Micro-GEAR

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Co-funded by the European Union



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

Tbilisi, Georgia

2026

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Project Partners

01 Georgia

- Georgian Technical University
- University of Georgia
- Ministry of Education, Science And Youth of Georgia
- National Center For Educational Quality Enhancement (NCEQE)
- Georgian Research and Educational Networking Association (GRENA)

02 Armenia

- Yerevan State University
- Eurasia International University
- Center for Ecological-Noosphere Studies National Academy of Sciences
- Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Armenia
- Armenian National Quality Assurance
- Armenian National Information Center for Academic Recognition and Mobility

03 Germany

- Saarland University
- Giraf PM

04 Spain

- Universidad Carlos III de Madrid

05 Italy

- Academic Equivalence Mobility Information Center

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About the project

The Micro-GEAR project supports higher education structural reforms in Georgia and Armenia by introducing micro-credentials to enhance educational quality, relevance, and flexibility, in line with the European Council's Recommendation on a European approach to micro-credentials for lifelong learning and employability, the project involves 16 institutions from 5 countries.

Key Objectives & Initiatives:

Framework & Policy Alignment: Updating National Qualifications Frameworks (NQFs) and establishing national consensus on micro-credentialing standards and mutual recognition.

Piloting & Capacity Building: Implementing pilot programs and developing targeted educational modules to validate reforms and gather policy feedback.

Stakeholder Consortium: Involving Ministries of Education, national accreditation agencies, ENIC-NARIC centers, and higher education institutions across Georgia, Armenia, and European partner organizations.

What is Microcredential?

A micro-credential is a small-volume educational program that certifies the learning outcomes achieved by a learner following a small volume of learning. It is delivered by a trusted provider, oriented towards the needs of industry, the labor market, or society, and adheres to quality assurance standards. A micro-credential can be offered as a standalone program or stacked with other micro-credentials, and it may be recognized as prior learning toward obtaining a broader qualification.

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Aims of Micro-credentials

- Targeted learning that meets the demands of a rapidly changing labor market.
- Skill development in areas such as information and communication technologies, business and administration, education, the arts, tourism, and others.
- Access to education and a contribution to eliminating social inequalities, particularly for those with limited opportunities to access full qualifications.
- Recognition of learning outcomes achieved within the program at both national and international levels.



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Choosing micro-credentials

Why Choose Micro-credentials?

Micro-credentials offer flexible, targeted, and short-term learning opportunities designed to address rapidly changing labor market demands and skill mismatches. They allow learners to upskill or reskill in specialized areas (such as ICT, business, education, and emerging technologies etc.) without committing to a full degree program. Furthermore, they support lifelong learning, improve employability, and offer stackability, enabling accumulated credits to be combined toward broader formal qualifications or recognized as prior learning.



Who Can Choose Micro-credentials?

Micro-credentials are open to a diverse range of learners. The standard minimum entry requirement is the possession of a secondary education certificate or its equivalent. They are ideal for working professionals seeking career advancement, university graduates wishing to bridge skill gaps or gain practical/soft skills, individuals looking for career retraining, and underrepresented or vulnerable social groups seeking accessible higher education opportunities. Providers may also establish specific prerequisites based on the program's level and field.



How to obtain micro-credentials?

Micro-credentials can be offered by Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) as well as accredited external non-HEI providers (such as training centers, industry associations, and private or public organizations operating under appropriate quality assurance frameworks). Learning deliverable formats are highly adaptable, including face-to-face, fully online (via Learning Management Systems), or hybrid/blended models.



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About the Initiative

Micro-GeAr in Georgia

Within the framework of the Erasmus+ project "Introducing Micro-credentials in the Higher Education Systems of Georgia and Armenia: A South Caucasus Beacon" (Micro-GEAR), a concept regarding micro-credentials was developed, and relevant policy documents were drafted. Pilot courses are currently being implemented at the Georgian Technical University and the University of Georgia. Draft amendments to the Georgian laws "On Higher Education" and "On the Development of Educational Quality" have also been prepared.



Concept

Policies

GNQF

Pilots

Legislation

Amendments

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Obtain the Right to Offer micro-Credentials

If a legal entity intends to offer a micro-credential course, it is required to undergo a procedure for obtaining the right to offer micro-credentials. This procedure determines whether the provider meets the state-established standards applicable to micro-credential courses, namely:



Design Microcredential

Design and development of the micro-credential course





Teaching and Assessment

Teaching methodology and organisation, and the adequacy of assessment of learning outcomes

Learner-centeredness & Resources

Use of learner-centered approaches and provision of teaching resources



QA of Microcredentials

Quality assurance of teaching and learning.





Microcredentials in GNQF

Although micro-credentials are limited in scope and do not necessarily encompass the full range of level descriptors applicable to full qualifications, they must address all three descriptor categories: knowledge and understanding, skills, and responsibility and autonomy. Their alignment with the Georgian National Qualifications Framework (GNQF) can be established by assessing their learning outcomes against the relevant NQF level descriptors and the learning outcomes of higher education programmes in the corresponding field of study at the same level.

