

Micro-GEAR

# Micro-credentials for Higher Education systems of Georgia and Armenia: South Caucasus lighthouse project

Kick-off Meeting

Tbilisi, GTU, 16 January 2024

Dr. Andrey Girenko, GIRAF PM e.K.



Welcome. GIRAF  
PM e.K.

- GIRAF PM e.K. – business consultancy with core competences in Organizational Quality in the field of Education, Research and Innovation
- Founded in 2009 in Saarbruecken
- Incorporates experiences of dozens RTD and Education projects funded on the EU level
- Experiences in Georgia and Armenia (FP7 INCO-WIDE, Tempus/Erasmus, HEP)



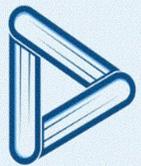
## GIRAF PM e.K. Role in the project

- Focus on all aspects of Quality Assurance
    - Quality Assurance aspects of micro-credentialing
    - Quality Assurance of the project implementation processes (WP4 and T6.3 leader)
  - Support to the coordinator
  - Expectation: QA in education becomes one of the core selling competences of the company. *We want to stengthen here.*
  - People
    - Andrey Girenko
    - Someone To-Be-Hired
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# Micro-GEAR project passport

- Erasmus 2027 Capacity Building in Higher Education, Strand 3 (Structural Reforms), Grant Agreement # 101081924
- Project eligibility period: 01.01.2024-31.12.2026 (36 months)
- Consortium:
  - 7 Universities (2 in Georgia, 2 in Armenia, Germany, Spain, Italy)
  - 2 Ministries (Georgia, Armenia)
  - 2 National Quality Assurance Agencies (Georgia, Armenia)
  - 2 ENIC (NARIC) bodies (Armenia, Italy)
  - 2 non-University training providers (Georgia, Armenia)
  - 1 SME (Germany)
- Grant: 999.805,00 Euro (Budget: 1.110.895,00 Euro)



# Details on consortium and budget

GEORGIAN TECHNICAL UNIVERSITY	GTU	101.502	91.352
THE UNIVERSITY OF GEORGIA	UG	53.031	47.728
MINISTRY OF EDUCATION AND SCIENCE OF GEORGIA	MOESGE	21.379	19.241
NATIONAL CENTER FOR EDUCATIONAL QUALITY ENHANCEMENT	NCEQE	72.247	65.022
GEORGIAN RESEARCH AND EDUCATIONAL NETWORKING ASSOCIATION	GRENA	83.716	75.344
UNIVERSITÄT DES SAARLANDES	USAAR	109.108	98.197
UNIVERSIDAD CARLOS III DE MADRID	UC3M	109.280	98.352
UNIVERSITÀ DEGLI STUDI EUROPEA	UER	71.730	64.557
ASSOCIAZIONE CIMEA	CIMEA	146.039	131.435
GIRAF PM e.K.	GIRAF	88.586	79.727
CENTER FOR ECOLOGICAL-NOOSPHERE STUDIES NATIONAL ACADEMY OF SCIENCES OF THE REPUBLIC OF ARMENIA	CENS	43.849	39.464
MINISTRY OF EDUCATION, SCIENCE, CULTURE AND SPORT OF THE REPUBLIC OF ARMENIA	MESCS	23.690	21.321
NATIONAL CENTER FOR PROFESSIONAL EDUCATION QUALITY ASSURANCE FOUNDATION	ANQA	41.816	37.634
YEREVAN STATE UNIVERSITY FOUNDATION	YSU	50.269	45.242
EURASIA INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY	EIU	45.882	41.294
NATIONAL INFORMATION CENTER FOR ACADEMIC RECOGNITION AND MOBILITY	ArmENIC	48.771	43.894
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>Consortium</b>	<b>1.110.895</b>	<b>999.805</b>



