



Webinar  
**RPL: evolving, attracting,  
 creating new opportunities**  
**Seychelles**

New demands, new opportunities and challenges

17 April 2024

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# Agenda of the webinar

**Day 1: 17 April, 09.00-11.00 CET / 11.00-13.00 (Seychelles)**

Joint meeting – go to [Zoom link](#)

Meeting ID: 873 5156 6985 - Passcode: 726705

**Topic: RPL – evolving, attracting, creating new opportunities**

## **Agenda**

11.00-11.10: opening, brief introduction

11.10-11.40: RPL - overview of developments Africa, Europe (ACQF-II)

11.40-12.10: RPL - case study Kenya (*KNQA representative*)

12.10-12.50: RPL Seychelles - practical cases (*SQA and stakeholders*)

12.50-13.00: Questions and answers. Closure

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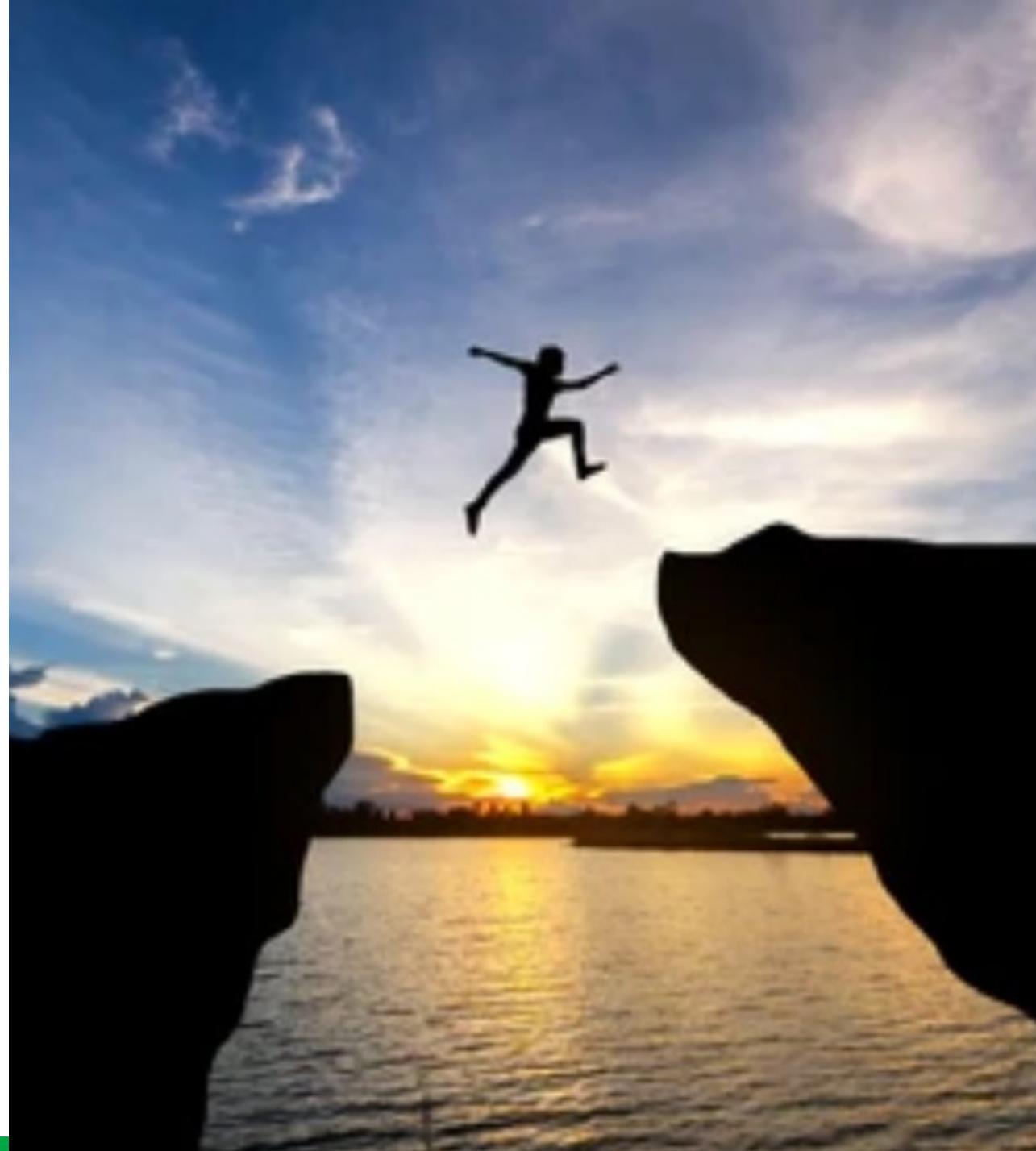
All learning matters

# RPL

## Make the invisible - visible

### Topics of the Presentation:

1. Why RPL
  2. RPL in the eco-system of education and training
  3. RPL in Europe
  4. RPL in Africa
- 



## A time of deep and multi-dimensional change requires:

- Learning
- Upskilling
- Reskilling
- Certification
- Lifelong learning
- Lifewide learning

<https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2023/05/future-of-jobs-2023-skills>

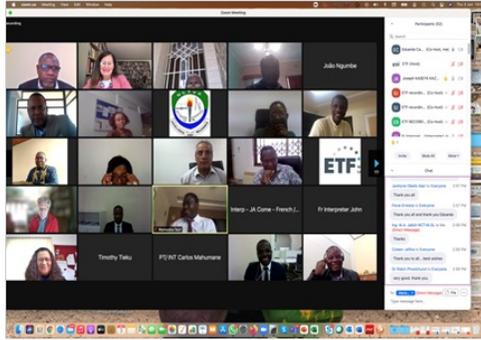
## Reskilling needs

# 44%

of workers' core skills are expected to change in the next five years



Source: World Economic Forum,  
*Future of Jobs Report 2023*.



## Make the invisible - visible

Non-formal and informal learning are key parts of **lifelong learning**

**People need RPL:** employees, informal sector workers, people in labour migration, refugees, school drop-outs

Knowledge, skills and competences acquired in all contexts and modalities of learning (incl. experience) can be **identified, documented, assessed and certified.**

NQF supports RPL; RPL supports NQF

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- A process
- An assessment
  - (Not education and training, not in the first place at least)
- All education and training institutions assess and validate learning outcomes, but RPL is specific (mainly because no curriculum)

- Recognition of prior learning (RPL) is a process of identifying, documenting, assessing and certifying formal, non-formal and **informal learning outcomes** against **standards** used in formal education and training.
- Thus, RPL provides an opportunity for people to acquire qualifications or credits towards a qualification or exemptions (from all or part of the curriculum, or even exemption from an academic prerequisite for entering a formal study programme) without going through a formal education or training programme.

- The Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) is a process through which formal, non-formal and informal learning is measured, mediated for recognition across different contexts and certified against the requirements for credit, access, inclusion or advancement in the formal education and training system or workplace.
  - The aim is to make it possible to obtain formal recognition for knowledge gained throughout life, such as in workplaces and own reading or experiences. The RPL process also entails providing support to a candidate to ensure that knowledge is discovered and displayed in terms of a relevant qualification registered on the National Qualifications Framework (NQF).
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# 02

**RPL in the eco-system  
of skills development**

# Building blocks / Conditions for RPL

## ILO (2018) Building blocks

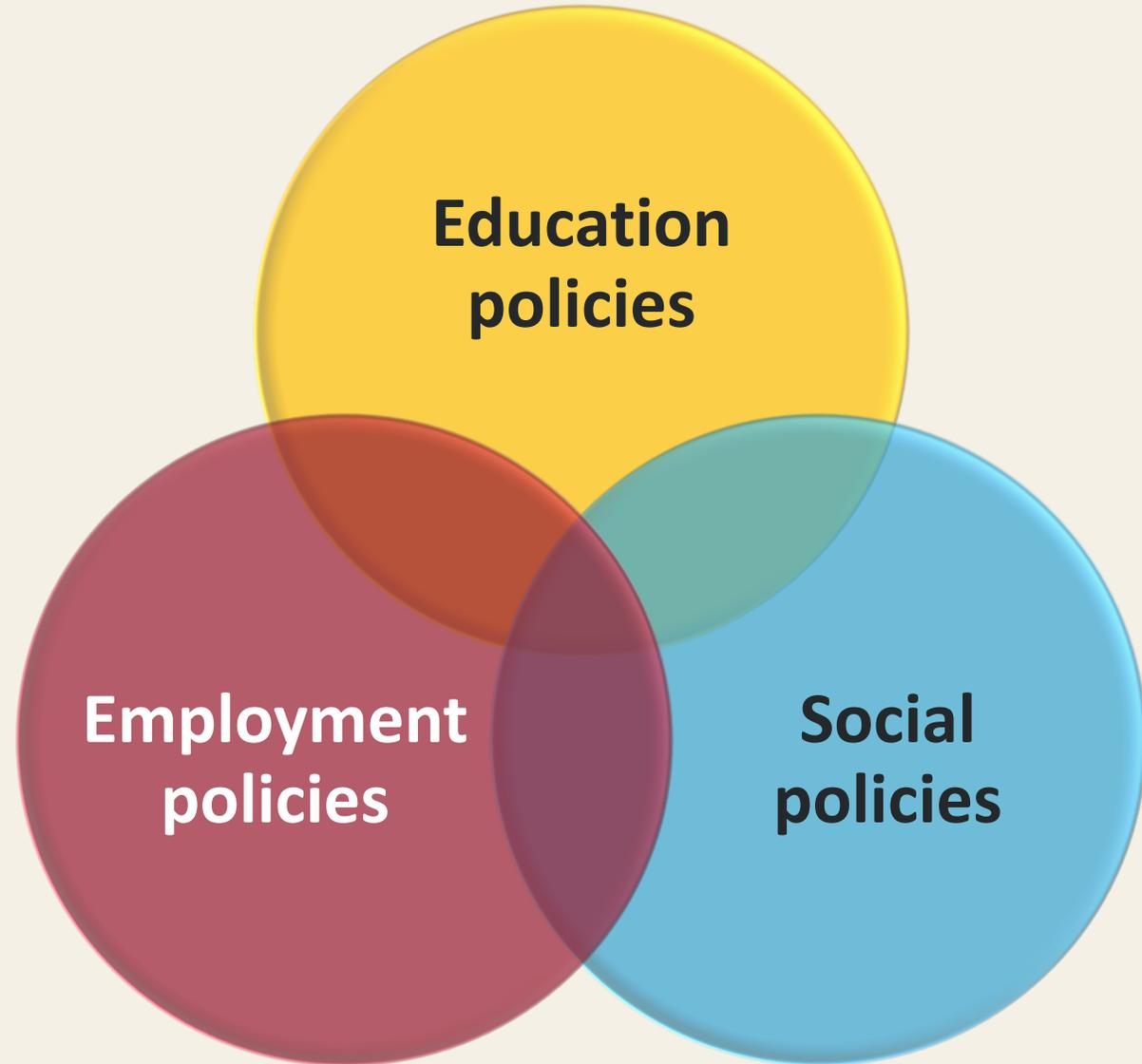
- Regulatory framework
- Institutional framework
- **Stakeholder ownership and commitment**
- **Quality assurance**
- Financing

## European Guidelines for Validation (2015) – Conditions

- Information, Guidance and counselling
- Stakeholders' coordination
- Links to national qualifications systems and frameworks
- Standards and learning outcomes
- **Quality assurance**
- Professional competences of validation professionals / practitioners

# A coordinated approach across policy areas

A coordinated approach to RPL explores the interfaces between RPL arrangements in education, employment and social policies and ways to reinforce them to achieve an integrated approach and impacts.



## FUNCTIONS OF RPL IN DIFFERENT POLICY AREAS

### Education policies

- Provide more flexible access to education and training
- Facilitate exemption from part(s) of an education and training programme.
- Provide the basis for awarding full qualifications.

### Employment policies

- Use skills assessments in the recruitment process
- Support training and staff development strategies of employers
- Increase staff retention and motivation and supports career progression
- Allow individuals to re-direct their careers
- Support the development of tailored training offer.

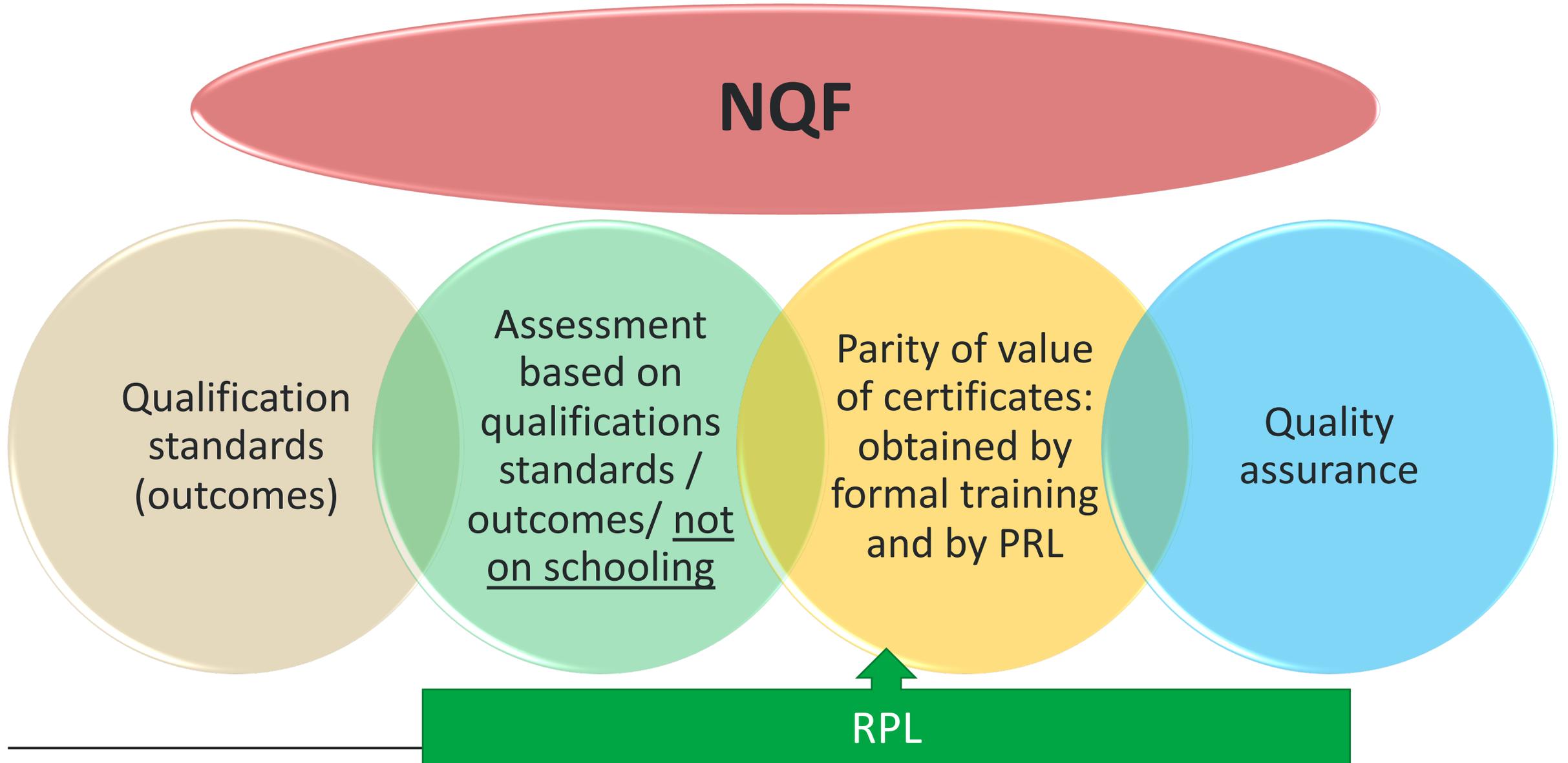
### Social policies

- Contribute to integration of individuals at risk of being marginalised
- Provide a process of self-reflection and contributes to increase individuals' self-esteem
- Contribute to make visible the learning from voluntary experience, youth work and civic engagement, especially for young people that lack work experience.

# What connection with NQF?



# What connection with NQF?

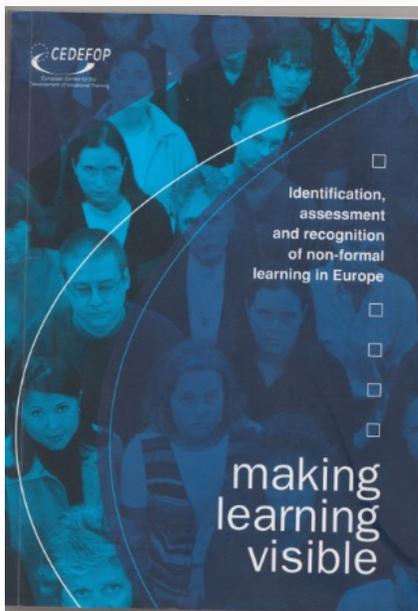


03

RPL / Validation in  
Europe – *source: Cedefop*



# Validation of non-formal and informal learning



Cedefop working on validation for more than 20 years



[www.cedefop.europa.eu/validation](http://www.cedefop.europa.eu/validation)



# Storyline of validation in EU

1995

European Commission White Paper on Teaching and Learning

2000

Making lifelong learning a reality

2004

European Principles

2008

EQF recommendation

2009

1st edition European Guidelines

2012

Council Recommendation on validation

2015

Updated European guidelines

2016

Upskilling pathways recommendation

2017

EQF new recommendation

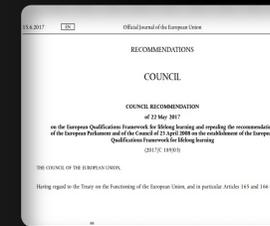
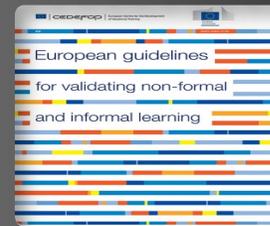
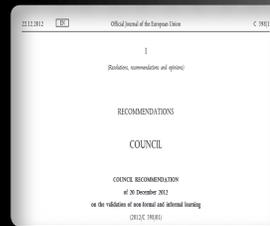
European Pillar of social rights

2020

New skills agenda

2022

New updated guidelines



2004

1st EU inventory

2005

2nd EU inventory

2008

3rd EU inventory

2010

4th EU inventory

2014

5th EU inventory

2016

6th EU inventory

2018

7th EU inventory



**1**

**All learning, irrespective of where and when it takes place, is valuable for the individual and for society.**



**2**

**Formal education needs to be complemented by validation of non-formal and informal learning.**

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# VALIDATION OF NON-FORMAL AND INFORMAL LEARNING

VALIDATION IS A PROCESS THAT CAN BE CARRIED OUT BY DIFFERENT STAKEHOLDERS WITHIN THE EDUCATION AND TRAINING SECTOR, LABOUR MARKET AND THIRD SECTOR

TRAIN PRACTITIONERS INVOLVED IN VALIDATION PROCESSES TO PROVIDE INFORMATION, ADVICE, GUIDANCE

VALIDATION PROCEDURES AND MATERIALS SHOULD BE RESPONSIVE TO ALL DIFFERENT NEEDS

- EDUCATION PROVIDERS AND EMPLOYERS MIGHT USE THE FORMAL OUTCOME OF A VALIDATION (E.G. CERTIFICATE)
- THE DIFFERENT STAGES OF VALIDATION, IN PARTICULAR THE IDENTIFICATION STAGE, ALLOWS A YOUNG PERSON TO REFLECT ON THE COMPETENCES GAINED AND HOW THEY COULD BE USED IN THE FUTURE

FOUR DIFFERENT STAGES TO VALIDATION:

- IDENTIFICATION
- DOCUMENTATION
- ASSESSMENT
- CERTIFICATION

SELECT THE RIGHT VALIDATION TOOLS (E.G. PORTFOLIO, EXAMINATION, REPORT, CV, OBSERVATION, ETC.)

RECOGNISE SKILLS AND COMPETENCES ACQUIRED IN A VARIETY OF SETTINGS

PLACING THE LEARNER AT THE CENTRE OF THE VALIDATION PROCESS

INVOLVE DIFFERENT STAKEHOLDERS IN THE VALIDATION PROCESS TO ENSURE THE QUALITY AND COHERENCE OF THE VALIDATION EXPERIENCE

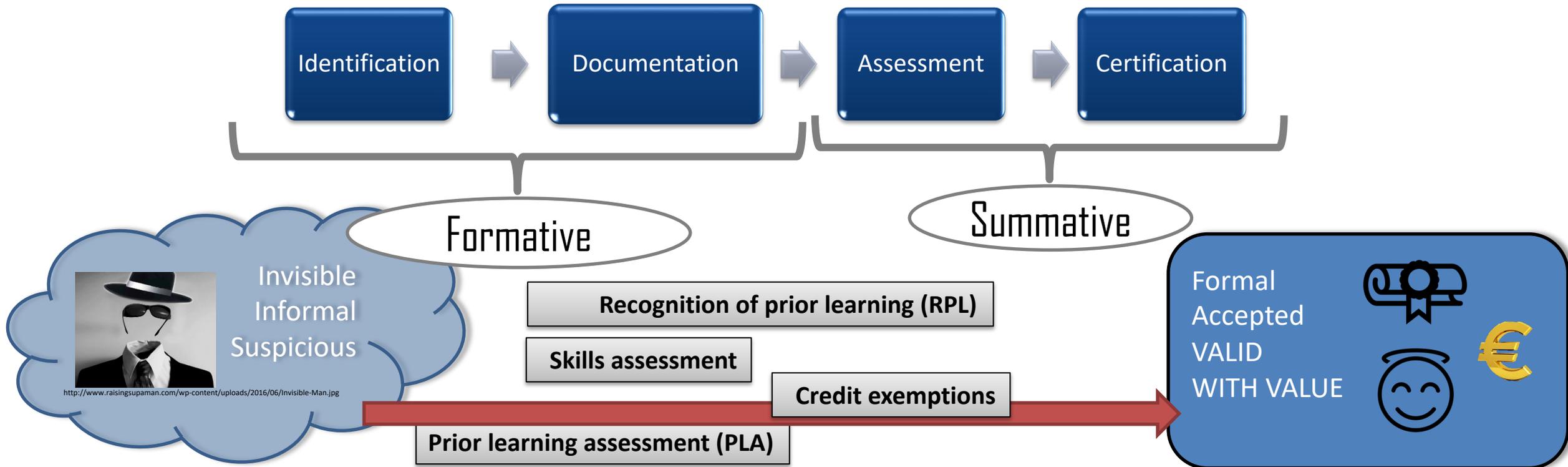
ENSURE THE CREDIBILITY OF VALIDATION BY EDUCATION PROVIDERS AND EMPLOYERS

FOLLOW-UP AFTER VALIDATION: KEEP TRACK OF THE PROGRESS AND MOBILITY OF INDIVIDUALS FOLLOWING COMPLETION OF A VALIDATION PROCEDURE

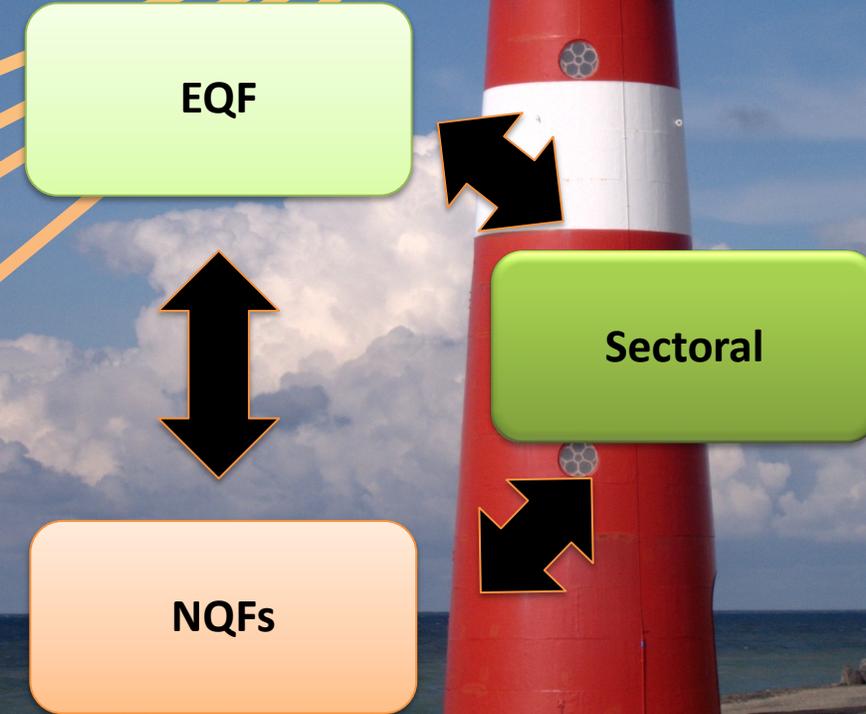
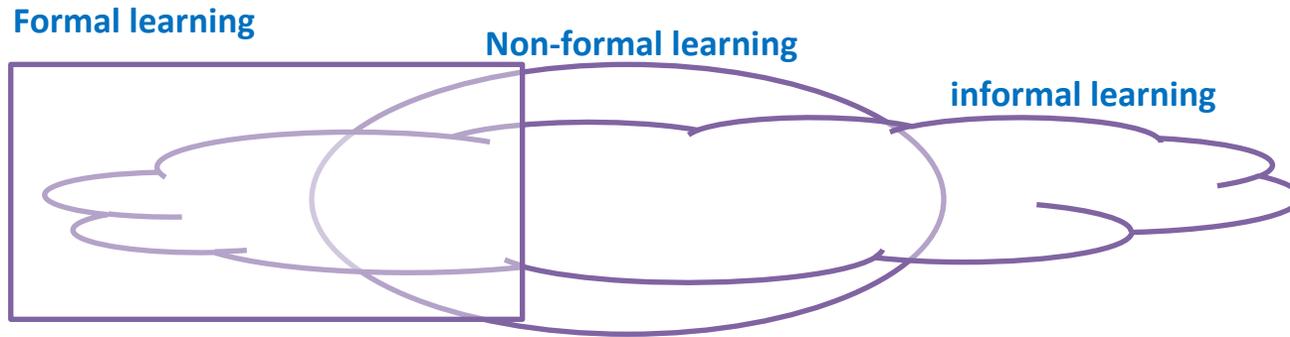


# VALIDATION of non-formal and informal learning and its objectives

**Validation** means a process of confirmation by an authorised body that an individual has acquired learning outcomes measured against a relevant standard

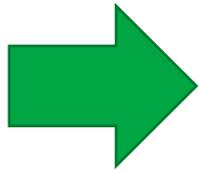
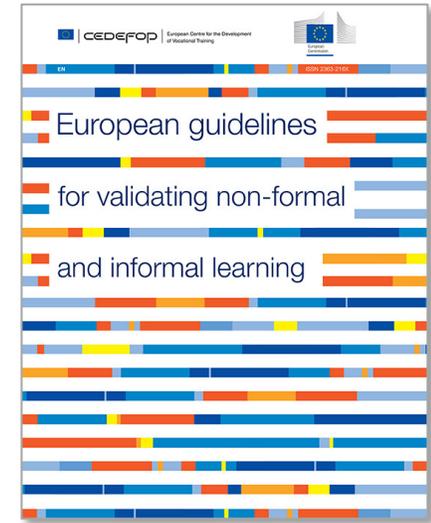


# RPL and National qualification systems and frameworks



# The European guidelines

- Assisting stakeholders by clarifying the different options and possible steps they face when establishing and operating validation arrangements
- Follow the principles outlined in the Recommendation in 2012



The guidelines acknowledge that any solution must be fit for purpose and that arrangements need to be designed according to the particular context in which they operate.

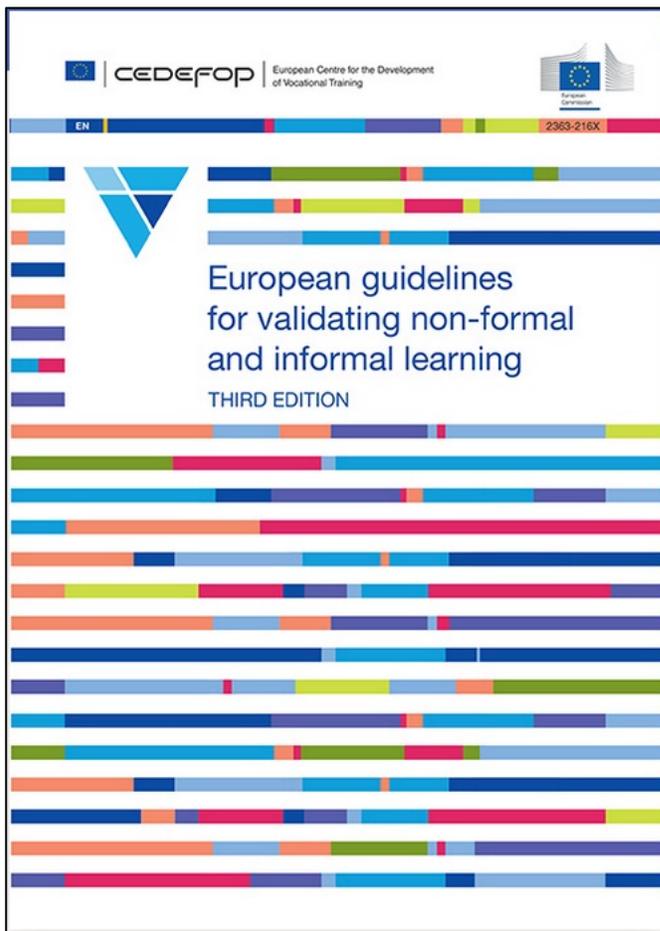
<https://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/publications/3073>

# The main principles

1. The centrality of the individual
2. Objectives of validation (4 phases)
3. Information, guidance and counseling
4. Stakeholder coordination
5. Links to national qualification frameworks
6. Standards and learning outcomes
7. Quality assurance
8. Professional practitioners
9. Validation in context
10. Validation tools



# European Guidelines: the new edition (2022)



<https://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/publications/3093#group-downloads>

## Chapter 1

### Purpose of the European guidelines

## Chapter 2

### A strategic vision: the individual at the centre

- 2.1. Centrality of the individual
- 2.2. Four phases of validation
  - 2.2.1. Identification
  - 2.2.2. Documentation
  - 2.2.3. Assessment
  - 2.2.4. Certification
- 2.3. Different purposes and benefits of validation

## Chapter 3

### Validation as a facilitator of individual, lifelong and life-wide learning

- 3.1. Validation contexts and transferability
  - 3.1.1. Validation in education and training
  - 3.1.2. Validation in the labour market
  - 3.1.3. Validation in the third sector
- 3.2. Validation in skills and lifelong learning strategies
- 3.3. Stakeholder involvement and coordination
- 3.4. Financing and cost
- 3.5. Validation professionals and their competences
  - 3.5.1. Counsellor/advisor
  - 3.5.2. Validation assessor
  - 3.5.3. Validation managers, administrators and external observers

## Chapter 4

### Validation provision elements

- 4.1. From learning outcomes to certification
  - 4.1.1. Learning outcomes
  - 4.1.2. Learning experiences, reference points and standards
  - 4.1.3. Validation in the context of changing qualifications and certificates
- 4.2. Information, awareness raising and outreach
- 4.3. Guidance and counselling
- 4.4. ICT and validation
- 4.5. Quality assurance

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### Key questions on validation

- Is the individual perspective considered in all elements of validation?
- Have the objective, purpose and expected outcomes of validation been defined and clearly communicated?
- Is the purpose of validation reflected in the organisation and emphasis of its different phases?
- Do possibilities for validation exist in different contexts and what is their role:
  - in education and training?
  - in the labour market?
  - in the third sector?
- Does validation work with other policies and services?
  - Are roles and responsibilities of stakeholders clarified?
  - What steps are taken to avoid fragmentation and ensure a coherent approach?
- Can individuals transfer and accumulate validation outcomes across different contexts?
- Has sustainable financing been provided, and cost-sharing mechanisms agreed?
- Have the professional roles of validation practitioners been clarified, developed and supported?
- Is information on validation being provided in ways which ensure awareness, outreach and access?
- Is there provision of guidance and counselling before, during and after a validation process?
- Are learning outcomes used to define reference points for validation?
  - Are reference points and standards agreed among stakeholders?
  - How does validation relate to different credentials?
  - Are there clear links to NQFs?
- Has the potential of ICT been considered for improving validation?
- How has quality been assured in the validation process?
- Which validation methodologies are available and how can they be used and potentially combined for specific policies and practices?
  - Are validation methods fit for purpose?
  - Are tools reliable, valid and scalable?

