

# 2024 Conference on “Micro-credentials: What, Why, Who and How?”

*Implementing microcredentials  
in the HRDA's activities*

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# Presentation outline

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The Human Resource Development Authority of  
Cyprus (HRDA)

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Micro-credentials in Cyprus

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Micro-credentials and the HRDA

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Challenges

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# The Human Resource Development Authority of Cyprus <sup>(1)</sup>

## Legal status:

- Semi-government organisation, which commenced its operations in 1979
- Reports to the government through the Minister of Labour and Social Insurance
- Governed by a 13-member Board of Directors, comprised of 5 Government, 4 Employer and 4 Trade Union representatives.
- Financed by the human resource development levy collected from all employers excluding the government (0,5% of payroll).
- The self-employed and civil servants are excluded from its sphere of competence.

# The Human Resource Development Authority of Cyprus <sup>(2)</sup>

## Mission:

To create the necessary prerequisites for the planned and systematic training and development of Cyprus human resources, at all levels and all sectors, for meeting the economy's needs, within the overall state's socio-economic policies.

## Vision:

The continuous enrichment of the human resources of Cyprus with the appropriate knowledge and skills, in order to respond effectively to the constantly changing conditions of the economy and the labour market and to contribute to the strengthening of the competitiveness and the increase of productivity of the enterprises/organisations.

# HRDA: Strategic objectives

- Upgrading the country's human resources through the continuous lifelong learning of the employed, the unemployed and the inactive, with emphasis on young, older-age and low-skilled persons and the long-term unemployed.
- Improving the productivity, enhancing the competitiveness and developing the resilience of Cypriot enterprises through the improvement of their potential for adaptability and the better utilisation of their human resources.
- Enhancing the quality assurance and the efficiency of the system for the training and development of human resources through the assessment and certification of training provision, the strengthening of controls for systems and procedures as well as the knowledge, skills, attitudes and vocational qualifications of the country's human resources.

# HRDA: Main activities

Integration of the unemployed and inactive persons into employment

Work placement schemes  
Training programmes

Lifelong learning of the employed

Single-company training programmes  
Multi-company training programmes

Enhancing of quality assurance systems

System of Vocational Qualifications  
System for the Assessment and Accreditation of Training Providers

Research and development

Trends and forecasts for employment and training needs  
Impact of the HRDA's activities on the Cyprus economy

# Micro-credentials in Cyprus

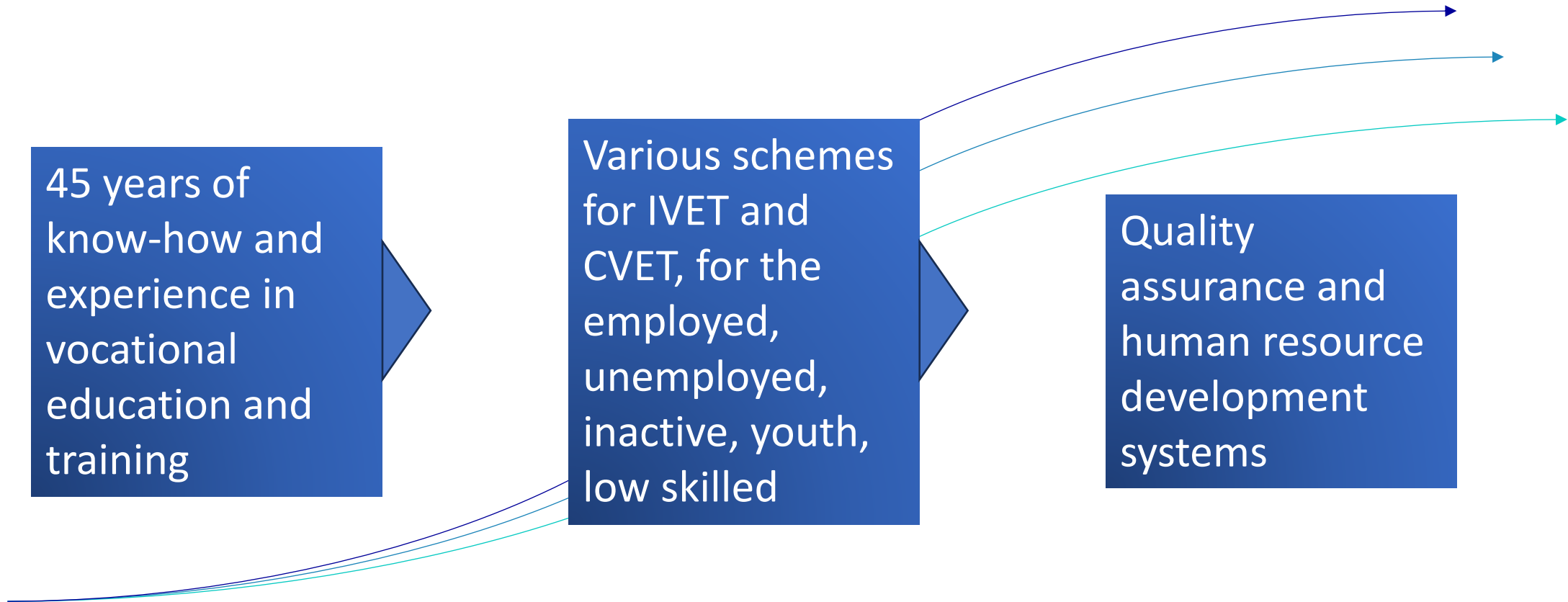
- The development of policies and implementation approach are under discussion
- Nomination of an official micro-credentials agency is still pending
- Discussions are conducted among representatives of various government agencies:
  - Ministry of Education, Sports and Youth
  - Ministry of Labour and Social Insurance
  - HRDA
  - Cyprus Agency of Quality Assurance and Accreditation in Higher Education (CYQAA) and the
  - Cyprus Productivity Center