# Background: Micro-credentials. Definition.

Source	Definition
European Commission (draft definition)	<p>A micro-credential is a proof of the learning outcomes that a learner has acquired following a short learning experience. These learning outcomes have been assessed against transparent standards.</p> <p>The proof is contained in a certified document that lists the name of the holder, the achieved learning outcomes, the assessment method, the awarding body and, where applicable, the qualifications framework level and the credits gained. Micro-credentials are owned by the learner, can be shared, are portable and may be combined into larger credentials or qualifications. They are underpinned by quality assurance following agreed standards (European Commission, 2020<sup>[3]</sup>).</p>
BloomBoard	<p>Micro-credentials are a form of micro-certification earned by proving competence in one specific skill at a time, via a portfolio of evidence, created through classroom practice (BloomBoard, 2021<sup>[4]</sup>).</p>
European University Association	<p>A micro-credential is a small volume of learning certified by a credential (Cirlan and Loukkola, 2020<sup>[5]</sup>).</p>
International Council for Open and Distance Education	<p>A credential issued for a relatively small learning project that consists of several modules in a given subject (ICDE, 2019<sup>[6]</sup>).</p>
MicroHE	<p>A micro-credential is a sub-unit of a credential or credentials that could accumulate into a larger credential or be part of a portfolio. Examples are Verified Certificates, Digital Badges, MicroMasters, and Nanodegrees (MicroHE, 2019<sup>[7]</sup>).</p>
New Zealand Qualifications Authority	<p>A micro-credential certifies achievement of a coherent set of skills and knowledge; and is specified by a statement of purpose, learning outcomes, and strong evidence of need by industry, employers, iwi and/or the community. They are smaller than a qualification and focus on skill development opportunities not currently catered for in the regulated tertiary education system (New Zealand Qualifications Authority, 2021<sup>[8]</sup>).</p>
Quacquarelli Symonds	<p>A micro-credential is a sector-endorsed short course that provides the recipient with specialist skills (Frances, 2020<sup>[9]</sup>).</p>
State University of New York	<p>Micro-credentials verify, validate, and attest that specific skills and/or competencies have been achieved. They differ from traditional degrees and certificates in that they are generally offered in shorter or more flexible timespans and tend to be more narrowly focused (State University of New York, 2021<sup>[10]</sup>).</p>



## Background: Micro-credentials phenomenon

- Short competence-oriented educational interventions are not completely novel
- Terms “microqualifications”, “microdegrees”, “micromasters”, etc. are used for years by digital education platforms (Coursera, EdX, etc.)
- Several factors pushed for more flexibility in skills acquisition and certification (digital transformation, COVID-19)
- Global interest and policy shift: UNESCO, OECD, EC