### Key questions on the centrality of the individual

- To what extent are individuals aware of, and have access to, validation?
- Are validation arrangements designed to capture diverse (and unexpected) learning experiences or do they address a limited (and predefined) set of experiences?
- To what extent does validation serve diverse individuals at different stages of their life? To what extent does it address lifelong and life-wide learning, employment careers and volunteering?
- Is the privacy and personal integrity of the candidates protected throughout the validation process?
- Have explicit procedures been put in place to guarantee confidentiality?
- What arrangements have been put in place to guarantee fair and equal treatment?
- Are there possibilities for appeal?
- Have ethical standards been developed and applied?
- Are the outcomes of the process the exclusive property of the candidate?
- Can the individual, if the opportunity arises, transfer and accumulate results of validation?
- Are individuals supported before, during and after the process?

### Key questions on identification

- Are there templates and systematic ways of identifying learning outcomes?
- Is the identification phase limited to predefined areas of prior learning? What is the starting point for the identification of skills?
- How are standardised (for example ICT-based) and open (for example dialogue-based) identification methods mixed and balanced?
- How is guidance and counselling supporting and interconnected with the identification phase?
- How is the identification process supported by professionals?

### Key questions on documentation

- Is there agreement on which evidence to accept for validation?
- Have end-users, notably individuals, been made aware of what is accepted as evidence?
- Are the formats used for documenting non-formal and informal learning generally known and/or accepted?
- To what extent do existing documentation formats support the transfer and portability of evidence gathered in the context of validation?

### Key questions on assessment

- Are assessment tools adapted to the individual's needs and characteristics?
- Are validity, reliability, accessibility and fairness assured?
- Can assessment results be contested?
- Have the conditions for assessment been clearly defined and communicated in terms of procedure, tools and evaluation/assessment standards:
  - to candidates?
  - to employers and education institutions?
- Is feedback regularly collected and analysed?

### Key questions on certification

- Is the awarding body known?
- Is the process leading to the award transparent?
- To what extent can the outcomes of validation (qualifications, certificates, credentials, etc.) be exchanged into further education, job opportunities?
- Are certifications obtained through validation linked to NQFs?

### Key questions on objectives and benefits

- Has the purpose of validation been defined and clearly communicated?
- Have the phases of the validation process been clearly defined to address the purpose of validation?
- Is the purpose of validation reflected in the structure and emphasis of the different phases of validation?
- Are benefits of validation clearly communicated to the individual?

### Key questions on education and training

- Has the purpose of validation within education and training been clarified and clearly communicated to individuals?
- Is validation offered in all parts of education and training systems?
- Does validation offered in different parts of the education and training system build on similar or different principles? Is there coherence on validation across different parts of education and training?
- Can validation arrangements in different parts of education and training aid progress across types and levels of education? To what extent can validation results be used across different parts of education and training?
- How is validation linked to credit transfer and accumulation?

### Key questions on labour market

- Are there systematic validation possibilities in the labour market?
- Is there a coherent approach to validation in the labour market across different labour market actors?
- Has the purpose of validation within the labour market initiatives been clarified and clearly communicated to individuals?
- Are there possibilities of connecting certificates obtained through validation in the labour market to formal education programmes?
- What is the value of labour market certificates and can they be acquired through validation?
- Is validation used and connected to up- and reskilling initiatives?
- Can results of a validation process in the labour market be used in other contexts, for example to access formal education programmes?

### Key questions on third sector

- Are there systematic validation possibilities in the third sector?
- Have the objectives of validation within third sector initiatives been clarified and clearly communicated to individuals?
- Are there possibilities of connecting certificates obtained through validation in the third sector to formal education programmes?
- Can results of a validation process in the third sector be used in other contexts, for example to access formal education programmes?

### Key questions on skill and lifelong learning strategies

- Have the role and purposes of validation within education and training, labour market and social policies been clarified?
- Are there guidelines or frameworks that govern the relationship of validation with other services, for example career guidance and public employment services?
- Are there forums in which diverse actors governing different policy fields can come together to discuss validation issues?

### Key questions on stakeholder involvement

- Are different stakeholders aware and do they accept the validation outcomes?
- Are different stakeholders involved in the design, implementation and execution of validation arrangements?
- Is there dialogue between social partners, education and training institutions and civic society organisations on the role of validation practices?
- Have single or multiple legal framework(s) been put in place that govern the relationship between actors in relation to validation?
- What administrative processes are in place (contact and information procedures, recording and monitoring of results, shared quality assurance arrangements)?
- What networking possibilities are there for stakeholders? What are the forums in which validation can be discussed and agreed upon?
- Who is responsible for coordination at national, regional and local levels? How is consistency and coherence across levels assured?
- What mechanisms exist for the direct experience of validation system users to contribute to, inform and review national policy and procedures for validation?

### Key questions on financing and cost

- Is there a sustainable model of financing validation?
- Are the criteria for the provision of funds incentivising the use of validation processes?
- Are there shared costing mechanisms in place for validation? Is it possible to reach an agreement on cost distribution among relevant stakeholders?
- What funding instruments are in place to incentivise and support individuals' uptake and institutional offers?
- Is information on the costs and benefits of validation clear and delivered to the individual in a timely manner?
- Have the elements that contribute to the cost of validation been defined?
- Are there elements in place to collect the information needed in terms of cost?
- Is it possible to carry out cost-benefit analysis of validation?

### Key questions on validation professionals and their competences

- What requirements, if any, have been set for:
  - counsellors and guidance personnel?
  - assessors?
  - other practitioners involved in validation?
- Is there a strategy in place for the professional development of these practitioners?
- Is the professional development of validation professionals coordinated between different sectors and arrangements?
- Can a community of practice for validation professionals be developed, supporting networking and professional development?

### Key questions on learning outcomes and validation

- Is the validation process using a reference point (standard, curricula, programme description) based on input or outcome expectation?
- What is the focus of the expected learning outcomes in terms of breadth (knowledge, skills and/or competences) and depth (levels and complexity)?
- Is the scope of the reference point sufficiently widely defined to capture the learning taking place outside formal education and training?

### Key questions on learning experiences

- What kind of knowledge has been acquired?
  - basic knowledge (literacy, numeracy, etc.)
  - technical and specialised knowledge
- Which skills are covered?
  - practical skills (related to tasks, functions and/or occupations)
  - analytical skills
- Which wider, transversal skills and competences have been acquired?
  - self-management skills and competences (time-management, learning to learn, etc.)
  - communication skills and competences (oral and written presentations, etc.)
  - social skills and competences (teamwork, management of others, etc.)
- At what level of complexity (depth) has the individual acquired learning? Can the depth and complexity of learning be specified by referring to formal levels and/or with action verbs?

### Key questions on standards and reference points

- Are the reference points for validation clearly identified?
- Is there stakeholder involvement in the development of the reference points? Are standards built on consensus and dialogue?
- Is the reference point for validation communicated with the candidate?
- Is the reference point opening up to the diversity of the individual's learning experiences, or does it require narrowing down?
- Is the reference point embedded in a limited education, training and/or occupation sector, and are the experiences gained outside this addressed?
- Are there feedback mechanisms in place for the development of the reference points?

### Key questions addressing the validation link to credentials

- Can the content and profile of a credential or certificate be presented in terms of learning outcomes?
- To what extent can the content and profile of credentials and certificates be compared?
- How can the content and profile of credentials and certificates be more systematically captured and compared? Is digitalisation playing a role?
- How can the content and profile of certificates and credentials be included (reliably and validly) in validation?

### Key questions on links to qualification frameworks

- Are stakeholders aware of, and do they understand, NQFs, their levels and descriptors?
- Are validation arrangements (all/only some) seen as an integrated part of the national qualifications system and as a normal route to qualifications?
- What is the relationship between validation and the NQF?
- To what extent can validation be used to support progression between all types and levels of qualification in the NQF?
- Is there a link between validation and (possible) credit transfer and accumulation arrangements?

### Key questions on awareness raising, information and outreach

- What measures are in place to increase awareness?
- Is information on cost, benefits and the process available and easily accessible?
- How is the information made easily available?
- Do the different actors involved provide coherent, complementary information?
- How can public and private stakeholders cooperate to offer better information on validation?
- Are past users given a voice to promote validation initiatives?

### Key questions on guidance and counselling

- Is there integration of career guidance with validation services and policies at a systemic level?
- To what extent are existing career guidance and counselling services (for example, in education and training, labour market and social services) connected and coordinated with existing validation services in different settings?
- To what extent is career guidance provided before, during and after validation processes?
- How can existing career guidance and counselling service networking be improved to address all potential target groups for validation?
- What kind of coordination mechanism is used to ensure that candidates are served where they live, study and work?
- Do guidance services provide information on the possibilities, costs and benefits of validation?
- Are guidance practitioners aware of, and trained on, existing validation possibilities?

### Key questions on ICT and validation

- Are there existing ICT systems that can be connected to validation?
- Are digital technologies used to register and keep track of the learning achievements of individuals?
- Is there consensus on what fields the digital certification should provide?
- Are the costs and benefits of developing ICT systems considered?
- Are there mechanisms to control the quality and legitimacy of digital certificates?

### Key questions on quality assurance

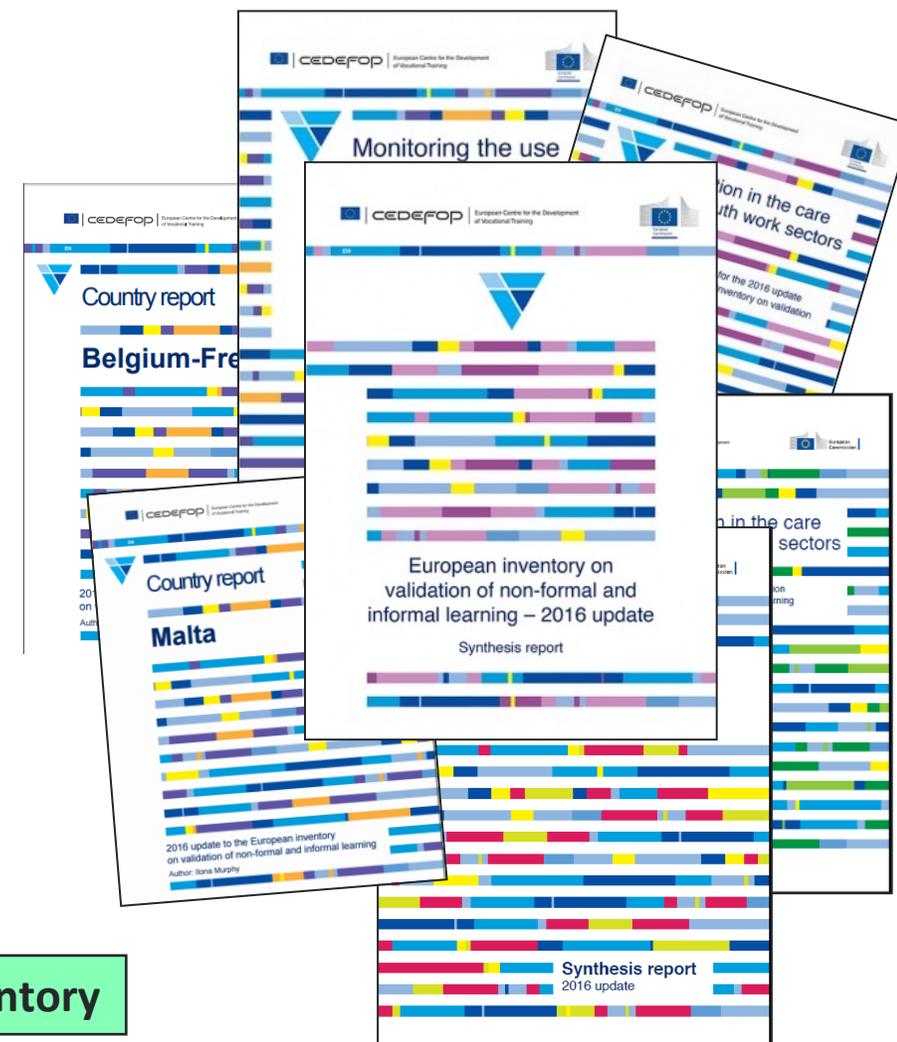
- Have explicit and integrated quality assurance measures been put in place for validation? If so:
  - do these measures reflect an explicit and agreed quality strategy?
  - how does the quality strategy address key objectives like reliability, validity and credibility of the process?
- Who are the actors involved, at different levels, in implementing this quality strategy?
- How are quality assurance arrangements divided between internal and external assurance and control?
- Are processes and outcomes being monitored and has a system for feed-back from users/customers been put in place?
- To what extent is research and evaluation of validation systems and processes supported?

## Key questions on validation tools and techniques

- ❑ Does the choice of methodologies consider the individual circumstances and characteristics?
- ❑ Are methodologies fit for purpose and in line with validation objectives? Is their purpose clearly informed?
- ❑ Are methodologies free from bias and how is fair treatment assured?
  - In what way do methodologies balance the criteria of reliability, validity, scalability and cost?
  - Are validation methodologies reliable, valid and scalable?
  - Do validation methodologies capture the variety of learning outcomes of individual experiences?
  - Are methodologies predictable, transparent and repeatable?
  - Can methodologies be replicated and used in different contexts while maintaining validity and reliability?
  - Has the cost of developing and maintaining methodologies been considered?
- ❑ Have technical consideration related to nature of assessment, criteria constructs and learning domains been clarified and agreed among stakeholders?
- ❑ Which validation methodologies are available and how can they be used and potentially combined for specific policies and practices, and for specific purposes?

## EU inventory - A rich source of information

- 2004, 2005, 2008, 2010, 2014, 2016, 2018 editions
- 39 country reports (covering 36 countries)
- Providing detailed information by sector
  - ✓ Sub-sector of education
    - General Education
    - IVET
    - CVET
    - Higher education
    - Adult education
  - ✓ Labour market
  - ✓ Third sector
- Thematic studies
- International country cases
- A synthesis of main findings



[www.cedefop.europa.eu/validation/inventory](http://www.cedefop.europa.eu/validation/inventory)

# Evaluation of the 2012 Recommendation

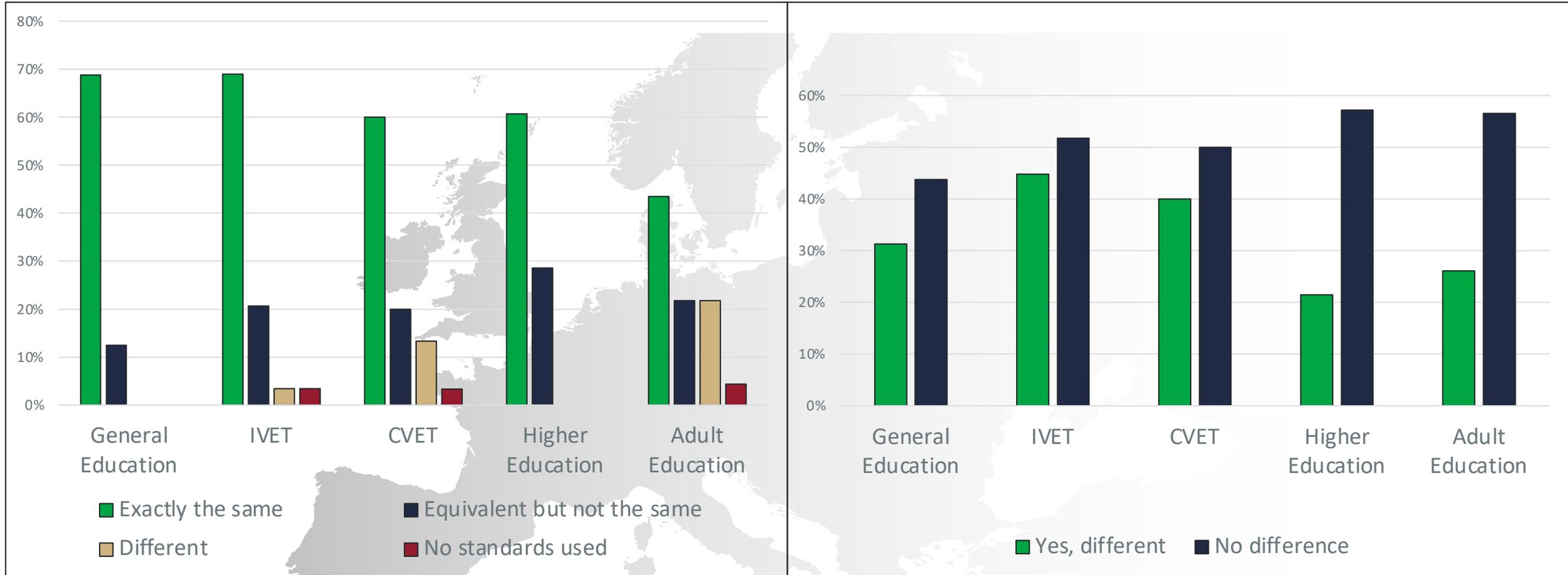
- All **Member States** have taken action;
- On the whole **more people** have **validation opportunities** and can find better information and **guidance** on validation;
- Wide agreement that in general **validation benefits justify its costs**;
- Wide consensus that the Recommendation is **consistent** with other actions and tools;
- Overall, the Recommendation has had a certain **impact on national action on validation**.

## Challenges

- Many people still have no access to validation – no information, not eligible, no means
- Validation arrangements are not comprehensive and not coordinated
- Guidance may not be effective (outreach)
- Need to involve more stakeholders
- Poor information on costs and benefits of validation

*Extent to which standards used for validation relate to those used in the formal education system (% of validation arrangements in E&T)*

*Certificates obtained through validation are different to those obtained through formal education (% of validation arrangements in E&T)*



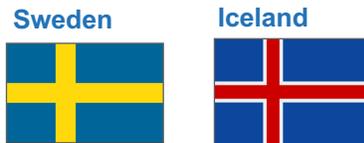
Source: European Inventory 2018

# Lessons learnt

*Some important elements*

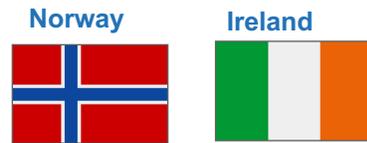
## Individual at the Center

- ✓ Adequate **SUPPORT**
- ✓ **GUIDANCE** and counselling
- ✓ Clear **GOALS** of the validation system



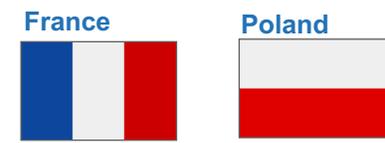
## Stakeholder involvement

- ✓ Strategic overarching approach
- ✓ Common understanding
- ✓ Networking and best practices



## Using NQF and Learning outcomes

- ✓ Standards clearly defined
- ✓ Quality assurance
- ✓ Using learning outcomes



## Key Challenges



### Reducing complexity

- Diversity of stakeholders
- Diversity of sectors/contexts
- Diversity of individuals and needs
- Diversity of professionals and services



### Valid and reliable tools

- Multiplicity
- Adaptable and robust



### Assure agreed standards

- Reference points
- Learning outcomes approach
- Education and Labour market oriented



### Digitalization and certification

- New land scape of qualifications
- Use of ICT



- Aggarwal, A. (2015). *Recognition of prior learning: Key success factors and the building blocks of an effective system*. Geneva: ILO.
- Cedefop. (2009). *European guidelines for validating non-formal and informal learning*. Luxembourg: Publication Office of the European Union. <https://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/publications/4054>
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- Duda, A. (2019). *European inventory on validation of non-formal and informal learning 2018 update: Poland*. Retrieved from [www.cedefop.europa.eu/validation/inventory](http://www.cedefop.europa.eu/validation/inventory)
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- Souto-Otero, M., & Villalba-García, E. (2015). Migration and validation of non-formal and informal learning in Europe: Inclusion, exclusion or polarisation in the recognition of skills? *International Review of Education*, 61(5), 585-607. doi: <https://10.1007/s11159-015-9516-7>
- Villalba-García, E. (2021a). Validation of non-formal and informal learning: A next stage of development in Europe? Special issue for the *European Journal of Education*, 56(3). doi: <https://doi.org/10.1111/ejed.12470>
- Villalba-García, E. (2021b). Validation of non-formal and informal learning: The hero with a thousand faces? *European Journal of Education*, 56(3), 351-364. doi: <https://doi.org/10.1111/ejed.12468>
- Villalba-García, E. (2016). The Council Recommendation on validation of non-formal and informal learning: implications for mobility, *Journal of international Mobility*, 4(1), 9-24. doi: <https://10.3917/jim.004.0009>
- Villalba-García, E., & Bjornavold, J. (2017). Validation of non-formal and informal learning: A reality in Europe? In Cedefop, ETF, & UNESCO (Eds.), *Global Inventory on NQFs, volume 1: Thematic chapters*. (pp. 72-82). <https://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/publications/2221>

04

**RPL in Africa**

# RPL in Africa

*New verb:*

*“To RPL”*

*“I was RPLed”*

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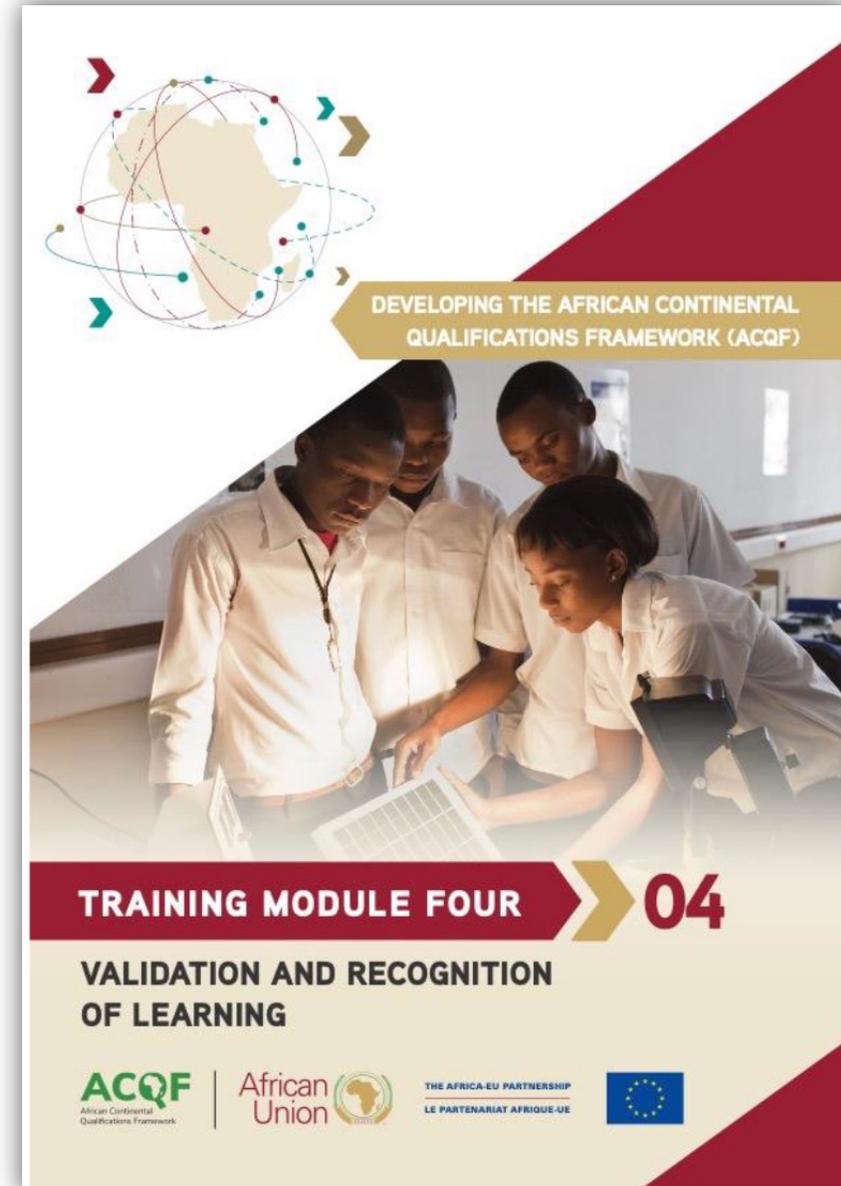
# African regional RPL policies and guidelines

## ACQF

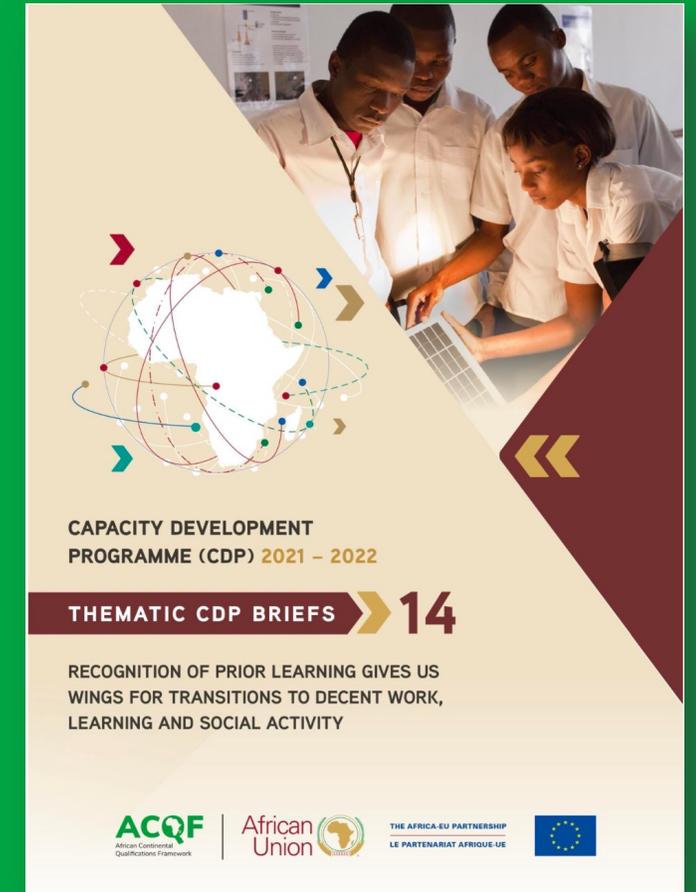
- ACQF Policy document (2023)
- Guideline 4: Validation and Recognition of Learning
- Training Module 4: Validation of Learning
- Thematic Brief
- Website Resource: RPL gives us wings

## SADCQF: RPL Guidelines

## EAC: RPL Policy



# ACQF RPL Survey 2023: some results



The image shows the cover of a thematic brief from the Capacity Development Programme (CDP) 2021-2022. The cover features a photograph of four people (three men and one woman) in white shirts looking at a laptop. To the left of the photo is a graphic of a globe with a map of Africa in the center, surrounded by colorful dots and lines. Below the photo and globe, the text reads: 'CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME (CDP) 2021 – 2022', 'THEMATIC CDP BRIEFS >> 14', and 'RECOGNITION OF PRIOR LEARNING GIVES US WINGS FOR TRANSITIONS TO DECENT WORK, LEARNING AND SOCIAL ACTIVITY'. At the bottom, there are logos for ACQF (African Continental Qualifications Framework), African Union, THE AFRICA-EU PARTNERSHIP / LE PARTENARIAT AFRIQUE-UE, and the European Union flag.

CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT  
PROGRAMME (CDP) 2021 – 2022

THEMATIC CDP BRIEFS >> 14

RECOGNITION OF PRIOR LEARNING GIVES US  
WINGS FOR TRANSITIONS TO DECENT WORK,  
LEARNING AND SOCIAL ACTIVITY

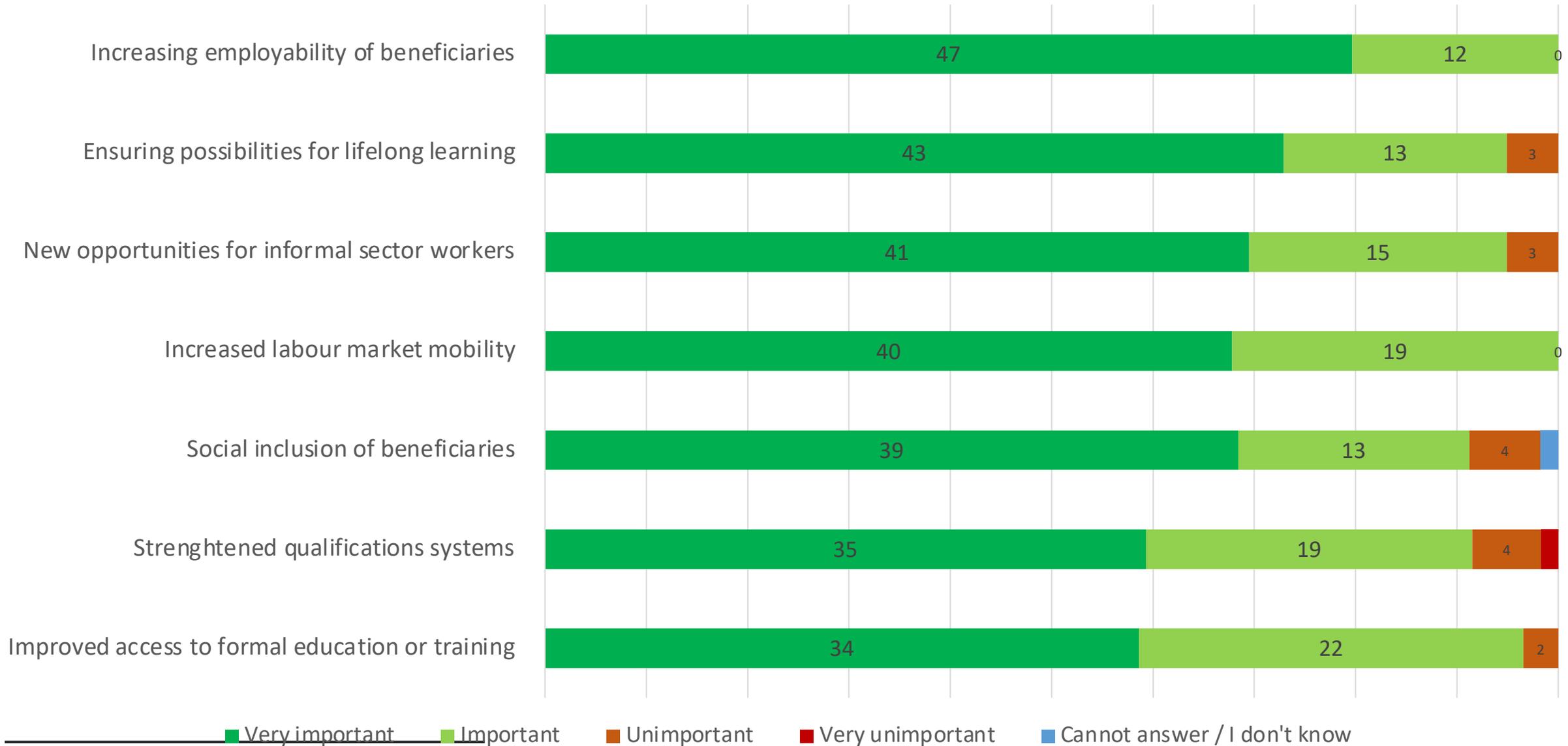
ACQF African Continental  
Qualifications Framework

African  
Union

THE AFRICA-EU PARTNERSHIP  
LE PARTENARIAT AFRIQUE-UE



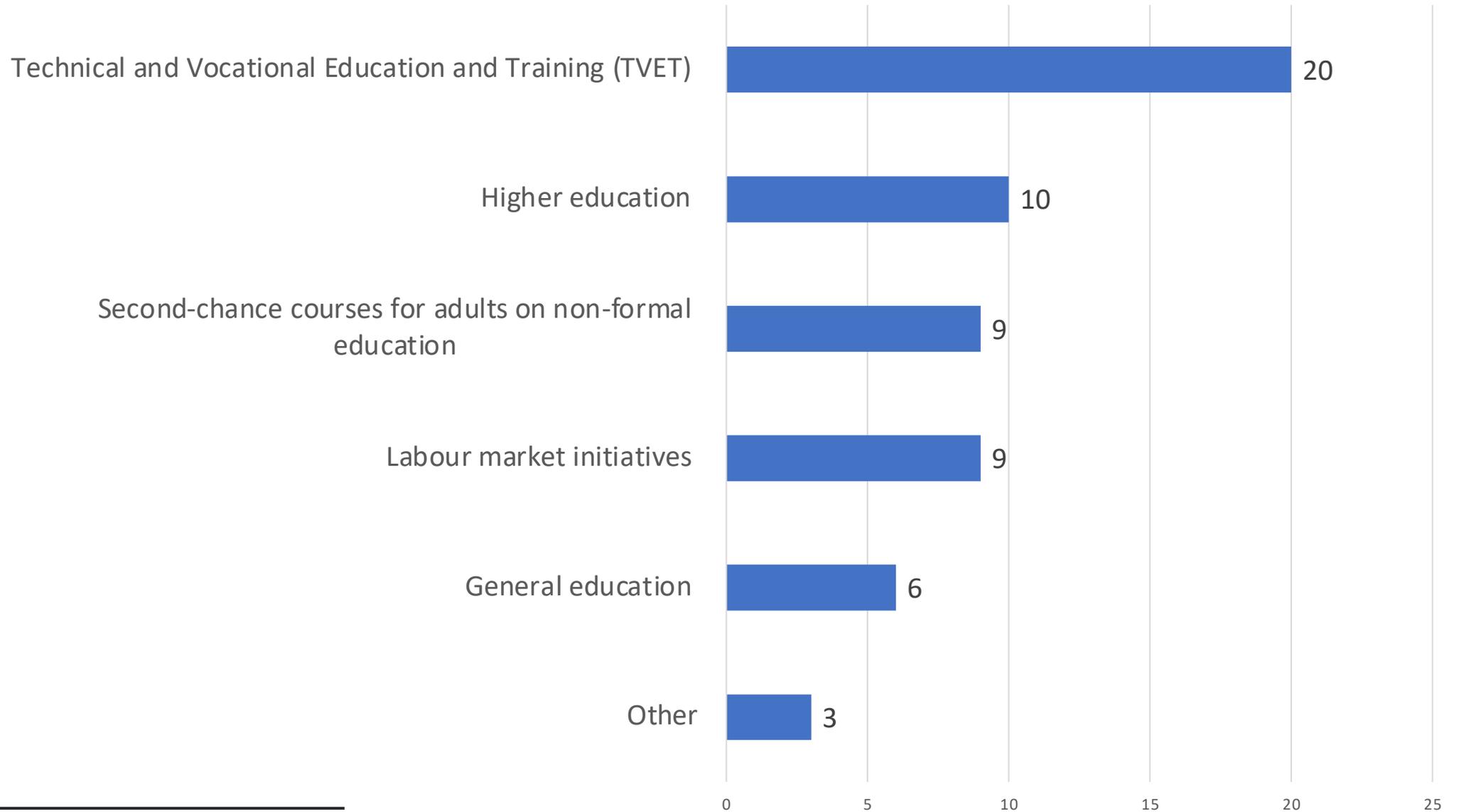
# Main objectives of RPL



# Phases of RPL process

	Information and guidance	Identification	Documentation	Assessment	Certification	Other
Kenya	+	+	+	+	+	+
Malawi	+	+	+	+	+	
Morocco	+	+	+		+	
Mozambique	+	+	+	+	+	
Namibia					+	
Rwanda	+	+		+	+	
Seychelles	+	+	+	+	+	
South Africa	+	+	+	+	+	+
Tunisia						+
Uganda	+	+	+	+	+	
Zambia	+	+	+	+	+	

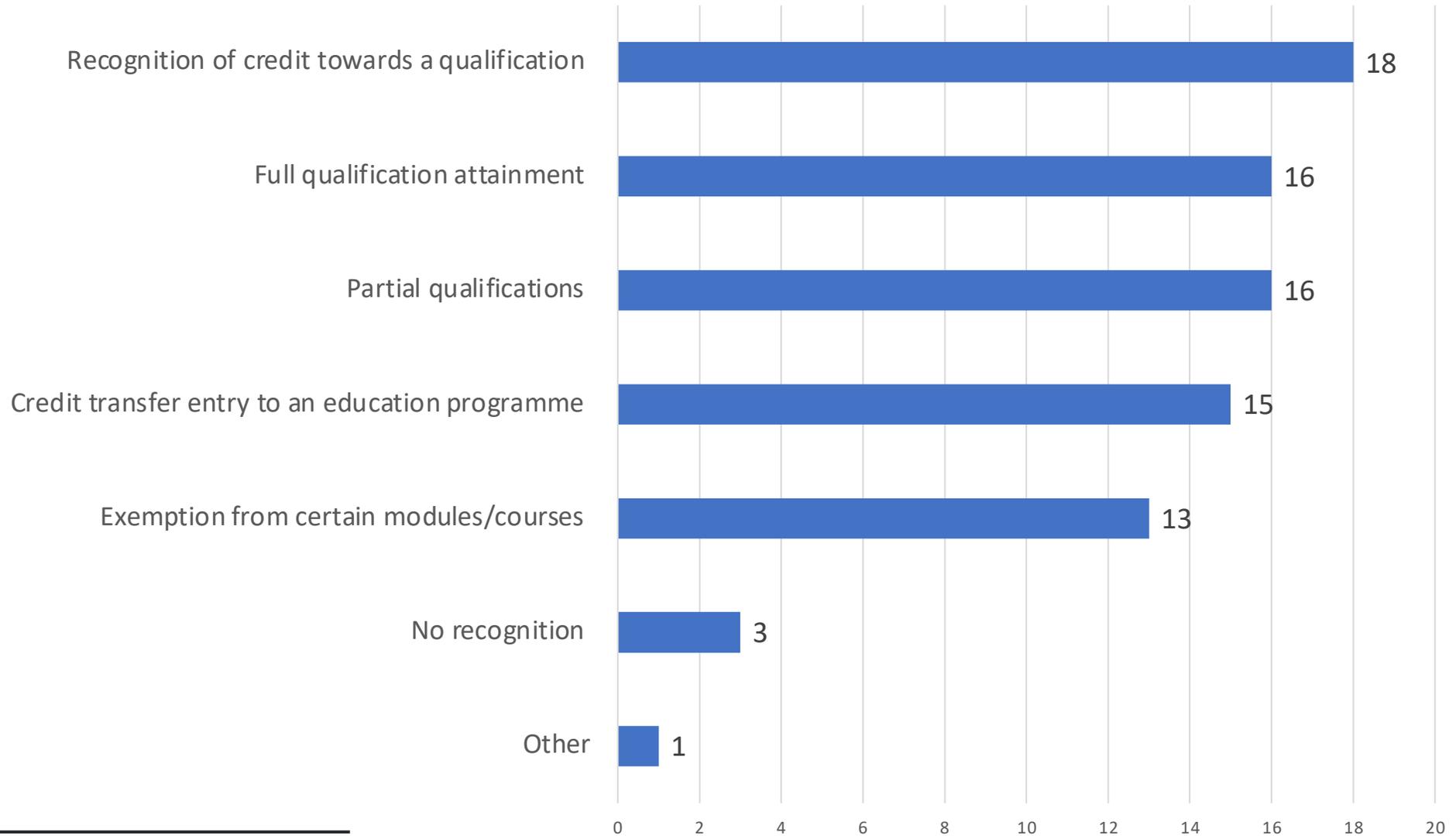
# RPL education and training sectors



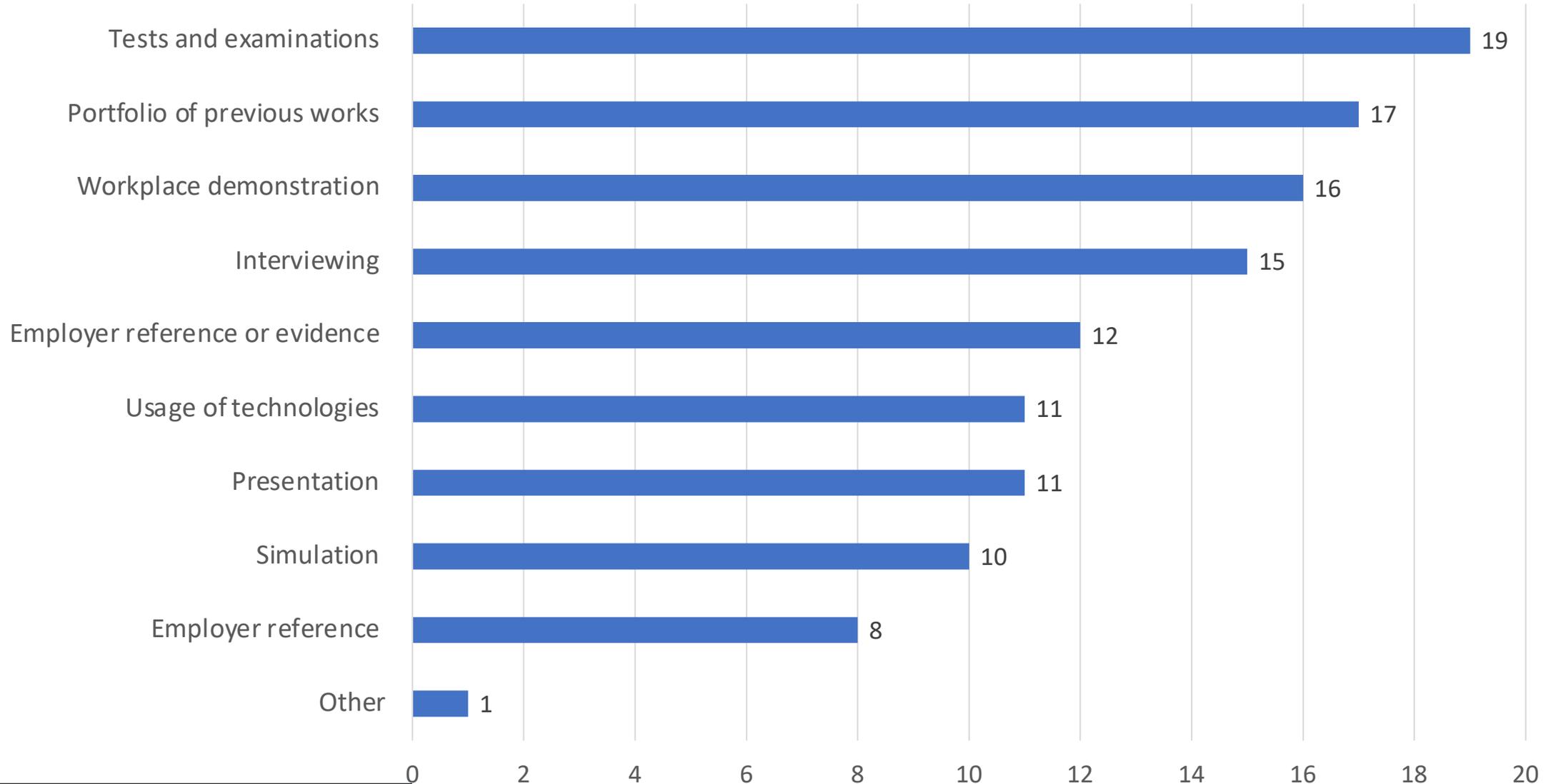
# ACQF Survey: Types of learning outcomes accepted in RPL



# ACQF Survey: outcomes from RPL processes



# ACQF Survey: used assessment tools / modes



**Kenya:**

Comprehensive package of RPL policy and implementation tool



SEYCHELLES QUALIFICATIONS AUTHORITY

National Guidelines for the Implementation of Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)

July 2017



Terça-feira, 17 de Agosto de 2021 I SÉRIE — Número 158



**BOLETIM DA REPÚBLICA**

PUBLICAÇÃO OFICIAL DA REPÚBLICA DE MOÇAMBIQUE

Decreto n.º 58/2021  
de 17 de Agosto

Havendo necessidade de dotar o Subsistema de Educação Profissional de normas e procedimentos, aplicados ao processo de reconhecimento de competências adquiridas, através de aprendizagem ao longo da vida, em contextos de trabalho, formação não formal e informal, ao abrigo do disposto no n.º 2 do artigo 15, da Lei n.º 23/2014, de 23 de Setembro, Lei de Educação Profissional, alterada e republicada pela Lei n.º 6/2016, de 16 de Junho, o Conselho de Ministros decreta:

ARTIGO 1

É aprovado o Sistema de Reconhecimento de Competências Adquiridas, abreviadamente designado SRCA, em anexo, que é parte integrante do presente Decreto.

ARTIGO 2

Compete ao titular superintende a área do ensino técnico profissional aprovar o Regulamento do Sistema de Reconhecimento de Competências Adquiridas, no prazo de 60 dias, a partir da data da publicação do presente Decreto.

ARTIGO 3

O presente Decreto entra em vigor na data da sua publicação.



ORIENTAÇÕES METODOLÓGICAS PARA A IMPLEMENTAÇÃO DO SISTEMA DE RECONHECIMENTO DE COMPETÊNCIAS ADQUIRIDAS (SRCA)



GOVERNMENT OF MALAWI

RECOGNITION OF PRIOR LEARNING GUIDELINES



MAURITIUS QUALIFICATIONS AUTHORITY

Recognition of Prior Learning Guidelines

June 2016



National Policy and Criteria for the Implementation of Recognition of Prior Learning (Amended in March 2019)

SEYCHELLES QUALIFICATIONS AUTHORITY

National Policy for the Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)

February 2017



GOVERNMENT OF MALAWI

RECOGNITION OF PRIOR LEARNING (RPL)

ASSESSORS GUIDE



POLICY AND CRITERIA FOR RECOGNITION OF PRIOR LEARNING IN ZAMBIA

JUNE 2016

VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING AUTHORITY (VETA)



GUIDELINES FOR RECOGNITION OF PRIOR LEARNING ASSESSMENT (RPLA) IN TANZANIA

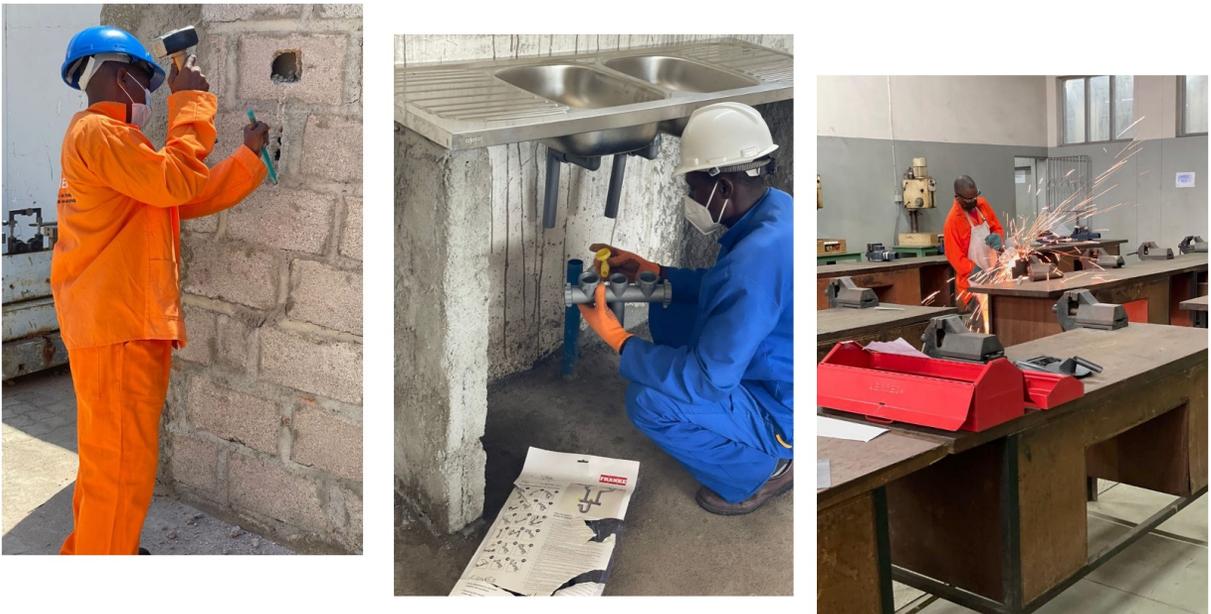


RPL is not only assessment! It is process...

RPL in Mozambique – NQF Professional

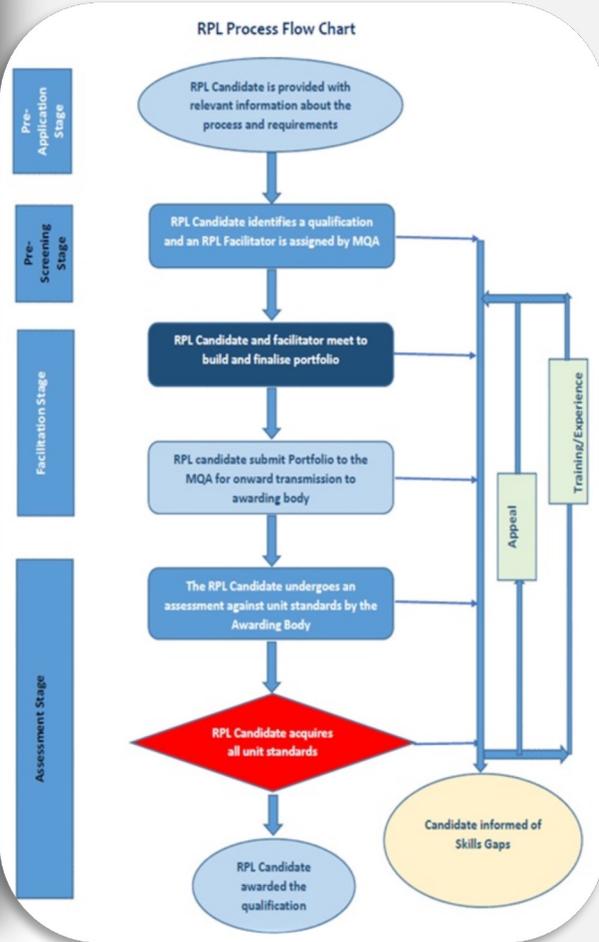


Assessment Tests in the Pilot Project:

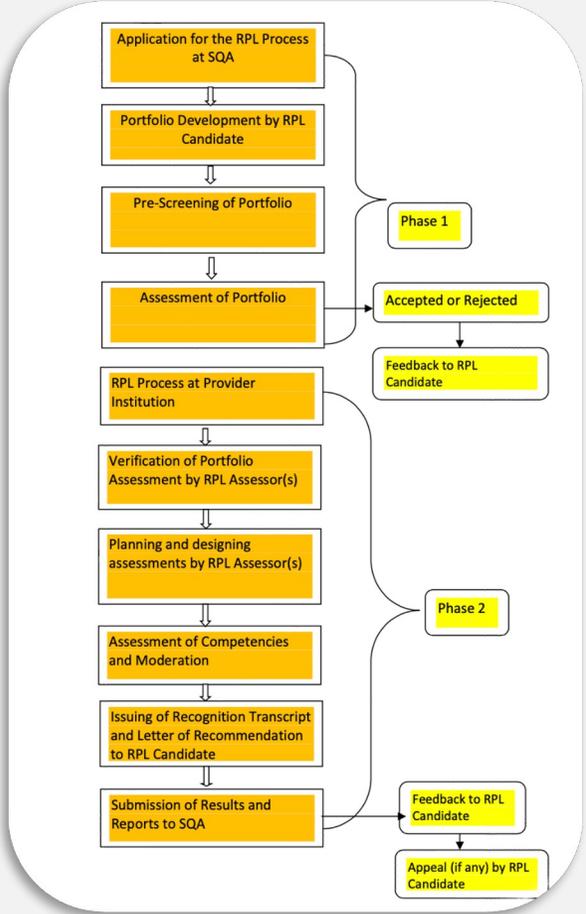


POR UMA EDUCAÇÃO PARA O TRABALHO E DESENVOLVIMENTO DO PAÍS

Mozambique



Mauritius



Seychelles

**Thank you**

[www.acqf.africa](http://www.acqf.africa)

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# ANNEX - REFERENCES

01

**We Know – the Future of  
Work is here - Change**

# Drivers of change

Digitalisation - Automation - AI

Covid-19

Greening of economy and society

Societal movements: rights, democracy, information, innovation

- The future of work arrived ahead of schedule
- “2 years of digital innovation in 2 months”
- Remote work: post-Covid19
- Wave of innovation and launch of new generation of entrepreneurs
- Digitally enabled productivity gains accelerate 4th Industrial Revolution
- Reskilling
- Learning anytime, anywhere, anything
- Hybrid skills
- New types of qualifications: micro-credentials, digital certificates

**'Double-disruption'  
scenario for workers**

Tandem Covid-19  
recession x automation &  
digitalisation

## Top Skills 2023



- **Cognitive skills** top the list of those deemed to be of greatest importance for workers in 2023.
- **Analytical thinking** is considered to be a core skill by more companies than any other skill, making up, on average, 9.1% of the core skills reported by companies.
- **Creative thinking** comes second, ahead of three self-efficacy skills – resilience, flexibility and agility; motivation and self-awareness; and curiosity and lifelong learning – which recognize the importance of workers' ability to adapt to disrupted workplaces.

## Top 10 skills on the rise



- |  |  |
|--|--|
| 1.  Creative thinking                   | 6.  Systems thinking                          |
| 2.  Analytical thinking                 | 7.  AI and big data                           |
| 3.  Technological literacy              | 8.  Motivation and self-awareness             |
| 4.  Curiosity and lifelong learning     | 9.  Talent management                         |
| 5.  Resilience, flexibility and agility | 10.  Service orientation and customer service |

### Type of skill

■ Cognitive skills  
 ■ Self-efficacy  
 ■ Management skills  
 ■ Technology skills  
 ■ Working with others  
 ■ Engagement skills

### Source

World Economic Forum, Future of Jobs Report 2023.

### Note

The skills judged to be increasing in importance most rapidly between 2023 and 2027



## Fastest growing vs. fastest declining jobs

### Top 10 fastest growing jobs

1.	AI and Machine Learning Specialists
2.	Sustainability Specialists
3.	Business Intelligence Analysts
4.	Information Security Analysts
5.	Fintech Engineers
6.	Data Analysts and Scientists
7.	Robotics Engineers
8.	Electrotechnology Engineers
9.	Agricultural Equipment Operators
10.	Digital Transformation Specialists

#### Source

World Economic Forum, Future of Jobs Report 2023.

### Top 10 fastest declining jobs

1.	Bank Tellers and Related Clerks
2.	Postal Service Clerks
3.	Cashiers and ticket Clerks
4.	Data Entry Clerks
5.	Administrative and Executive Secretaries
6.	Material-Recording and Stock-Keeping Clerks
7.	Accounting, Bookkeeping and Payroll Clerks
8.	Legislators and Officials
9.	Statistical, Finance and Insurance Clerks
10.	Door-To-Door Sales Workers, News and Street Vendors, and Related Workers

#### Note

The jobs which survey respondents expect to grow most quickly from 2023 to 2027 as a fraction of present employment figures

## Reskilling needs

# 44%

of workers' core skills  
are expected to change  
in the next five years



Source: World Economic Forum,  
*Future of Jobs Report 2023*.

<https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2023/05/future-of-jobs-2023-skills>

02

**Green and digital  
skills – in-demand**

# Green-enabled recovery and growth

- Green with a touch of brown is the colour of recovery
- Greening of the economy and society – at heart of post-Covid19 recovery strategies and growth in many countries
- **Green growth opportunities abound across massive sectors such as energy, mobility, and agriculture.**
- Just as digital-economy companies have powered stock-market returns in the past couple of decades, so green-technology companies could play that role in the coming decades.
- EU, US, China, Japan, South Korea's Green New Deal, Canada, Africa – green stimulus packages

## Major implications for jobs, education, training and skills;

- need to develop **environmentally friendly** technologies, production processes, products, services, and business models across all sectors of the economy;
- It changes the way **traditional occupations** are performed (and taught) and creates **new occupations**;
- It creates a demand for new skills and knowledge and the need to **upskill** and **reskill** large numbers of people;
- need to increase **environmental awareness** in education and training curricula;
- requires close interaction between education and training systems and their environments to build **skills ecosystems** in which skills development goes hand in hand with economic, technological and social change.

# Green transition drives job growth

Future of Jobs

## Green transition drives job growth



Expected impact of trends on jobs:



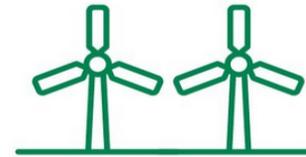
Including jobs such as



Sustainability specialist



Solar energy installation and system engineers, and



Renewable energy engineers.

Source: Future of Jobs, World Economic Forum, April 2023.

<https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2023/04/future-jobs-2023-fastest-growing-decline>

# Greener jobs future

- To compensate for expected job losses, global efforts to decarbonize in response to the climate crisis are giving rise to a wealth of green jobs across sectors and industries.
- A green-recovery scenario could generate around 3.5% of additional global GDP growth and a net employment gain of 9 million new jobs each year, according to International Energy Agency data.
- The green transition could **create 30 million jobs globally in clean energy, efficiency and low-emissions technologies by 2030.**
- But while there has been continued growth in green jobs for the past four years, **reskilling and upskilling towards green skills is not keeping pace.**

# 03

**What is the labour market demand for -  
green and digital skills?**

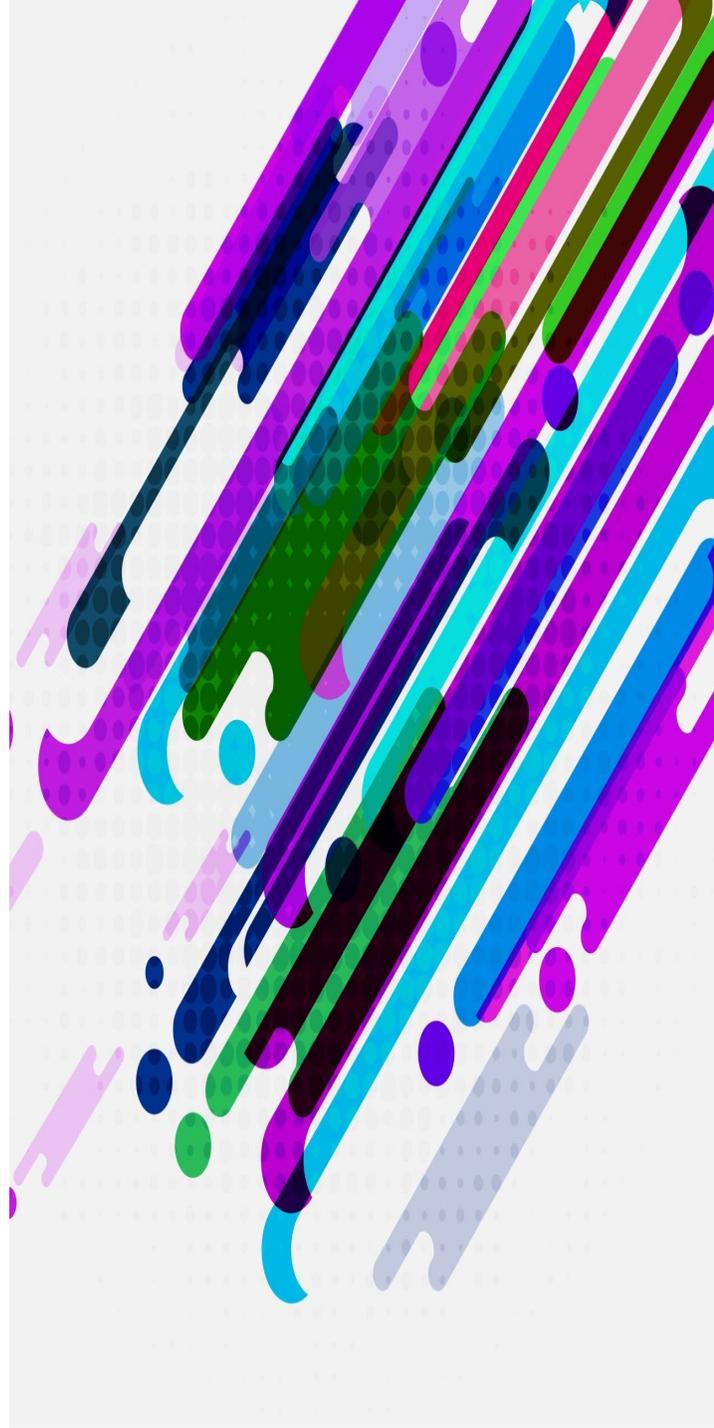
**Based on a data of ETF Big Data LMI  
project (ex.: Egypt, Kenya)**



# Green skills Demand

ETF Data – Online Job Vacancies Kenya, Egypt

# Definitions



Green skills – an important area of debate and policy action and which has become a priority in research (quantitative and qualitative) and social communication. Several international organisations are working on the analysis and taxonomies related to green competences.

Cedefop defines green skills as "the knowledge, skills, values and attitudes needed to live, work and act in economies and societies that seek to reduce the impact of human activity on the environment".

Skills for the green economy consist of:

- **transversal skills**, linked to sustainable thinking and acting, relevant to all economic sectors and professions;
- **specific skills** needed to adapt or implement standards, processes and services to protect ecosystems and biodiversity and reduce energy, materials and water consumption;
- **highly specialised skills** needed to develop and implement green technologies such as renewable energy, wastewater treatment or recycling;

Skills for the green economy are also referred to as skills for green jobs, skills for the green transition or green skills.

