

# Micro-credentials linked to the Bologna Key Commitments

Presentation of the project

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# Details project:

- Title: Micro-credentials linked to the Bologna Key Commitments
- Erasmus+ KA3: Initiatives to support the implementation of European Higher Education Area (EHEA) reforms, 2019
- Period: March 2020 – March 2022



# Partners:

- Belgium – Flemish Ministry of Education and Training
  - Finland – Ministry of Education and Culture
  - Italy – CIMEA
  - EUA
  - ENQA
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- Experts: Anthony F. Camilleri, Frederik De Decker, Ann Katherine Isaacs, George Ubachs, Peter Van der Hijden



# Aim project:

- Raise awareness among national governments
- Encourage and guide national governments to include micro-credentials on the policy agenda
- Check whether existing Bologna tools are fit for micro-credentials and/or propose changes for adaptations on European level
- Formulate recommendations
- Create a European Framework for micro-credentials



# Structure & timeline:

- Desk research (April-Aug '20)
- Kick-off conference (Aug-Sept '20)
- Working groups (Sept '20–May '21)
  - Quality Assurance (Belgium – Flemish Community, Peter van der Hijden, Anthony Camilleri)
    - 70 participants, 34 countries, 7 stakeholder organisations
  - Recognition (Italy, Frederik De Decker, Peter van der Hijden)
    - 60 participants, 33 countries, 5 stakeholder organisations
  - Qualification Frameworks (Finland, George Ubachs, Ann Katherine Isaacs)
    - 60 participants, 32 countries, 7 stakeholder organisations
- Survey among EHEA countries (Okt '20-Feb '21)
- Recommendations on QA, Recognition & QF&ECTS (May-June '21)
- European Framework for Micro-credentials (July'21-March'22)
- Final Conference (March '22)



# Working definition:

A micro-credential is a small volume of learning certified by a credential. In the EHEA context, it can be offered by higher education institutions or recognised by them using recognition procedures in line with the Lisbon Recognition Convention or recognition of prior learning, where applicable. A micro-credential is designed to provide the learner with specific knowledge, skills or competences that respond to societal, personal, cultural or labour market needs. Micro-credentials have explicitly defined learning outcomes at a QF-EHEA/NQF level, an indication of associated workload in ECTS credits, assessment methods and criteria, and are subject to quality assurance in line with the ESG.



# MICROBOL survey:

- Aim of the survey: gain a picture on the state-of-play on micro-credentials in different member states of the European Higher Education Area and encouraging national discussion
  - Target: members of the Bologna Follow Up Group as well as the nominated representatives in the MICROBOL working groups
  - Respondents: 35 countries participated in the survey
  - Reference point in time
  - First time EHEA members were questioned
- => Way forward in common understanding



# Section 1

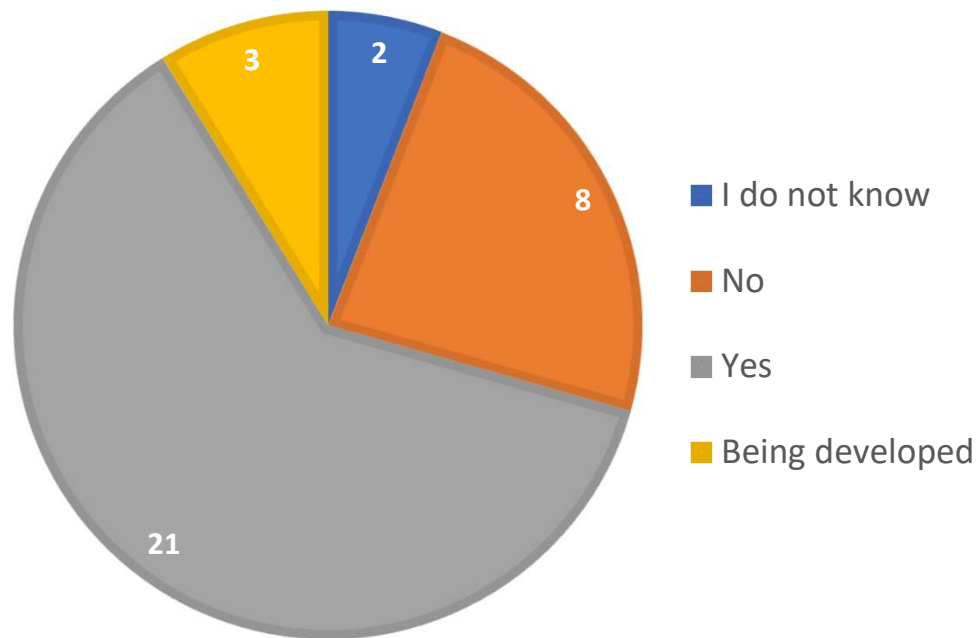
## Investigating the use of micro-credentials

- Overview of micro-credentials offered or being developed
- Regulation of micro-credentials at national level





