

Insights on MC in the Italian contexts

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Micro-credentials The regulatory framework in Italy

Micro-credentials are widely considered as one of the most promising innovation assets for addressing the challenges of

- Persistent of skills mismatches;
- Limited integration between active labour market policies;
- Rigidity of education and VET systems;
- Social inclusion: continuing inequalities in access to learning opportunities for disadvantaged and underrepresented groups;
- Insufficient personalisation of learning pathways;
- Weak mechanisms for the recognition, stackability, and transferability of skills and competences acquired through any learning experience.

These developments should be pursued “in accordance with individual aptitudes and choices, and from a personal, civic, social and employment perspective”, as stated in Article 1 of **Legislative Decree No. 13 of 16 January 2013**, which effectively established the individual right to lifelong learning in Italy and it is the basis for the competences certification system in Italy.

Definition of “Micro-credentials”

In Italy micro-credentials were defined as “**micro-qualifications**” in the (second) **Italian Referencing Report** which links national qualifications to the European Qualifications Framework (EQF) - approved in June **2023** with an Interministerial Decree. This approach was formally adopted and have been incorporated into the National Competence Certification System(SNCC).

Micro-qualifications are defined as clusters of competences which constitute components of broader qualifications. They can be achieved through short, personalised and modular learning pathways.

This definition makes it possible to recognise and value learning acquired in formal, non-formal and informal settings, while supporting the progressive accumulation of competences and their portability over time.



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Ministerial Decree No. 115/2024 of the Minister of Labour and Social Policies, regulates the services for the identification, validation and certification (IVC) of competences and envisages the establishment of a catalogue of micro-qualifications.

The decree adopts a subsidiarity-oriented approach, whereby the development and management of micro-qualifications involve multiple levels of governance and stakeholders. While national authorities provide the overarching framework, regions, education and training providers, employers, and other actors contribute to the identification, validation, certification, and recognition of competences, ensuring responsiveness to local and sector-specific needs.

Ministerial Decree No. 931/2024 of the Minister of University and Research, which establishes the criteria for the recognition of **university credits** (CFU – University Educational Credits) acquired through extracurricular learning experiences.

Although the decree does not explicitly regulate micro-credentials, it creates a favourable framework for their implementation by recognizing learning outcomes acquired through extracurricular activities and establishing procedures for their conversion into university credits (CFU). This aligns with the core principles of micro-credentials, namely the certification, recognition, and portability of learning outcomes obtained through diverse learning pathways.



Adult participation

The overall objective is to increase adult participation in learning and training.

They allow adults to acquire, update, or certify specific competences without committing to full degree programmes or lengthy training courses.

By recognizing Learning Outcomes (LOs) and facilitating their validation and certification, micro-credentials can also encourage lifelong learning, upskilling, and reskilling, particularly among adults seeking to improve their employability or adapt to changing labour market demands.



Insights

Shared concept of MC

- Clearly defined Learning Outcomes (knowledge, skills, and competences)
- Create trusted and portable evidence of learning
- Short, targeted and modular learning pathways

Digital nature of MC

Support interoperability and recognition (trust) across different education and employment systems
They can be integrated into digital credential wallets, learner records, and online learning and professional profiles repertories (e.g. Europass)

Flexibility

- Provide flexible delivery modes (online, blended, part-time)
- Facilitate lifelong, life wide and life-deep dimensions
- Overcome some rigidities associated with qualification standards

Learner-centred

- Enhance learners' greater autonomy over their learning pathways
- Reduce barriers to participation by adapting to learners' time, financial, and professional constraints
- Respond more effectively to the needs of individuals entering, re-entering or transitioning within the labour market





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