# Analysis of demand for skills: online job vacancy data

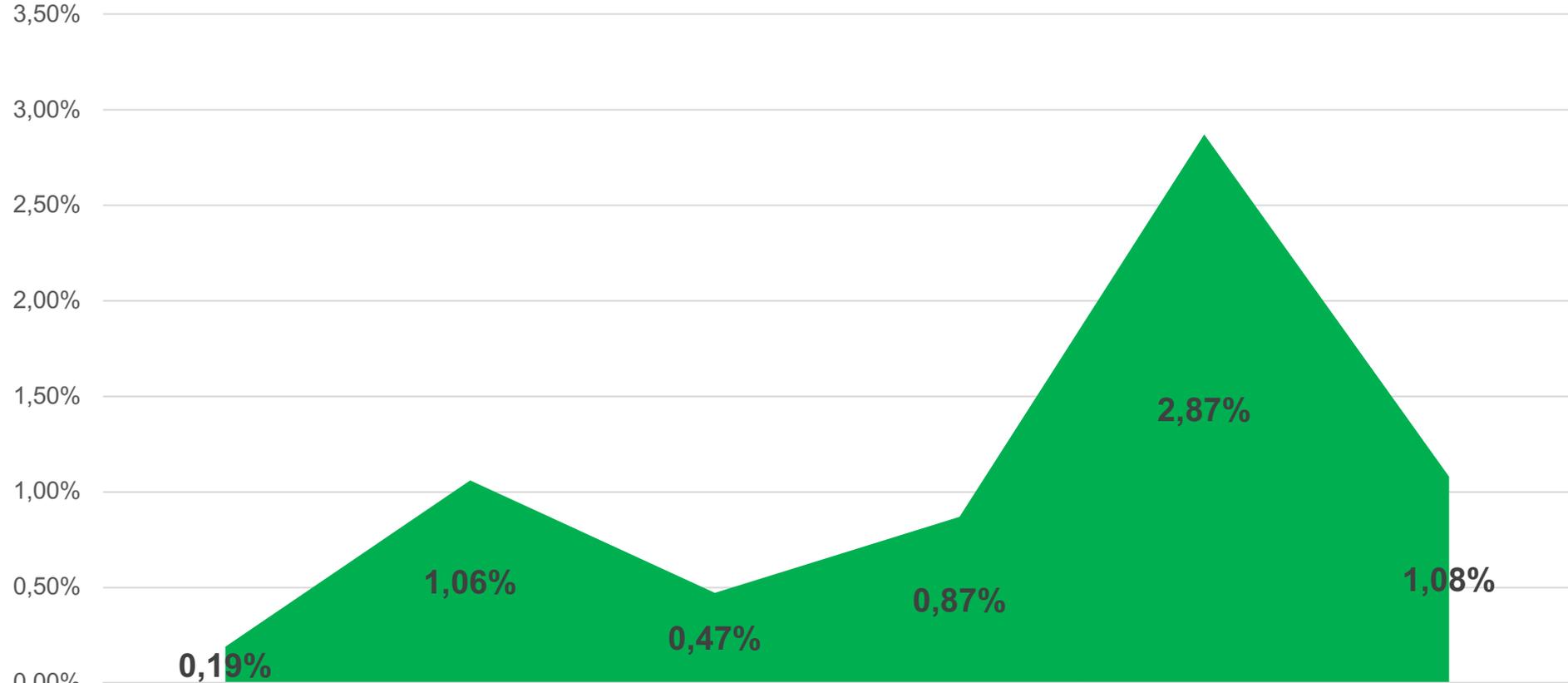
- Dashboards ETF project

[https://solutions.emsibg.com/?pc=x\\$fhADtD\\*cu\\$BjY9](https://solutions.emsibg.com/?pc=x$fhADtD*cu$BjY9)

---

# ETF project: Online job vacancy – Big data for LMI

Green skills share - data updated until 31/12/2023



Green skills share = share of online job vacancies that required at least 1 green skill

Kenya: highest green skills share, Ukraine – the lowest

Used green skills taxonomy: ETF (225 terms)

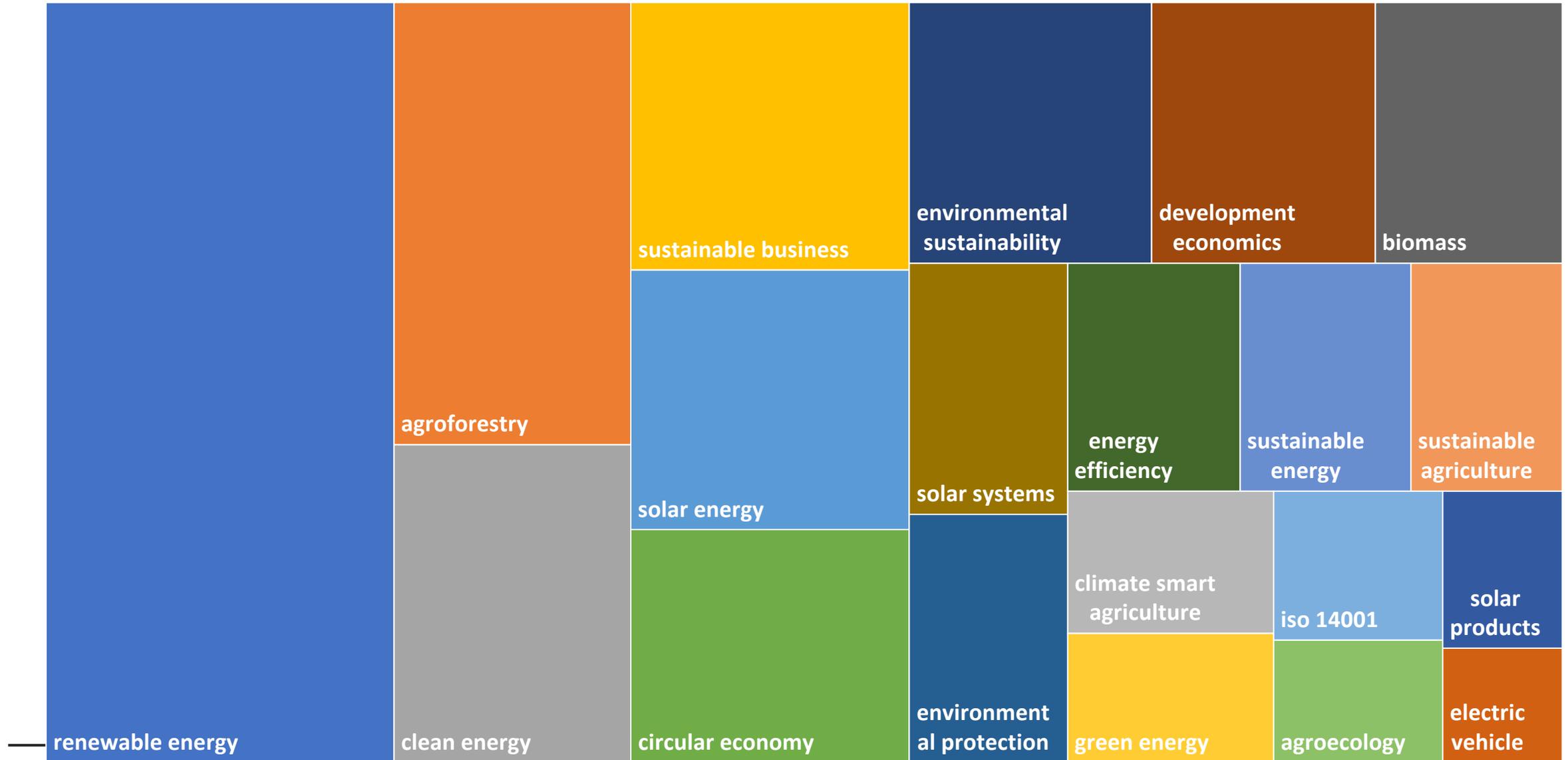
Green skills share

# Top 20 Green Skills Kenya

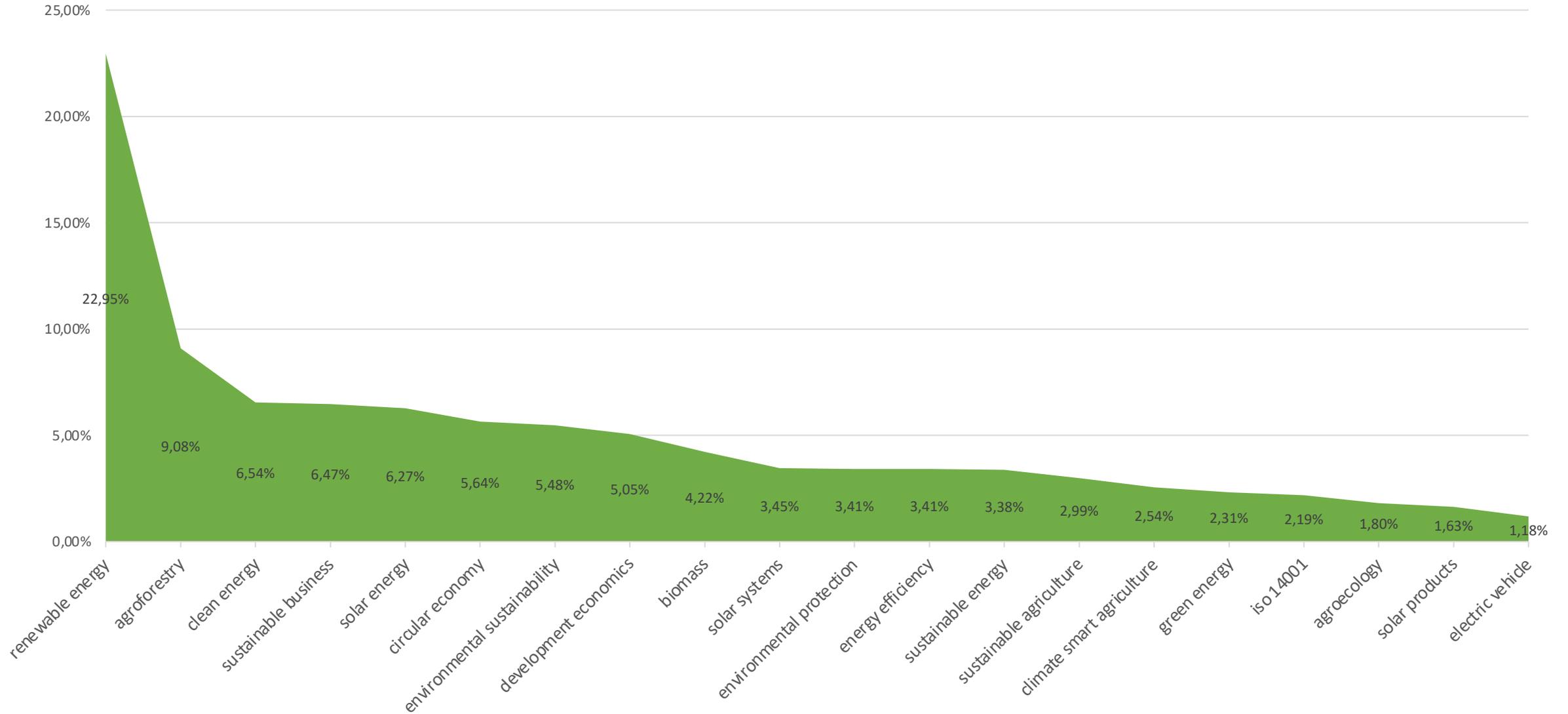
Skills / skill set	% (from 20)	Nº unique job postings
renewable energy	22,95%	2.598
agroforestry	9,08%	1.028
clean energy	6,54%	740
sustainable business	6,47%	732
solar energy	6,27%	710
circular economy	5,64%	638
environmental sustainability	5,48%	620
development economics	5,05%	572
biomass	4,22%	478
solar systems	3,45%	390
environmental protection	3,41%	386
energy efficiency	3,41%	386
sustainable energy	3,38%	382
sustainable agriculture	2,99%	338
climate smart agriculture	2,54%	288
green energy	2,31%	262
iso 14001	2,19%	248
agroecology	1,80%	204
solar products	1,63%	184
electric vehicle	1,18%	134

# Top 20 green skills in OJV: Kenya

TOP 20 GREEN SKILLS KENYA - DATA COLLECTED: OCT 2022-JUL 2023

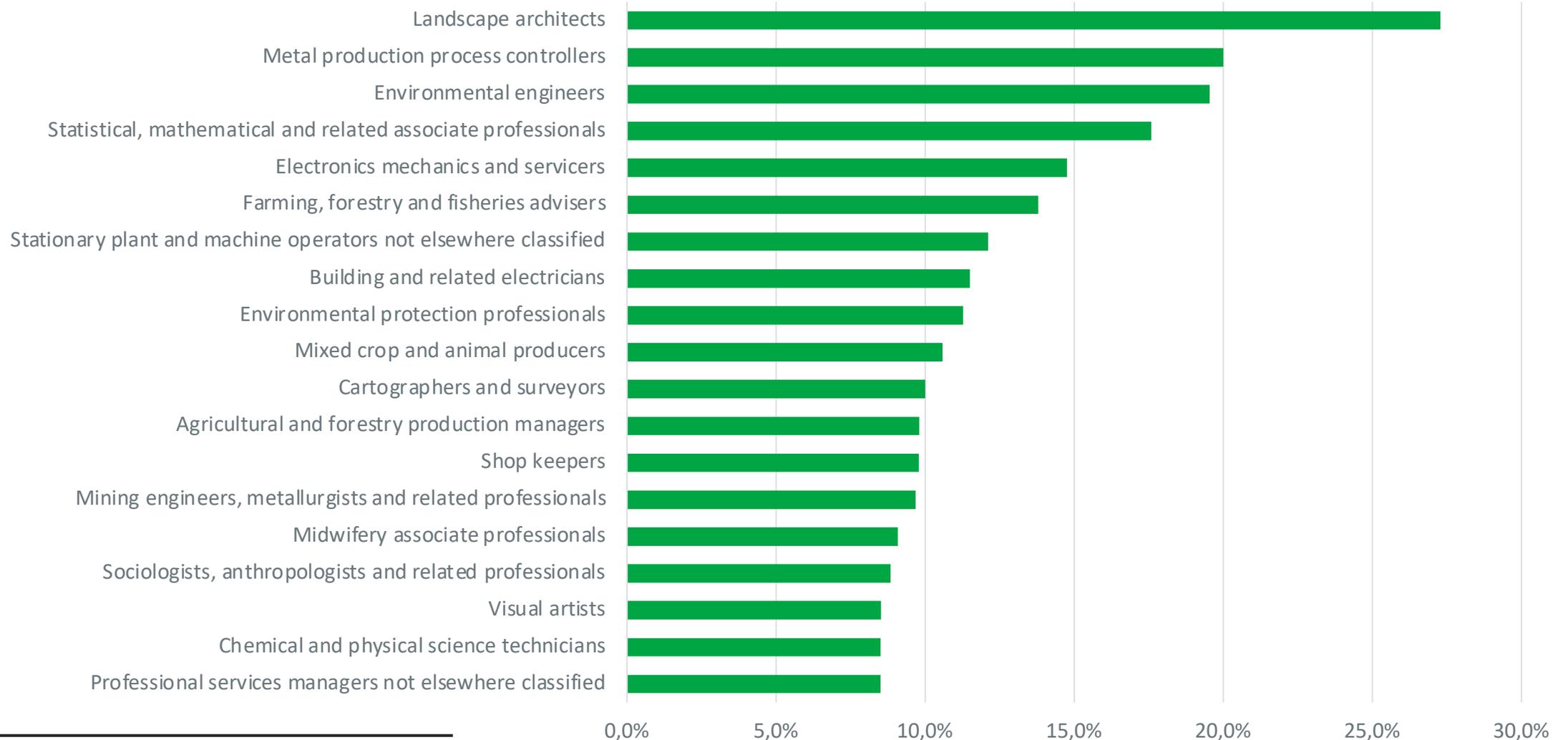


## Top 20 Green Skills Kenya (2)



# Kenya: green skills by occupation (share)

Kenya - Green share by occupation (data collected: Oct 22- Jul 23)



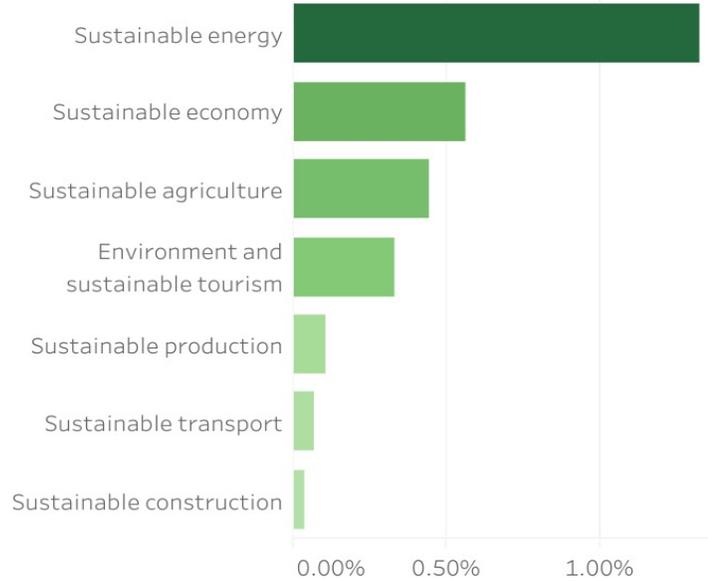
# Kenya: Green skills required for selected occupations

Occupation	Green skill	Unique Job postings (Oct 22- Jul 23)
Electronics mechanics and servicers	solar panels	7
	solar energy	2
	environmental protection	2
Environmental engineers	environmental sustainability	32
	environmental protection	19
	sustainable procurement	9
	renewable energy	9
	sustainable business	7
	energy efficiency	7
	sustainable energy	5
	circular economy	4
	development economics	3
	climate smart agriculture	3
	green energy	2
	ecotourism	2
	clean energy	2
	carbon footprint reduction	2
	sustainable agriculture	1
	sustainability performance	1
	iso 14001	1
hydroponics	1	
clean technology	1	
agroforestry	1	
Metal production process controllers	iso 14001	2
Statistical, mathematical and related associate professionals	environmental protection	18
	clean energy	18
	energy efficiency	11
	green building	9
	sustainable materials	6
	sustainable building	6
	sustainable agriculture	6
	renewable energy	5
	circular economy	5
	biomass	4
	agroforestry	4
	sustainable energy	3
	hydropower	1
	biofuels	1

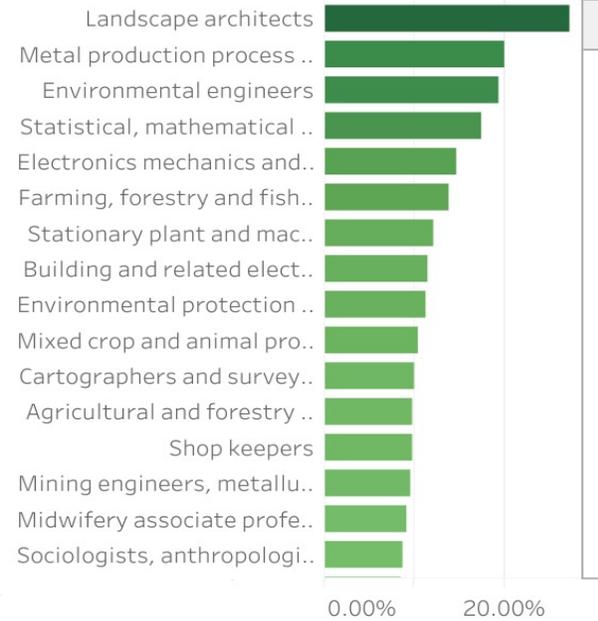
## Green Share

2.59%

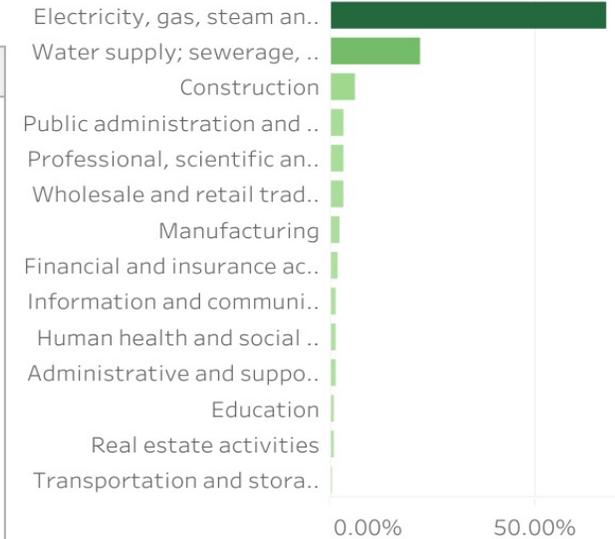
Select the Green skill family that you want to Analyze (then select it again to reset your choose)



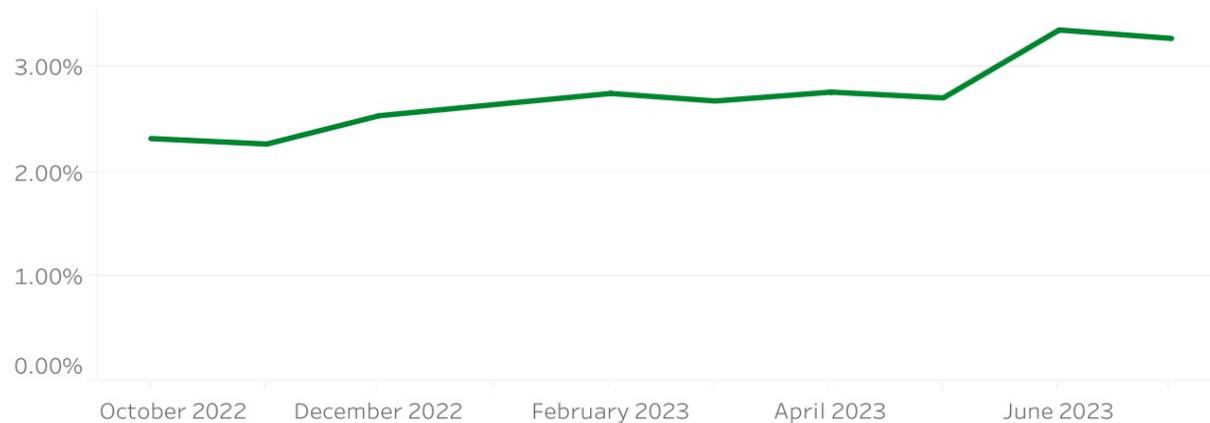
## Share of green skill by occupation



## Share of green skill by industry



## Share of green skill by release date



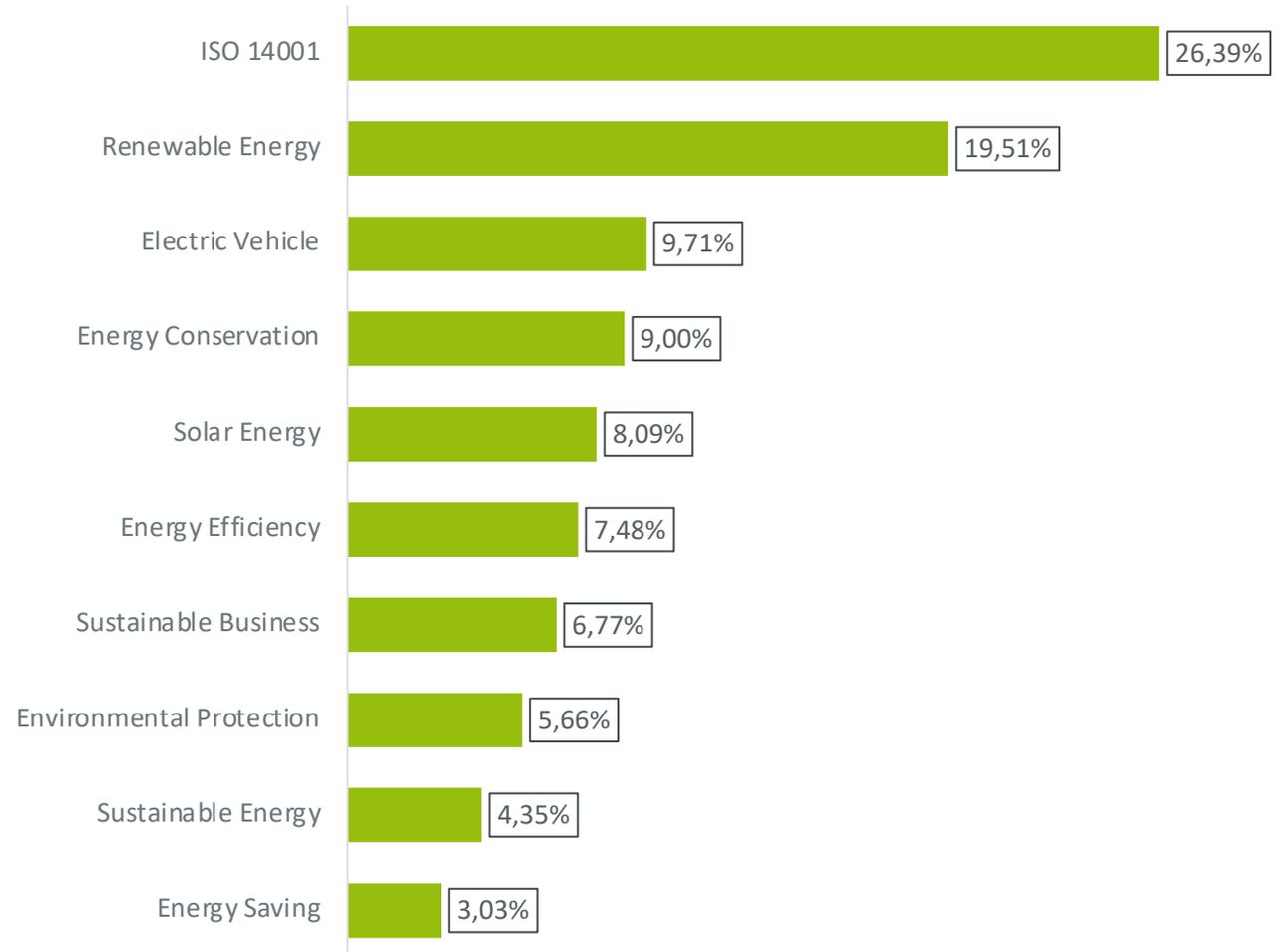
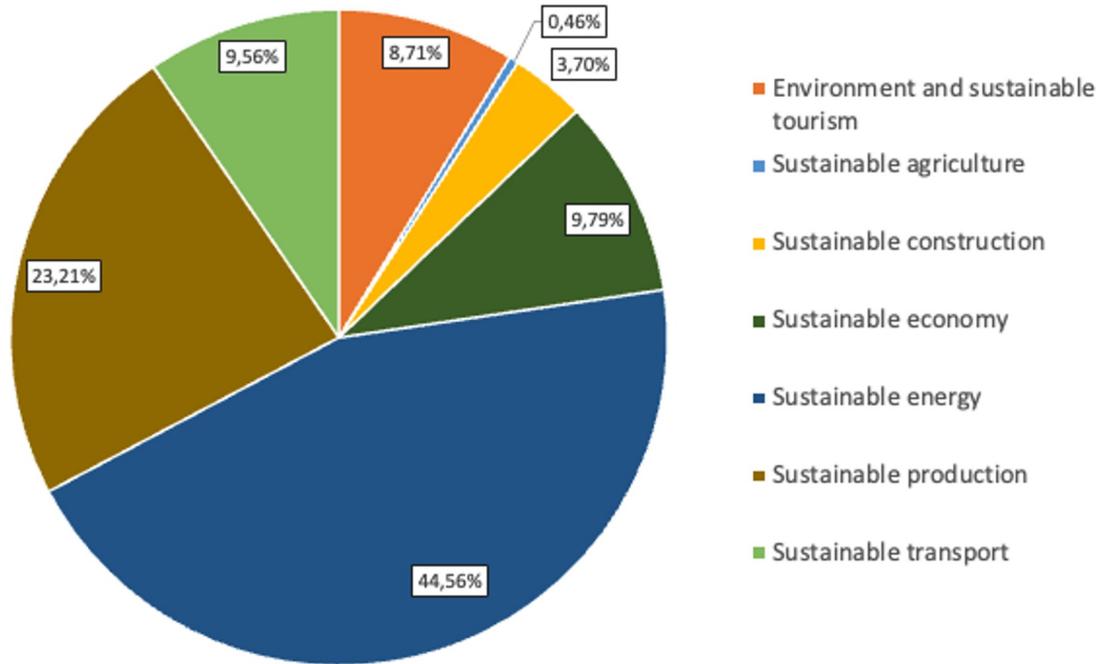
## Most requested green skill



