EBSN
Professional
Development
Series

Erasmus+

# Professional Development for Basic Skills Teachers' - EBSN on-line courses for micro-credentials

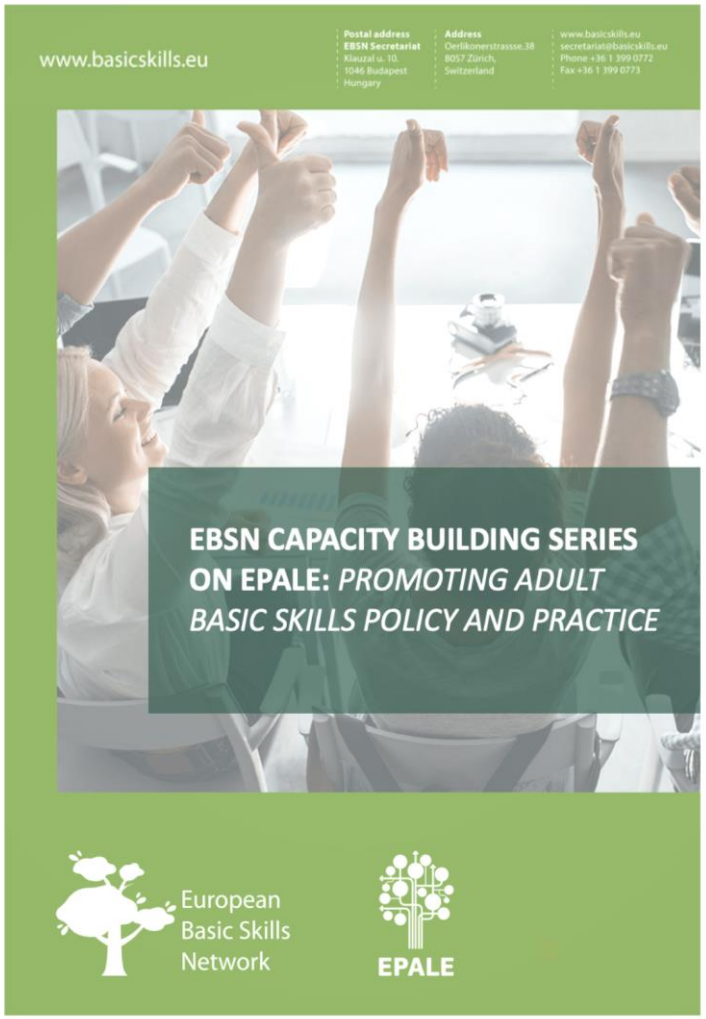
Zoltán Várkonyi (EBSN) and Helen Murphy (SETU – South-East Technical University, Waterford, Ireland)

# EBSN Professional Development Series

- Overview of the EBSN PDS project
- Status of Implementation
- Microcredentials as boosters for exploitation and acceleration of professional development of adult educators
- Vision for EBSN PDS

Erasmus+

# EBSN CBS



2021 Designing Successful Digital Basic Skills Programs for Adults

Adult educators and basic skills practitioners, as well as other teachers have all experienced a sudden need to shift to an online environment when COVID made classroom-based learning programs impossible. Although it has long been discussed how to build online learning opportunities for adults, it is still not evident how to do so when it comes to adults with basic skills challenges. This OER attempts to outline some of the main considerations for course designers that could help in making their courses more accessible and meaningful to their adult learners who have difficulties in literacy.

European Basic Skills Network

EPALE Podcast
Re-Thinking Adult Basic Skills In The 21st Century: Research, Policy And Practice

2021 Re-thinking Adult Basic Skills - Research, policy and practice

Re-thinking Adult Basic Skills in the 21st century 2021

In this session we wanted to stop to take a look at the diverse and multi-disciplinary concept of literacy and other basic skills. Among others, the following questions emerged through the discussions:

- What can we learn from quantitative research about cognitive profiles and the factors leading to challenges in reading, writing, our nuremate behaviour etc?
- How does the future of basic skills policy look like?
- What are the main fields of expertise for adult literacy teachers and how have these changed over time?

Our guest experts were:

**Dr Réka Vágvölgyi**
Senior Research Scientist from University of Kaiserslautern, Developmental Psychology & Cognitive Science

**Graciela Sbertoli**
Secretary General of the European Basic Skills Network

**Dr Sam Duncan**
Associate Professor in Adult Education and Literacies at UCL Institute of Education

The title of the this session is Re-thinking Adult Basic Skills in the 21st century and we chose this topic to allow for reflection on the changing nature of basic skills provision in the light of certain global phenomena that we all experienced recently.