# Micro-credentials and the HRDA <sup>(1)</sup>

- Included in the strategic planning for 2024-2026, along with Individual Learning Accounts (ILAs)
- Attending conferences at national and European level
- Participating in meetings and discussions with various government and agencies representatives
- Continuous involvement with contributions and suggestions on policy development and the potential implementation of micro-credentials in Cyprus



# Micro-credentials and the HRDA <sup>(2)</sup>



# Micro-credentials and the HRDA <sup>(3)</sup>

- ❖ Routes to implementation:
  - ✓ System of Vocational Qualifications
  - ✓ Single-company training programmes
  - ✓ Multi-company training programmes
  
- ❖ Prerequisites for implementation:
  - ✓ Develop the additional elements and principles according to the recommendation
  - ✓ Enhance our quality assurance and monitoring procedures
  - ✓ Educate our accredited training providers

# Micro-credentials and the HRDA <sup>(4)</sup>

## ❖ System of Vocational Qualifications (SVQ)

- ✓ Developed to assess and certify a person's competence to carry out a specific job/task in real or simulated conditions
- ✓ 165 Vocational Qualification Standards
  - ✓ Covering the majority of occupations in Cyprus
  - ✓ Regularly updated
- ✓ Standards developed based on learning outcomes
  - ✓ Overall description of the occupation and the work environment
  - ✓ Learning path
  - ✓ Assessment methods
  - ✓ Tasks – occupation specific and transversal
    - ✓ Knowledge and skills
    - ✓ Competencies

# Micro-credentials and the HRDA <sup>(5)</sup>

## SVQ assessment and certification process:

- ❖ Based on the recommendation on Validation of non-formal and informal learning
- ❖ Centres for Assessment of Vocational Qualifications
  - ✓ Accredited Vocational Training Centres
  - ✓ Promote SVQ
  - ✓ Process applications by candidates
  - ✓ Prepare the candidates for assessment
  - ✓ Organise assessments
- ❖ Assessors of Vocational Qualifications
  - ✓ Highly experienced and qualified in their field
  - ✓ Tasked with assessing the candidates on their knowledge, skills and competencies on a specific qualification standard
    - ✓ Observation
    - ✓ Written assessment
    - ✓ Oral assessment
- ❖ Verifiers
  - ✓ Certified lifelong learning trainers
  - ✓ Tasked with verifying the validity of the assessment process

# Micro-credentials and the HRDA <sup>(6)</sup>

## Single-company training programmes

- ❖ Cover the training needs of a single company
- ❖ Participants are the company's employees
- ❖ Online application process by the company
- ❖ Organiser and subsidy recipient is the company
- ❖ Specific prerequisites and requirements for approval
- ❖ Priority subjects
- ❖ Training programmes related to Vocational Qualification Standards are also a priority

