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PRESS RELEASE #6

More Than Attendance: The First Microcredential Assessments Are Under Way

APROXIMAR

Across the partner countries, the first learners to complete units of the Europe 4.0 Digital Citizens course are now sitting the assessment that leads to a microcredential.

It is a small step with a wider significance. The project's microcredential brings together a framework and a process developed collaboratively by eight organisations. Through its implementation, this shared work becomes a tangible learning achievement for participants.

Online learning offers many opportunities, but completing a course does not always mean that new skills have been acquired. Digital certificates often record participation and course completion, while assessment helps demonstrate what a learner has actually learned.

A microcredential makes a different claim. Under the European approach set out in the Council Recommendation of June 2022,* it records learning outcomes that have been assessed against transparent, clearly defined criteria. Not that the learner was present. That the learner can demonstrate something.

Assessment adds value by going beyond course completion to recognise the knowledge and skills learners have developed.

* Council of the European Union (2022). Council Recommendation of 16 June 2022 on a European approach to micro-credentials for lifelong learning and employability. Official Journal of the European Union, C 243, 27.6.2022, pp. 10–25.

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What a Microcredential Actually Contains

Trust in a credential depends on what it tells you. A document that says only “course completed” leaves an employer, an admissions officer or a training provider with nothing to work with.

The European approach addresses this through transparency. A micro-credential issued under the Union standard elements must describe, as a minimum:

- the identification of the learner
- the title of the micro-credential
- the country or region of the issuer
- the learning outcomes
- the notional workload needed to achieve them
- the level of the learning experience, where applicable
- the type of assessment
- the form of participation in the learning activity
- the type of quality assurance underpinning it

Read as a list, it is administrative. Read as a question, it is not: everything above is what someone needs in order to judge whether a credential means anything.

How long did this take? What was the learner asked to demonstrate? Who stands behind it? Was anyone checking?

A credential that answers those questions can be weighed. One that does not can only be believed or dismissed.

The same framework also **allows a micro-credential to stand alone or to be stackable, combined with others** towards a larger qualification. A single unit on cybersecurity is useful in itself. It can also be one piece of something longer, assembled over years rather than taken in one period of full-time study.

For adults who cannot step away from work or family to retrain, that possibility matters more than it might appear.

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What This Means for the Learner

For the person taking it, the sequence is straightforward. Work through the units of a chosen topic. Sit the assessment. Receive a digital credential that describes, specifically, what was learned and how it was demonstrated.

What they hold at the end is not a diploma and does not pretend to be one. It is narrower, and that is the point. It says: this person understands artificial intelligence well enough to discuss it, or recognises how common cyberattacks work, or can explain what cloud computing is and what it means for their data.

Those are modest claims, precisely stated, and modest, precise claims are the ones that survive scrutiny.

For many of the adults the project was built for, it will also be the first formal recognition of learning they have received in a long time. Some left education early. Some have never had a qualification that described a skill rather than a year completed.

A credential that names what they can do, in terms an employer can read, is not a small thing to be handed.

The Europe 4.0 Digital Citizens course remains open across all partner countries — Poland, Austria, Greece, Portugal, Lithuania, Italy and Cyprus.

Thirteen units are available and each unit stands alone. Each ends with an assessment. Each assessment, passed, leads to a microcredential.

Registration is open and takes around three minutes:

1. Go to the Course page on the project website
2. Under “Apply Now!”, select your country
3. Complete the form and choose your topic
4. Receive your platform access by email

The course is free, entirely online and self-paced, in seven European languages. No prior knowledge or technical background is required. Choose your topic. **Complete it at your own pace. Earn yours. Explore the courses today!**

https://europe40digitalcitizens.eu/

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