

# Chapter 15

## Micro–Credentials in Higher Education and the Learning Compass 2030: Intersections and Reflections

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### ABSTRACT

*Globalization in higher education is embodied in the articulation between micro-credentials and the Learning Compass, especially in the context of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development's (OECD) Learning Compass 2030, revealing a promising intersection for the future of education and skills development. Both concepts support the idea that education should be a continuous process, adaptable and aligned with the emerging needs of society and the labor market. The mission of this chapter is to understand how micro-credentials can help teachers sculpt their profile and train skills to help students on their learning path while promoting their well-being, as well as providing students with micro-credentials that enable them to develop knowledge and skills in specific areas and attitudes and values.*

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## INTRODUCTION

In the fluid modernity of information and the learning process, we have the *Education 2030: Future of Education and Skills* project, proposed by the OECD in 2015, which highlights a conceptual learning matrix and the creation and development of an international curriculum based on the “*Learning Compass 2030*”. (Directorate for Education and Skills - Education Policy Directorate, 2019; OECD, 2018c; Rodrigo Castañeda Valle et al., 2015). The *Future of Education and Skills 2030* sets out a new vision for education in the coming years, with the most important values driving this vision being inclusion and equality, thus meeting Education for Sustainable Development, Goal 4 of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), namely “Ensure access to inclusive, quality and equitable education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all”. (United Nations, 2015, 2018). The aim is to, by 2030, ensure equal access for all women and men to quality and affordable technical, vocational and tertiary education, including university, and substantially increase the number of young people and adults with relevant skills, including technical and vocational skills, for employment, decent work and entrepreneurship (United Nations, 2015, 2018). This conceptualization is in line with the philosophy behind micro-credentials, as set out by the European Council: “People need access to quality education and learning, provided in different ways and environments, to develop their personal, social, cultural and professional knowledge, skills and competences”. (The Council of the European Union, 2022). Member States are recommended to adopt a European approach to micro-credentials with the aim of promoting inclusion, access and equal opportunities and contributing to the achievement of resilience, social justice and prosperity for all, in a context of demographic and social change and throughout all phases of economic cycles. They also recommend, where appropriate, integrating micro-credentials into both education and training systems and skills policies, including through micro-credentials to improve access to education and training for all learners, including disadvantaged and vulnerable groups (such as people with disabilities, older people, people with low qualifications/skills, minorities, people with a migration background, refugees and people with fewer opportunities due to their geographical location and/or disadvantaged socio-economic situation), where appropriate.

In 2019, at the *Forum on Transforming Education, Global Peace Convention*, Andreas Schleicher, head of the OECD's Directorate for Education and Skills, stated that “Education is no longer just about teaching students something specific; it is more important to teach them to develop a reliable compass and navigational tools so that they can find their own way in an increasingly complex, volatile and uncertain world. Our imagination, conscience, knowledge, skills and, most importantly, our common values, intellectual and moral maturity and sense of responsibility are what

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