We discussed the following topics in this podcast:

- **The impact of COVID on our digital behaviour:** what lessons can we draw from this period of time? Is there anything that we should keep / let go / be aware of?
- How can we create a balance between making digital skills training directed to individual needs and still applying certain standards?
- **Basic skills' role to democratic citizenship:** Lacking the necessary skills to read and write, calculate and more numeric behaviour, and especially applying digital tools consciously is becoming a must for all who wish to keep up with disruptive changes, crises, newly emerging policies in technology, social life, employment.
- **Microcredentials, open badges:** A tool that could turn out to be promising in making learning outcomes, training choices and acquired skills determined by individual needs are microcredentials.

**Dr. Doug Belshaw**
Technologist, Leader and an Educator at We Are Open Co-Op and Dynamic Skillset

Listen to the podcast! 14 15 Listen to the podcast!

# Rational

## EBSN PDS

- Anchored in the context of Recommendation on UP
- 64 m 25-64 adults without upper secondary qualification
- UP aims require well funded high quality basic skills training
- Quality and efficiency are among utmost importance
- Availability of teacher training and professionalisation is diverse
- EBSN PDS provides easy and flexible access with accredited path

Erasmus+

# Strategy



- RESEARCH
- CO-DESIGN
- PILOT (4 MOOCs in 2022)
- IMPLEMENTATION (6 MOOCs)
- RECOGNITION
- SUSTAINABILITY

# Partners & Roles

## EBSN
Coordination & piloting

## SETU (IE)
Research & development

## NALA (IE)
Learning  Platform

CO-DESIGN

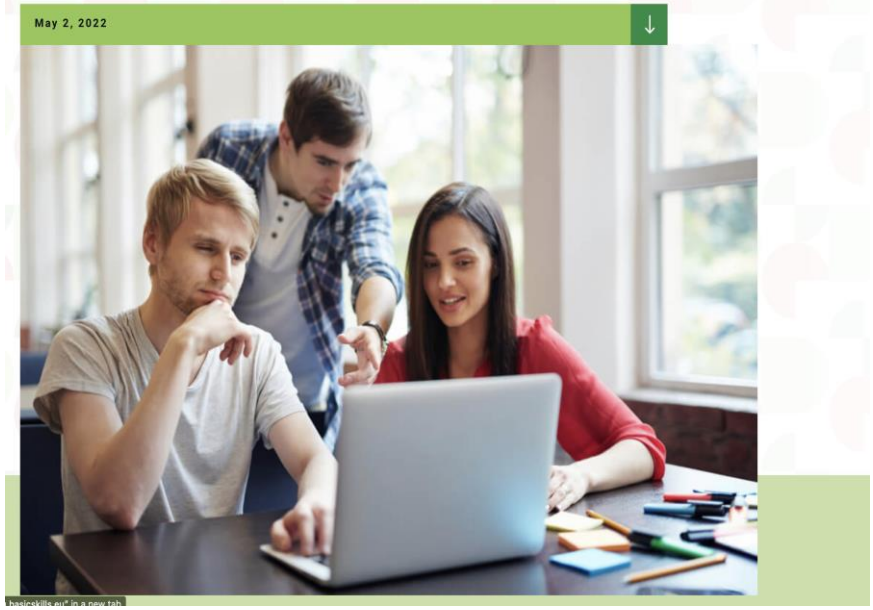
## DRLLE (M)
Piloting in Malta

## Folkeuniversitetet (NO)
Piloting in Norway

## University of Pécs
Dissemination & Sustainability

# Implementation

## EBSN-PDS PILOT MOOCS ARE AVAILABLE




More information on project website: [https://teaching.basicskills.eu/the-pds-project/](https://teaching.basicskills.eu/the-pds-project/)

Approaching Digital Teaching & Learning

Empowering Adult Learners of Basic Skills

Basic Literacy

Diversity & Interculturalism

# Implementation in 2024

## OPEN ONLINE COURSES

For basic skill teachers, tutors, instructors, and counsellors

- Approaching Digital Teaching & Learning
- Basic Literacy
- Diversity & Interculturalism
- Empowering Adult Learners of Basic Skills
- Digital Basic Skills Program for Adults
- Facilitating the Learning Process

