quality assurance and standards (26 respondents, 16 or 57.1% of recipients) should be a policy focus to maintain the credibility of these credentials, ensuring that they meet consistent and transparent criteria that employers and learners can trust.

In summary, these recommendations provide a roadmap for policymakers to address both awareness and structural barriers to the widespread adoption of micro-credentials. By improving access, recognition, and quality

assurance, alongside formal integration into national frameworks, micro-credentials could become a more powerful tool for skills development and workforce transformation in Seychelles.

**Figure 42. Respondents' main recommendations to improve micro-credentials in Seychelles by micro-credential recipients (multiple choice, frequency)**



## 6. Summary

The Seychelles Micro-credentials Survey, undertaken in the context of the cooperation between the project African Continental Qualifications Framework (ACQF-II) and Seychelles Qualifications Authority, aimed to map the micro-credentials landscape in Seychelles. The survey serves as a foundational study to inform policy and practice regarding the integration of micro-credentials into the Seychelles National Qualifications Framework (SNQF). With the increasing global relevance of micro-credentials for skills development and lifelong learning, this report provides a comprehensive overview of their current implementation, benefits, challenges, and future directions in Seychelles. The survey's findings will support the national dialogue on policy development, quality assurance, and the role of micro-credentials in meeting evolving labour market demands.

### Overview of Micro-credentials in Seychelles

The survey captured responses from 15 providers of micro-credentials in Seychelles, covering a total of 140 credentials, as well as 65 responses from potential and current recipients of these credentials. Micro-credentials, defined as short-term learning experiences that provide specific, targeted skills, are increasingly recognised for their flexibility and potential to address specific learning and training needs.

In a short summary of the current provision of micro-credentials, the landscape shows a diverse picture, with offerings across various sectors including government institutions, and private and public educational providers. The micro-credentials themselves vary in scope and purpose, from short courses to in-house training and skills development programs. A wide array of industries, notably information and communication technology (ICT), health and social work, education, professional, scientific and technical activities and accommodation and food services, were identified as actively utilising micro-credentials.

Micro-credentials in Seychelles are still in a nascent stage of formalisation, with the majority of credentials not yet integrated into the SNQF. However, a significant proportion of providers expressed intentions to register their credentials within the national qualifications framework, signalling a shift in the attitudes of the providers. The survey also highlighted the flexibility of micro-credentials, with providers offering both in-person and blended learning modalities, catering to the varying needs of learners and industries.

### Characteristics of Micro-credentials

The study found that the majority of micro-credentials offered in Seychelles have a workload between 20 and 50 hours, with the majority of the courses requiring between 20 to 30 hours to complete. This suggests that current micro-credentials are typically short and focused on delivering specific skills or knowledge within a manageable time frame.

Micro-credentials in Seychelles are primarily non-credit-bearing, with only a small proportion recognised within formal educational structures. Additionally, the study found that most micro-credentials are not yet registered with the SNQF, though two-thirds of providers plan to register their offerings in the future, indicating an increasing move toward formal recognition.

It is important to note that most of the provided micro-credentials are not accredited or quality assured by a competent body. Although there is a smaller portion of around a third that received quality assurance, this is an area with a significant potential to increase the trustworthiness and value of these credentials. Furthermore, half of the surveyed micro-credentials lack stackability options, while around a third provide possibilities of combining credentials.

The survey also revealed that micro-credentials tend to take a more traditional approach in the format and mode of learning. Most credentials use an in-person or onsite learning mode and the credentials are issued in paper format. Digital credentials are being used less frequently, with a possible indication of an increase in digitally stored and shared credentials. In terms of assessment, internal assessments are the predominant method, with

external assessments or automated methods used far less frequently. Furthermore, most quality assurance practices are various forms of internally applied measures, with external measures being much less common. This reliance on internal procedures may limit the perceived value of micro-credentials by employers and other external stakeholders.

Thus, according to the survey results, there are a number of areas where a more systematic approach and formalisation could benefit micro-credentials, particularly by increasing their trustworthiness as well as utility.