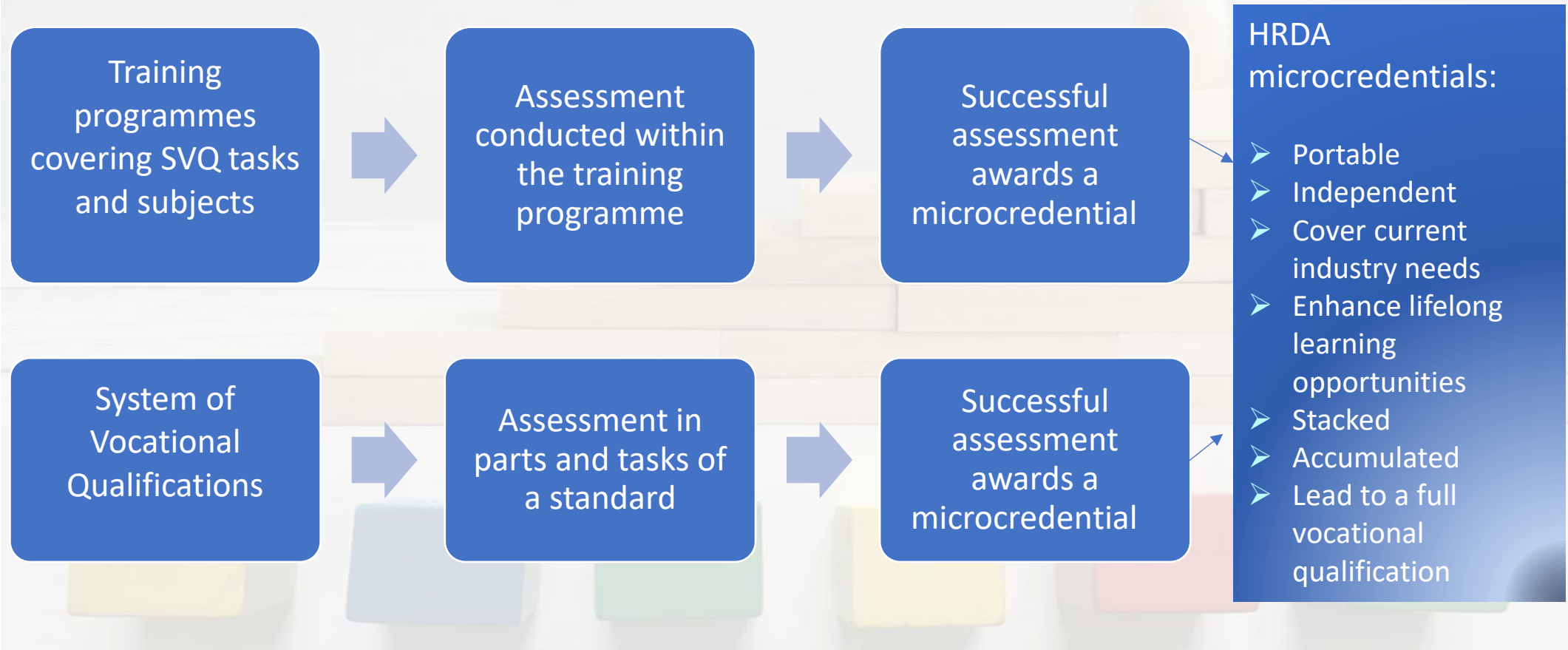
# Micro-credentials and the HRDA <sup>(7)</sup>

## Multi-company training programmes

- ❖ Cover the training needs of the economy
- ❖ Participants are employees from different companies
- ❖ Online application process, twice a year
- ❖ Applicants: Accredited Vocational Training Centres
- ❖ Specific prerequisites and requirements for approval
- ❖ Priority subjects
- ❖ Training programmes related to Vocational Qualification Standards are also a priority

# Micro-credentials and the HRDA <sup>(8)</sup>

Bringing it all together:



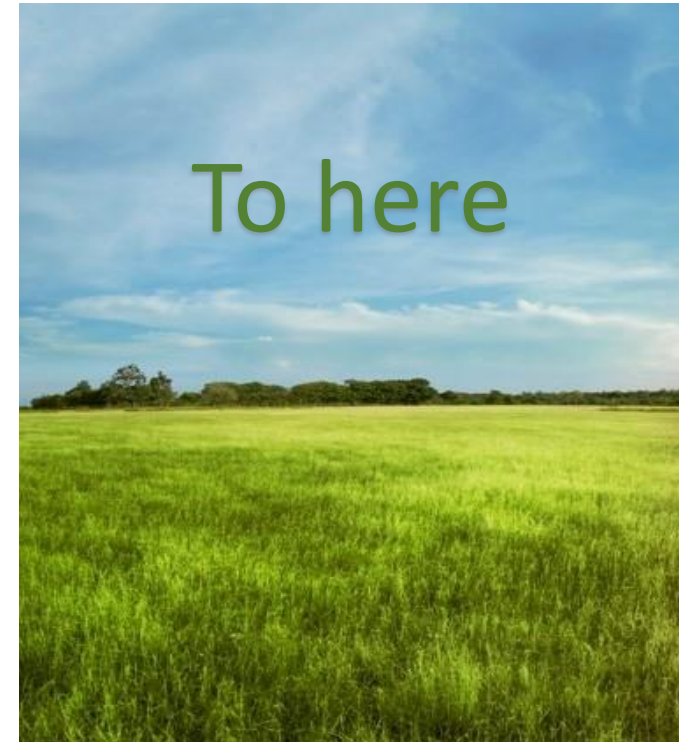


# Challenges: what is the way ahead

From here



To here





# Challenges: Issues to consider

- What is a micro-credential: should there be a collective consensus?
  - one type of micro-credential or
  - distinction between VET and HE
- What should be the basis of distinction?
  - The provider?
  - The micro-credential?
- Should there be a timeline for policy development?
- Which is the governing body for micro-credentials in Cyprus?
- How do we achieve wide recognition?
- Funding?
- Digital portfolio?
- How is flexibility ensured?