Transparency and evidence-based justification are essential to this process. All decisions regarding the alignment of micro-credentials with NQF levels must be clearly documented and substantiated to ensure their credibility and facilitate recognition at both national and international levels.

- GNQF 6th and 7th Levels
- knowledge and understanding
- Skills
- Responsibility and Autonomy
- Program Learning Outcomes
- Performance Rewards

QA of micro-credentials

Incorporating the qualification into the GNQF

A qualification is included in the National Qualifications Framework if two conditions are met:

- The qualification must be described in terms of learning outcomes.
- It must have undergone an external quality assurance procedure.



Internal and external quality assurance for micro-credentials must be transparent, outcome-based, and learner-centered to ensure their recognition and effective application. At the national level, quality assurance standards for micro-credentials will be aligned with the accreditation standards for higher education programs. Following the relevant legislative amendments, the LEPL - National Center for Educational Quality Enhancement (NCEQE) will be designated as the body responsible for the external quality assurance of micro-credentials.

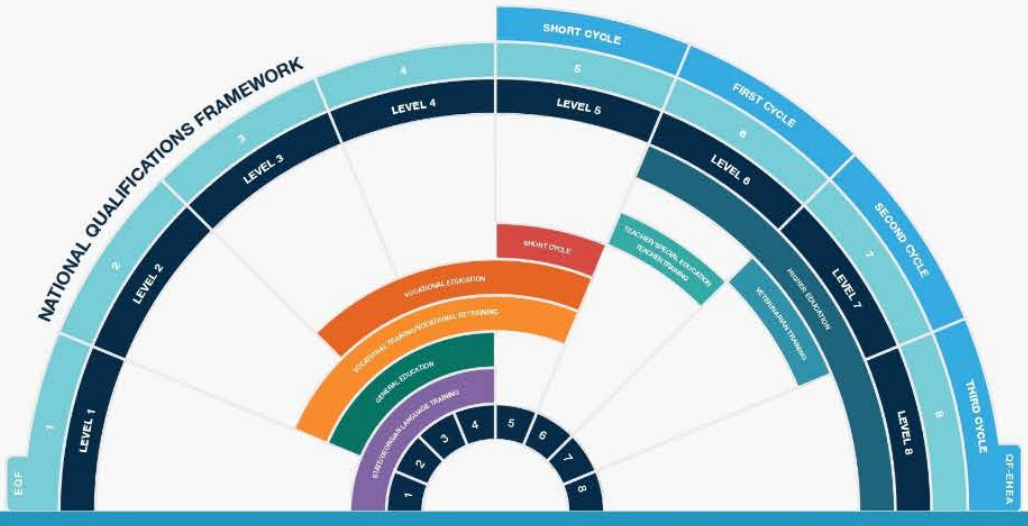
Recognition of micro -credentials

- Given modern approaches to lifelong learning and employment, the recognition of micro-credentials is becoming increasingly important; in this context, flexibility, transparency, and quality in teaching and learning play a crucial role.

- Clearly defined learning outcomes enable the alignment of a micro-credential with a specific level of the National Qualifications Framework and facilitate its comparability with other programs.

- Full access to information regarding the micro-credential is of fundamental importance. A micro-credential must be accompanied by key elements—such as learning outcomes, workload, the level within the National and European Qualifications Frameworks, the form of assessment, the date of issuance, the issuing institution, and others.

- Quality assurance is critical to the recognition process. Internal and external assessment mechanisms must be designed to ensure the credibility and legitimacy of micro-credentials. It is desirable for the qualification obtained through a micro-credential to be confirmed by a digital certificate.



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Introducing micro-credentials in the higher education system – Legislative Amendments

Main Objective:
To establish a legal framework for micro-credentials (Micro Qualifications) — small-volume educational programs tailored to labor market demands — to promote lifelong learning and employment.

Definition of New Terms:

- Definitions for "micro-qualification," "higher education micro-qualification program," "learner," and "micro-credential certificate" are introduced into the law.

Program Providers:
Both higher education institutions and other legal entities are authorized to develop and implement micro-credential programs, subject to obtaining the relevant right

Quality Assurance Mechanism:

- LEPL – National Center for Educational Quality Enhancement will administer the process of granting the right to implement the program.
- The Accreditation Council of Educational Programs will make decisions on granting, refusing, or revoking this right.

Program Characteristics:

- Level: Program learning outcomes must correspond to Level 6 (Bachelor's) or Level 7 (Master's) of the National Qualifications Framework.

Volume:

- Defined as no less than 3 and no more than 30 credits (ECTS).

Recognition of Micro-credentials:
Higher education institutions will be authorized to recognize credits accumulated within micro-credential programs towards Bachelor's or Master's programs (up to one-quarter of the program's total volume), based on the compatibility of learning outcomes.

Registration and Certification:

- Information regarding programs and awarded qualifications will be reflected in the Higher Education Management Information System.
- A state-recognized electronic micro-credential certificate will be issued.
- LEPL – Education Management Information System (EMIS) will develop the relevant digital platform within one year.

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