# Background: Micro-credentials phenomenon. What? Why?

## What?

*Compared to traditional degree programmes, micro-credentials are:*

**Smaller** in volume (in study duration or load)

**More targeted** in terms of skills or study topics

**More flexible** in delivery

## Why?

*Different offerings have distinct, but often overlapping purposes*

Educational advancement



Employment and wage advancement

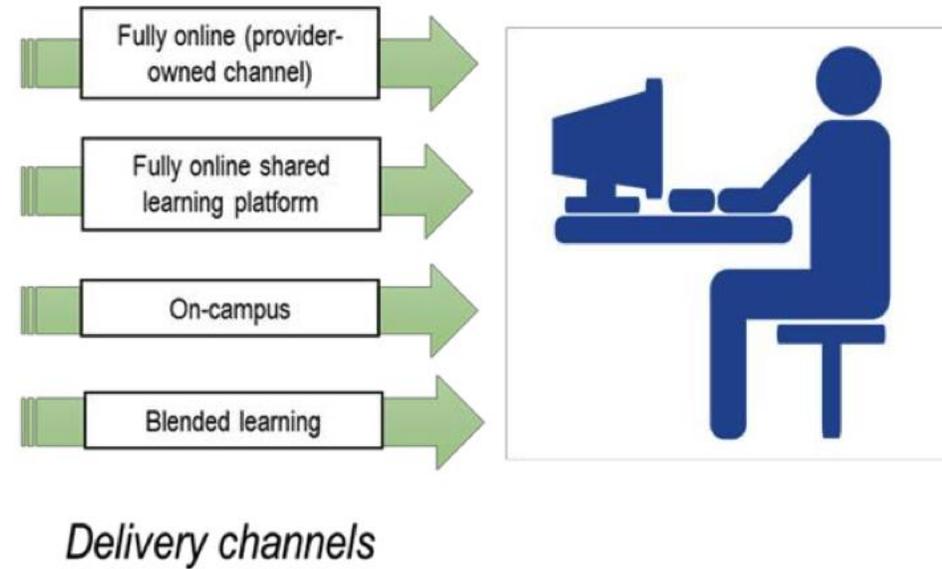
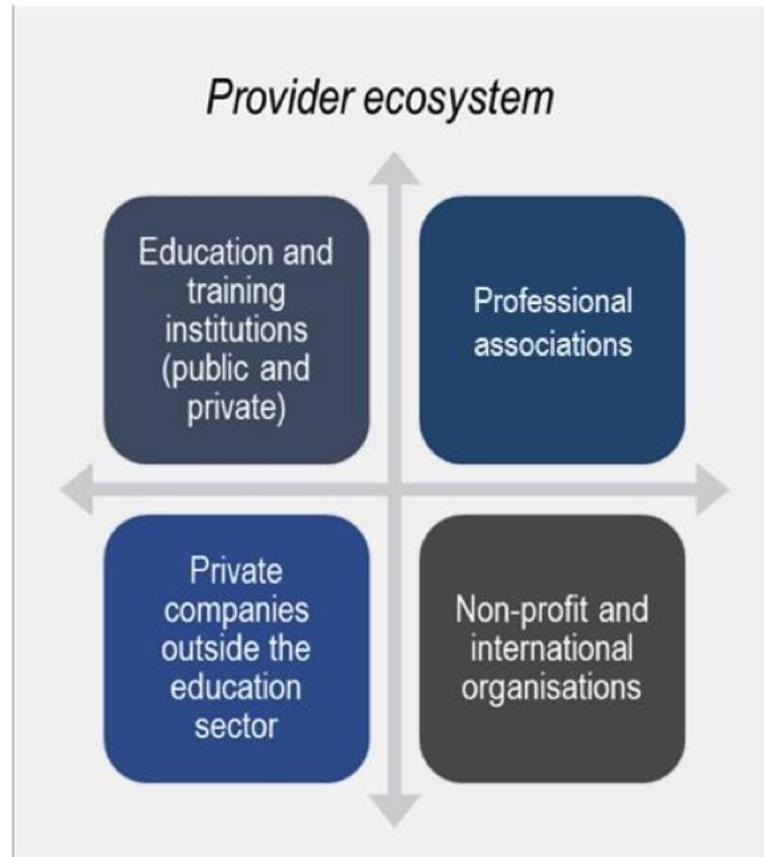