# Egypt: Green Skills: TOP 10

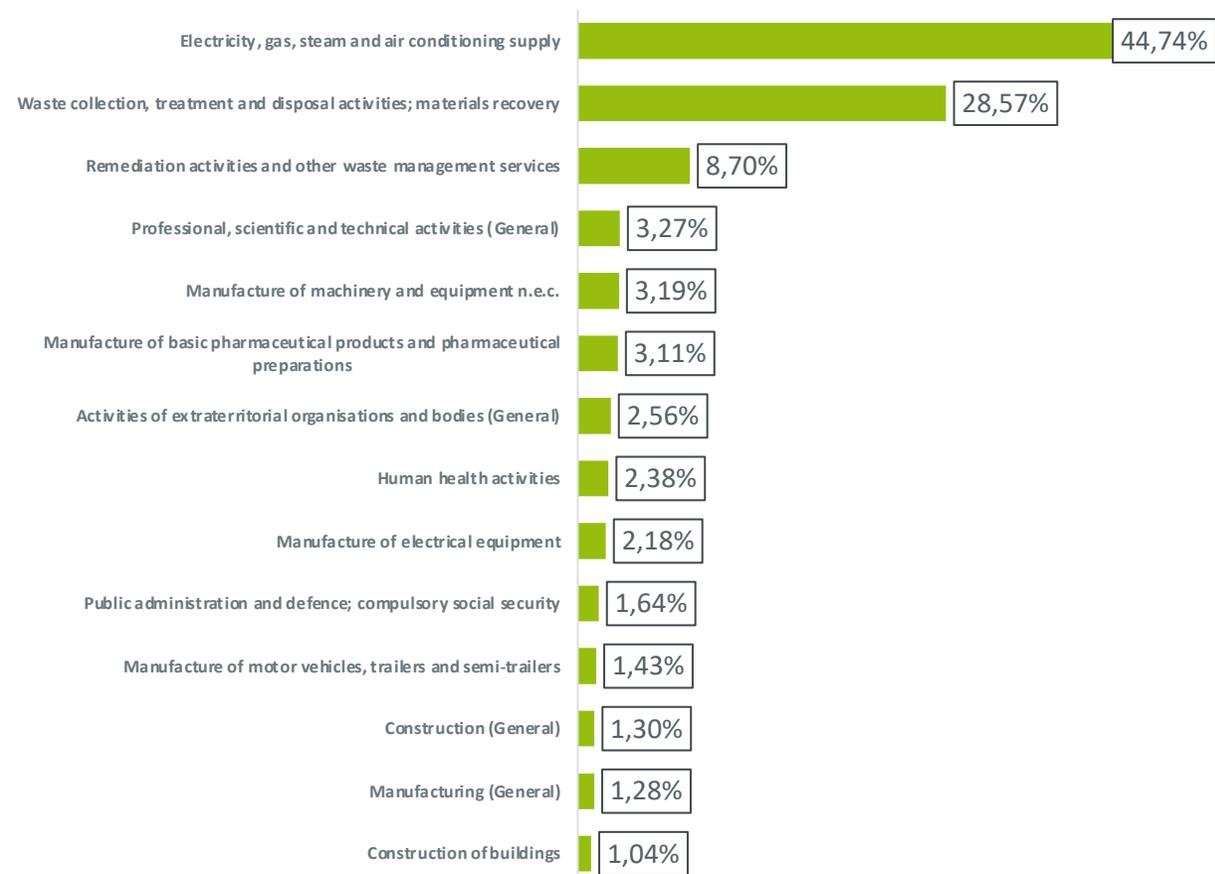
By Groups –  
classification  
ETF

Top Green skills

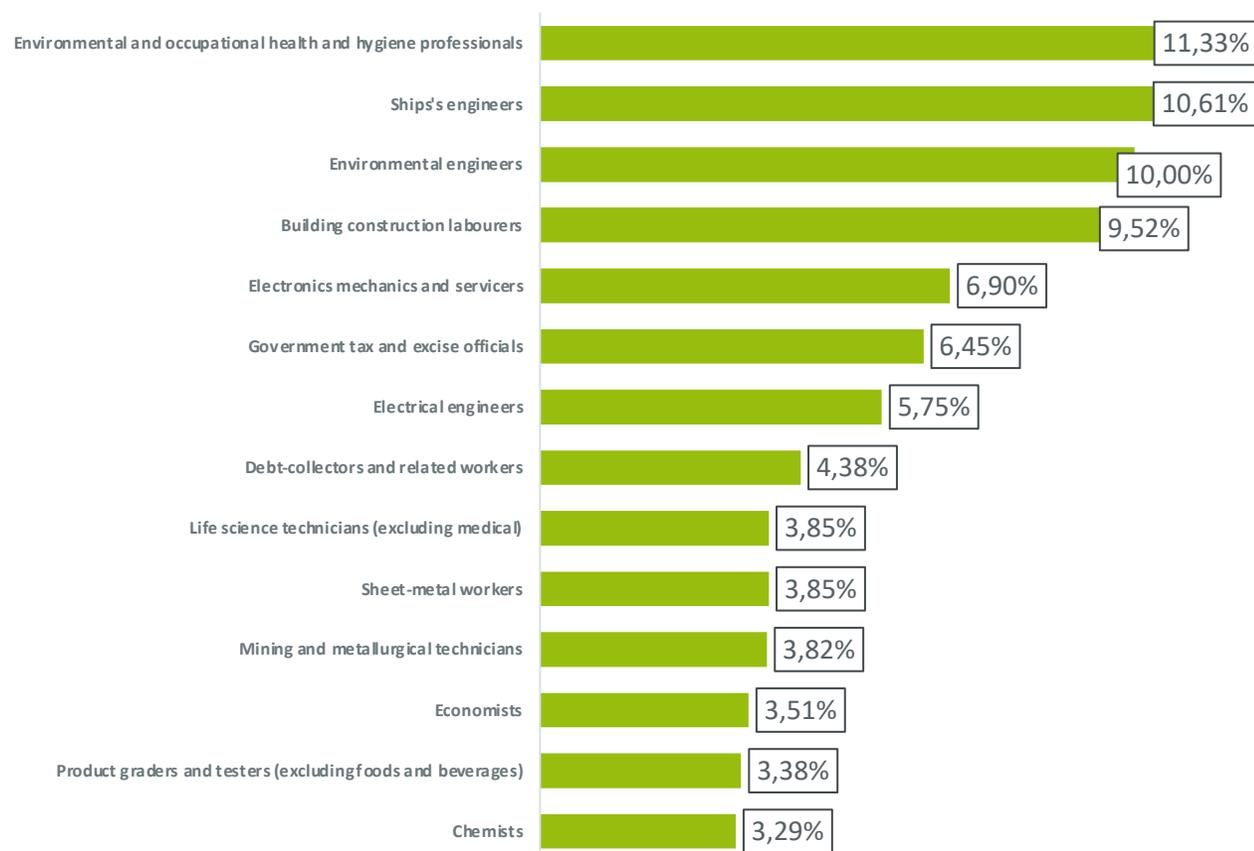


# Egypt: Green skills: % by sectors and occupations

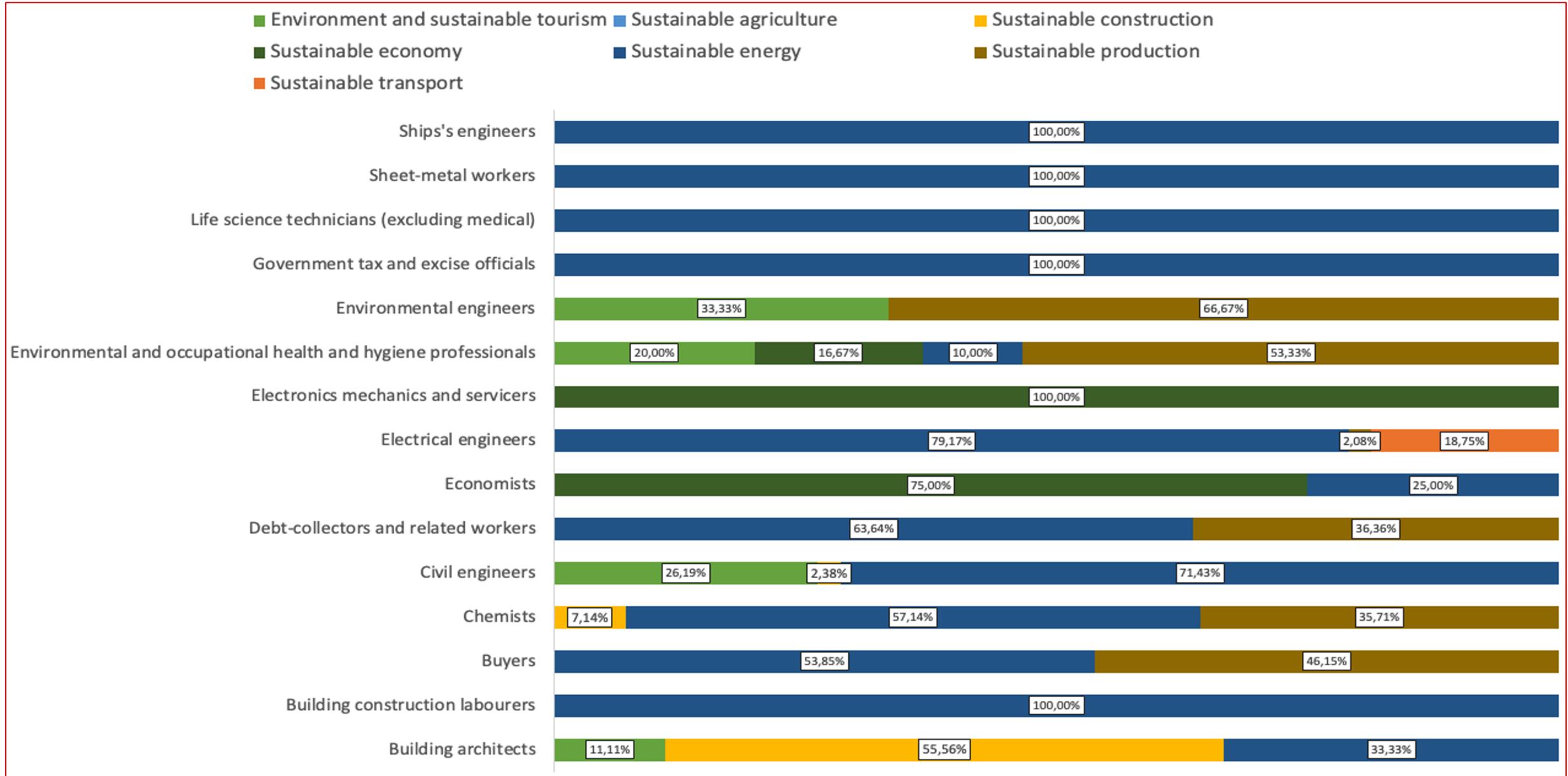
## Sectors



## Professions

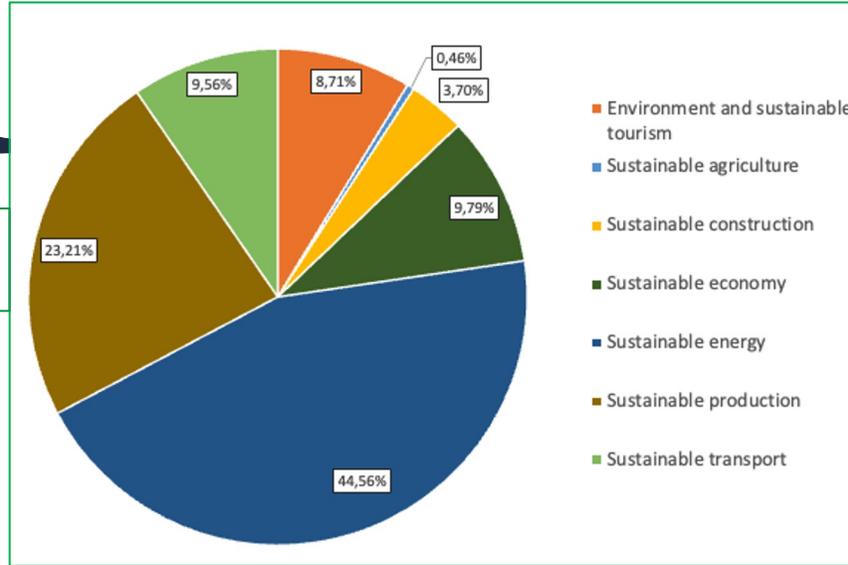


# Egypt: Green skills: profiles of the greenest occupations

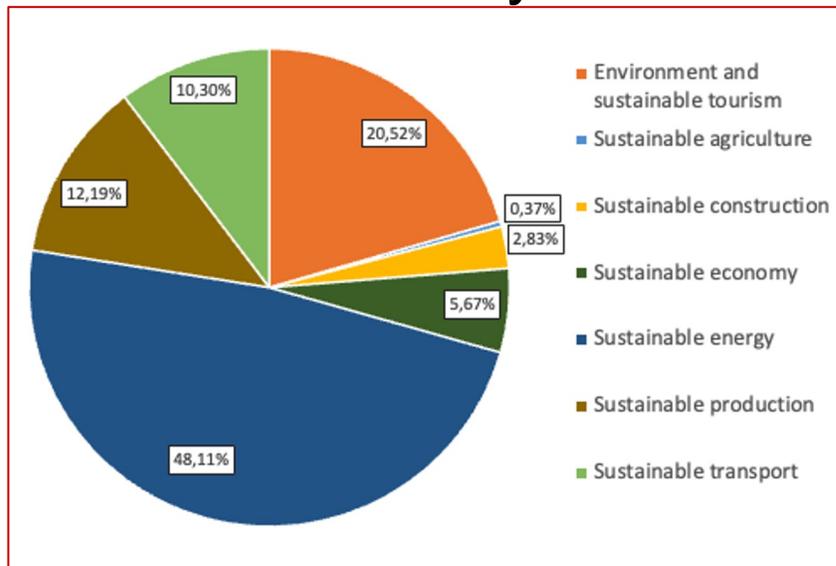


# COMPARISONS: % OF GREEN SKILLS BY CATEGORIES

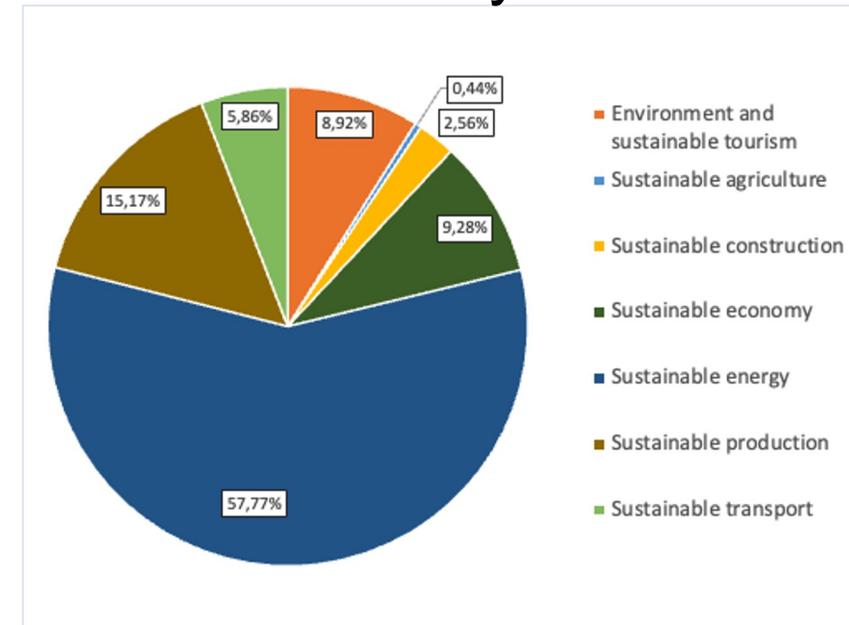
Egypt



Germany



Italy



# How about education – qualifications for green skills?

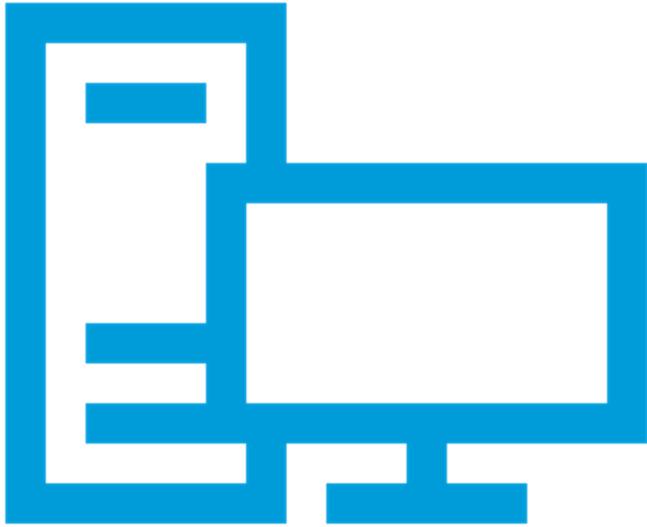
Could you share some examples of Seychelles?

How can you *Green* the NQF?

# Digital skills – overview of some features of demand



**Analysis based on ETF data Job Listings - Egypt**

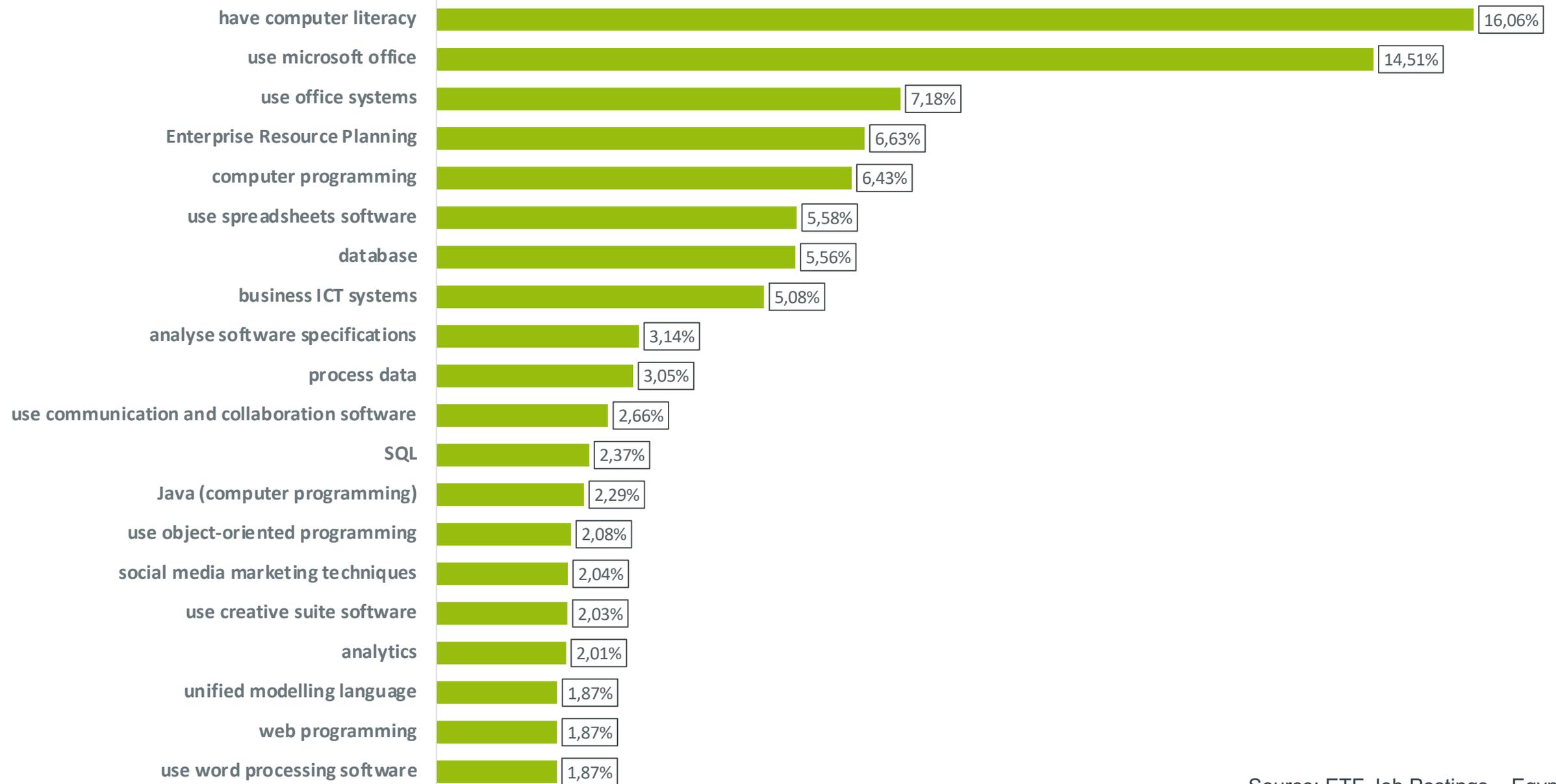


## Digital skills

Ability to use digital technologies confidently, critically and responsibly and engage with them for learning, at work and for participation in society.

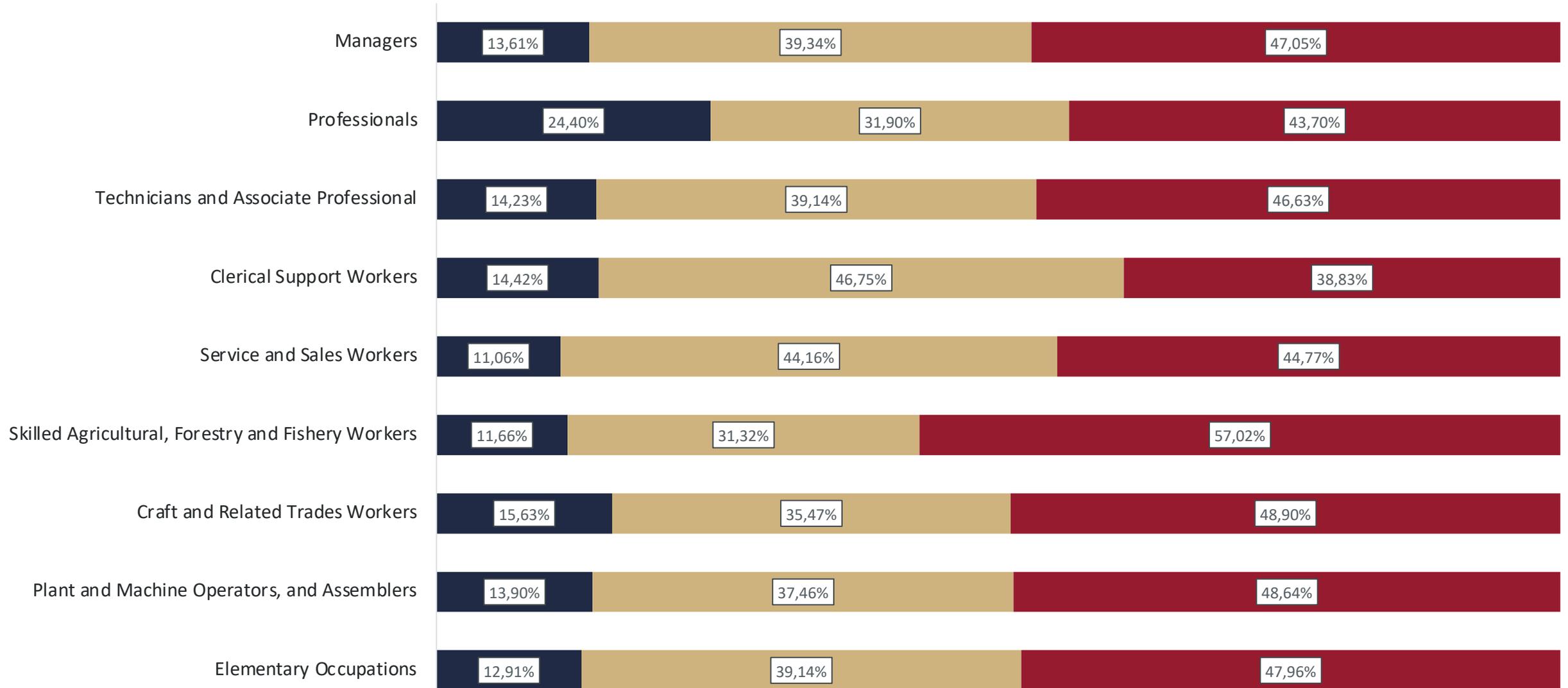
It includes information and data literacy, communication and collaboration, media literacy, digital content creation (including coding), security (including digital wellbeing and cybersecurity-related skills), intellectual property issues, problem-solving and critical thinking.

# Egypt: DIGITAL SKILLS: TOP 20



# DIGITAL SKILLS: BY ISCO GROUPS (Occupations)

■ Digital skills rate   ■ Soft skills rate   ■ Occup-specific skills rate



# DIGITAL SKILLS: IN DIGITAL AND NON-DIGITAL OCCUPATIONS

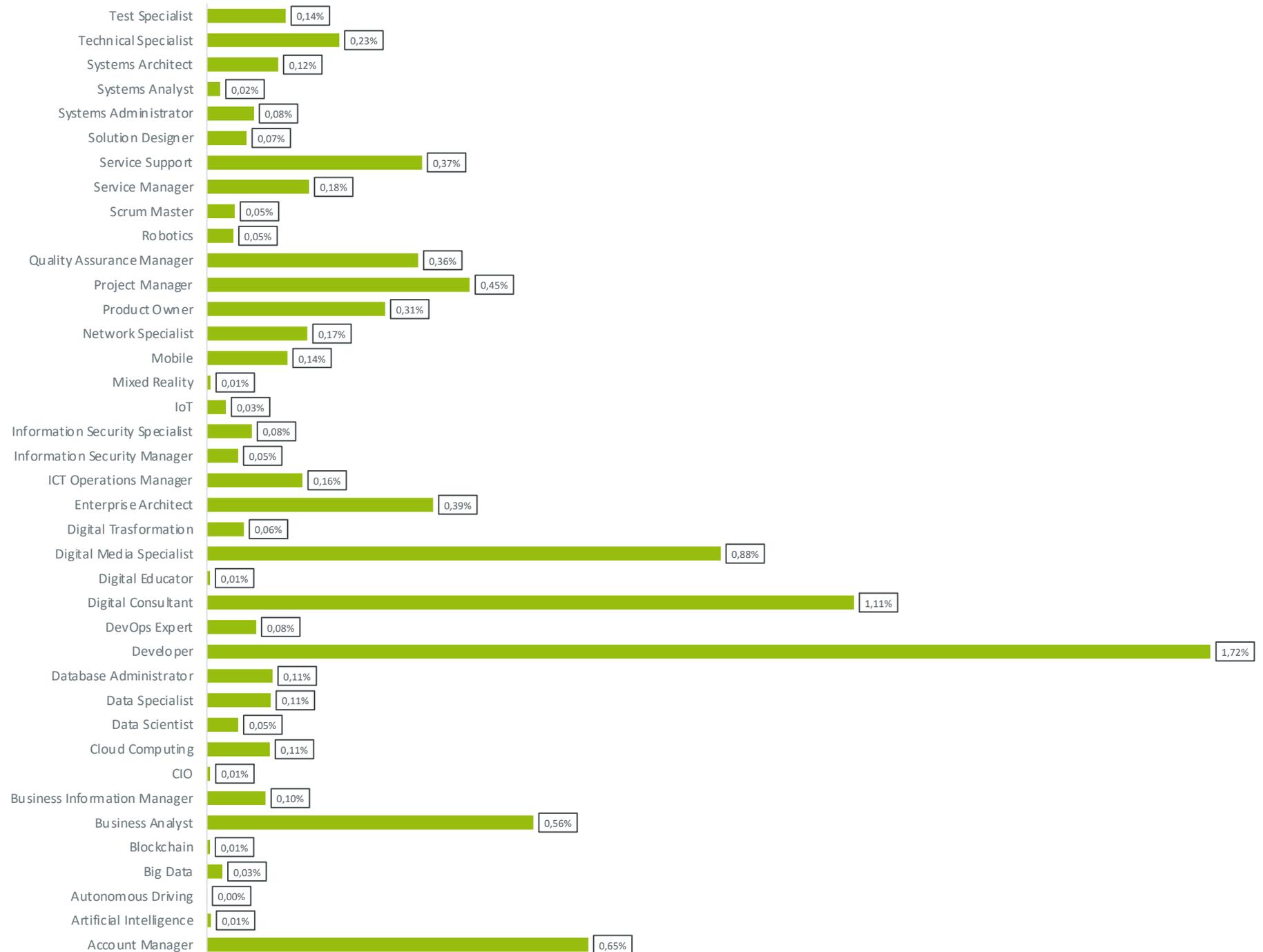
Occupation (ISCO 08)	Unique OJV 2022	Digital skills rate	Soft skills rate	Occupational-specific non digital skills rate
Database designers and administrators	158	54,00%	20,00%	26,00%
Web and multimedia developers	5418	48,00%	23,00%	29,00%
Systems administrators	1366	47,00%	25,00%	28,00%
Applications programmers	1343	44,00%	24,00%	32,00%
Software developers	14752	40,95%	26,32%	32,73%
Data entry clerks	351	40,13%	30,64%	29,23%
Mathematicians, actuaries and statisticians	174	39,08%	28,53%	32,38%
Database and network professionals	1780	38,77%	26,57%	34,66%
Computer network professionals	397	38,29%	29,08%	32,63%
Systems analysts	6593	28,64%	33,62%	37,74%
Graphic and multimedia designers	3686	25,39%	25,93%	48,69%
General office clerks	2022	21,92%	44,19%	33,89%
Environmental engineers	58	19,53%	36,15%	44,31%
Business services and administration managers	1785	15,78%	40,38%	43,84%
Personnel and careers professionals	4122	15,77%	39,97%	44,26%
Accounting and bookkeeping clerks	240	11,88%	33,99%	54,13%
Handicraft workers in textile, leather and related materials	2022	19,75%	31,85%	48,41%

# ICT profiles

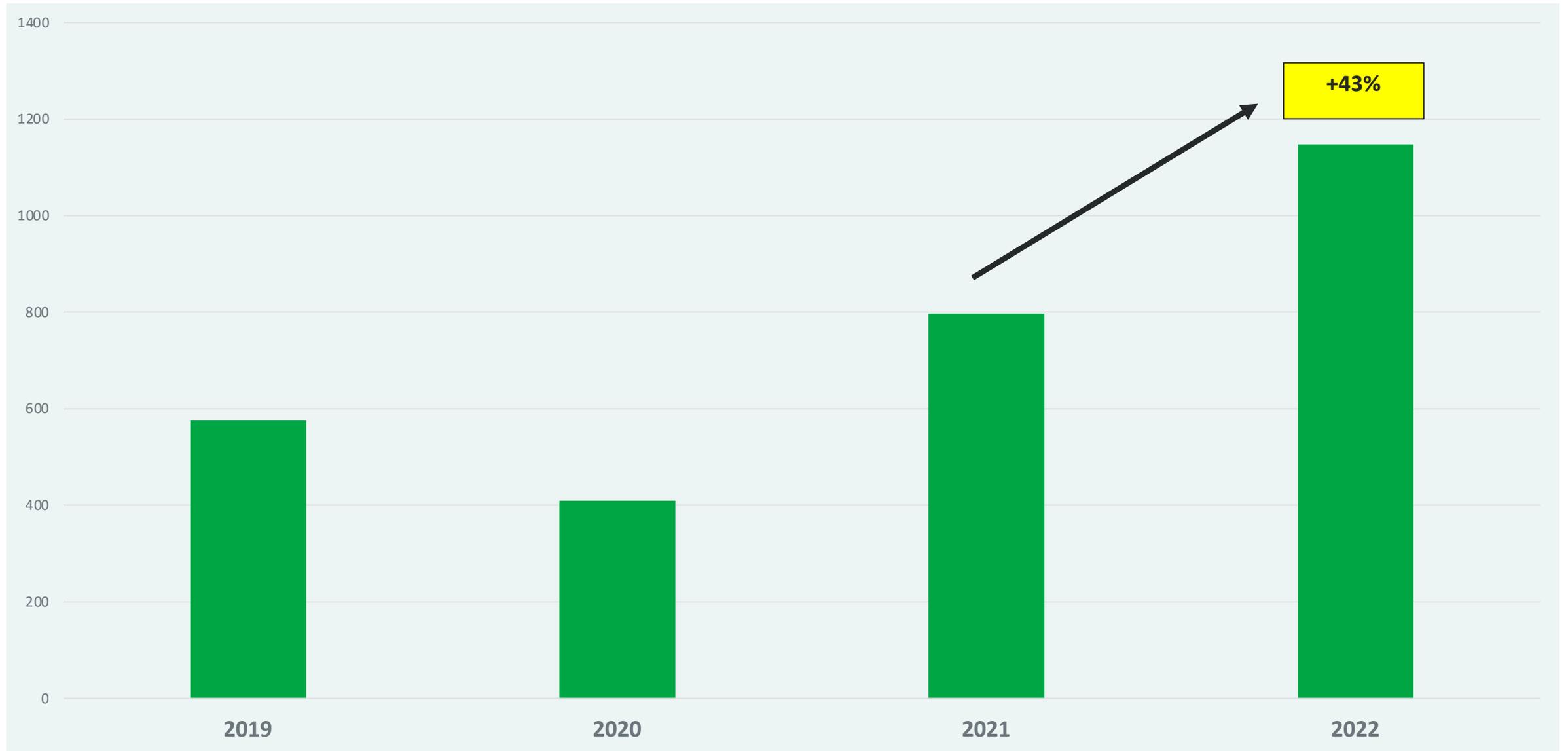
## CEN-SENELEC

### (UNIQUE OJV)

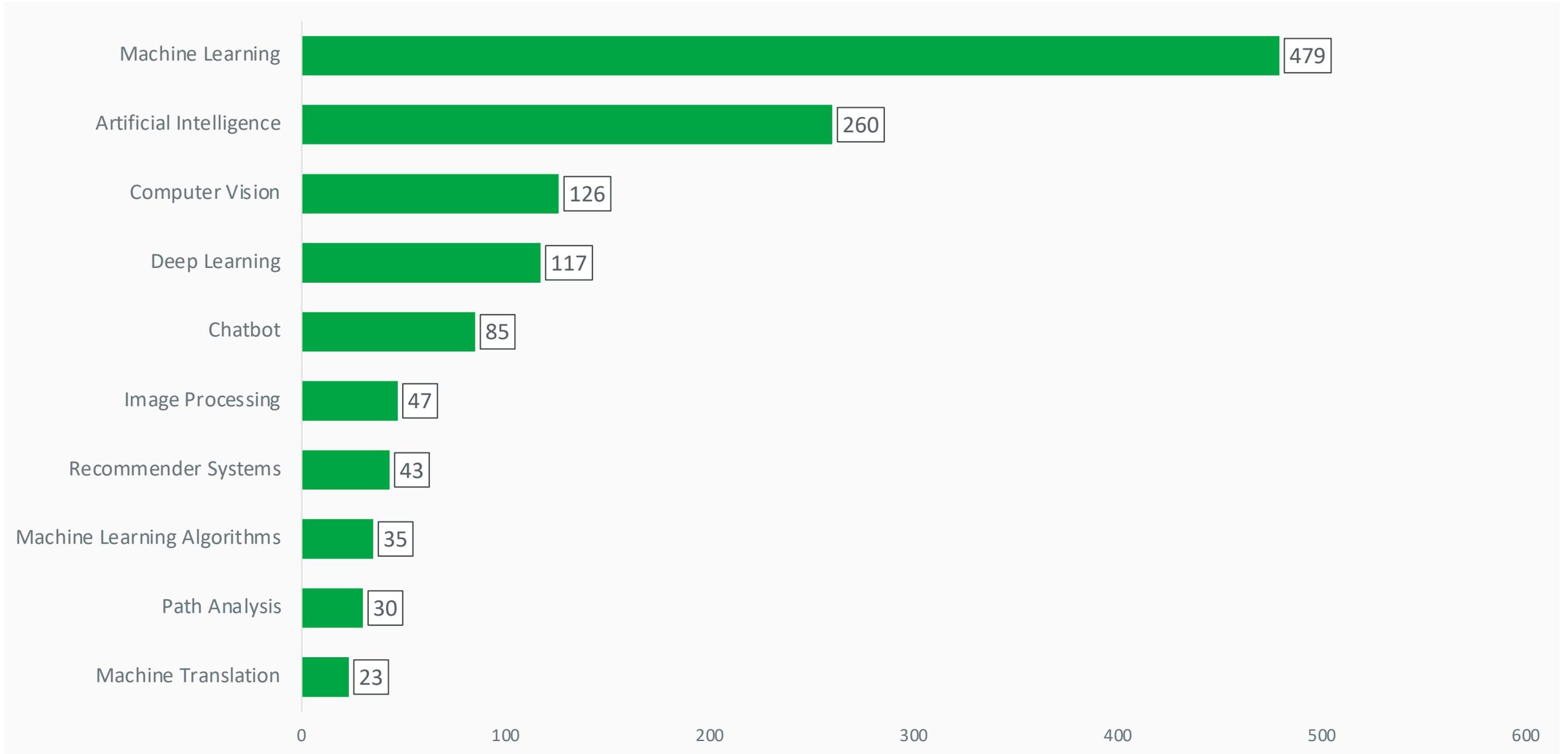
Source: ETF Job Postings – Egypt 2022



# Demand for AI skills: growth (time for AI literacy)?



# TOP AI skills: from online job vacancies



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What are the top Digital Skills on demand?