# Countries that offer or are developing micro-credentials

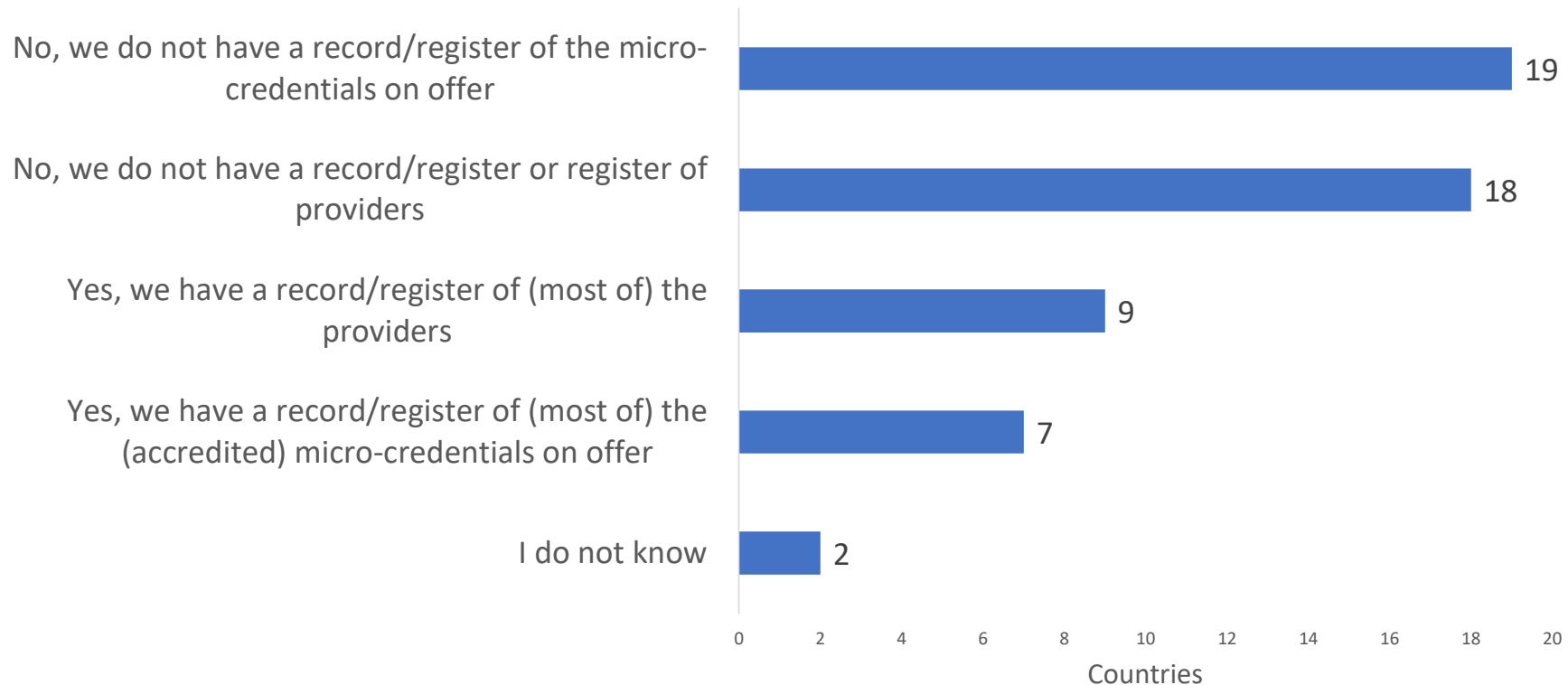


- Offered: 21 countries
- Being developed: 3 countries
- Not offered/not being developed: 8 countries

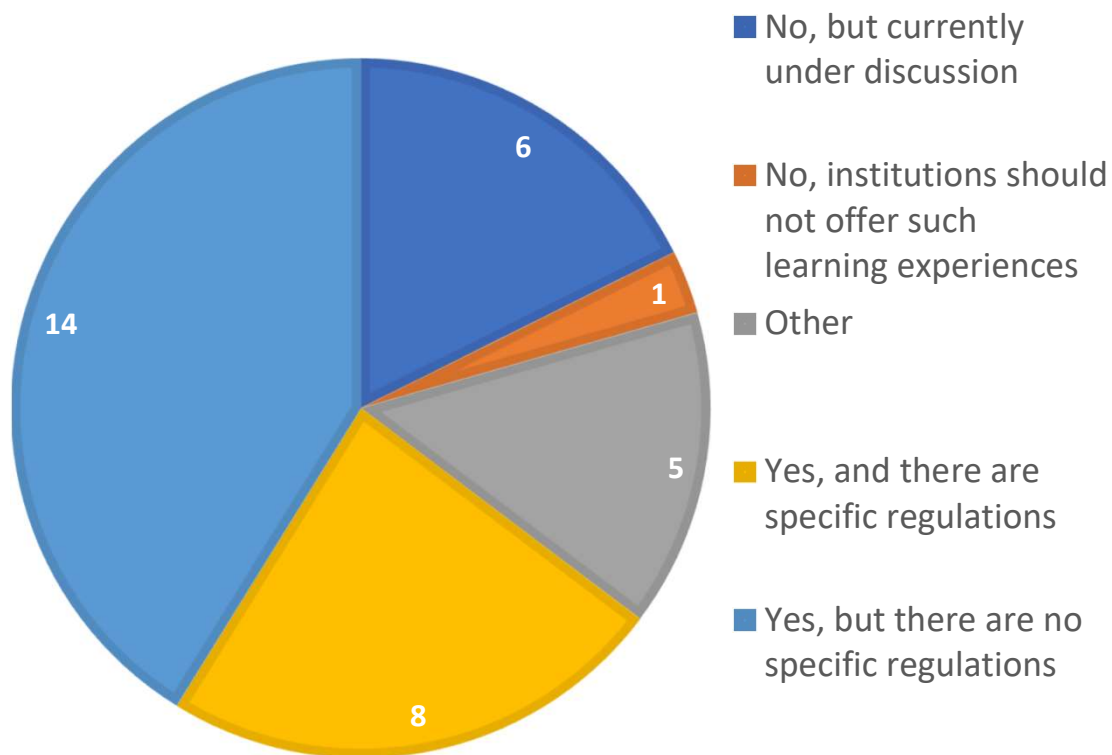
# Examples of micro-credentials offered/recognised by HEIs



