



**Coordination Group on Global Policy Dialogue ('Africa' sub-group)
of the *Bologna Follow-Up Group (BFUG)* - European Higher Education Area**

**Second EHEA-Africa Conversation on Academic Recognition
Recognition for Lifelong Learning**

Perspectives in the European Higher Education Area, Africa and the Near East

6th June 2023, 11.00 – 13.00 Central European Summer Time (on-line)

PROGRAMME

PLENARY SESSION 1 (Opening)

(Simultaneous interpretation from/into English, French and Portuguese)

- Welcome, programme presentation, housekeeping (Moderator, **Andreas Snildal**, UNESCO)
- Introductory panel:
EHEA: Cristina Ghițulică, BFUG member for Romania, Co-chair of the Task Force on Enhancing Knowledge Sharing in the EHEA community, Vice president of ENQA, Professor of Chemical Engineering at Polytechnic of Bucharest
Africa: Michael Mawa, Head of the Quality Assurance and Qualifications Framework Unit, Inter-University Council for East Africa (IUCEA).
- Input from chat (Moderator/s)
- Introduction to Breakout Sessions, practical guidelines (Moderator)

Switch to Breakout Sessions

THEMATIC LANGUAGE-SPECIFIC PARALLEL BREAKOUT SESSIONS

NO SIMULTANEOUS INTERPRETATION
BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS ONLY IN THE SESSION'S LANGUAGE

Language	Title/Topic(s)	Participants
English	<i>Spotlight on micro-credentials</i>	<p>Moderator: Helene Peterbauer, Policy Analyst, European University Association (EUA)</p> <p><i>Speakers:</i> Chiara Finocchietti, Information Centre on Academic Mobility and Equivalence - CIMEA, Italy James Keevy, CEO JET Education Services, South Africa Irene Mutuzo, Vice Chair of the Learner and Employment Records Workgroup of the Learning Technology Standards Committee, IEEE Standards Association</p>
French	<i>Valorisation et validation des apprentissages non formels</i>	<p>Moderator: Michaela Martin, Institut International de Planification de l'Éducation, UNESCO</p> <p><i>Speakers:</i> Valérie Fontaine, Direction générale de l'Enseignement supérieur, de l'Enseignement tout au long de la vie et de la Recherche scientifique, Service général de l'Enseignement tout au long de la vie, Direction de l'Enseignement de Promotion sociale, Fédération Wallonie-Bruxelles, Belgium Lamine Gueye, Secrétaire exécutif, Autorité Nationale d'Assurance Qualité de l'Enseignement Supérieur - ANAQ SUP, Sénégal (https://shorturl.at/adwKL)</p>
Portuguese	<i>Digitalização: Perspetivas para o reconhecimento e a aprendizagem ao longo da vida</i>	<p>Moderator: Ana Maria Nhampule, Vice-Reitora, Universidade Joaquim Chissano, Moçambique</p> <p><i>Speaker:</i> Eduarda Castel Branco, Perito Sénior em Desenvolvimento do Capital Humano - Coordenador do Quadro Continental Africano de Qualificações - Projecto II, Fundação Europeia para a Formação</p>



English session: Spotlight on Micro-credentials

With the adoption of the [Council Recommendation on a European Approach to Micro-credentials for lifelong learning and employability](#) in June 2022, the EU member states agreed on a common foundation for the development of these learning units across Europe. The discussion on this topic has since gained even more momentum and touches upon a vast array of questions, among which: What opportunities do micro-credentials offer higher education institutions (HEI) to sharpen their strategic profile? How can these learning units support (virtual) mobility and internationalisation at home? How can micro-credentials support recognition of competences acquired through non-formal and informal learning? What challenges remain for quality assurance and recognition more broadly? And how should HEI prepare for a likely increase in requests for recognition?

These questions are not only discussed within Europe but also globally (see: [Global Dialogue on Micro-credentials](#), 2022).

This session of the EHEA-Africa Conversation on Academic Recognition will address these and other questions in the European and African context.

EHEA

In the 2022 *Rome Communiqué*, the Ministers for Education of the European Higher Education Area committed to help higher education institutions to diversify their learning offer and to innovate in educational content and modes of delivery. In addition to full degree programmes, higher education institutions may offer smaller units of learning, which can help learners to develop or update their skills and competences.

In the 2022 *EU Council Recommendation on a European approach to micro-credentials for lifelong learning and employability*, ‘micro-credentials’ are defined as the record of the learning outcomes that a learner has acquired following a small volume of learning. Learning experiences leading to micro-credentials should provide the learner with specific knowledge, skills and competences that respond to societal, personal, cultural or labour market needs. Micro-credentials are owned by the learner, can be shared and are portable.

The *EU Council conclusions on the European Universities initiative – Bridging higher education, research, innovation and society: Paving the way for a new dimension in European higher education* stress that micro-credentials could widen learning opportunities to accommodate non-traditional learners and the demand for new skills in the labour market; make the learning experience more flexible and modular; support access to higher education; and engage learners, regardless of their previous qualifications or backgrounds, promoting reskilling and upskilling opportunities, while ensuring quality education. The Council welcomes the Commission’s intention to support the development of micro-credentials, including the development of guidelines to foster transparency and apply the current EU and Bologna instruments in the field of higher education to the internal and external quality assurance of micro-credentials.

Africa, Middle East

Comparability of qualifications is a key feature in the context of economic integration and free movement in Africa. The African Union’s Free Movement Protocol stipulates that state parties should establish a continental qualifications framework to promote the free movement of persons. The interplay between learning programmes, curricula, qualifications and credentials is considered as foundational to any form of harmonisation in Africa, but research and data on micro-credentials in



Africa is scarce. Proxies of micro-credentials are well established in the context of labour market-oriented training and in digital and innovative skills development eco-systems, but most countries are only starting to better define and manage their variations of micro-credentials. A common approach to micro-credentials in the context of regional economic communities and at the wider level of the African Union is yet to be initiated.

In 2021, a survey among members of the African Continental Qualifications Framework (ACQF) Advisory Group showed that countries are aware of the development of micro-credentials in their education and training systems and markets and most respondents provided definitions used/accepted in the respective countries. There is a growing trend in the diversity and provision of micro-credentials, especially in the field of vocational education and training, while higher education is less involved.

Switching back to plenary

PLENARY SESSION 2 (Closing)

(Simultaneous interpretation from/into English, French and Portuguese)

- Introduction to the session (Moderator)
- Reporting from Breakout Sessions (3 Rapporteurs)
- Remarks from the two Guest Speakers
- Feedback from chat (Moderator/s)
- General conclusions from Guest Speakers
- Closure, follow-up (Moderator)

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