



CEDEFOP

European Centre for the Development
of Vocational Training

50
YEARS
SHAPING LEARNING AND
SKILLS FOR EUROPE

Refernet activity on the development and use of digital tools, including digital credentials

Cedefop supports the promotion, development and implementation of Union policies in the field of vocational education and training as well as skills and qualifications policies.

European tools and principles for transparency and recognition of qualifications and their learning outcomes



- Increase **permeability** within and between VET and other forms of education and training
- **Mobility** across sectors and broader
- Promoting **lifelong learning, employability and career development**

Background

Cedefop project on “[Transparency tools](#)”

20+ years of cooperation and progress but barriers persist, including fragmentation, uneven implementation, and limited awareness

Digital technologies → OPPORTUNITY for increasing:

- **Transparency**
- **Synergies and cooperation**
- **Trust**
- **Transferability and portability**



EU policy strategies and initiatives

- [Digital Education Action Plan 2021-2027](#)
 - [European strategy for data](#)
 - [Common European data space for skills](#)
 - [Europass Decision](#)
 - [European Learning Model](#)
 - [European infrastructure for digital credentials](#)
 - [European qualifications framework Recommendation](#)
 - [Micro-credentials Recommendation](#)
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- [Union of skills](#)
 - Skills portability initiative → “It could also promote common European formats for interoperable digital credentials to enable the understanding and acceptance of skills and qualifications”



Digital tool: a form of digital technology i.e. any *product* that can be used to create, *view*, distribute, modify, *store*, retrieve, transmit and receive information electronically in a *digital form*. It is used for a given purpose or for carrying out a particular function of information processing, communication, content creation, safety or problem solving.

ReferNet activity's scope: tools promoting the transparency and portability of skills, knowledge and competence

Draft working definition drawn from the EU approach

(Learning) credential: a set of one or more *claims made by an issuer*. They refer to *individual achievements* and can be used to demonstrate that the owner has certain *knowledge, skills and competence* or achieved certain learning outcomes through *formal, non-formal or informal learning*.

If the claims are represented digitally → **digital credentials**.

(Learning) credentials encompass awarded qualifications (e.g. diplomas and certificates), attestations (e.g. participation attestation, attendance in projects), professional entitlement (e.g. registration as a medical doctor)

Sources: Vuorikari, R., Punie, Y., Carretero Gomez S., Van den Brande, G. (2016). DigComp 2.0: The Digital Competence Framework for Citizens; W3 <https://www.w3.org/TR/vc-data-model-2.0/#dfn-identity-providers>; European Commission (https://europa.eu/europass/elm-browser/homepage/edc-generic-no-cv_en.html; <https://europass.europa.eu/en/what-are-digital-credentials>; <https://op.europa.eu/en/publication-detail/-/publication/2c47b0cf-19a1-11f0-b1a3-01aa75ed71a1>)

Purpose of the activity



Gathering
initial **baseline
evidence**



Informing
ongoing **policy
debates**



Laying the
foundation for
Cedefop's **project**

ReferNet activity (workplan 2026)

Identify and report on

- **National developments (policies and practices - ongoing or planned)** on digital tools and platforms - including in relation to digital credential - that can promote the visibility, transparency and transferability of learning outcomes
 - **Challenges, enablers** as well as **risks** and **opportunities** also in relation to *interoperability*
 - **Innovative practices** and emerging trends, including the role of AI
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Interoperability: is the ability of organisations to *interact* towards mutually beneficial goals, involving the *sharing of information and knowledge* between these organisations, through the business processes they support, by means of the *exchange of data between their ICT systems*

Source: [European Interoperability Framework](#)

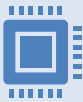
Survey – preliminary scope and focus



Policy priorities and strategies

Access **learning opportunities** (qualifications and courses) and their **interconnections** with other information and services