# Official record or register of micro-credentials and providers

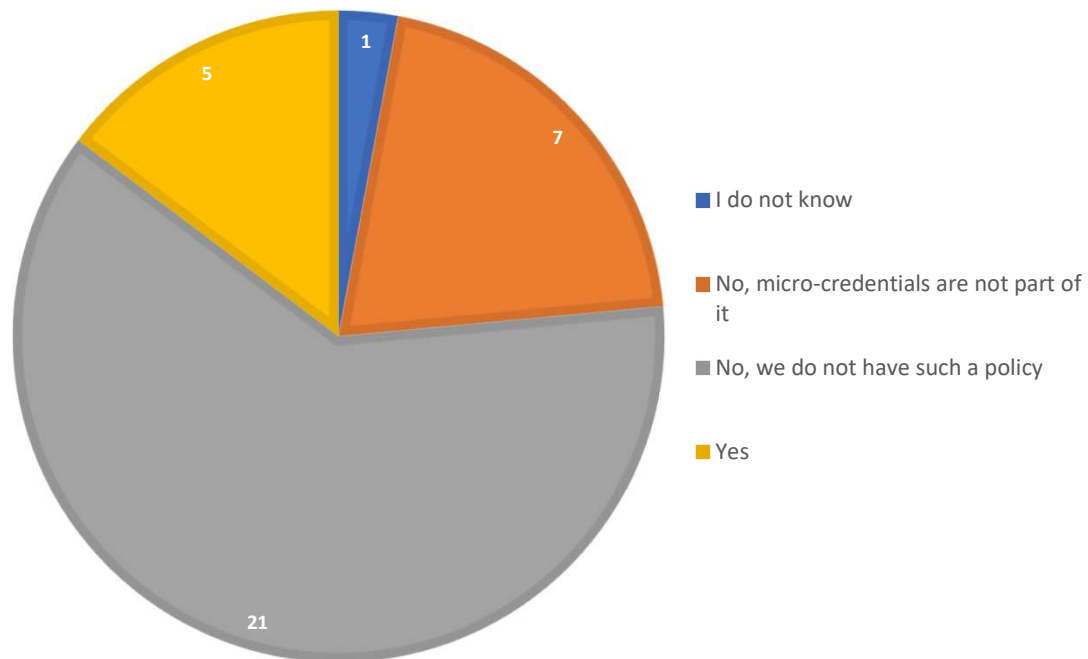


# Regulation of micro-credentials at national level



- Regulated/allowed at national level: 22 countries
  - Specific regulations: 8
  - No specific regulations: 14
- Under discussion: 6 countries
- Institutions should not offer MCs: 1 country

# Micro-credentials and digitalisation policies



- NO policy on digitalisation:
  - 21 countries
- Yes policy but MCs are not part of it
  - 7 countries
- Yes MCs are part of this policy
  - 5 countries

