

Public consultation questionnaire informing the Skills Portability Initiative

Fields marked with * are mandatory.

Introduction

The European Union is working on an initiative to improve the understanding, digitalisation and recognition of qualifications and skills across Europe, regardless of how or where they were acquired (at work, in a training centre, at university, in another country, etc.).

Take part in this survey, share your experiences and opinion, and help the EU shape this initiative.

Target audience

This consultation seeks input from across the EU on how skills and qualifications are recognised and understood across borders, including in border regions where people may live in one EU country but work in a neighbouring one. It is open to individuals aged 16 and above. We are particularly interested in hearing from **working-age people** and from **employers or recruiters** who assess and evaluate candidates' skills and qualifications, whether they were obtained within the EU or in non-EU countries. We also welcome contributions from other organisations involved in or affected by mobility and skills recognition, such as public authorities, competent authorities responsible for recognition, research institutions and civil society organisations, to ensure a broad and inclusive understanding of the challenges and opportunities for skills portability in the EU. We invite these organisations to complete this questionnaire from the perspective of their area of expertise and representation, as well as their experience as employers.

Why are we consulting?

The Skills Portability Initiative aims to make it easier for individuals and employers to identify, showcase, understand, trust and use skills and qualifications across the EU – whether obtained within the EU or in non-EU countries. This is key to improving the EU's competitiveness, both within its internal market and in the global race for talent. This public consultation seeks to collect evidence, experiences, and views from individuals and organisations on the challenges they face in having qualifications or skills recognised or assessed across borders, the impact of these challenges, and the possible solutions and improvements that could make recognition and skills portability simpler, faster and more reliable, including through the use of verifiable digital credentials and EU-wide tools. The results will support the European Commission's work in

identifying potential policy actions and legislative options to improve the portability of skills and qualifications in the EU, while ensuring added value at European, national and local levels. This initiative has a strong focus on simplification and does not impose any new obligations on employers or workers.

For this survey, the following definitions of qualifications and skills apply:

Qualifications: Official certificates (like a university diploma or vocational certificate) provided by a competent body that prove someone has achieved learning corresponding to a given standard. A qualification can be a legal entitlement to practice a trade.

Skills: What a person can do because of their knowledge or experience (such as use software, repair machines, care for patients, etc.). Skills can be gained e.g. while working, through volunteering or while studying and training, with or without receiving a formal certificate.

Recognition of qualifications: The process by which a relevant authority (such as a public body or a higher education or training institution) formally accepts a qualification obtained in another country as equivalent /comparable to its own, for the purpose of work, study or access to a regulated profession[1].

Validation of skills: The process by which relevant authorities, such as public bodies or education institutions, identify, document, assess and certify skills that a person has, including those acquired through non-formal and informal learning (for example, while working or in a short training course)[2].

[1] https://commission.europa.eu/education/skills-and-qualifications/recognition-your-qualifications_en

[2] <https://europass.europa.eu/en/validation-non-formal-and-informal-learning>

Additional definitions are available for reference. Feel free to consult them or skip directly to the consultation below.

- Please click here to display the additional definitions

About you

* Language of my contribution

- Bulgarian
- Croatian
- Czech
- Danish
- Dutch
- English
- Estonian

- Finnish
- French
- German
- Greek
- Hungarian
- Irish
- Italian
- Latvian
- Lithuanian
- Maltese
- Polish
- Portuguese
- Romanian
- Slovak
- Slovenian
- Spanish
- Swedish

*I am giving my contribution as

- Academic/research institution
- Business association
- Company/business
- Consumer organisation
- EU citizen
- Environmental organisation
- Non-EU citizen
- Non-governmental organisation (NGO)
- Public authority
- Trade union
- Other

*First name

Paul

*** Surname**

DE RAEVE

*** Email (this won't be published)**

efn@efn.be

*** Organisation name**

255 character(s) maximum

European Federation of Nurses Associations (EFN)

*** Organisation size**

- Micro (1 to 9 employees)
- Small (10 to 49 employees)
- Medium (50 to 249 employees)
- Large (250 or more)

Transparency register number

Check if your organisation is on the transparency register. It's a voluntary database for organisations seeking to influence EU decision-making.