Erasmus+

# The Concept

- **Micro-credentials including Digital Badges**

- SETU (WIT) School of Education
- History of third level award programmes for basic skills teachers and tutors (EQF levels 5 to 8)
- Professional development of adult educators (teaching/research & engagement
- Philosophically our values are informed by Freire, Mezirow and other adult learner researchers, practitioners and advocates
- Modular, flexible and delivered in multiple modes (online/hybrid/in-person/outreach

Erasmus+

# The Concept

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mvx4XhZ0Y0w

**Micro-credentials – characteristics**

- Short thus micro!
- Can be online/in person or hybrid
- Intentional design/outcome orientated
- Can address formal/informal and non-formal learning

**In Higher Education – no common approach to micro-credentials for formal learning**

- EU guidelines on Micro-credentials
- SETU New framework (1-20 ECTS)

Erasmus+

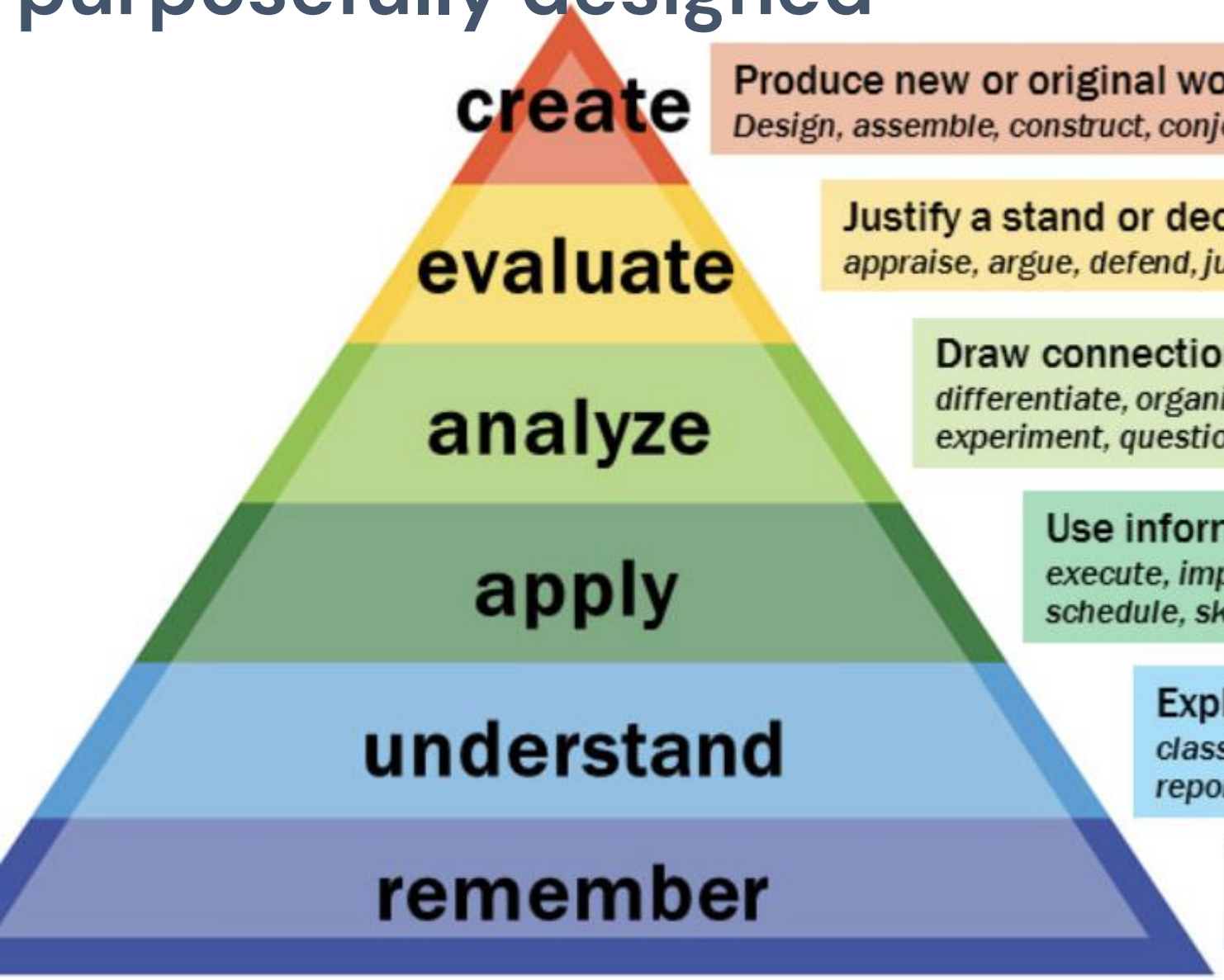
# Microcredentials are accessible

# Microcredentials are widely employed

# Microcredentials are stackable

# Microcredentials boost learner autonomy

# Microcredentials are purposefully designed



# EBSN Micro-credentials – Professional Development

- Aligned to I ECTS (20-27 effort hours at pre-Bachelor cycle)