### **Target Groups for Micro-credentials**

The survey identified several key target groups for micro-credentials in Seychelles, including professionals, low-skilled workers, and employees in highly competitive sectors such as tourism and information technology. The data showed that professionals and employed individuals are the most common recipients of micro-credentials, reflecting a strong focus on upskilling and reskilling within the workforce. Most frequently, recipients are taking up micro-credentials for personal development, to gain new skills and to enhance current job performance.

Micro-credentials are also seen as a valuable tool for vulnerable groups such as unemployed individuals, school dropouts, and young people without formal education. By providing accessible, targeted learning opportunities, micro-credentials have the potential to support social inclusion and improve the employability of marginalised groups. However, the survey found that certain groups, such as recent graduates, retirees, and people with migrant backgrounds, are less frequently targeted by micro-credential programs, suggesting an opportunity to broaden the reach of these offerings.

In terms of age, the providers reported that the majority of micro-credential recipients fall within the 18-45 age range, with mid-career professionals (aged 35-44) representing the largest group. In a similar vein, most recipients completing the survey were aged between 25-44, thus only slightly older. This indicates that micro-credentials are particularly appealing to (mid-career) individuals seeking to advance their careers or transition into new roles, reflecting the growing importance of lifelong learning. Furthermore, results also show that those with vocational or technical training or (higher) secondary education are the most frequent recipients.

### **Perceived Benefits of Micro-credentials**

Micro-credentials were widely seen as offering several key benefits, particularly in terms of their accessibility, flexibility, and relevance to the labour market. The majority of respondents highlighted the value of micro-credentials in providing learning opportunities to diverse groups, including those who may not have access to traditional educational pathways. The flexibility of micro-credentials, which allows for upskilling and reskilling in response to changing job market demands, was also seen as a major advantage.

Another key benefit identified was the ability of micro-credentials to offer targeted, industry-specific skills that are directly relevant to employers. This makes micro-credentials particularly valuable for sectors where continuous skill development is essential, such as ICT, healthcare, and education. Respondents also noted the relatively low cost of micro-credentials compared to traditional qualifications, making them an affordable option for learners seeking to improve their skills.

Micro-credentials were also seen as an effective tool for lifelong learning, with many respondents highlighting their potential to support continuous professional development throughout an individual's career. The ability to quickly respond to labour market needs was seen as a key advantage, allowing workers to stay competitive in fast-changing industries.

### **Challenges and Barriers to Uptake**

Despite the numerous benefits, the survey also identified several challenges and barriers to the uptake of micro-credentials in Seychelles. With regard to uptake, the most frequently cited challenge was the lack of integration with the Seychelles National Qualifications Framework (SNQF), which limits the formal recognition and

portability of these credentials. Without formal recognition, micro-credentials may be viewed as less valuable by employers and educational institutions, reducing their appeal to potential learners.

Another major challenge was the lack of specific legislation and policies governing micro-credentials, as well as the absence of a clear national strategy to promote their use. This regulatory gap hinders the widespread adoption of micro-credentials and limits their potential to contribute to national skills development goals. Respondents also highlighted the lack of international and regional collaboration on micro-credentials, which further limits their portability and recognition across borders.

Respondents identified similar barriers to the uptake of micro-credentials by potential recipients. Most cited the lack of recognition and the lack of integration with the SNQF. Financial support, the availability and accessibility of these credentials and the low awareness of recipients were also identified as hindering the access to micro-credentials.

### **Future Directions and Recommendations**

The survey results pointed to several key areas for future development in the micro-credentials landscape in Seychelles.

First and foremost, as signalled by respondents, there is a clear need to integrate micro-credentials into the SNQF to ensure their formal recognition and portability.

Results on quality assurance show that most micro-credentials are not accredited or quality assured by a competent body. While there are internal quality assurance practices implemented, external quality assurance is much less frequent. Thus, the establishment of consistent, transparent and clear quality assurance processes and requirements is recommended, both with regard to internal and external practices. While the usage of learning outcomes is well-spread, not all organisations design activities based on these. For the portability and stackability of micro-credentials, facilitating the usage of learning outcomes would be crucial to unlock the full potential of these credentials.