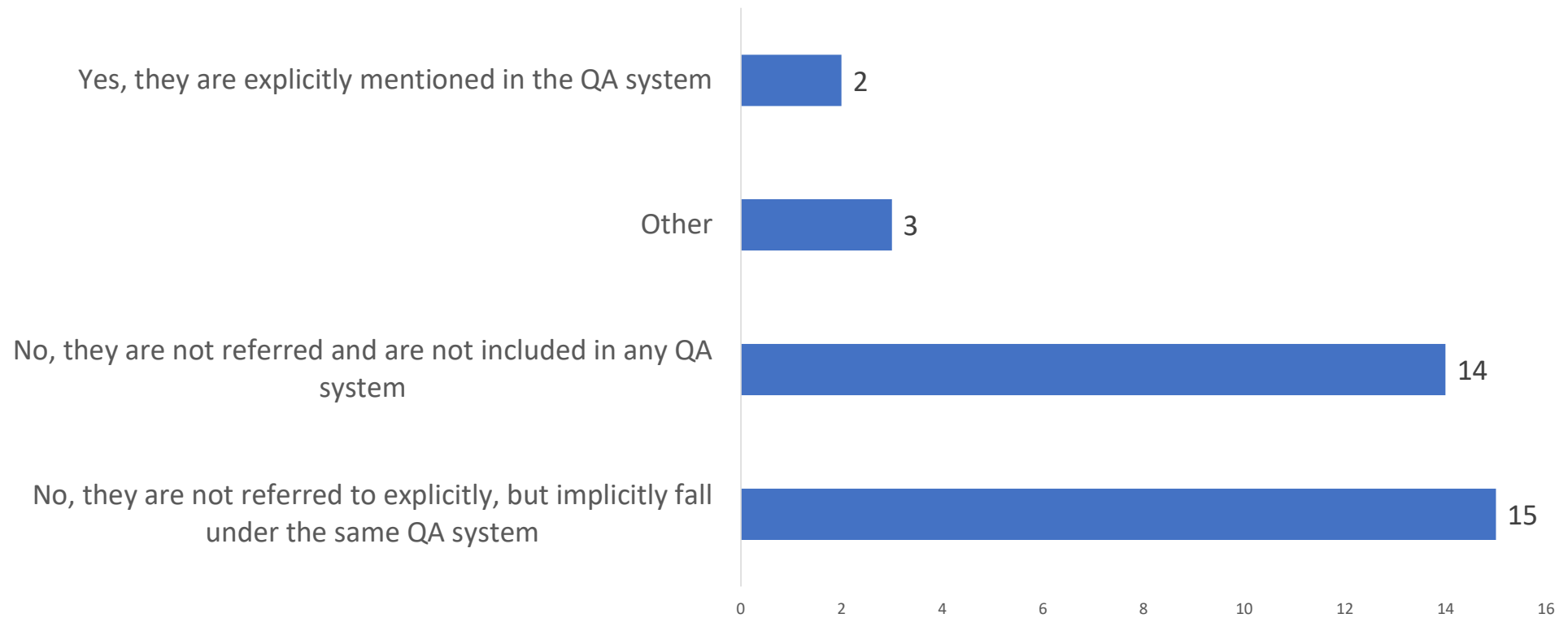
## Section 2

# Applying Bologna tools to micro-credentials

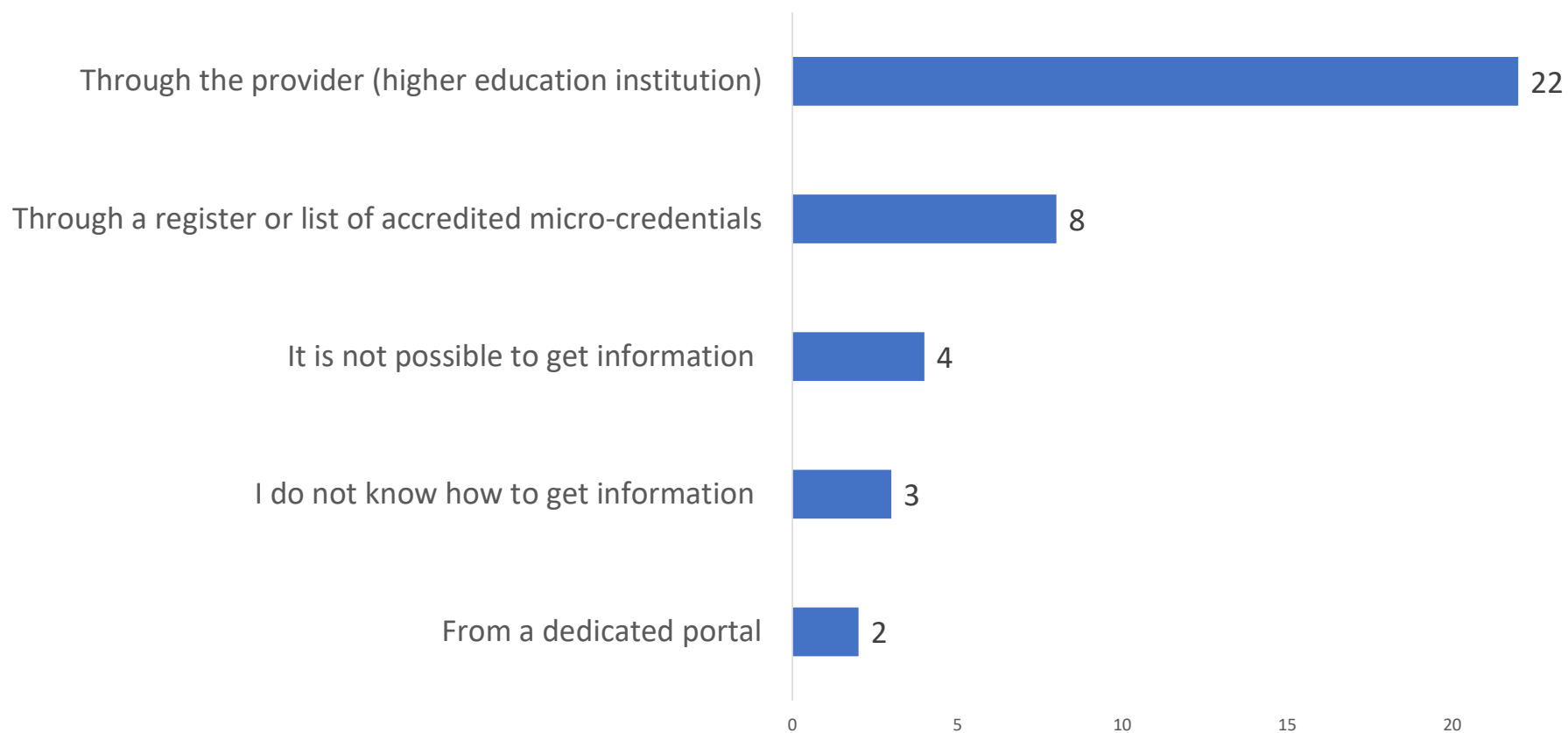
- Quality Assurance
- Recognition
- Qualification Frameworks & ECTS