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Are education and training programmes / LLL - adjusted / reviewed to meet demand?

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How can the Ecosystem NQF-RPL-CATS help?

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**Micro-credentials**

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The number and diversity of micro-credential offerings has expanded substantially in recent years, accelerated by the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic.

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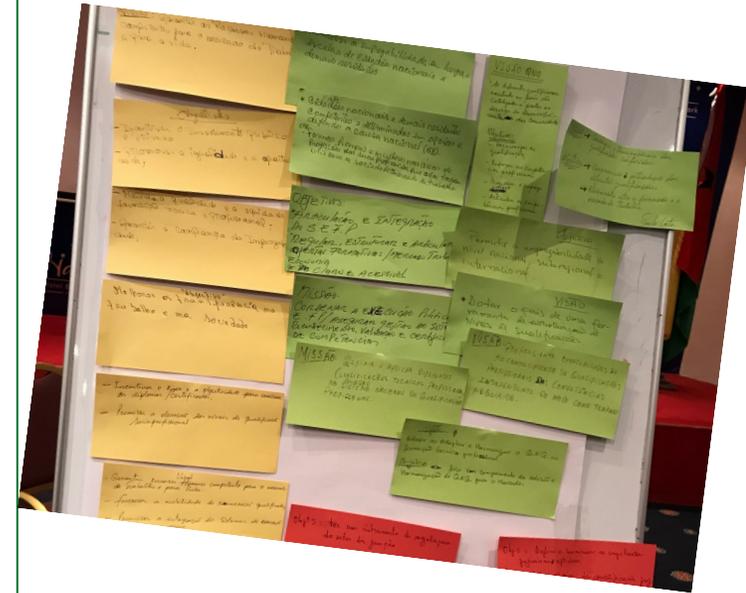
A large part of all employees will need reskilling and the urgency of getting people back to work gives new momentum to “micro-credentials”, which hold **promises and challenges**.

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The **common understanding** on the role and potentialities of micro-credentials in the era of digital learning and economy is central to the debate. Countries, regional communities and international organisations globally are deploying initiatives to clarify the state-of-play and develop policies and measures to better contextualise micro-credentials. Ex.: UNESCO, EU, Australia, African countries (Erasmus+ project, ACQF)

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- Existing definitions (from OECD, European Commission, UNESCO, Australian Government) point to key characteristics of micro-credentials:
  - ✓ Referring to learning over a limited time and/or in a specific area
  - ✓ May form part of or add to formal qualifications
  - ✓ Potentially 'stackable' over time, adding to individual learning careers
  - ✓ Given their limited size and focus, more flexible than traditional qualifications
  - ✓ Based on assessed learning
  - ✓ Frequently delivered in a digital form.



# Global debate towards common definition of micro-credentials (UNESCO and partners)

- In 2019-2021 UNESCO promoted a global debate towards a common definition of micro-credentials, based on extensive expert consultation, analysis of definitions from 15 countries and literature review. The key proposals and underpinning reflection were discussed in September at an international conference (UNESCO, 2021). **The author of the report (Oliver, 2021) concludes “When it comes to micro-credentials, micro is the distinguishing feature, but to be accepted and trusted, micro-credentials must be seen to bear the quality hallmarks of credentials”.**
- Credentials verify, validate, confirm, or corroborate a person’s learning achievements, knowledge and preparedness for performing tasks. Credentials are diverse with regard to their scope, status and purpose.
- A large subset of credentials can be referred to as **macro-credentials**: degrees, diplomas, certificates and licences, often awarded by accredited, recognised or regulated educational and other institutions or organisations. They indicate learning achievement of a broad body of knowledge, transferable skills or technical proficiency and may take a number of years to complete.
  - Purposes: personal or general educational advancement; qualifying to practice a particular profession or to follow a particular career path.

# Micro-credentials: proposed definition

Another large **subset of credentials** can be referred to as **micro-credentials: focused on a specific set of learning outcomes in a narrow field of learning and achieved over a shorter period of time.**

Micro-credentials are offered by commercial entities, private providers and professional bodies, traditional education and training providers, community organisations and other types of organisations.

While many micro-credentials represent the outcomes of more traditional learning experiences, others verify demonstration of achievements acquired elsewhere, such as in the workplace, through volunteering, or through personal interest learning. Micro-credentials are often promoted as an efficient way to upskill workers across the lifespan.

- **The proposed definition (Oliver, 2021) states that a micro-credential:**

1. Is a record of focused learning achievement verifying what the learner knows, understands or can do;
2. Includes assessment based on clearly defined standards and is awarded by a trusted provider;
3. Has stand-alone value and may also contribute to or complement other micro-credentials or macro-credentials, including through recognition of prior learning; and
4. Meets the standards required by relevant quality assurance.

# Potentialities of micro-credentials

Micro-credentials are one of the **big movements** in education and training.

The should be at **service of Big Ideas**, rather than being considered the Big Idea...

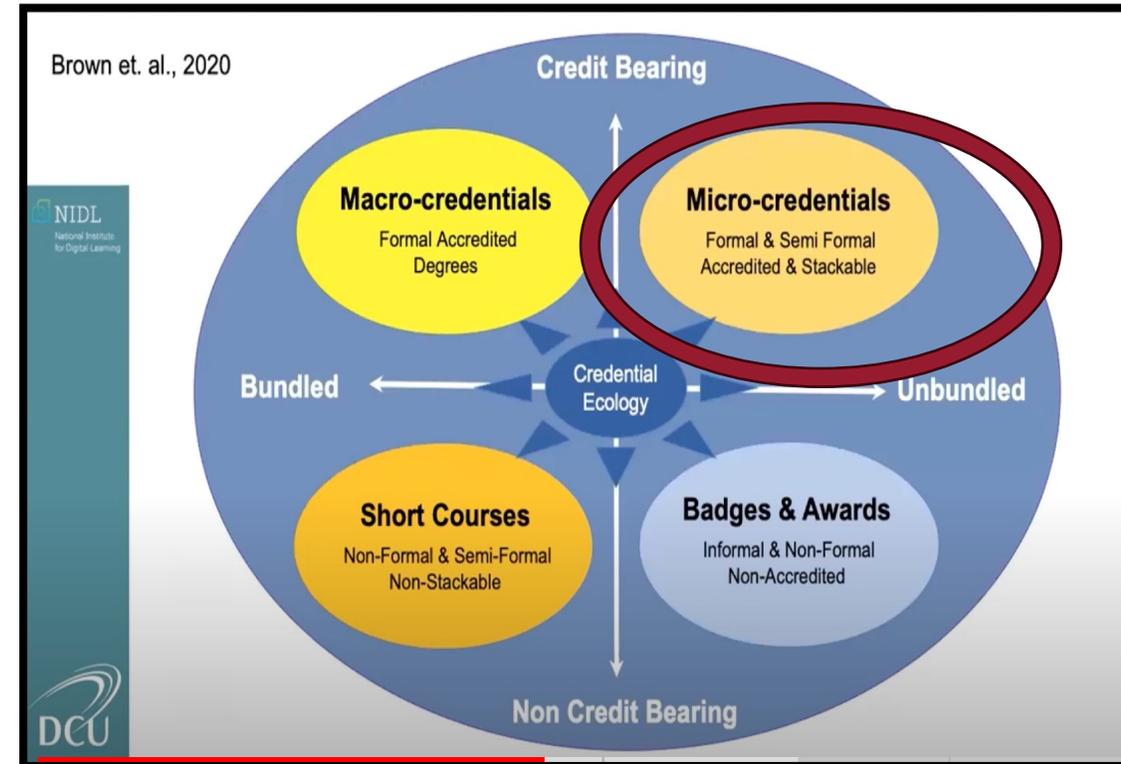
Micro-credentials can help **certify the outcomes of small, tailored learning experiences**.

They make possible the **targeted, flexible acquisition of knowledge, skills and competences** to meet new and emerging needs in society and the labour market and make it possible for individuals to fill the skill gaps they need to succeed in a fast-changing environment, while not replacing traditional qualifications.

**They can, where appropriate, complement existing qualifications**, providing added value while not undermining the core principle of full degree programmes in initial education and training.

Micro-credentials could be designed and issued by a variety of providers in different **learning settings** (formal, non-formal and informal learning settings)

## Credential ecology: quadrants



[Access the video](#)

*Mike Brown, MC Observatory*

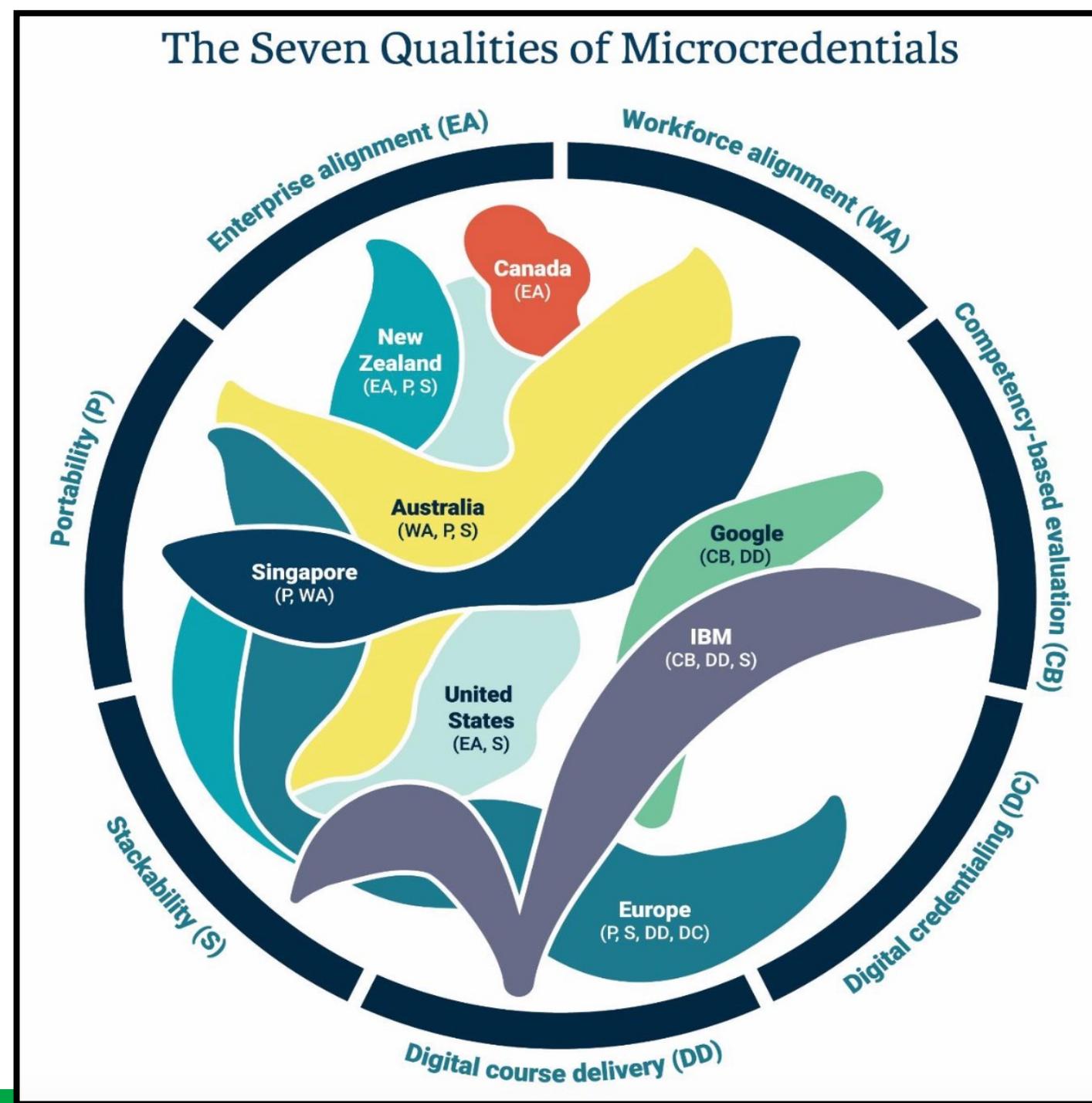
# Micro-credentials

Stylized version: how different micro-credential regimes aim to incorporate varying sub-sets of the **seven qualities**.

- **Note: Stackability is a common feature for US, NZ, A, EU, IBM**

Approaches to Stackability of Micro-credentials Options for Ontario, Prepared for Ontario Council on Articulation and Transfer, March 2023

[https://www.oncat.ca/sites/default/files/media-files/r2246\\_micro-credentials\\_final\\_report\\_21-3-23.pdf](https://www.oncat.ca/sites/default/files/media-files/r2246_micro-credentials_final_report_21-3-23.pdf)



# OECD: Contexts in which Micro-credentials are expected to play a role

 Upskilling and reskilling

 Employability

 Lifelong Learning

 More flexible, learner-centred education

 Access to and completion of education and training

 Student international mobility

 Social inclusion

 Active citizenship and well-being

OECD, 2023. Micro-credentials for Lifelong Learning and Employability: Uses and Possibilities: <https://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/docserver/9c4b7b68-en.pdf?expires=1683402111&id=id&accname=guest&checksum=EC532C674B9D2AB9D69D7DB18202E488>

# Way forward for governments

- Micro-credentials do not deliver on their potential automatically.
- For micro-credentials to play a role in enhancing learners' employability, facilitating access to higher education, improving degree completion, and promoting social inclusion, **policymakers need to make interventions to steer and support learners and providers.**

1

Micro-credential initiatives need clarity about their purpose and target population if they are to be effective in achieving their goals

2

Funding support for micro-credential learners and providers should be sustainable and ensure micro-credentials remain accessible to all

3

Achieving the full potential of micro-credentials will require changes to quality assurance and academic recognition policies

4

Information provision for learners needs to go beyond the development of an online information portal to reach a wider population

5

Public policies can encourage collaborations between education and training providers and industries in micro-credential development and delivery

# Australia National Micro-Credential framework

The Australian Government (2021) adopted the [National Micro-Credentials Framework](#), which uses the following definition:

- A micro-credential is a certification of assessed learning or competency, with a minimum volume of learning of one hour and less than an Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF) award qualification, that is additional, alternate, complementary to or a component part of an AQF award qualification.

## What can constitute a micro-credential?

- TVET skill sets or units of competency.
- Modularised, assessed components of existing higher education curriculum or subjects.
- Industry learning that is assessed (such as vendor certifications, professional learning).
- Other forms of assessed learning or competencies (e.g. Vocational Education/Higher Education /Industry courses not currently accredited by a regulatory authority, and those by other providers).

## What does not constitute a micro-credential?

- Unassessed learning or courses, including work-integrated learning without an assessment.
- Badges which are obtained through participation only (i.e. without an assessment).
- Formal qualifications within the AQF and macro-credentials, including diplomas, certificates and master's degrees.

# Australia: National Micro-credentials Marketplace

- <https://www.microcredseeker.edu.au/>
    - **Microcred Seeker: “The new way to get ahead”**
    - Goal: Seek, explore and compare courses (tertiary education and training providers)
  - Course levels – according to Dreyfus model:
    - ✓ Novice
    - ✓ Advanced beginner
    - ✓ Competent
    - ✓ Proficient
    - ✓ Expert
-

# 3 clusters of micro-credentials

Skill Credential	Learning Unit	Short Learning Programmes
1-25 hours of learning	25-150 hours of learning	150-1500 hours of learning Typically consists of more than one learning unit
Awarded within the context of non-formal learning	Awarded within the context of formal learning and include options for assessment	Awarded within the context of formal learning and include options for assessment
Not explicitly quality assured by external QA	Often explicitly quality assured by external QA	Always explicitly quality assured by external QA
Linked to the acquisition of a specific competence	Linked to the acquisition of a set of learning outcomes	Linked to specific career progression goals
		Can be mapped to qualification frameworks, either as 'partial qualifications' or as a special category of micro-qualifications

# Integrate micro-credentials into national and regional qualifications frameworks.

*[The NQFs aim to] make qualifications easier to understand and compare. The NQFs classify qualifications by level, based on learning outcomes - that is, what the holder of a certificate or diploma is expected to know, understand, and be able to do. This classification reflects the content and profile of qualifications.*

Source: [Cedefop \(2022\)](#).

## Two approaches for mapping micro-credentials to existing NQFs:

- A **new micro-credential qualification type** may be established under the NQF.
  - A micro-credential may be **outlined as a subunit** of an existing qualification on the NQF.
-

<https://www.nzqa.govt.nz/nzqf/search/microcredentials.do>

The screenshot shows the NZQA website's search interface. At the top, there is a navigation bar with the NZQA logo, a search bar, and buttons for 'Contact us' and 'Login Options'. Below the navigation bar, there are menu items: HOME, QUALIFICATIONS & STANDARDS, NCEA, MĀORI & PASIFIKA, PROVIDERS & PARTNERS, INTERNATIONAL, and ABOUT US. The main content area is titled 'Register of NZQA-approved Micro-credentials'. It features a search form with a 'Keyword' field and a 'Developer name or Education Organisation number' field, and a 'Search' button. Below the search form, a yellow banner indicates '336 results found. Displaying the first 200 only. Please refine your search, if required.' Below this banner is a table listing the first five results.

Title	Level	Credits	Developer	Approval Date	Review Date	
ADAS ROV Technician (Micro-credential)	4	10	Omne Marine Training Centre Limited	08/2022	01/08/2023	⏪
ADAS SSBA 50m Offshore Supervisor Trainee (Micro-credential)	6	10	Omne Marine Training Centre Limited	08/2022	01/08/2023	⏪
ADAS Scuba 30m ADAS Occupational Scuba Diver (Micro-credential)	4	33	Omne Marine Training Centre Limited	07/2022	27/07/2023	⏪
AWS re/Start (Micro-credential)	5	40	Te Pūkenga - New Zealand Institute of Skills and Technology	03/2021	12/12/2023	⏪

336 results found. Displaying the first 200 only. Please refine your search, if required.

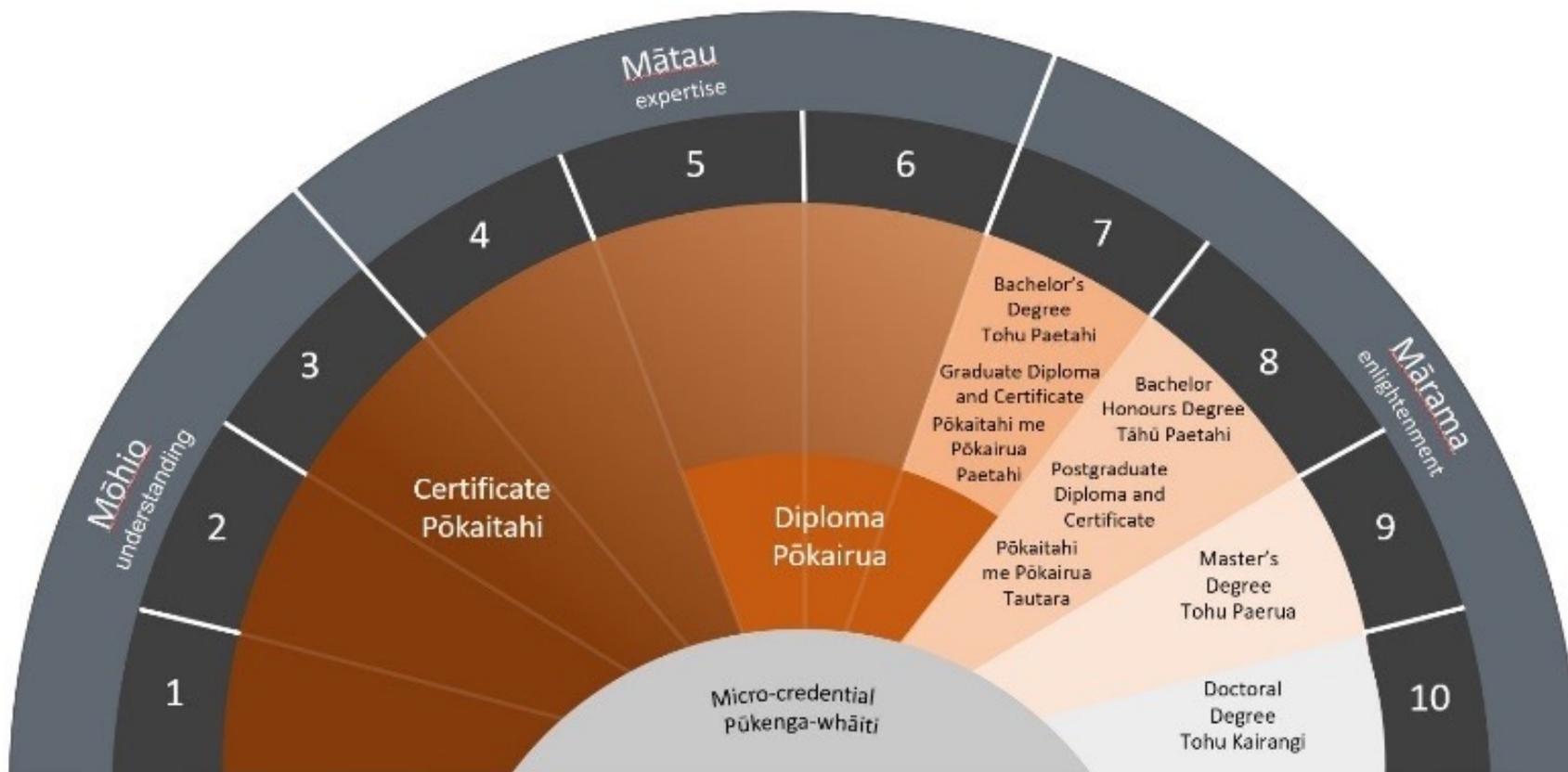
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AWS re/Start (Micro-credential)	5	40	Te Pūkenga - New Zealand Institute of Skills and Technology	03/2021	12/12/2023	⏪
Aeronautical Engineering Fundamentals (Micro-credential)	3	30	Te Pūkenga - New Zealand Institute of Skills and Technology		19/03/2024	⏪
Aeronautical Maintenance Fundamentals (Micro-credential)	3	30	Te Pūkenga - New Zealand Institute of Skills and Technology	03/2022	19/03/2024	⏪
Applied Payroll (Micro-credential) (Level 5)	5	15	Te Pūkenga - New Zealand Institute of Skills and Technology	08/2020	05/08/2023	⏪
Aquatic Fish Industry Skills (Micro-credential)	3	40	Bay of Plenty Technical Institute Limited	12/2021	07/12/2023	⏪
Asbestos Management and Surveying (Micro-credential)	4	10	CC Training Academy Limited	03/2022	31/03/2023	⏪
Assess and Review HACCP Requirements in a Food Processing Operation (Micro-Credential)	5	20	Te Pūkenga - New Zealand Institute of Skills and Technology	10/2020	18/10/2023	⏪
Assist with Dairy Farming Mating, Calving and Neonatal Care (Micro-credential)	3	30	Te Pūkenga - New Zealand Institute of Skills and Technology	11/2020	17/10/2023	⏪
Assist with Management of Livestock Health and Biosecurity (Micro-credential)	3	20	Te Pūkenga - New Zealand Institute of Skills and Technology	11/2020	31/10/2023	⏪
Assist with Milk Harvesting and Optimising Milk Quality (Micro-credential)	3	30	Te Pūkenga - New Zealand Institute of Skills and Technology	11/2020	31/10/2023	⏪

336 micro-credentials in online register. With NQF level (3 to 8). Credits: 5-40...

# Example: "Excavator Operator" micro-credential – NZQA register

<b>Excavator Operator (Micro-credential)</b>	3	29	Besafe Training Limited	22/09/2023	▼
<b>Aim</b> <p>The aim of this micro-credential is to train skilled operators to operate and manage hydraulic excavators on construction sites, so that they are able to place materials with minimal spillage, stock-pile and other related activities in accordance with company and industry standards including health and safety legislation.</p> <p>This micro-credential targets excavators' operators who are employed with no formal training or qualification. It will also enable learners to meet the Construct Safe Tier 2 Health and Safety Competency Test for excavators.</p> <p>Learners will be assessed against unit standard 17310 and must complete an "WTR" endorsement training (unit standards 16701, 16702, 16703) that is pre-requisite for operating excavator to successfully graduate from this micro-credential.</p>					
<b>Outcome</b> <p>Operate a special-type vehicle safely and legally by obtaining an W, T or R Licence endorsement</p> <p>Apply excavation health and safety regulations in accordance with company and job requirements</p> <p>Perform site and excavator checks</p> <p>Operate excavator to load, unload, stock-pile, strip, and trim materials</p> <p>Perform special lifting and post-operational procedures</p>					
<b>Education Organisations that can deliver this Micro-credential</b> <p>Besafe Training Limited</p>					

# New Zealand Qualifications Framework



Micro-credentials can be listed at any level (from 1 to 10) of the New Zealand Qualifications and Credentials Framework (NZQCF).

They must:

- Have at least one credit (10 learning hours) and are typically more than 5 credits and less than 40 credits.
- State the learning outcomes, demonstrate that they meet an industry or community need and include an assessment component.
- Vocational micro-credentials must include any relevant skills standards

# Ireland: micro-credentials in the NFAQ

Micro-credentials are incorporated at every level of the Irish National Framework of Qualifications

They are represented in three different forms:

“Minor Awards” (at any level, outcomes of partially completed “Major Awards” can be awarded).

“Supplemental Awards” (from Level 4 onwards, learning in addition to “Major Awards” can be awarded).

“Special Purpose Awards” (specific achievements can be awarded at any level)

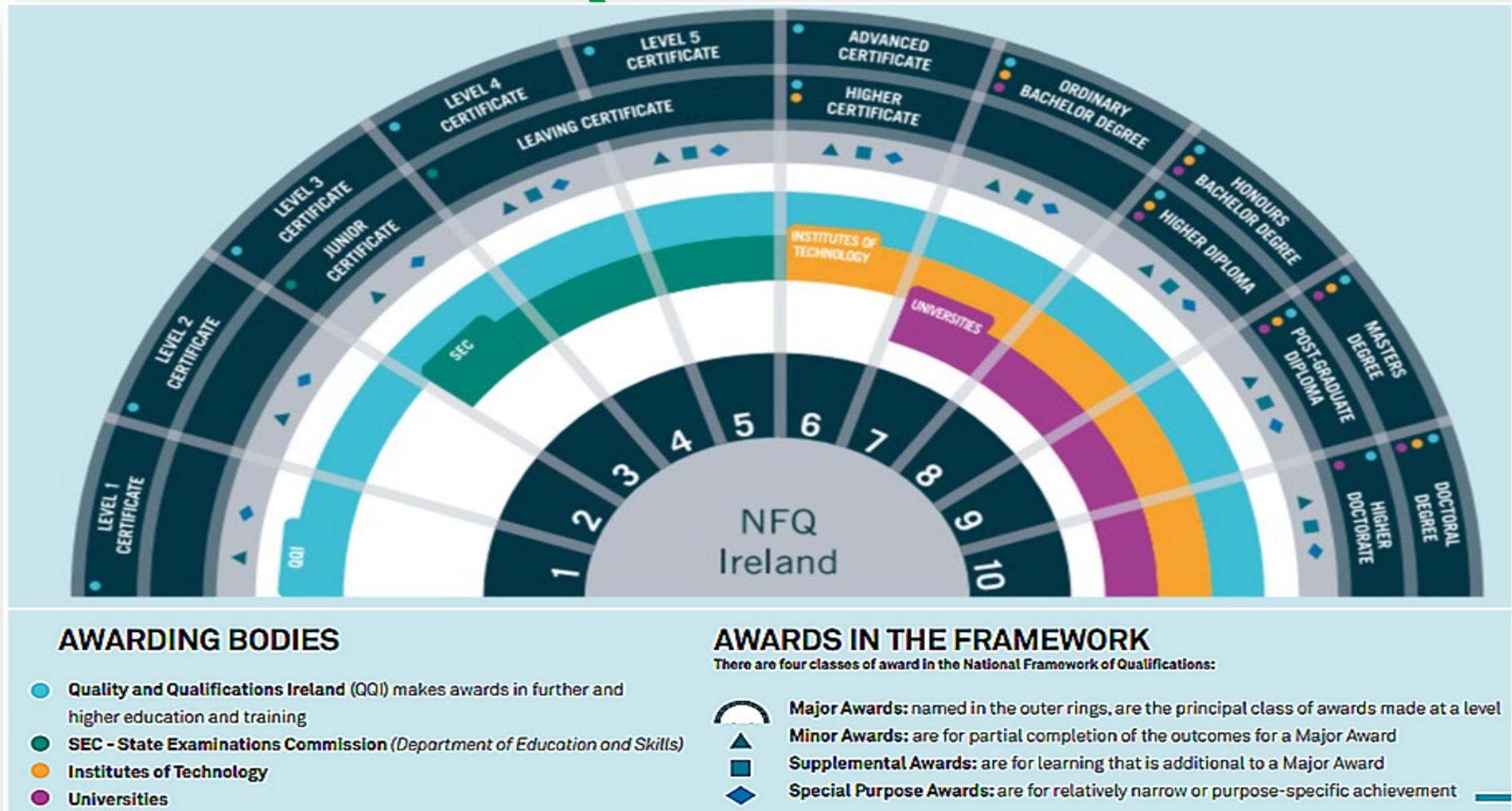


Figure 3: The Irish NQF. Source: Quality and Qualifications Ireland (2021).

Micro-credentials are awarded by universities, institutes of technologies, other awarding bodies, the State Examinations Commission and Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI)<sup>11</sup>.

# Portugal: National Catalogue Qualifications - ANQEP (UFCD)

Qualificações de Dupla Certificação

Referencial Básico e Secundário (Adultos)

Percursos de curta e média duração

Competências Transversais

Conselhos Setoriais para a Qualificação

Documentação

## UFCD

Pesquisa Unidades de Formação de Curta Duração

Designação

Código

Qualificação

Áreas de Educação e Formação

Nenhum selecionado

Duração

Nenhum selecionado

Excluídas

Não

 Resultados da pesquisa: **8669 UFCD**

DESCARREGAR LISTAGEM

Código 0001	Carga horária: 25 horas História das artes e da indústria gráfica	Pontos de Crédito: 2.25 VER
Código 0002	Carga horária: 25 horas Desktop publishing - tratamento de texto e paginação	Pontos de Crédito: 2.25 VER
Código 0003	Carga horária: 50 horas Desktop publishing - tratamento de texto e imagem	Pontos de Crédito: 4.5 VER

- UFCD: proxy of micro-credentials
- Access: National Catalogue of Qualifications – ANQEP.
- Can be combined into a full qualification.
- UFCD: Volume of learning: 2.25 – 4.5 credit points
- Separate UFCD: does not give a level of qualification.

<https://catalogo.anqep.gov.pt/>

UFCD: Unidade de Formação de Curta Duração; Unit of Training of Short Duration

# EU: Recommendation on European approach to micro-credentials for LLL and employability: 10 principles

“Use micro-credentials, where appropriate, as a tool to strengthen and complement existing learning opportunities, increase participation in lifelong learning”

1. Quality
2. Transparency
3. Relevance
4. Valid assessment
5. Learning pathways

6. Recognition
7. Portability
8. Learner-centred
9. Authentic
10. Information and guidance

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Adopted 16/06/2022: <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A32022H0627%2802%29>

## ANNEX I

### Union standard elements to describe a micro-credential

This annex includes a list of common Union standard elements to describe micro-credentials that can be used as a resource to support implementation.