Public awareness campaigns were also identified as a critical factor in promoting the uptake of micro-credentials. Many respondents emphasised the need to raise awareness among both learners and employers about the value of micro-credentials and their potential to meet specific labour market needs. Success stories from individuals and organisations that have benefited from micro-credentials could be used to demonstrate their effectiveness and encourage wider adoption. Furthermore, learners and other target groups could be better informed about their learning opportunities via strengthening providers' usage of catalogues of learning experiences or including micro-credentials in public-facing databases.

Another key recommendation, shared by the majority of providers, was to strengthen cross-industry dialogue and collaboration on the development and delivery of micro-credentials. By working together, education providers and industry stakeholders can ensure that micro-credentials are aligned with the specific skills needs of the labour market, that they provide real value to both learners and employers and are aligned with the objectives of policy-makers as well. Co-developing and co-delivering micro-credentials with industry partners was seen as an essential step toward enhancing their relevance and impact.

Providers agree that micro-credentials could fulfil various purposes, ranging from addressing skills needs in emerging sectors where qualifications are not yet formalised, supplementing existing learning opportunities and providing more accessible learning opportunities to a greater diversity of learners. Furthermore, the majority also thinks that micro-credentials are a good solution to better respond to changing labour market needs.

Crucially, most voiced that they would be willing to contribute to the development of micro-credential policy and guidelines in a national framework.

The Seychelles Micro-credentials Survey highlights the growing importance of micro-credentials as a flexible, accessible tool for skills development, lifelong learning, and employability. While micro-credentials offer numerous benefits, including their relevance to labour market needs and their affordability compared to traditional qualifications, challenges remain. To fully realise the potential of micro-credentials, policymakers will need to address certain systematic barriers, such as the need for wider recognition, quality assurance and awareness.

## 7. Sources

ACQF. 2023. Thematic Brief 13. Micro-credentials: Concepts, debates, experiences – towards a common understanding in different parts of the world. <https://acqf.africa/capacity-development-programme/thematic-briefs/acqf-thematic-brief-13-micro-credentials-concepts-debates-experiences-2013-towards-a-common-understanding-in-different-parts-of-the-world>

ACQF-II (2024a). Survey on micro-credentials: comprehensive report. <https://acqf.africa/resources/surveys-acqf-ii-nqf-rpl-micro-credentials/micro-credentials-in-africa-results-of-the-survey-2024-full-report>

ACQF-II. (2024b). Survey on micro-credentials: summary report infographic. <https://acqf.africa/resources/surveys-acqf-ii-nqf-rpl-micro-credentials/micro-credentials-survey-results-2024>

Cedefop (2022). Microcredentials for labour market education and training: first look at mapping microcredentials in European labour market-related education, training and learning: take-up, characteristics and functions. Luxembourg: Publications Office. Cedefop research paper, No 87. <http://data.europa.eu/doi/10.2801/351271>

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>

Cedefop, (2023). Microcredentials for labour market education and training: the added value for end users. Publications Office of the European Union. Cedefop research paper. <https://data.europa.eu/doi/10.2801/141643>

European Union. 2022. Council Recommendation of 16 June 2022 on a European approach to micro-credentials for lifelong learning and employability 2022/C 243/02 ST/9790/2022/INIT <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/DE/TXT/?uri=uriserv:OJ.C .2022.243.01.0010.01.ENG>

UNESCO (2022). Towards a common definition of micro-credentials. <https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000381668>

## 8. Annex

### 8.1 Summary tables

Table 1. Summary of open-ended questions on the integration of micro-credentials into the SNQF<sup>16</sup>