# Micro-credentials included in the national QA

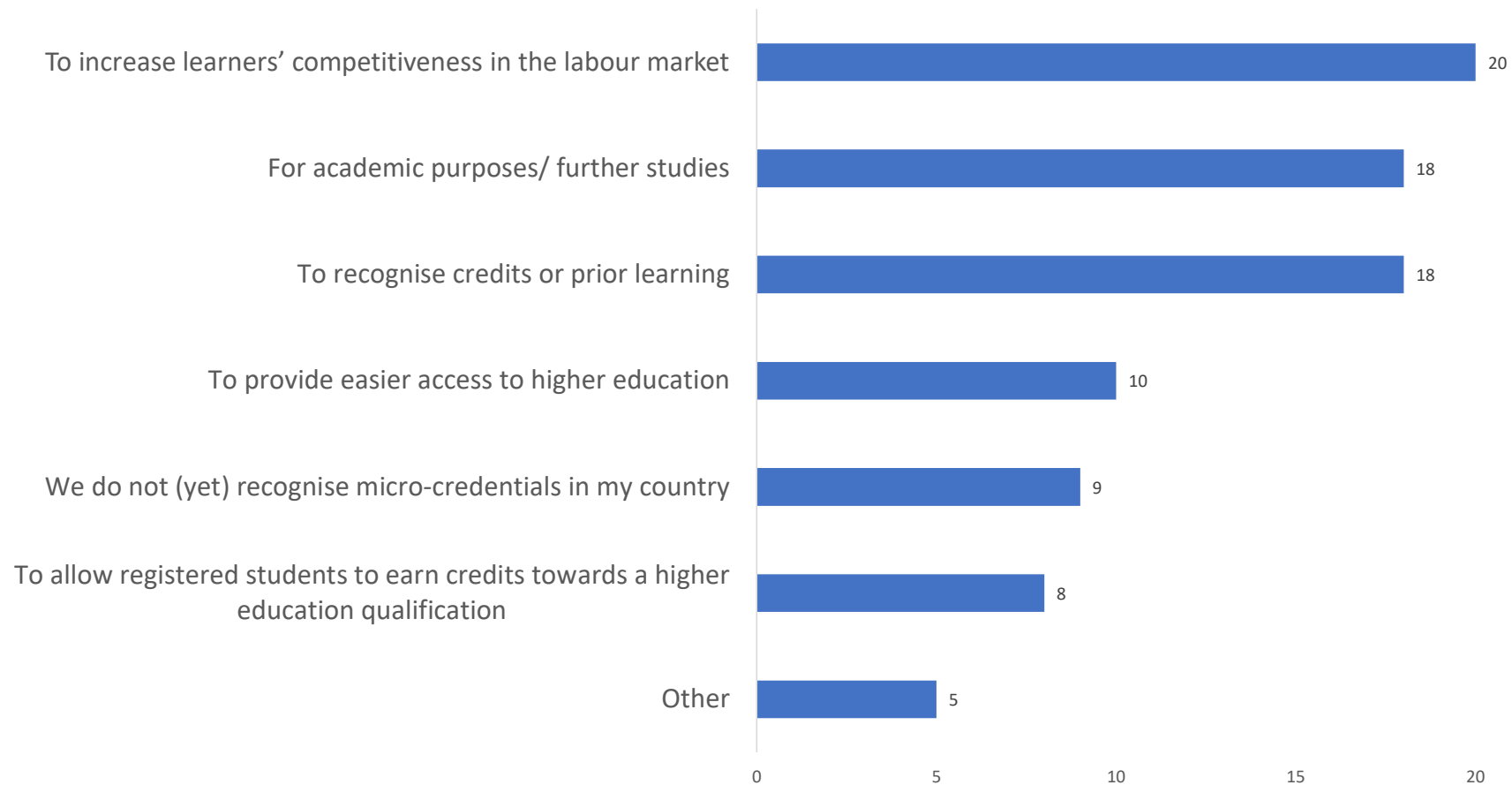


# Sources of information on the QA status of the awarded credential

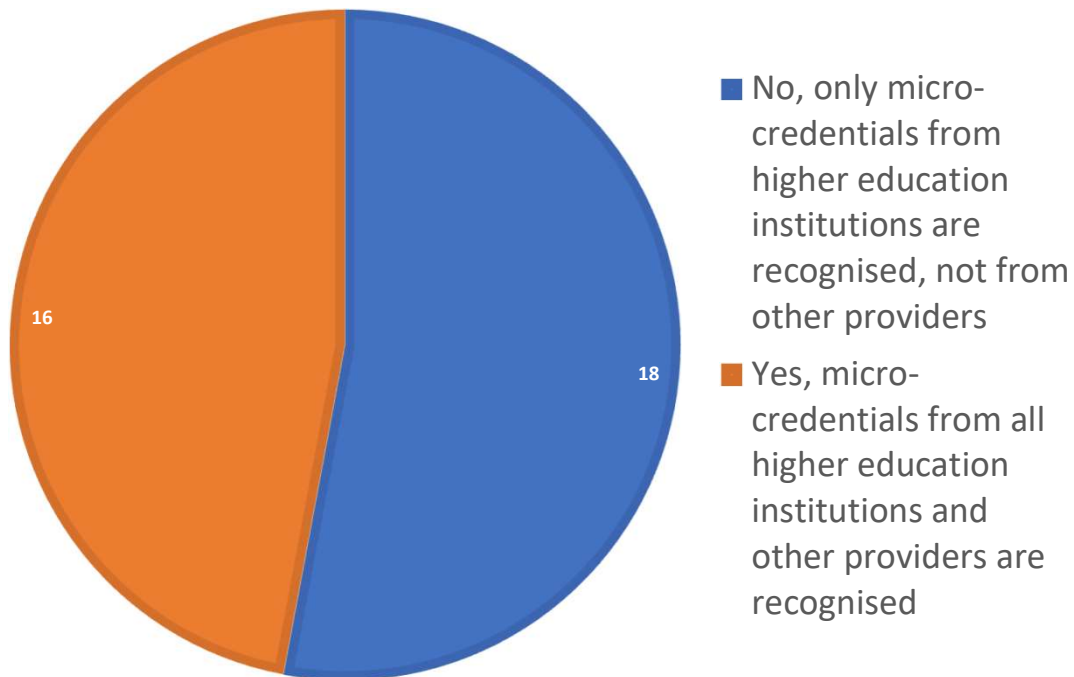




# Purpose to recognise micro-credentials

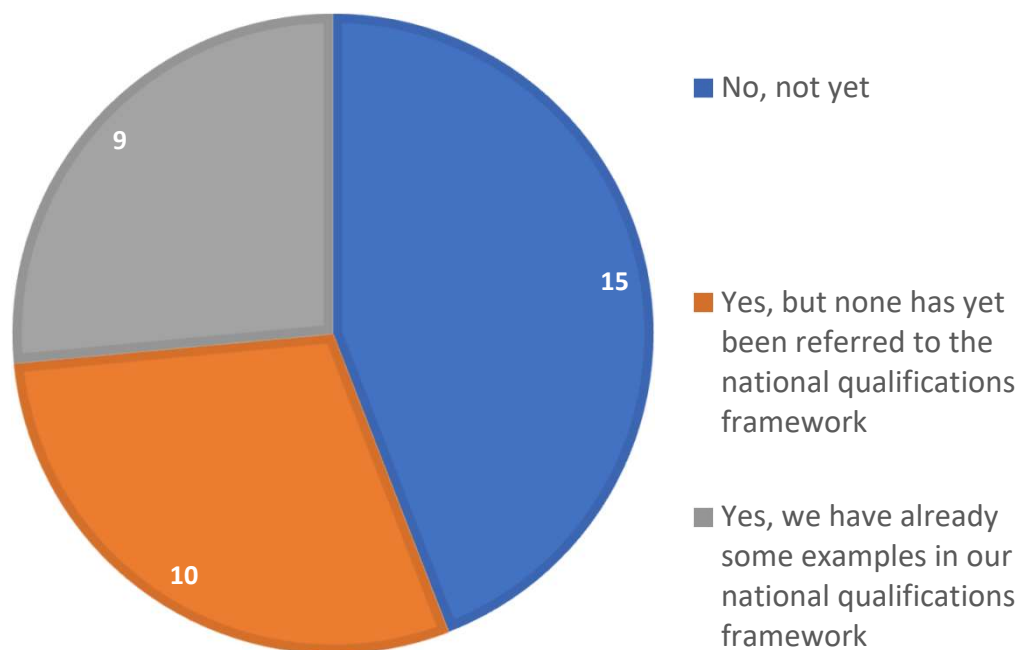


# Recognition of micro-credentials offered by non-HE providers



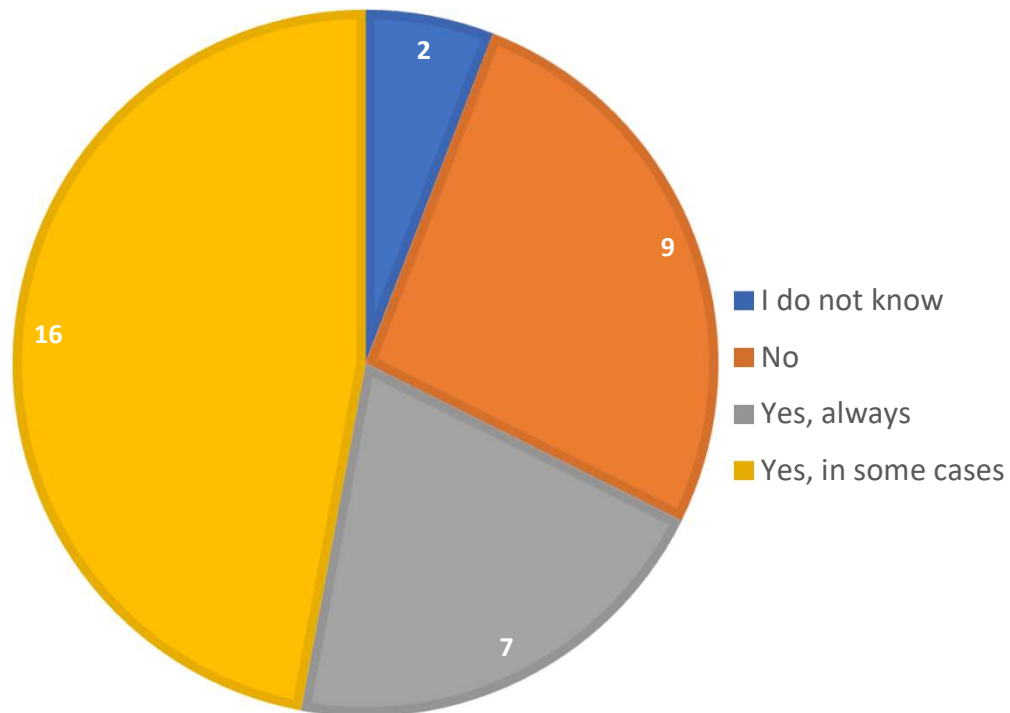
- **Only from HEIs: 18 countries**
- **From HEIs and other providers: 16 countries**

# National framework open to micro-credentials



- **Open to MCs: 10 countries**
  - At any level
  - 5, 6 and 7
  - 6
  - MCs awarded by HEIs can be referred to QF
  - Full degree referred to QF
  - Single module within a full degree (HEIs) can be referred to QF
- **Some examples of MCs referred to QF: 9 countries**
- **Not yet: 15 countries**