Enjoyment and personal growth



# Background: Micro-credentials phenomenon.

## Flexibility





# Project goals

## Overall goal:

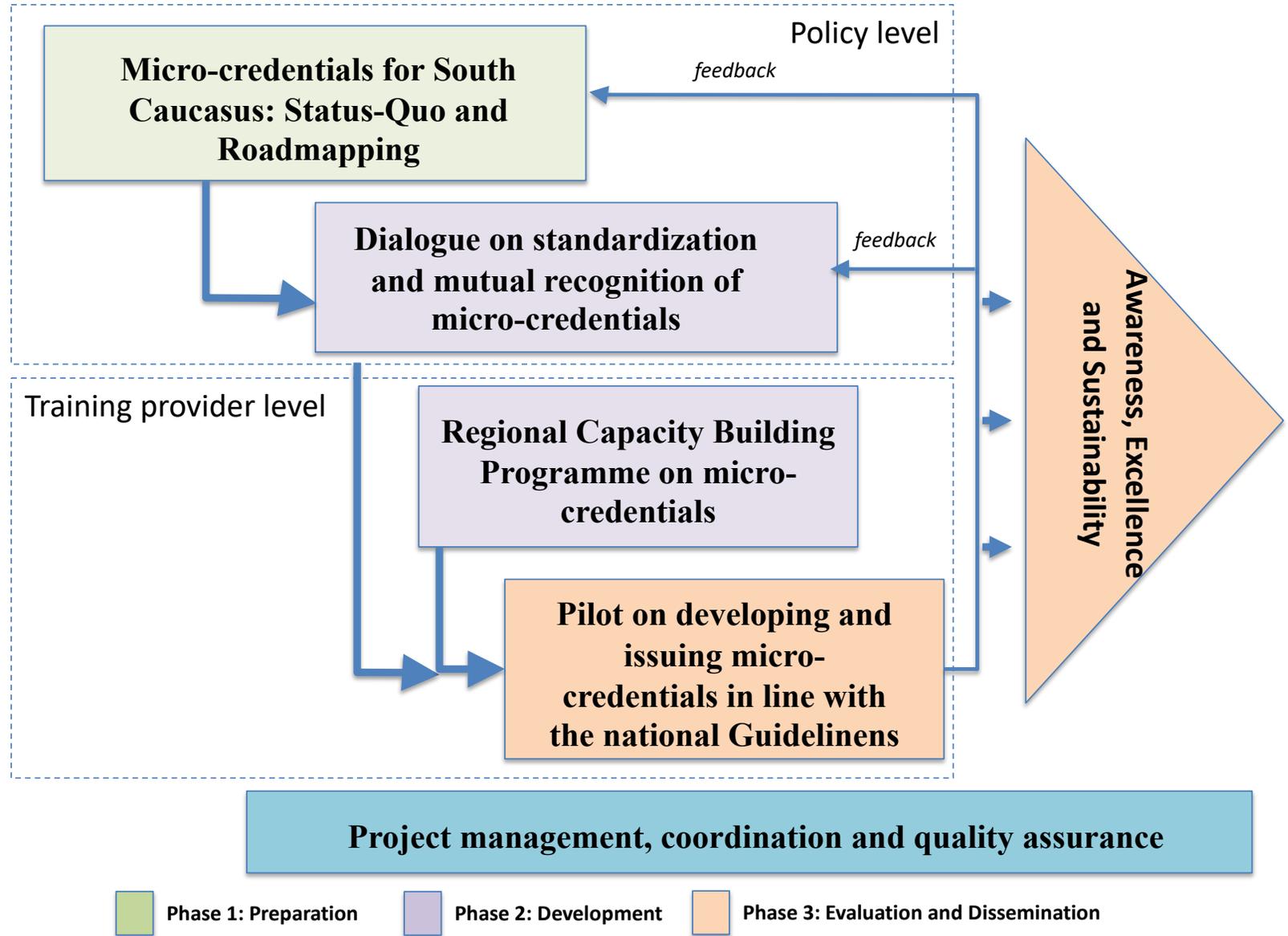
*is to contribute towards further modernization and improving responsiveness of the system of Higher Education in Georgia and Armenia by supporting the nation-wide policy and legislation reforms aimed at the introduction of micro-credentials into the regulation and educational practice as relevant, flexible and efficient means of delivering education and skills.*

## Operational Goals:

- To identify most suitable micro-credentials models and update national regulations to introduce standards for micro-credentials in line with the European Council Recommendation on micro-credentials
- To contribute towards establishing an effective European environment for mutual recognition of micro-credentials
- To enable South Caucasus Universities and non-academic training providers to develop and deliver micro-credentials based educational measures
- To pilot the recommended structural reforms by a pilot development and delivery of the set of DigiComp 2 compatible courses
- To promote the structural changes leading to institutionalization of micro-credentials in the region and beyond



# The work plan



## Principle outcomes:

National roadmaps for micro-credentials introduction + White Papers

National Guidelines on micro-credentials (standardization) tested and evaluated through the pilot activities

Comprehensive capacity to develop and deliver courses leading to digital micro-credentials