87872442953-08

*** Country of origin**

Please add your country of origin, or that of your organisation.

This list does not represent the official position of the European institutions with regard to the legal status or policy of the entities mentioned. It is a harmonisation of often divergent lists and practices.

<input type="radio"/> Afghanistan	<input type="radio"/> Djibouti	<input type="radio"/> Libya	<input type="radio"/> Saint Martin
<input type="radio"/> Åland Islands	<input type="radio"/> Dominica	<input type="radio"/> Liechtenstein	<input type="radio"/> Saint Pierre and Miquelon
<input type="radio"/> Albania	<input type="radio"/> Dominican Republic	<input type="radio"/> Lithuania	<input type="radio"/> Saint Vincent and the Grenadines

● Algeria	● Ecuador	● Luxembourg	● Samoa
● American Samoa	● Egypt	● Macau	● San Marino
● Andorra	● El Salvador	● Madagascar	● São Tomé and Príncipe
● Angola	● Equatorial Guinea	● Malawi	● Saudi Arabia
● Anguilla	● Eritrea	● Malaysia	● Senegal
● Antarctica	● Estonia	● Maldives	● Serbia
● Antigua and Barbuda	● Eswatini	● Mali	● Seychelles
● Argentina	● Ethiopia	● Malta	● Sierra Leone
● Armenia	● Falkland Islands	● Marshall Islands	● Singapore
● Aruba	● Faroe Islands	● Martinique	● Sint Maarten
● Australia	● Fiji	● Mauritania	● Slovakia
● Austria	● Finland	● Mauritius	● Slovenia
● Azerbaijan	● France	● Mayotte	● Solomon Islands
● Bahamas	● French Guiana	● Mexico	● Somalia
● Bahrain	● French Polynesia	● Micronesia	● South Africa
● Bangladesh	● French Southern and Antarctic Lands	● Moldova	● South Georgia and the South Sandwich Islands
● Barbados	● Gabon	● Monaco	● South Korea
● Belarus	● Georgia	● Mongolia	● South Sudan
● Belgium	● Germany	● Montenegro	● Spain
● Belize	● Ghana	●Montserrat	● Sri Lanka
● Benin	● Gibraltar	● Morocco	● Sudan
● Bermuda	● Greece	● Mozambique	● Suriname
● Bhutan	● Greenland	● Myanmar/Burma	● Svalbard and Jan Mayen
● Bolivia	● Grenada	● Namibia	● Sweden
● Bonaire Saint Eustatius and Saba	● Guadeloupe	● Nauru	● Switzerland

● Bosnia and Herzegovina	● Guam	● Nepal	● Syria
● Botswana	● Guatemala	● Netherlands	● Taiwan
● Bouvet Island	● Guernsey	● New Caledonia	● Tajikistan
● Brazil	● Guinea	● New Zealand	● Tanzania
● British Indian Ocean Territory	● Guinea-Bissau	● Nicaragua	● Thailand
● British Virgin Islands	● Guyana	● Niger	● The Gambia
● Brunei	● Haiti	● Nigeria	● Timor-Leste
● Bulgaria	● Heard Island and McDonald Islands	● Niue	● Togo
● Burkina Faso	● Honduras	● Norfolk Island	● Tokelau
● Burundi	● Hong Kong	● Northern Mariana Islands	● Tonga
● Cambodia	● Hungary	● North Korea	● Trinidad and Tobago
● Cameroon	● Iceland	● North Macedonia	● Tunisia
● Canada	● India	● Norway	● Türkiye
● Cape Verde	● Indonesia	● Oman	● Turkmenistan
● Cayman Islands	● Iran	● Pakistan	● Turks and Caicos Islands
● Central African Republic	● Iraq	● Palau	● Tuvalu
● Chad	● Ireland	● Palestine	● Uganda
● Chile	● Isle of Man	● Panama	● Ukraine
● China	● Israel	● Papua New Guinea	● United Arab Emirates
● Christmas Island	● Italy	● Paraguay	● United Kingdom
● Clipperton	● Jamaica	● Peru	● United States