# Micro-credential expressed in ECTS



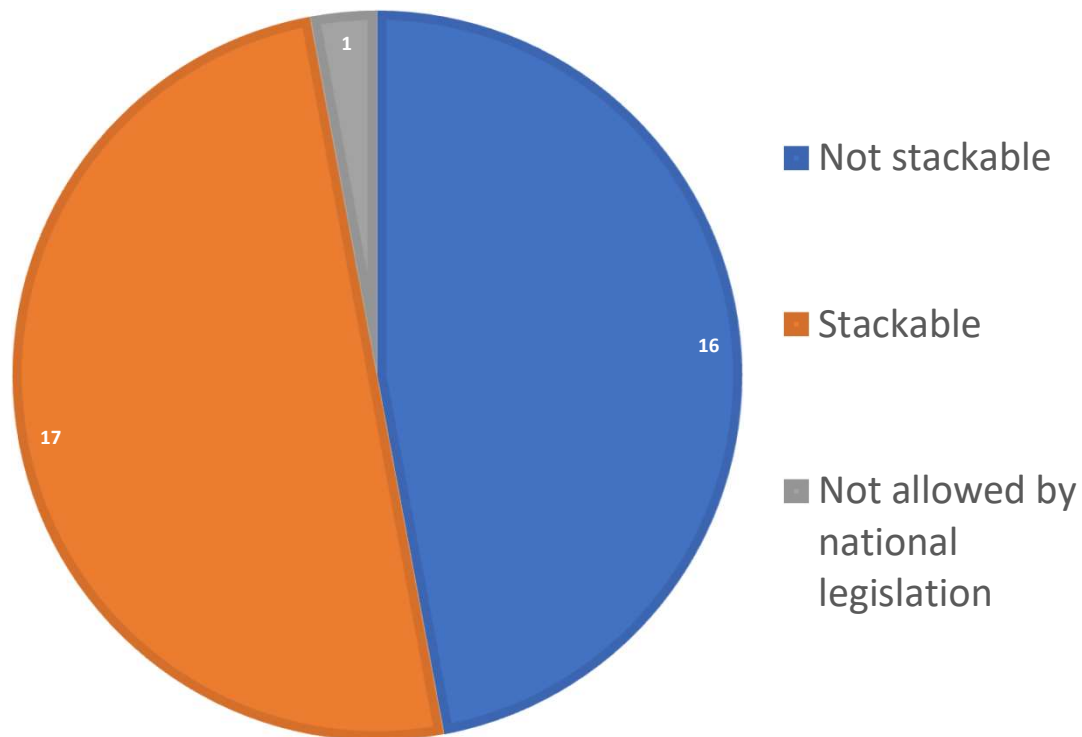
- **MCs expressed in ECTS in some cases**

- 2-4-6 ECTS
- 4-6 ECTS
- Usually less than 10 ECTS
- 3-20 ECTS (module/single course within a full degree)
- 3-25 ECTS
- 20-50 ECTS
- 1-60 ECTS
- Maximum 30 ECTS
- Awarded by HEIs 13-30 ECTS (less frequently 0-6 ECTS. Continuing education 10 ECTS)

- **MCs always expressed in ECTS**

- 1 to 5 ECTS;
- 3 to 6 ECTS;
- from 3 to 36 ECTS;
- 7.5 credits, 15 and 30 credits (for single courses within a full study programme in HE);
- 20-30 ECTS;
- 2-70 ECTS;
- from less than 180 to less than 30 ECTS.

# Stackability of micro-credentials



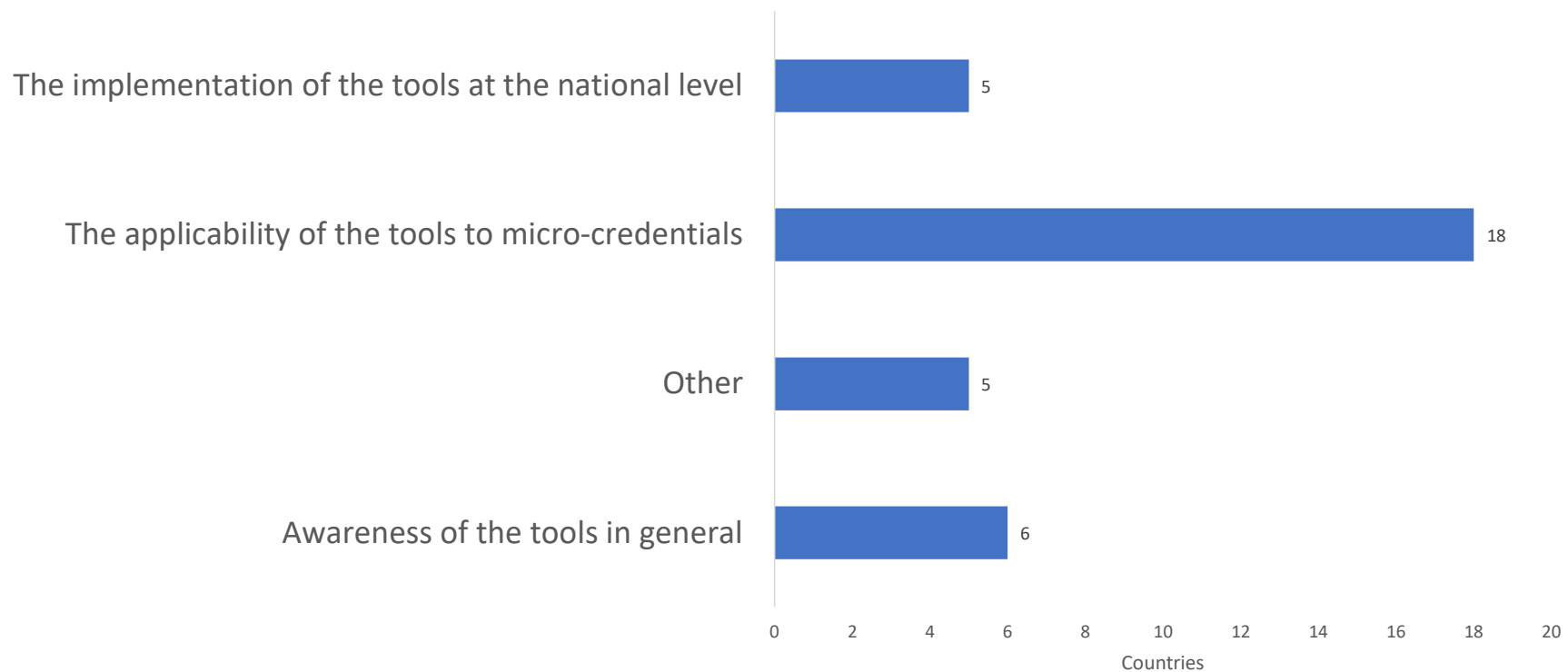
- **Learners can accumulate MCs:**  
17 countries
  - Most countries (8) recognise MCs in a full degree programme;
- **Learners cannot accumulate MCs:** 16 countries
- **Not allowed by national legislation:** 1 country