Micro-credential training programme in the field of digital competences

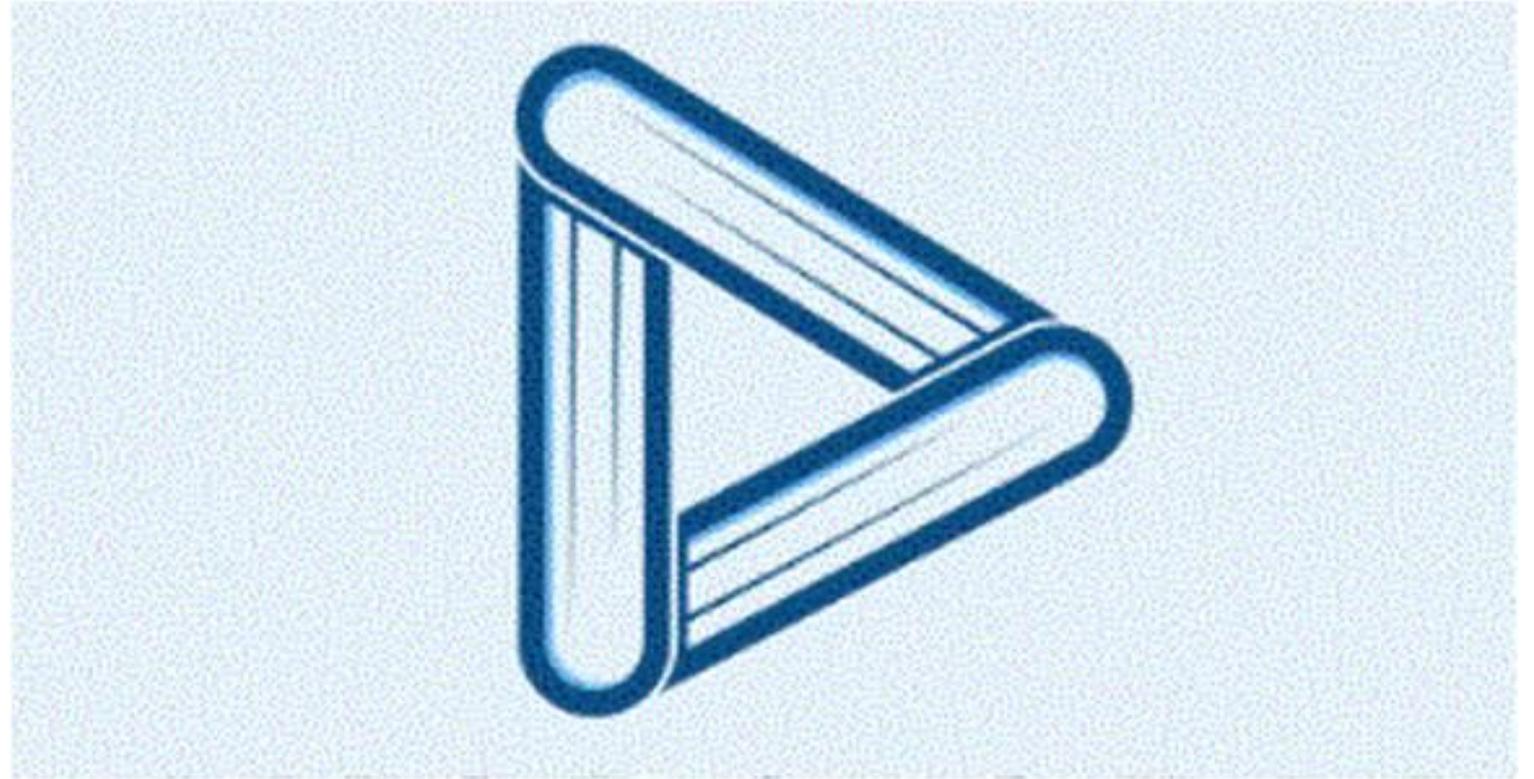
New level of awareness of micro-credentials among all stakeholders in the region

Thank you for your  
attention!

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