<input type="radio"/> Cocos (Keeling) Islands	<input type="radio"/> Japan	<input type="radio"/> Philippines	<input type="radio"/> United States Minor Outlying Islands
<input type="radio"/> Colombia	<input type="radio"/> Jersey	<input type="radio"/> Pitcairn Islands	<input type="radio"/> Uruguay
<input type="radio"/> Comoros	<input type="radio"/> Jordan	<input type="radio"/> Poland	<input type="radio"/> US Virgin Islands
<input type="radio"/> Congo	<input type="radio"/> Kazakhstan	<input type="radio"/> Portugal	<input type="radio"/> Uzbekistan
<input type="radio"/> Cook Islands	<input type="radio"/> Kenya	<input type="radio"/> Puerto Rico	<input type="radio"/> Vanuatu
<input type="radio"/> Costa Rica	<input type="radio"/> Kiribati	<input type="radio"/> Qatar	<input type="radio"/> Vatican City
<input type="radio"/> Côte d'Ivoire	<input type="radio"/> Kosovo	<input type="radio"/> Réunion	<input type="radio"/> Venezuela
<input type="radio"/> Croatia	<input type="radio"/> Kuwait	<input type="radio"/> Romania	<input type="radio"/> Vietnam
<input type="radio"/> Cuba	<input type="radio"/> Kyrgyzstan	<input type="radio"/> Russia	<input type="radio"/> Wallis and Futuna
<input type="radio"/> Curaçao	<input type="radio"/> Laos	<input type="radio"/> Rwanda	<input type="radio"/> Western Sahara
<input type="radio"/> Cyprus	<input type="radio"/> Latvia	<input type="radio"/> Saint Barthélemy	<input type="radio"/> Yemen
<input type="radio"/> Czechia	<input type="radio"/> Lebanon	<input type="radio"/> Saint Helena	<input type="radio"/> Zambia
<input type="radio"/> Democratic Republic of the Congo	<input type="radio"/> Lesotho	<input type="radio"/> Ascension and Tristan da Cunha	
<input type="radio"/> Denmark	<input type="radio"/> Liberia	<input type="radio"/> Saint Kitts and Nevis	<input type="radio"/> Zimbabwe
		<input type="radio"/> Saint Lucia	

The Commission will publish all contributions to this public consultation. You can choose whether you would prefer to have your details published or to remain anonymous when your contribution is published. **For the purpose of transparency, the type of respondent (for example, 'business association, 'consumer association', 'EU citizen') country of origin, organisation name and size, and its transparency register number, are always published. Your e-mail address will never be published.** Opt in to select the privacy option that best suits you. Privacy options default based on the type of respondent selected

*Contribution publication privacy settings

The Commission will publish the responses to this public consultation. You can choose whether you would like your details to be made public or to remain anonymous.

Anonymous

Only organisation details are published: The type of respondent that you responded to this consultation as, the name of the organisation on whose behalf you reply as well as its transparency number, its size, its country of origin and your contribution will be published as received. Your name will not be published. Please do not include any personal data in the contribution itself if you want to remain anonymous.

Public

Organisation details and respondent details are published: The type of respondent that you responded to this consultation as, the name of the organisation on whose behalf you reply as well as its transparency number, its size, its country of origin and your contribution will be published. Your name will also be published.

I agree with the [personal data protection provisions](#)

* Which of these sectors are you related to?

