

The SKILLS Bridge Masterclass Series

Promoting Lifelong Learning (LLL) for the Future of Work

Concept Note

Small Steps, Big Gains – Micro-credentials for Lifelong Learning

15 November 2023 - 12:00 – 13:30 GMT



Objectives

Micro-credentials hold immense potential for lifelong learning. They offer a flexible and targeted approach to acquiring specific skills, enabling individuals to stay relevant and adaptable in today's rapidly evolving job market. Micro-credentials can be earned in shorter timeframes, providing a faster pathway to gaining in-demand knowledge and expertise. The recent joint report from the ILO, UNESCO and the World Bank highlighted the opportunities that micro-credentials bring to foster lifelong learning and increase flexible pathways towards alternative learning to traditional TVET¹. The report cited different real-world examples of how micro-credentials have been integrated into formal skills systems while pointing out that this process presents various challenges, particularly in the case of L/MIC countries. Being a relatively recent trend, the report cautioned that there was insufficient empirical evidence of their impact and success and a need to monitor their development closely.

As the popularity of micro-credentials grows, it becomes essential to **establish rigorous standards** and accreditation processes to **maintain the value and integrity** of these credentials. Another challenge lies in the **recognition and transferability** of micro-credentials. Employers and educational institutions need to acknowledge and accept micro-credentials as valid qualifications comparable to traditional degrees. Moreover, the **accessibility and affordability** of micro-credentials can be a challenge. While they are often more cost-effective than traditional degree programs, some individuals may still face financial barriers to accessing micro-credential programs. Lastly, the **rapidly changing nature of industries** and job requirements poses a challenge for micro-

¹ ILO, UNESCO and the World Bank (2023) [Building better formal TVET systems: Principles and practices in low-and middle-income countries](#)

credentials. As new skills and technologies emerge, it is crucial for micro-credential programs to keep pace with these changes and continuously update their offerings.

Addressing these challenges and leveraging micro-credentials' potential can unlock immense opportunities for lifelong learners. With the right frameworks and support systems in place, micro-credentials can empower individuals to acquire relevant skills, enhance their employability, and pursue continuous professional development throughout their careers.

Audience

Anyone interested in improving skills and lifelong learning systems around the world can join these Masterclasses. **There are no fees.**

Language

The working language of the webinar will be English.

Tentative Agenda

Time	
12:00 – 12:10	<p>Introduction By Ashwani Aggarwal, Workgroup Leader (Skills Policy, Systems and Digitalization), ILO</p> <p>Opening remarks By Manuela Geleng, European Commission</p>
12:10 – 12:40	<p>Micro-credentials in the European context: lessons learned and way forwards</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Anastasia Pouliou, CEDEFOP (12 min) <i>Audience Poll 1</i> <p>Micro-credentials in LMICs: country case (India)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dr. Neena Pahuja, National Council for Vocational Education and Training (NCVET), India (12 min) <i>Audience Poll 2</i>
12:40 – 13:20	<p>Panel discussion and Q & A session (Based on Audience Polls)</p> <p>Panelists:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Anastasia Pouliou and Iraklis Pliakis, CEDEFOP Dr. Neena Pahuja, NCVET, India Microsoft (TBC) Wesley Teter, UNESCO <p>Moderator:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ashwani Aggarwal, ILO Geneva
13:20 – 13:30	<p>Closing remarks World Bank</p>

Technical specifications

The webinar will be conducted via the ILO's Zoom conferencing software.

Participants can register via this link:

https://ilo-org.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_Qez3pLEBQ2Gf0tWgPKZoKg

Coordinator and moderator of the Masterclass series

Ashwani Aggarwal (aggarwal@ilo.org), Team Leader (Skills Policy, Systems and Digitalization), ILO Geneva

Contact Person: Livia Husmann (husmann@iloquest.org), ILO Geneva

The Masterclasses title “The SKILLS Bridge” refers to the invaluable role of Skills and Lifelong Learning in closing skills gaps, aligning demand and supply, and uniting private and public sector collaboration.