How should the national qualifications framework be opened up to micro-credentials.	Minimum workload proposed	Type of micro-credentials to be included
Structured recognition, accreditation, assessing, promoting	10 - 15 hours	All
The National Qualification Framework should have a clear explanation of what micro-credentials are and should be open to working with institutions and organisations to have these training sessions recognised. The process should be simple bearing in mind that it is not only educational institutions with educators providing these training sessions.	30-10	all micro-credential offering training over 10 hours
To give some form of credibility to the certification of the lowest training.	36 hours	Certification of Training/ on job training
To recognise training done by individuals, to ensure the quality of micro-credentials, to facilitate employment and career progression	Basic certificate in specified training	Relevance: Align with current industry standards and educational needs. Quality: Delivered by accredited institutions or organisations with rigorous assessment methods. Transparency: Clearly defined learning outcomes, assessment criteria, and workload. Recognition: Offer value in terms of career advancement or further education opportunities.
	Half day training sessions are much welcomed by small tourism operators who welcome the idea of training but cannot afford to be away from their business for long as they are the ones running their operations. As low as 4 hours can therefore be recognised, as long as it meets the pre-determined requirements of the national qualifications framework.	Technical Skills, Basic Digital Skills, Soft Skills
	Minimum 30 hrs and maximum 100 hrs	
	More than 90 hours	
	The minimum notional workload for a micro-credential is often around 20 to 40 hours. This ensures that the micro-	

<sup>16</sup> Rows are not indicating answers from the same respondent.



credential represents a significant but manageable learning experience, demonstrating a meaningful acquisition of skills or knowledge. The maximum notional workload for a micro-credential typically ranges up to around 100 to 150 hours. This upper limit ensures that micro-credentials remain distinct from more comprehensive qualifications like certificates or diplomas.

## 8.2 List of registered part qualifications in Seychelles

	<b>Title of the part qualification</b>	<b>NQF level</b>	<b>No. of credits</b>	<b>Field of education as per your own used classification</b>	<b>Sub-field</b>
1.	Language Proficiency for English Teachers	Level 4	6	02 Culture and Arts	(3) Language
2.	Kreol Seselwa atraver son lalang ek son kiltir	Level 3	6	02 Culture and Arts	(3) Language
3.	Preparatory Skipper Course for Artisanal Fisherman	Level 3	10	01 Environment and Natural Resources Fisheries	(9) Maritime
4.	Preparatory Skipper Course for industrial Fisherman	Level 3	10	01 Environment and Natural Resources Fisheries	(9) Maritime
5.	Basic Training in QuickBooks Accounting Software	Level 3	8	03 Business Commerce and Management Studies	(4) Accounting and Finance
6.	Sewing Skills for Beginners	Level 3	12	02 Culture and Arts	(4) Fashion Design
7.	Basic Soft Furnishing	Level 3	12	02 Culture and Arts	(6) Upholstery and Soft Furnishing
8.	Basic First Aid	Level 3	4	08 Health Sciences and Social Services	(3) Curative Health
9.	Semi-Industrial Longline Fishing Techniques	Level 3	14	01 Environment and Natural Resources	(8) Fisheries
10.	Office Procedures Level 1	Level 3	3	03 Business Commerce and Management Studies	(7) Generic Management
11.	Business Communication in	Level 3	3	02 Culture and Arts	(2)

	English Level 1				Communication
12.	Office Procedures Level 2	Level 3	6	03 Business Commerce and Management Studies	(7) Generic Management
13.	Business Communication in English Level 2	Level 3	6	02 Culture and Arts	(2) Communication
14.	Oral Health Care	Level 3	12	08 Health Sciences and Social Services	(1) Preventive Health
15.	Maritime Crime and Correctional Administration	Level 5	8	07 Laws and Security	Safety in Society
16.	Maritime Crime and Law Enforcement (short course)	Level 5	7	07 Laws and Security	Safety in Society
17.	Aseptic Compounding of Sterile Pharmaceutical Products	Level 5		08 Health Sciences and Social Services	(6) Medical goods
18.	Advanced Maritime Crime and Law Enforcement Management	Level 6	8	07 Laws and Security	Safety in Society
19.	Advanced Maritime Crime and Correctional Administration	Level 6	8	07 Laws and Security	Safety in Society