- Aerospace and defence
- Agri-food
- Construction
- Cultural and creative industries
- Digital
- Electronics
- Energy-intensive industries
- Energy - renewables
- Health
- Mobility – transport – automotive
- Proximity and social economy
- Retail
- Textile
- Tourism
- Public sector

- I am not related to any specific sector
- Other (please specify)

* To what extent are you involved in recruitment or hiring processes in your organisation?

- Directly involved (e.g. HR, management)
- Indirectly involved (e.g. providing input on candidate profiles or selection)
- Not involved
- Don't know / Not applicable

Problems/Challenges

To what extent do you consider the following challenges related to skills portability in the EU to be a problem?

	Not a problem at all	A small problem	A moderate problem	A big problem	A very big problem
* Employers find it more difficult to understand and trust qualifications obtained in a country other than their own.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
* Employers in other countries find it difficult to understand what skills a person has acquired through work experience.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
* The certificates (e.g. micro-credentials) that a person receives after following a short training course have less value for employers who are unfamiliar with the course provider and the training conditions.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
* Qualifications are rarely issued as verifiable digital credentials.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
* Qualifications issued as verifiable digital credentials in one country cannot be easily shared with employers or authorities in other EU countries.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
* Recognition processes for accessing a regulated profession in another country are often lengthy, complex and costly.	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

* People who have studied and acquired skills outside the EU do not have a uniform and simple way to get their qualifications recognised and their skills validated to access the EU labour market.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
* Employers in the European Union who want to recruit people from outside of the EU struggle to understand what people can do and/or need to wait for their qualifications to be recognised.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

* Do you think there are other issues that make it harder for people to have their skills and qualifications understood, recognised and valued in another country?

- Yes
- No

* Have you had any personal experiences with any of these challenges, for example, when applying for jobs in a different country, recruiting people from another country or dealing with the recognition of qualifications or validation of skills?

- Yes
- No

EU tools

* With which of the following EU tools supporting transparency, comparability and recognition of skills and qualifications are you familiar? (Please select all that apply)

- European Qualifications Framework (EQF)
- Europass Framework
- European Skills, Competences, Qualifications and Occupations (ESCO)
- The Professional Qualifications Directive (Directive 2005/36/EC)
- European Quality Assurance in Vocational Education and Training (EQAVET)
- Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG)
- European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS)
- Database of External Quality Assurance Results (DEQAR)

- National Academic Recognition Information Centres in the European Union (NARIC)
- European Digital Credentials for Learning (EDC)
- Single Digital Gateway and Once-Only technical System (OOTS)
- European Learning Model (ELM)
- [EU Digital Identity Wallet](#)
- Databases of qualifications from the National Qualifications Frameworks
- Diploma Supplement and Certificate Supplement

Would you suggest changes to any of the above tools to enhance the portability of skills and qualifications in the single market? If so, please elaborate.

NO changes needed. The tools we have, especially the Directive 2005/36/EC, updated by the Directive 2013/55/EU and the Commission Delegated Directive (EU) 2024/782 work very well. The IMI systems need more technical support so the application period can be reduced. Also the EQF system is very well known and used.

EU action

To what extent do you think EU-level action is necessary for the following objectives?

	Very necessary	Somewhat necessary	Not very necessary	Not at all necessary	I don't know/ Not sure
* To guarantee that qualifications are transparent and evenly understood across the EU.	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
* To facilitate a common system of certification, so that knowledge and skills acquired through short training courses (e.g. micro-credentials) are understood throughout the EU.	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
* To guarantee that people can get a certificate that demonstrates what they can do, and that this validation of skills certificate is issued in a common format throughout the EU.	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

* To enhance the digitalisation and transnational sharing of qualifications in the EU.	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
* To enhance the digitalisation and transnational sharing of skills credentials in the EU (for example, the certificate you get after an official authority has validated your skills, or a diploma).	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
* To simplify, modernise and speed up administrative procedures for the recognition of qualifications across the EU.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
* To simplify the way in which people who have acquired qualifications or skills outside the EU can get them recognised in the EU so that they can access the EU labour market.	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Please elaborate