Mandatory elements:	Identification of the learner
	Title of the micro-credential
	Country/Region of the issuer
	Awarding body
	Date of issuing
	Learning outcomes
	Notional workload needed to achieve the learning outcomes (in ECTS credits, wherever possible)
	Level (and cycle, if applicable) of the learning experience leading to the micro-credential (EQF, QF-EHEA), if applicable
	Type of assessment
	Form of participation in the learning activity
	Type of quality assurance used to underpin the micro-credential
Optional elements, where relevant (non-exhaustive list)	Prerequisites needed to enrol in the learning activity
	Supervision and identity verification during assessment (unsupervised with no identity verification, supervised with no identity verification, supervised online, or onsite with identity verification)
	Grade achieved
	Integration/stackability options (standalone, independent micro-credential/integrated, stackable towards another credential)
	Further information

These standard elements will be included in a Union data model<sup>1</sup> that specifies a common format for describing micro-credentials. The data model will be available as an open standard

**Elements to structure and design a Micro-credential (EU Recommendation on a common approach to micro-credentials)**

- ✓ Incorporate micro-credentials into your **institutional quality assurance** system.
    - Delivery of courses, assessment and certification.
    - Feedback from learners and external stakeholders (such as employers and professional bodies)
  - ✓ **Externally review** the quality of your institution.
  - ✓ **Publish** methods and results of internal and external quality assurance.
-

# ACQF **Transparency**

- ✓ **Publish the learning outcomes, notional workload and credit points of micro-credentials.**
    - Document link with teaching, learning and assessment criteria and methods.
    - Document link with formal taxonomies such as skill or competence frameworks (e.g. ESCO).
    - Publish information on micro-credentials using the standard model.
  - ✓ **Integrate micro-credentials into national and regional qualifications frameworks.**
-

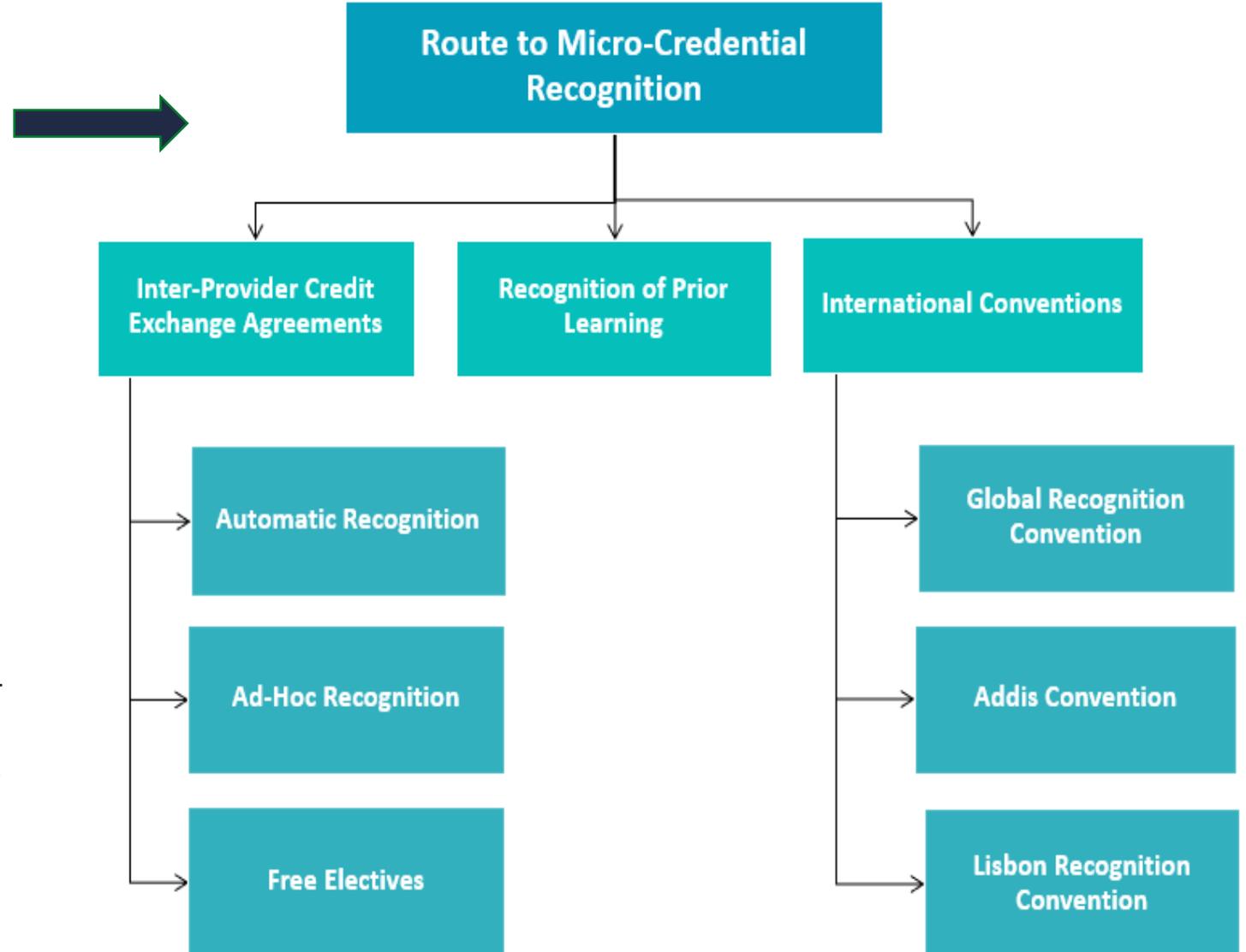
# Recognition of micro-credentials

## For education or training purposes:

- ✓ **Enable multiple, feasible routes** for micro-credential recognition
- ✓ **Seek collaboration** with private or public sector entities (which may include professional bodies, companies and other enterprises) to co-design and offer micro-credentials which may be automatically recognised for employment and education purposes.

## For employment purposes:

- ✓ Non-formal or informal learning providers should tailor recommendations in the Micro-Credentials Guide to design and offer fit for purpose interoperable micro-credentials (e.g. as part of **Continuous Professional Development** schemes).



# Micro-credential Observatory: a great source

The Research Observatory on Micro-credentials (ROM) is a NIDL initiative in partnership with the [ECIU University](#). The aim is to provide a curated and regularly updated collection of major reports, policy initiatives and research-related publications on the growth of micro-credentials in higher education and lifelong learning more generally.

- [NIDL Activities](#)
- [NIDL Research](#)
- [Major Policy Initiatives](#)
- [National & International Reports](#)
- [Useful Reading: Articles, Books & Papers](#)
- [Events, Conferences and Webinars](#)
- [Microcredentials Sans Frontières Network](#)



- Large number of articles published in 2022-2023: <https://www.dcu.ie/nidl/micro-credential-observatory>

# Websites, resources on micro-credentials: open information

- **In NQF registers:**

- New Zealand (NZQA): <https://www.nzqa.govt.nz/providers-partners/approval-accreditation-and-registration/micro-credentials/>

- Register of micro-credentials NZQA: <https://www.nzqa.govt.nz/nzqf/search/microcredentials.do>
- Up to 40 credits – levels 3 to 8 of NQF

- **Portugal: National Qualifications Catalogue:** <https://catalogo.anqep.gov.pt/>

- 8663 courses of short duration (75-350 hours of learning)

- **Toolkits: Ontario Micro-credentials Toolkit:**

<https://ecampusontario.pressbooks.pub/microcredentialtoolkit/>

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# Websites, resources on micro-credentials: open information (2)

- **ACQF website:** <https://acqf.africa/resources/micro-credentials>
  - **Cedefop:** <https://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/projects/microcredentials-labour-market-education-and-training>
  - **ETF:** Guideline to design, issue and recognise Micro-Credentials. <https://www.etf.europa.eu/sites/default/files/2023-05/Micro-Credential%20Guidelines%20Final%20Delivery.pdf>
  - **EU Recommendation 2022:** A European Approach to Micro-Credentials: [https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=uriserv:OJ.C\\_.2022.243.01.0010.01.ENG](https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=uriserv:OJ.C_.2022.243.01.0010.01.ENG)
  - **New survey:** [https://www.holoniq.com/notes/micro-credentials-survey-2023-insights?utm\\_campaign=Weekly%20Education%20Marketing%20Newsletter&utm\\_medium=email&\\_hsmi=257668719&\\_hsenc=p2ANqtz-9AW9h3XTIKkCALx1MFTX6515BITWs4V5GeO7EdAbCUYOBGELgA3TN43nQjKY7B30\\_AxaBgAGsBVj7OKaftMoJ4yi8Dvw&utm\\_content=257668719&utm\\_source=hs\\_email](https://www.holoniq.com/notes/micro-credentials-survey-2023-insights?utm_campaign=Weekly%20Education%20Marketing%20Newsletter&utm_medium=email&_hsmi=257668719&_hsenc=p2ANqtz-9AW9h3XTIKkCALx1MFTX6515BITWs4V5GeO7EdAbCUYOBGELgA3TN43nQjKY7B30_AxaBgAGsBVj7OKaftMoJ4yi8Dvw&utm_content=257668719&utm_source=hs_email)
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# Reflection Ghana



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Micro-credentials and proxies:  
please mention some examples

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How will the NQF incorporate  
them? Some ideas?

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What is the future of micro-  
credentials in Ghana?

05

**Micro-credentials survey  
ACQF: preliminary results**

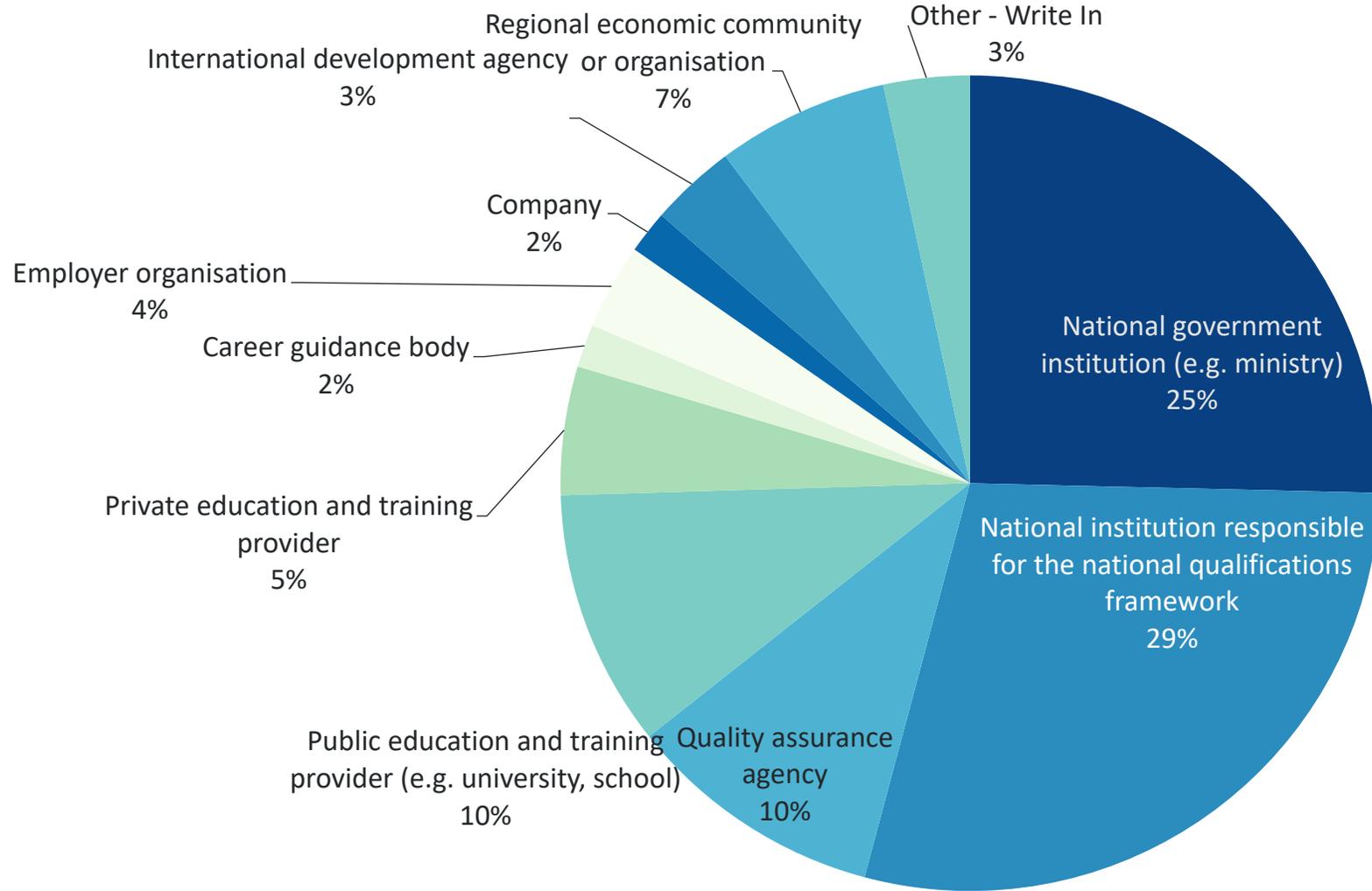


# ACQF-II MC Survey respondents

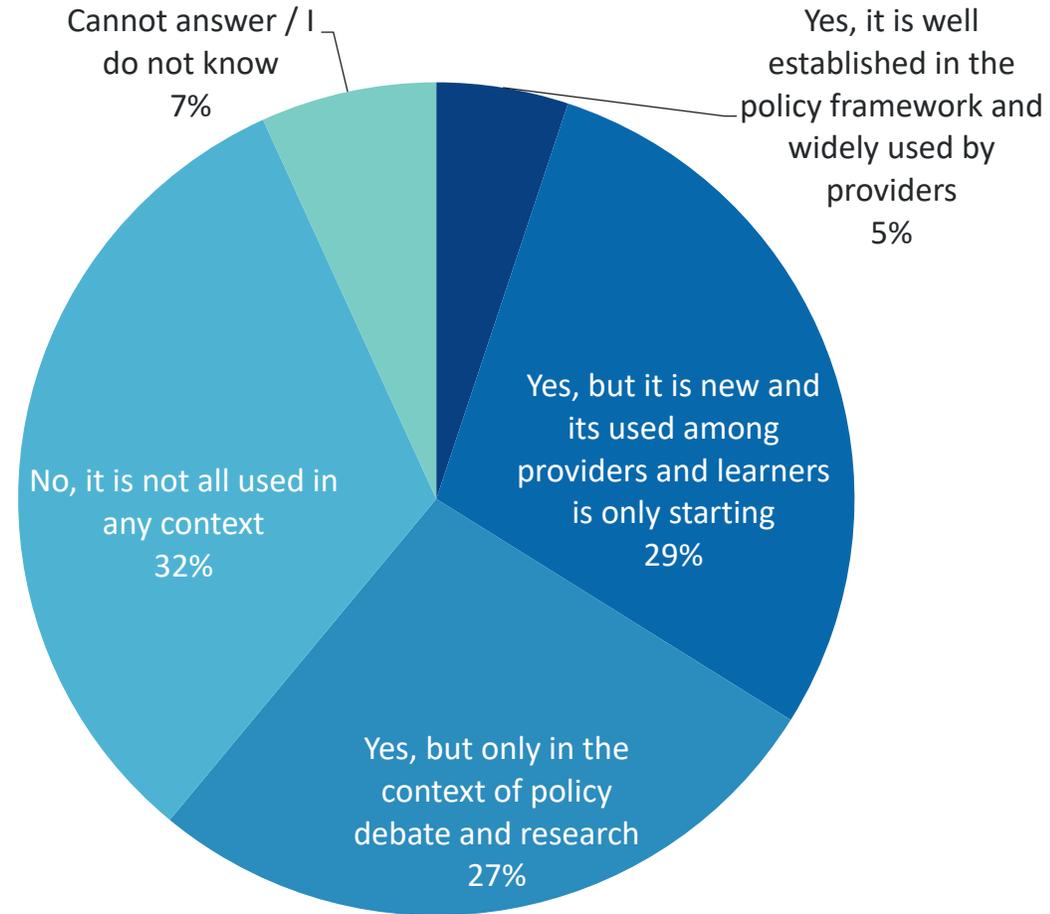
SADC countries: Angola, Botswana, DR Congo, Eswatini, Malawi, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia, Seychelles, South Africa, Zambia

Value	Percent	Count
Angola	5.1%	3
Botswana	1.7%	1
Burkina Faso	6.8%	4
Cabo Verde	1.7%	1
Chad	1.7%	1
Democratic Republic of the Congo	1.7%	1
Djibouti	1.7%	1
Egypt	1.7%	1
Eswatini (formerly Swaziland)	6.8%	4
Ethiopia	1.7%	1
Ghana	1.7%	1
Guinea-Bissau	6.8%	4
Kenya	5.1%	3
Malawi	1.7%	1
Mauritius	1.7%	1
Morocco	5.1%	3
Mozambique	6.8%	4
Namibia	1.7%	1
Nigeria	1.7%	1
Rwanda	1.7%	1
Senegal	1.7%	1
Seychelles	6.8%	4
Somalia	1.7%	1
South Africa	3.4%	2
Sudan	1.7%	1
Tunisia	5.1%	3
Uganda	3.4%	2
Zambia	11.9%	7
Totals		59

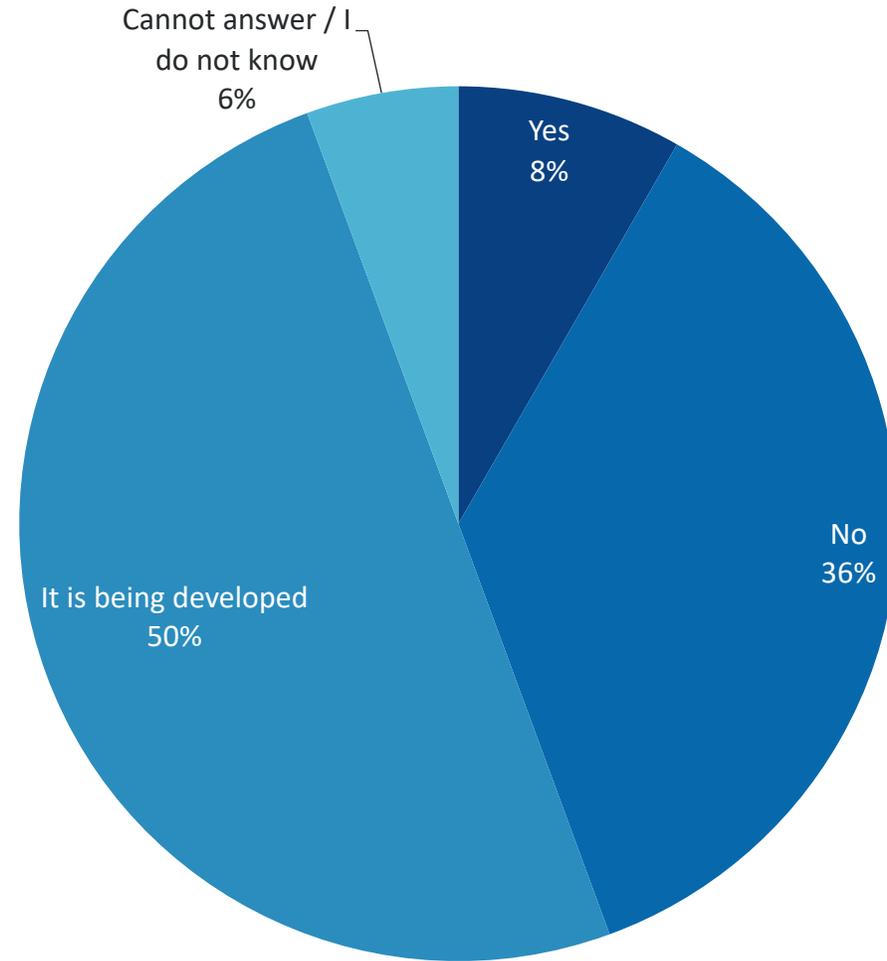
# What type of organisation do you represent?



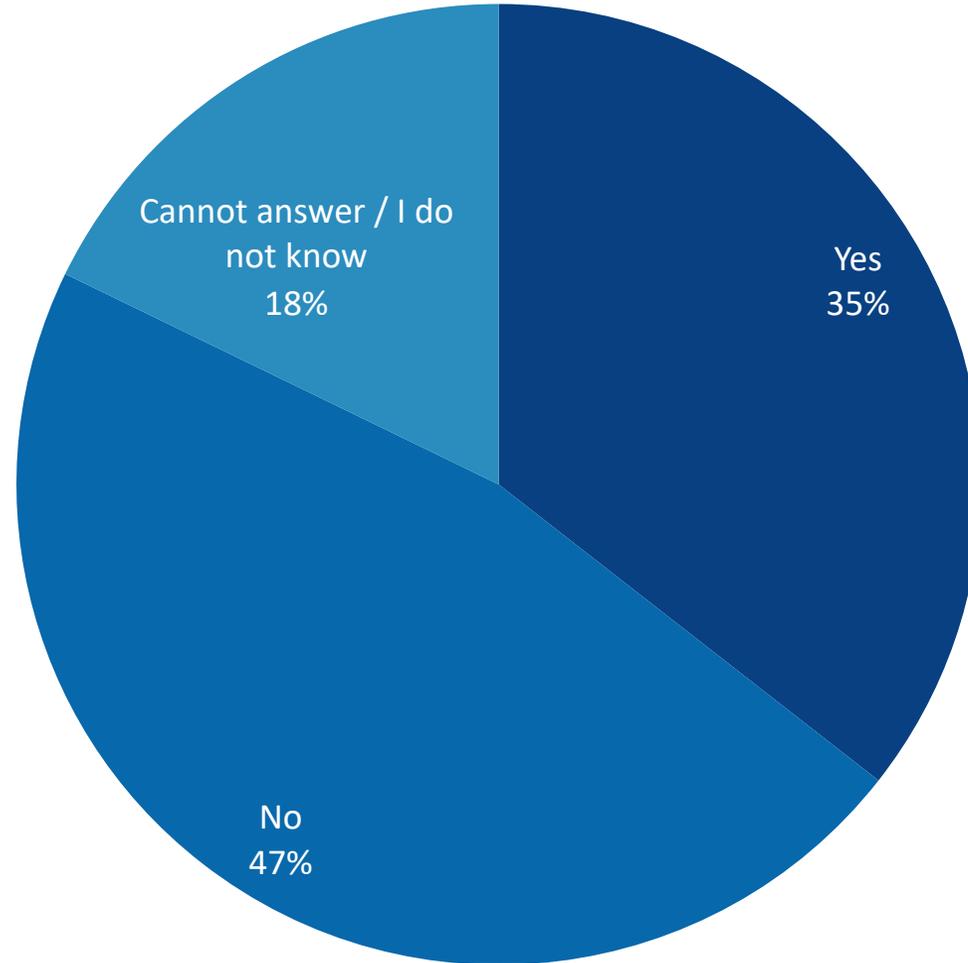
# Is the term “micro-credential” used in the context of your organisation / country?



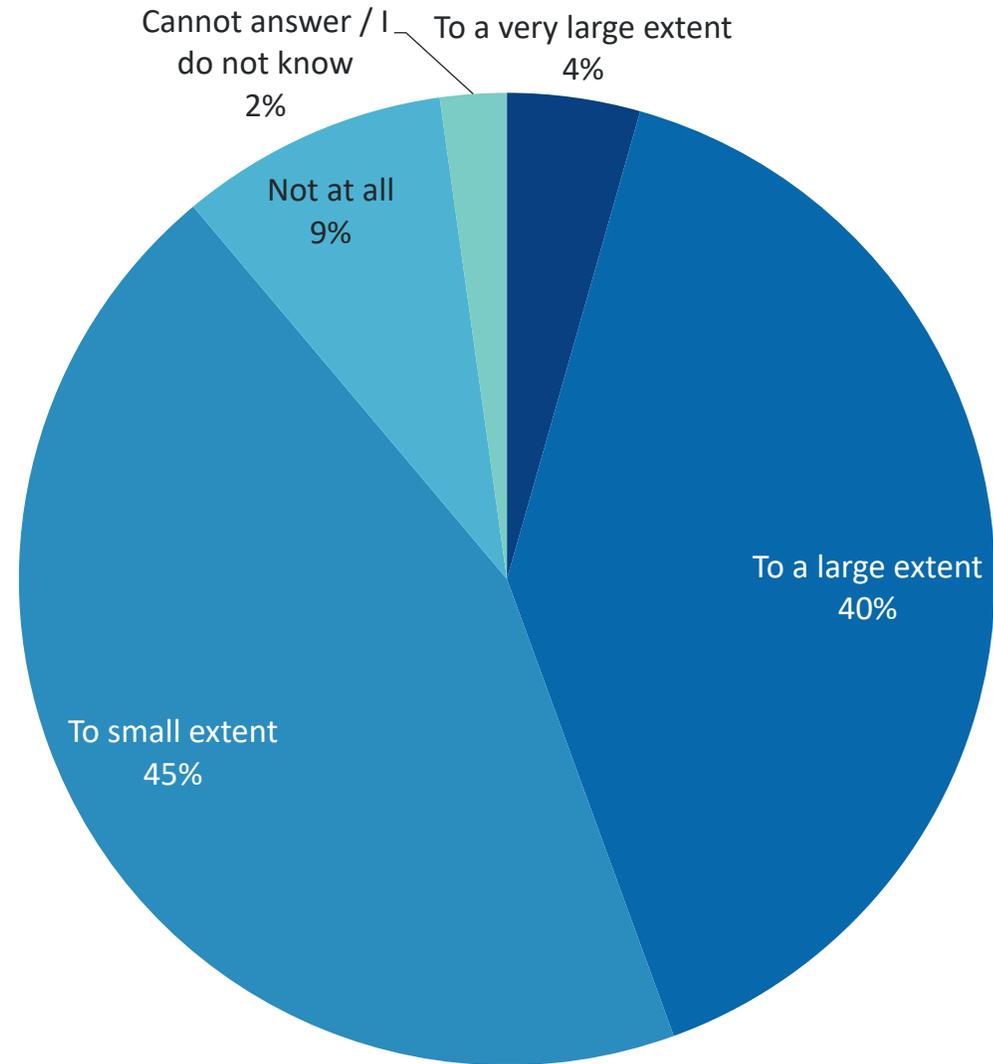
## Is there a formal definition for micro-credentials in your country?



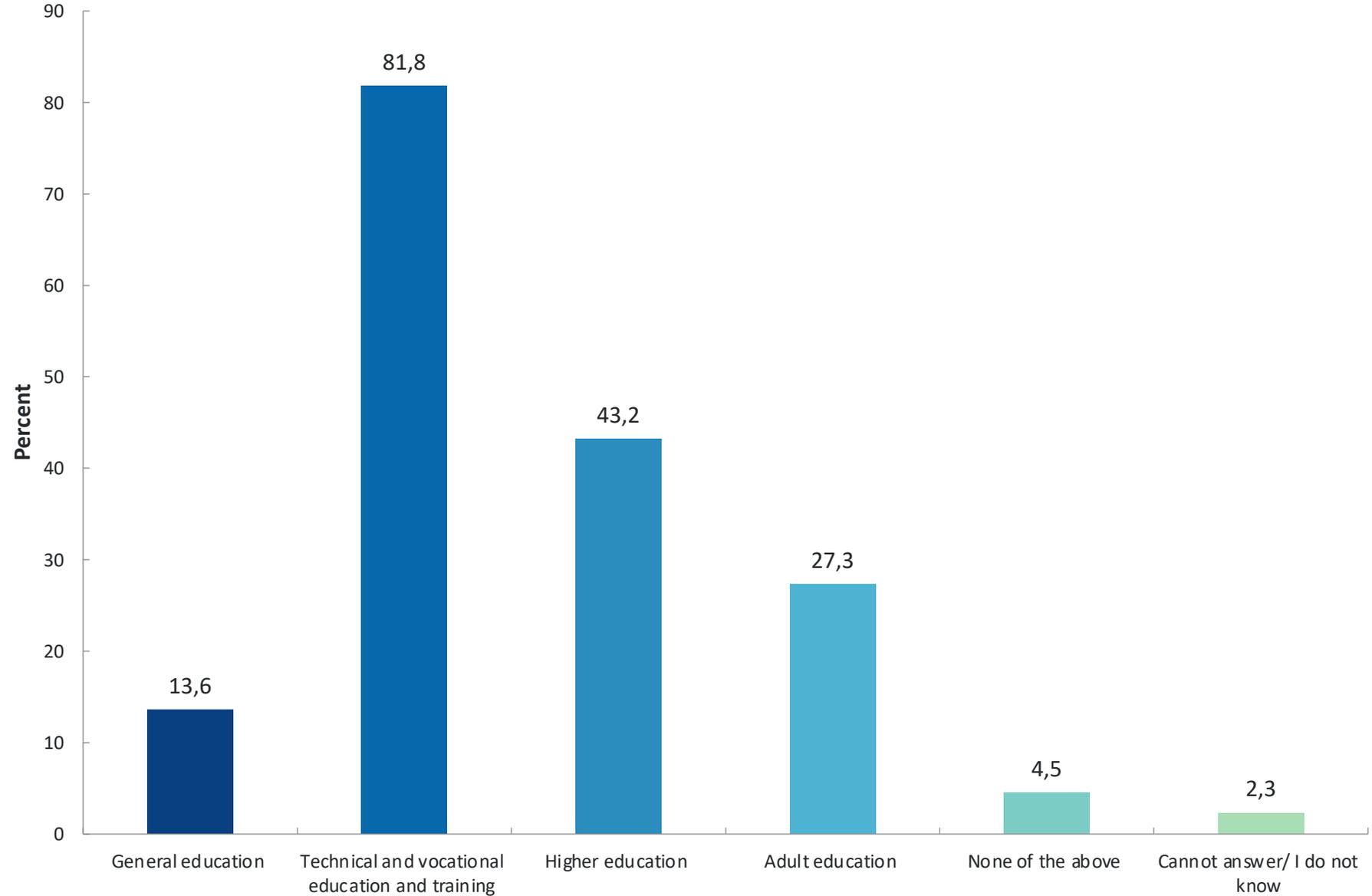
## Are micro-credentials referred to in any official policy documents ?



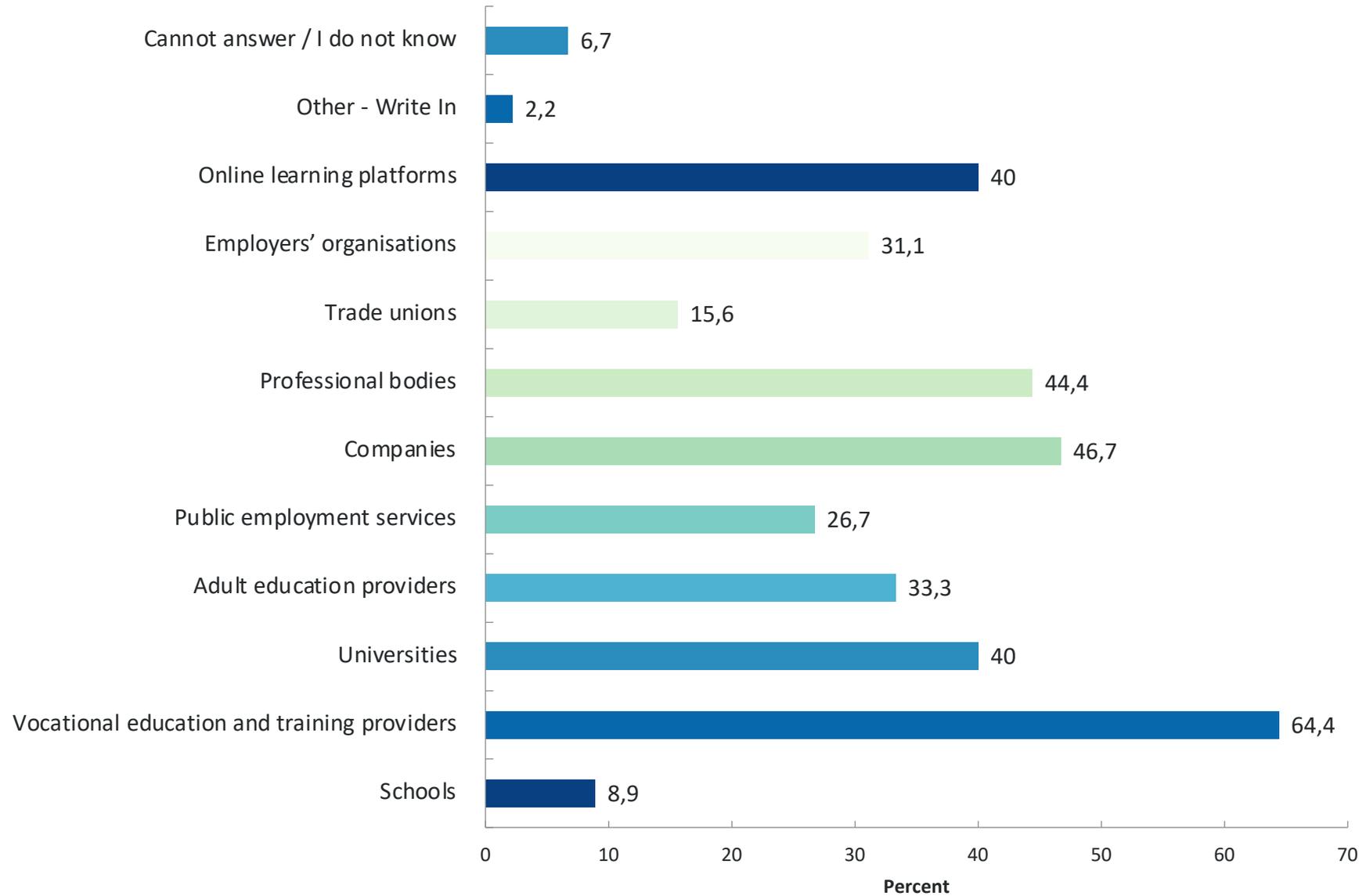
# To what extent are micro-credentials (or the term specified by you) referred to in national and regional policy discussions?