Examples of tools: Qualifications databases, course catalogues



Developments of digital tools

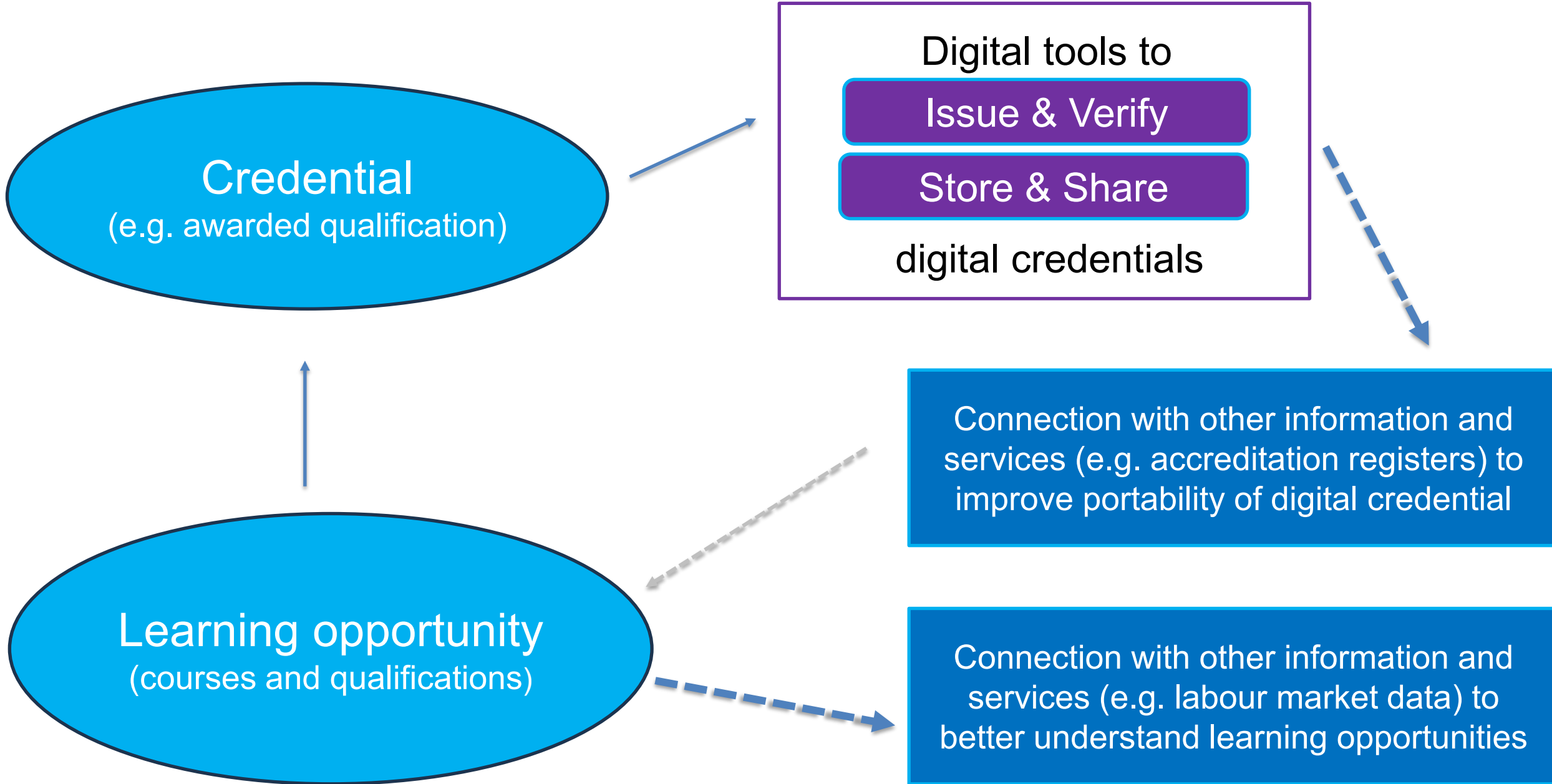
Issue & verify digital (learning) credentials and their **interconnections** with other information and services

Examples of tools: infrastructure to issue digital credentials

Store & share digital (learning) credentials and their **interconnections** with other information and services