With regards to EU action on micro-credentials, the European Commission should:

1. Develop a European Approach to Micro-Credentials for the healthcare sector, with a specific focus on nursing care. This must complement, and not substitute, the education and training requirements set for nurses in the Directive 2013/55/EU and the updated Annex V, and should be developed by taking into consideration the uniquely complex competency requirements which stem from the responsibilities of frontline registered nurses towards patients/citizens.
2. To ensure that Micro-Credentials do not lead to fragmented learning in the context of up-skilling of registered nurses, and that they reflect their real frontline needs, they should be aligned in a systematic way with competency-based frameworks, particularly the 8 competencies of nurses listed in the Directive 2013/55/EU.
3. Develop a transparent EU framework for micro-credentials assessments in the context of nursing continuing education, which will support quality assurance and ensure that learners have acquired the expected learning outcomes, building on best international practices.

With regards to the recognition of qualifications acquired outside the EU, the European Commission should:

1. Protect patient safety and quality of care in the EU and Europe by developing new harmonised EU rules for the recognition of qualifications of non-EU nurses which are benchmarked against the education standards set in the Directive 2013/55/EU and the 8 competencies for nurses listed in article 31 of the Directive. This is needed to ensure that third-country nurses have the same qualifications and competencies of EU nurses, and the common EU rules should therefore be enforceable to ensure that they are followed by all the EU national registration bodies/regulators, which otherwise might follow their own criteria which are non compliant with the Professional Qualifications Directive.
2. Develop a monitoring and enforcement mechanism to ensure that under these new harmonised rules, foreign recruited nurses will be given the same professional treatment and opportunities as EU educated and trained nurses. Furthermore, provide adequate investments to facilitate their integration in the EU and to prevent any form of discrimination against them. Employers must support foreign recruited nurses with adequate opportunities for Continuous Professional Development (CPD) and Life-Long Learning (LLL), as well as appropriate orientation processes and high quality mentoring.

* In your view, how important is it for your sector or your country to attract skilled non-EU nationals to address current and future labour market needs?

- Very important
- Important
- Somewhat important
- Not important
- Not sure/ No opinion

* In your view, how important is it in your sector or country to equip workers and employers with reliable tools to identify and demonstrate a person's skills, regardless of how they acquired them (through work or study, etc.)?

- Very important
- Important
- Somewhat important
- Not important
- Not sure / No opinion

Please provide further details

It is very important for an employer to be able to quickly verify if a third-country nurse's education and training are non-compliant with the Directive 2005/36/EC standards, as this may have serious consequences for the quality and safety of patients' care. At the same time, an individual third-country nurse should be able to quickly verify if their education and training is compliant with the Directive 2005/36/EC standards or not, so that they will not risk get trapped in a never ending recognition process, and instead be quickly informed on what they need to do to bridge their education and training gaps.

Should new tools/policies/rules be introduced at EU level? Please provide as much detail as possible, including the needs these initiatives would address.

We do not need new tools as the list is already very long, but instead what we need is to fully implement the tools already at our disposal (the Directive 2005/36/EC) and develop a common EU framework for the recognition of qualifications of third-country nationals, benchmarked against the Directive 2005/36/EC to ensure that all EU national registration bodies/regulators follow the same procedure and criteria for the recognition of qualifications of non-EU nurses, rather than their own criteria which may be non-compliant with the Directive 2005/36/EC minimum education and training standards.

Possible EU-level solutions

*Imagine a system where qualifications and training or skills certificates across the EU are issued as verifiable and transparent digital credentials that can be shared, understood and processed across borders.

Individuals could share their qualifications with employers or authorities in another country, and these organisations could check their authenticity quickly and securely.