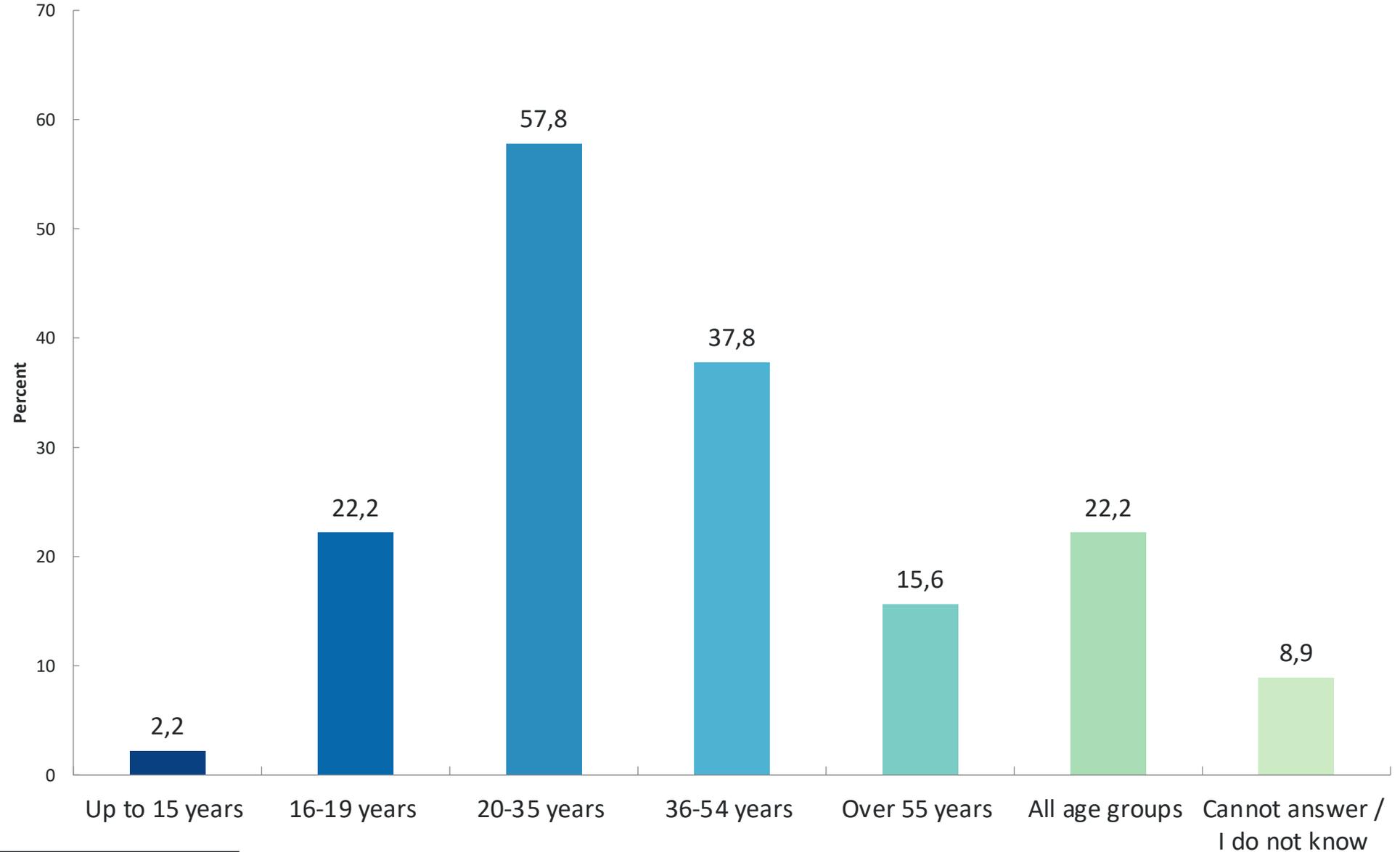
# Which education and training sectors are offering micro-credentials?



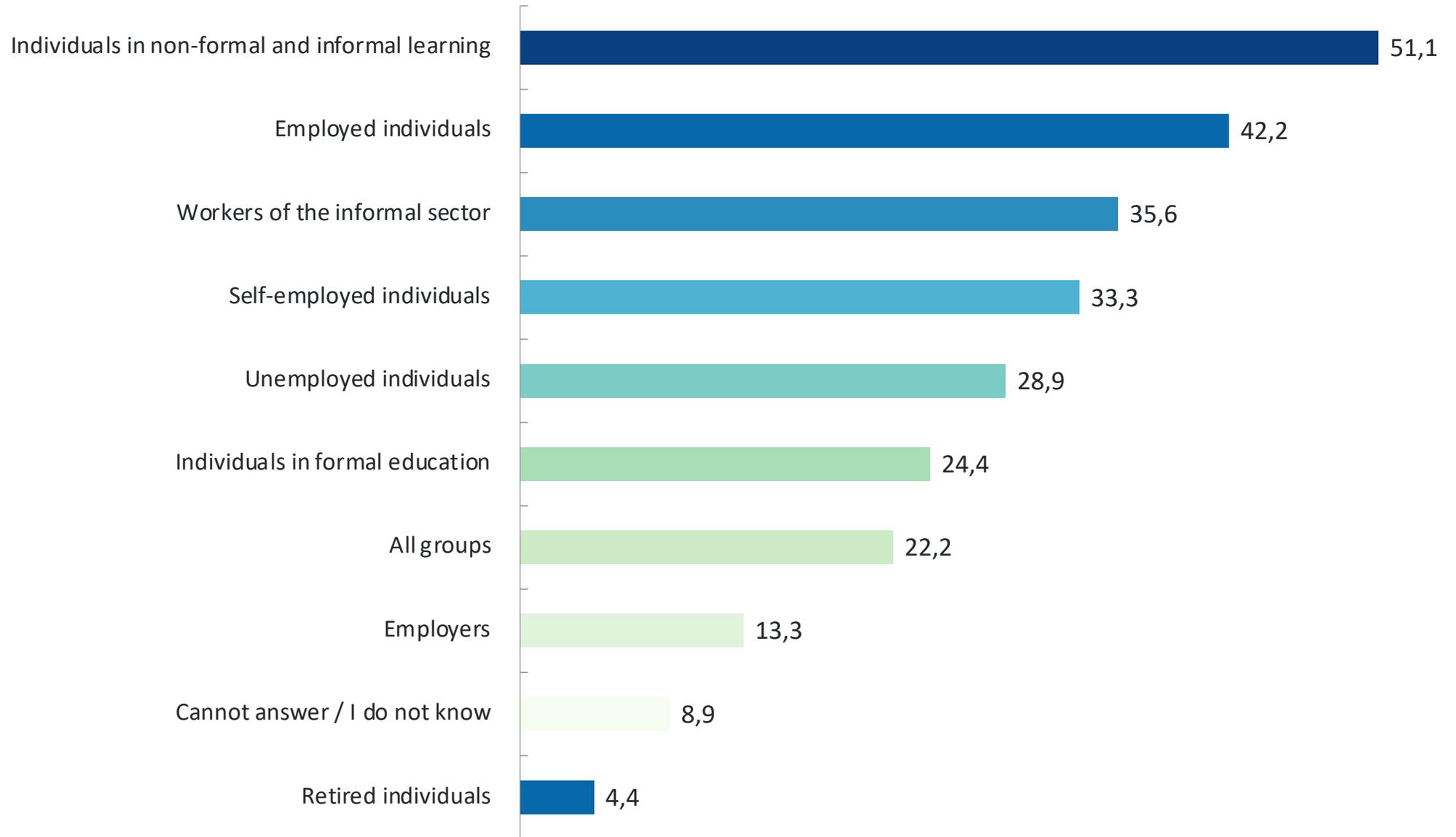
## Who are the main providers of micro-credentials ?



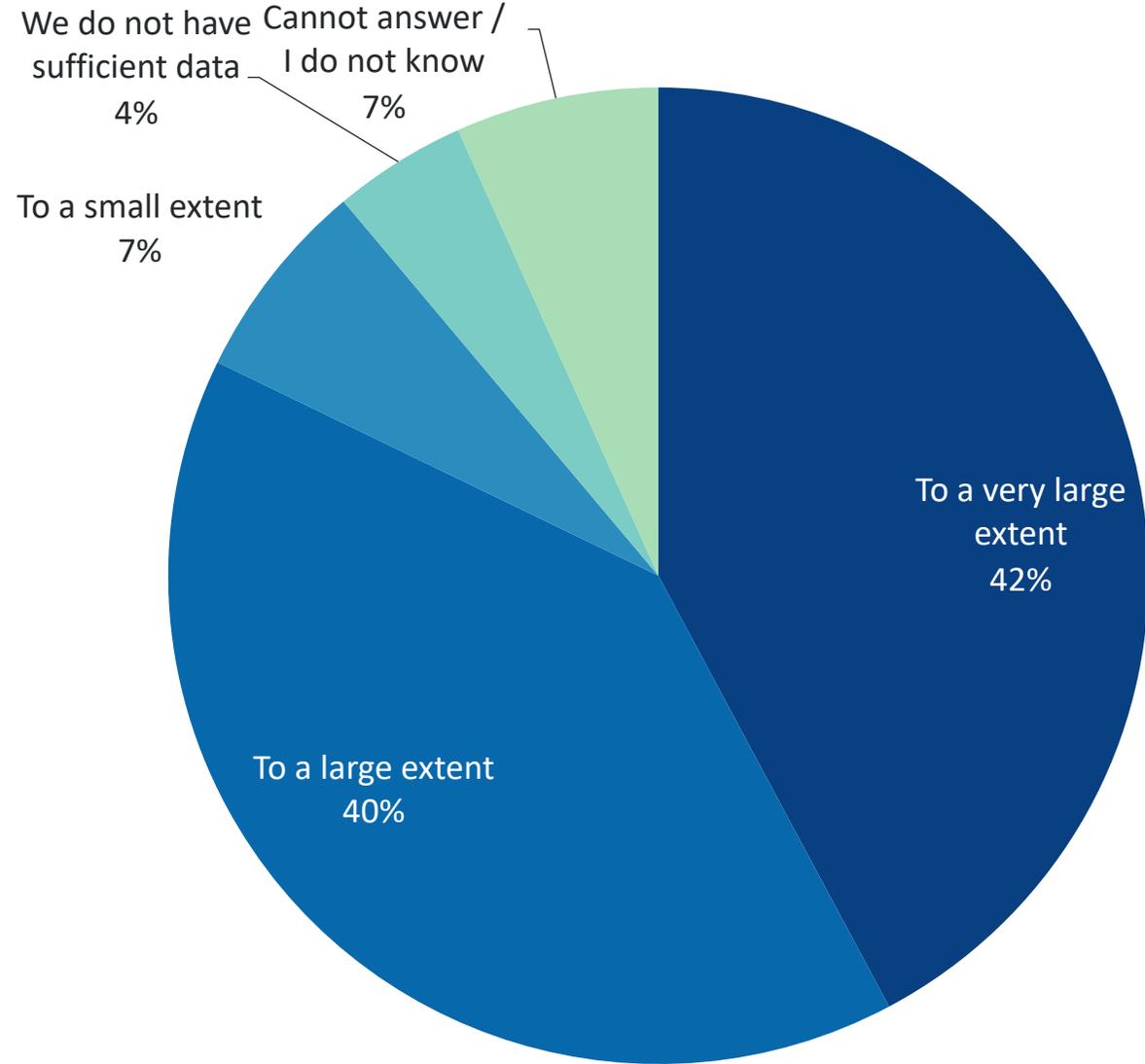
# What groups of learners are the main recipients of micro-credentials in terms of age ?



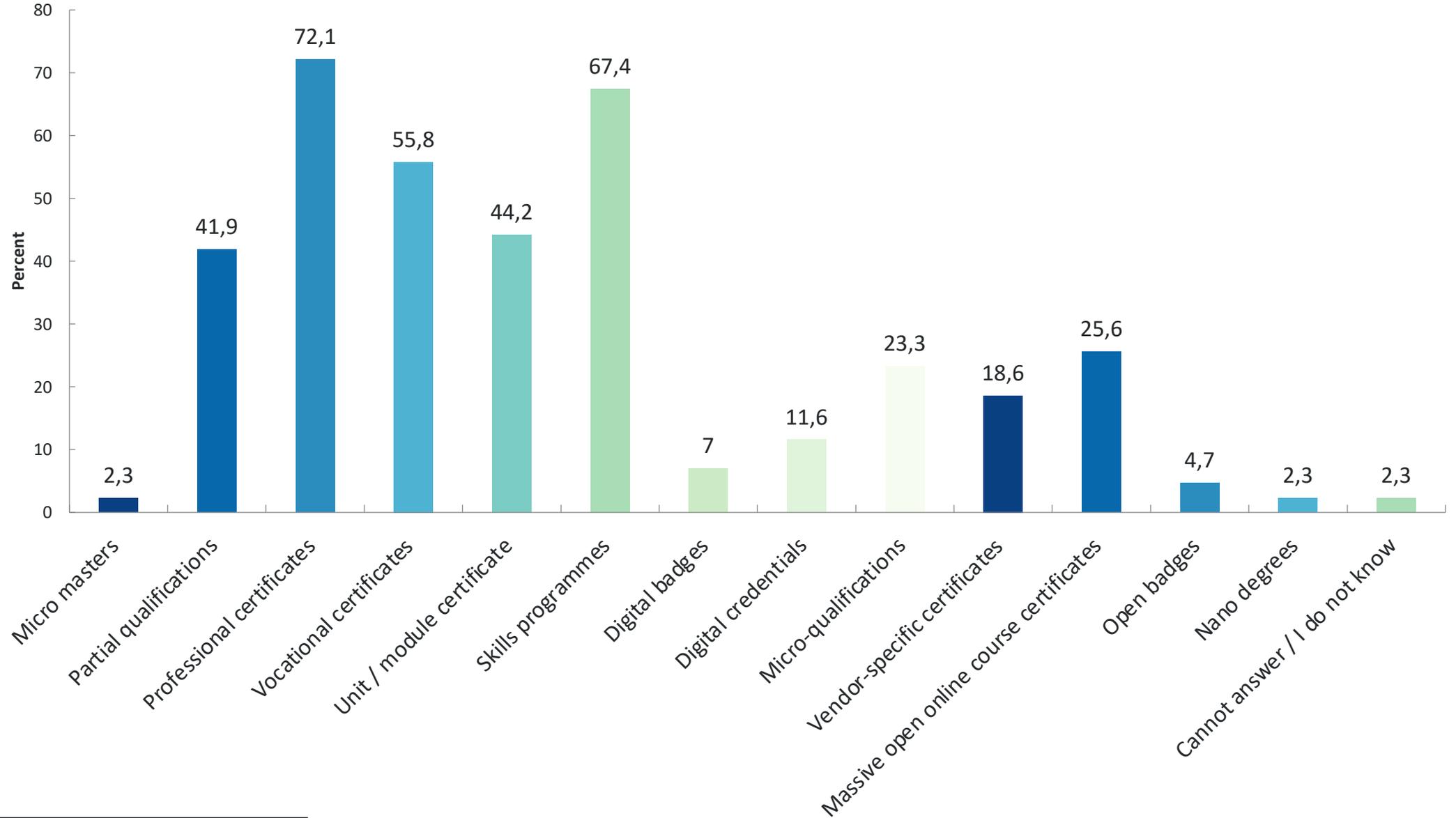
## What groups of learners are the main recipients of micro-credentials ?



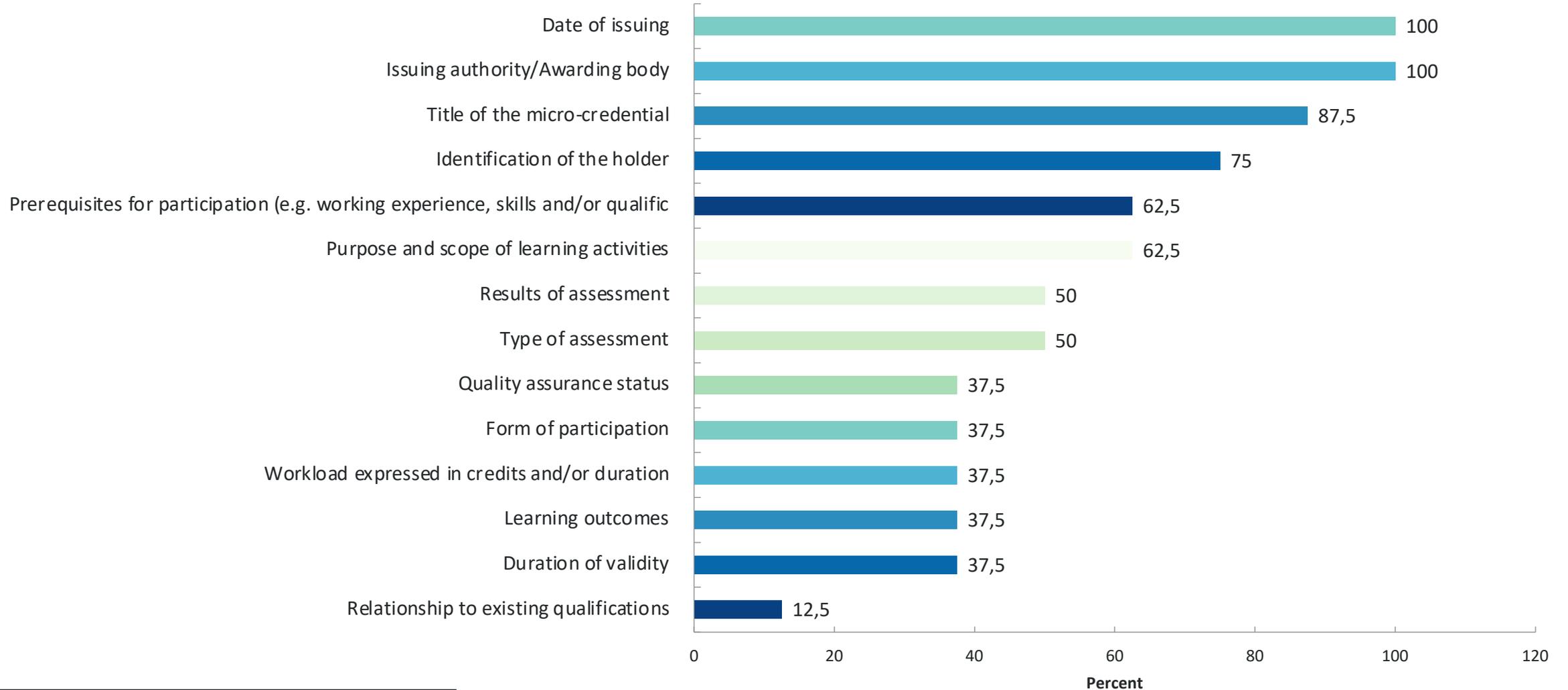
# To what extent do you expect the offer of micro-credentials to grow in your country's education and training offering in the next couple of years ?



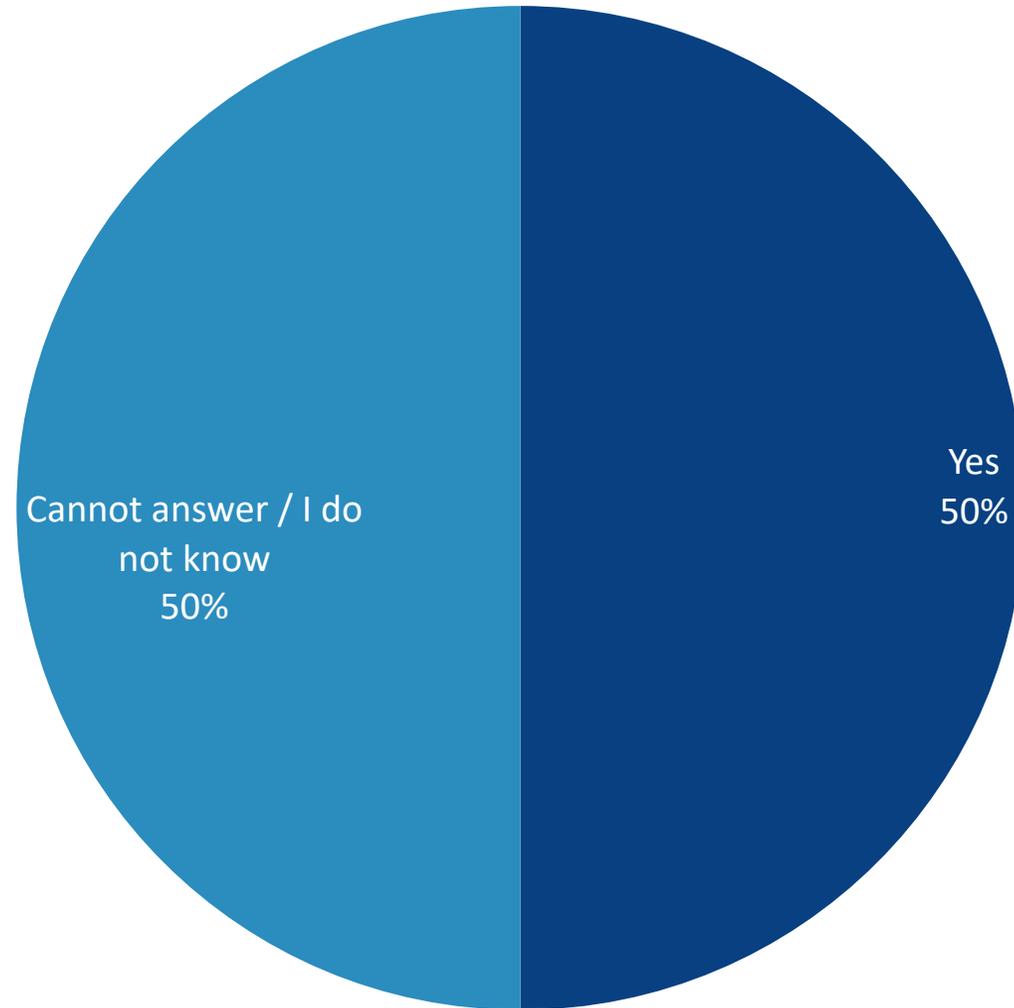
# What types of micro-credentials are the most common in your country?



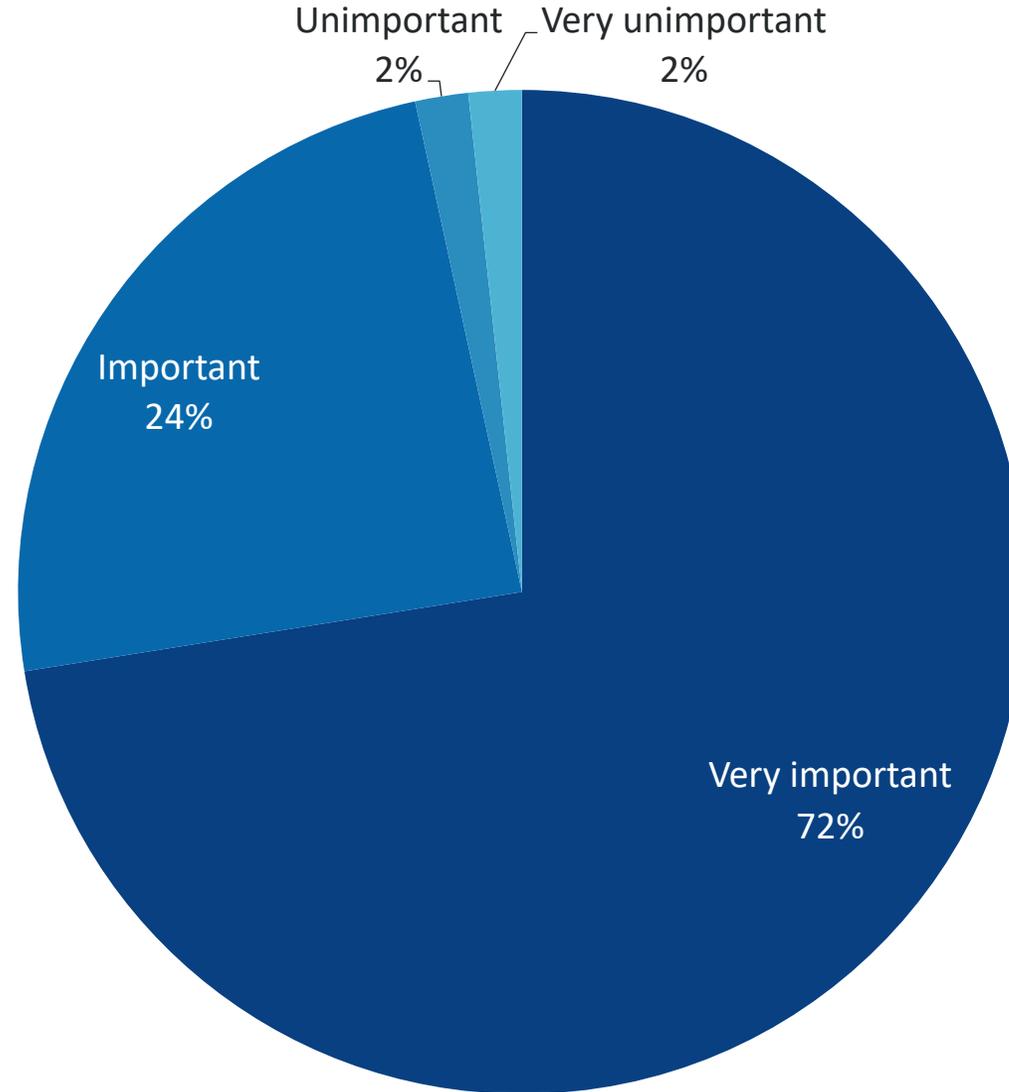
**Please consider micro-credentials offered by your organisation. Which of the following information elements do they have?**



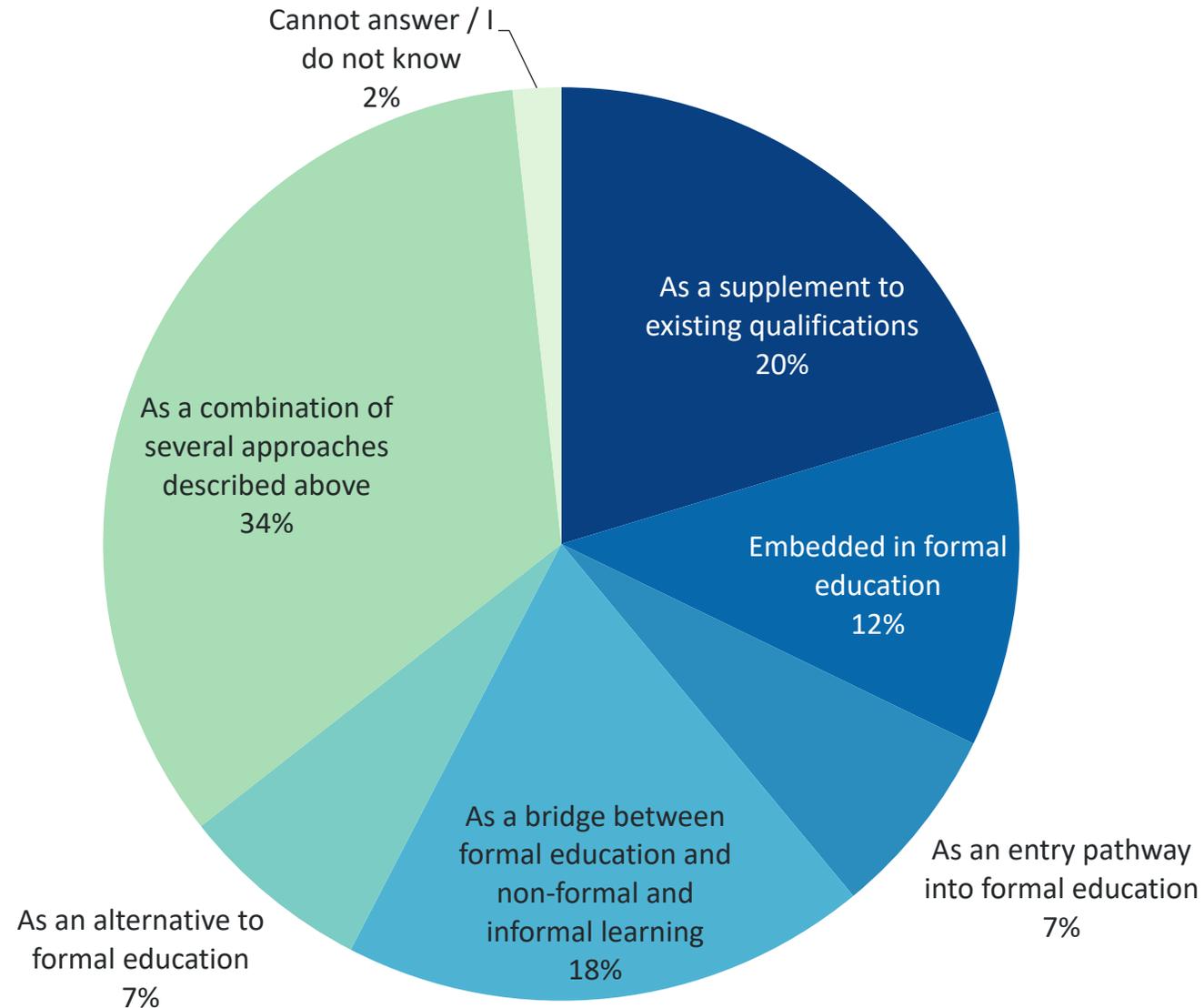
Are there any plans to include micro-credentials in your NQF / register or database of qualifications?



In your opinion, how important would it be to develop a common African approach to micro-credentials?



# If a common approach was to be developed, how would you imagine the positioning of micro-credentials in the wider qualifications and credentials ecosystem?



AACQF

African Continental  
Qualifications Framework

# Poll



**1. Is the number and diversity of micro-credentials growing in your country / training offer?**

- Yes
- No
- We do not have sufficient data
- Perhaps

**2. Which sub-sectors / institutions offer short courses providing micro-credentials. Choose as many options as adequate.**

Higher education

TVET

Professional associations / bodies

Large companies

NGOs

Schools

Others

# Poll

## 3. What are the main purposes of micro-credentials in your country?

Reskilling, upskilling

Employability

Articulation

Access to higher levels of education

Social inclusion

Others

## 4. Micro-credentials and the NQF: does the legislation provide for inclusion of micro-credentials (or proxies) in the NQF / register?

Yes

Not

No, but we are working on it

I am not sure

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