Examples of tools: E-portfolios, E-wallets, etc





Survey – preliminary scope and focus

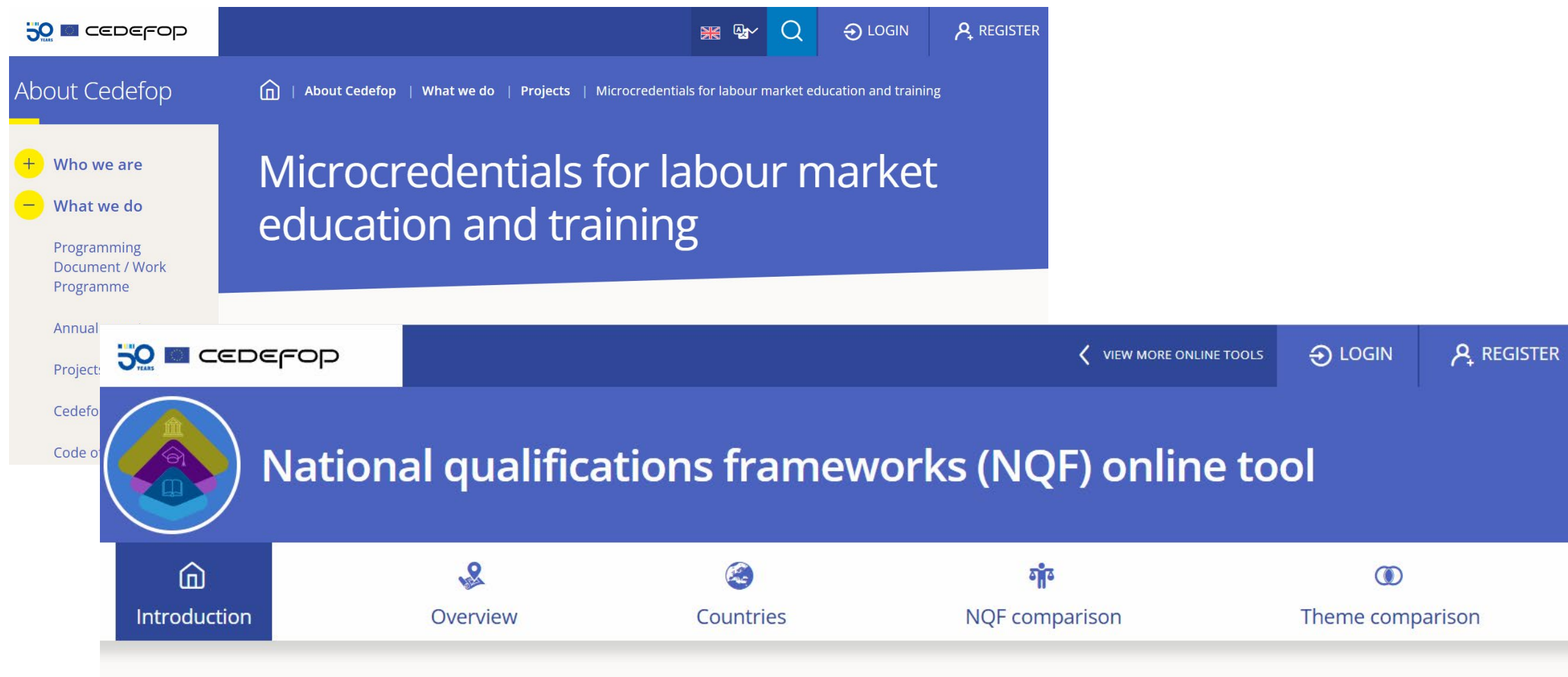
 **Focus:** national or sectoral developments and/or the use of EU tools
(*not global platforms like LinkedIn or Coursera*)

 **Priority:** tools and platforms covering different types of learning

 If no comprehensive tools exist → focus on vocational and professional learning (IVET/CVET) → formal and/or non-formal learning opportunities and credentials

 If not applicable → refer to developments in other sectors

Example of synergies with existing Cedefop projects



Milestone	Timeframe	Status
Initial presentation of the activity in the context of the workplan discussion	Oct. 25	
Presentation of the activity - 23rd ReferNet plenary meeting	Oct. 25	
Survey design (possible focus groups and pilots)	Oct. – Dec. 25	
Webinar to present the survey	Jan. 26	
Survey launch (open for responses/6-8 weeks)	Jan. 26	
Survey closes	March 26	
Preliminar analysis and possible requests for clarifications and one-to-one meetings	April – Sept. 26	
Workshop to discuss results	Q4	

Thank you

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