Do you think such a system would lead to cost savings or reductions in administrative burden for any of the groups below? (select all that apply)

- Individuals / Job seekers
- Employers
- Education or training providers
- Recognition bodies

- Public administrations
- Other (please specify below)

* What concerns, if any, would you have about EU-level digital credentials for qualifications? (Select all that apply)

- Data privacy or security issues
- Not being legally valid in all countries
- Technical complexity or lack of compatibility between systems
- Risk of excluding people with low digital skills or poor internet access
- Costs of adopting or using the system
- Doubts about who issues or verifies the credentials
- Dependence on specific platforms or providers
- None of the above
- Other (please specify)

* If EU-wide digital credentials for qualifications and skills were available, how likely would you be to use them and/or accept them if someone were to share them with you?

- Very likely
- Somewhat likely
- Somewhat unlikely
- Very unlikely
- Don't know

* If the EU could improve or create new online/digital ways for people to show and share their qualifications, which changes do you think would help the most? (Choose up to three)

between 1 and 3 choices

- Providing a database of qualification standards that can be consulted by all.
- Ensuring that digital credentials work everywhere in the EU.
- Linking digital credentials to a single secure app or 'digital wallet' for all documents.
- Uploading verifiable digital credentials in an EU Digital Identity Wallet.

- Ensuring easy access to verifiable digital credentials.
- Making it easy for schools and training providers to issue verifiable digital credentials.
- Providing a simple service for employers to check verifiable digital credentials
- Offering clear guidance and help for people using verifiable digital credentials.
- Other (please specify below)

* What type of digital tools could be most useful to improve administrative procedures for recognition applications? (Please select up to three)

between 1 and 3 choices

- Simple online portals where applicants can submit, track, and manage their applications in one place.
- Automated document-verification tools (e.g. authenticity checks, completeness checks, fraud detection).
- Automated translation of documents in other languages
- Digital pre-screening tools to assess whether recognition is needed and what documents are required.
- AI-assisted assessment tools to support the analysis of qualifications and identify training gaps.
- Automated notification and deadline-alert systems to prevent delays and improve communication.
- Other (please specify)

Additional comments

If you wish to add further information- within the scope of this consultation- please do so here

When it comes to the recognition of qualifications and skills in the EU, the Directive 2005/36/EC, updated by the Directive 2013/55/EU and the Commission Delegated Directive (EU) 2024/782 work extremely well, so we do not need to develop new tools!

Instead, we should fully implement the Directive 2005/36/EC, and fully exploit its potential, including via the development of Common Training Frameworks (CTF), which would greatly benefit Advanced Practice Nurses (APNs) which are already practicing in more than 10 EU Member States with very positive effects on the quality and safety, as well as continuity and accessibility of care, including in underserved areas.

Furthermore, when it comes to the recognition of qualifications of third country nationals, we should extend the Directive 2005/36/EC as a benchmark to verify their qualifications through harmonised EU rules, and make them enforceable so that all national registration bodies/regulators follow the same rules, making the process quicker and more transparent for the applying nurses, and protecting the safety and quality of care of patients across the EU and Europe.

With regards to the implementation and recognition of micro-credentials and other forms of non-formal education and training, developing a common EU framework, based on digital certificates can greatly improve their recognition across the EU, however when it comes to nursing, adequate safeguards must be implemented as high quality formal education cannot be substituted, and it represents the most effective way to uphold high professional standards for the nursing profession and for the quality and safety of patients' care in the EU and Europe. Because of this, micro-credentials targeting nurses should be used only to recognise skills and training acquired a post-registration level, and should undergo extensive quality assurance. in the same way higher-education educational material.

Participation in focus group

* Several focus groups will be organised as part of this initiative's consultation process, and we would welcome your participation. Would you like to be invited to one of these focus groups?

- Yes
- No
- Maybe, please send me additional information

Contact

[Contact Form](#)