## Section 3

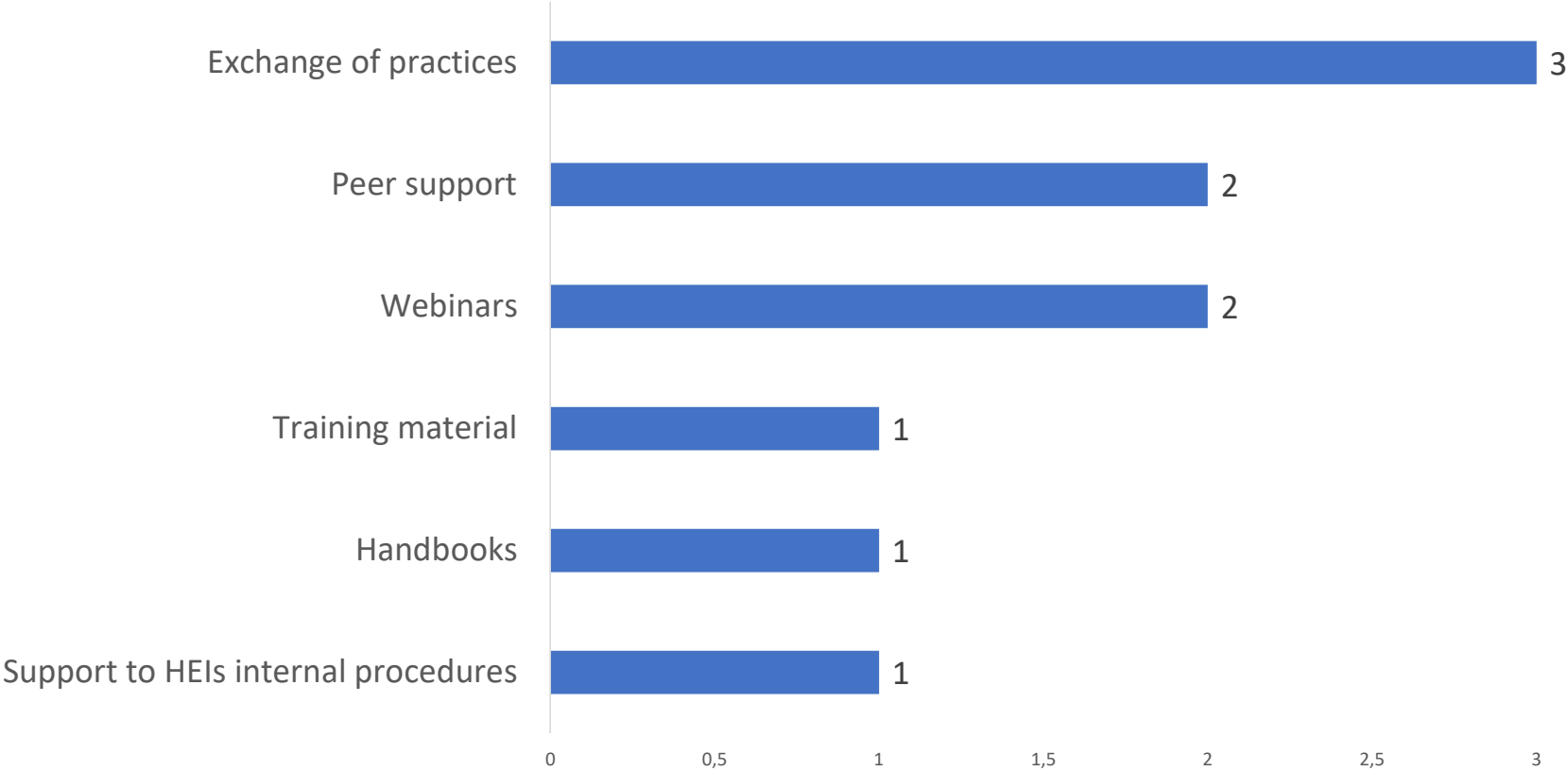
# Challenges regarding the application of Bologna tools to micro-credentials



# Biggest challenges to apply Bologna Key Commitments to micro-credentials



# Type of support required





# MICROBOL recommendations:

- Based on survey results & discussions in the working groups
- Joint publication of 34 recommendations on QA, recognition & QF & ECTS
- Target: EHEA countries and stakeholder organisations, but also European Commission -> Consultation
- Download: <https://microcredentials.eu/wp-content/uploads/sites/20/2021/07/MICROBOL-Recommendations-1.pdf>



# MICROBOL recommendations:

## Transversal themes:

1. An opportunity to rethink higher education's role in lifelong learning
2. Awareness of and common agreement on what a micro-credential is
3. A common format
4. Legislation
5. Digitalisation

Peer exchange and support, involvement of all actors, guidelines

Bologna key commitments