**Welcome to Digital Basic Skills Blended Programme**
Link: https://youtu.be/vHB3xMwNN5U
**Welcome to Understanding Facilitation in Adult Learning**
Link: https://youtu.be/zke1TPAjRAc
**Welcome to an Introduction to Diversity and Multiculturalism**
Link: https://youtu.be/v3OuhLBP9Ng

Erasmus+

Welcome to Approaching Digital Teaching and Learni

Week 1: Digital Basic Skills Blended Programme Desig

Week 2: Planning Blended Learning Courses

Week 3: Engaging Adults of Basic Skills

Week 4: Preparing for Blended Learning

Pilot MOOC Evaluation Form

# Welcome to Approaching Digital Teaching and Learning

## Welcome to Approaching Digital Teaching and Learning!

This image by Pablo Gentile on Unsplash is licensed under Creative Commons 0

### Hello and welcome to Approaching Digital Teaching and Learning!

This course has specifically been designed to assist you in using digital skills to enhance your teaching practices when working with adults of basic skills. It will introduce you to technologies used in the blended learning classroom and equip you with the tools to evaluate the use of technology in your teaching context.

EBSN Professional Development Series

SETU Ollscoil Teicneolaíochta an Oirdheiscirt South East Technological

Sample Activity

# The Blended Learning Wave

## The Blended Learning Wave

Creating a coherent blended learning course is important to ensure our learners remain engaged. However, designing a coherent course is not without its challenges.

The blended learning wave has been implemented in many blended courses at universities to great effect and it gives not only an overview of what works well in the online context and the face-to-face context, but also a visual way of designing your module. The Blended Learning Wave uses icons to describe various activities related to your teaching context which work well in the face-to-face context and the online context.

### Blended Learning Wave

# Approaching Digital Teaching & Learning

More information on the project website:
https://teaching.basicskills.eu/project/approaching-digital-teaching-learning/

Welcome to the Diversity & Interculturalism MOOC!

Discussion Forum: Introduce yourself!

Week 1: An Introduction to Diversity and Multicultural

Week 2: Cultural Sensitivity and Microaggres

Week 3: Celebrating Differences and Similarities

Week 4: Teaching Techniques and Strategies

Pilot MOOC Evaluation Form

# Welcome to the Diversity & Interculturalism MOOC!

**Welcome to Diversity & Interculturalism!**

This image by Pablo Gentile on Unsplash is licensed under Creative Commons 0

Hello and welcome to **Diversity and Interculturalism!** This course has specifically been designed to assist you in **teaching in the multicultural classroom** to enhance your teaching practices when working with adults of basic skills. It will introduce you to many topics including Cultural Sensitivity and equip you with **diverse teaching tools to be applied** in your teaching context. It has been developed as part of the **EBSN** project in tandem with **DRILLE and the Maltese Ministry for Education** and **South East Technological University**. You will come across

Sample Activity

## My Multicultural Self

**My Multicultural Self**

**Task instructions**

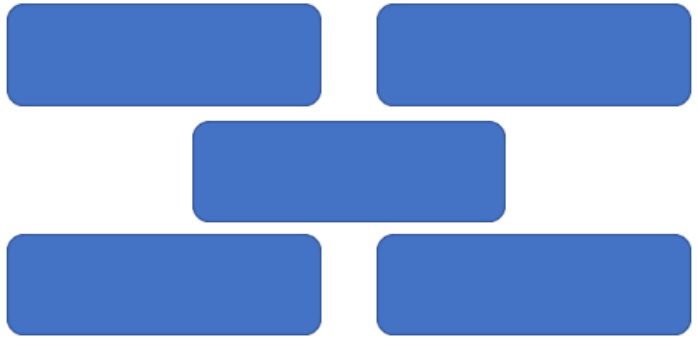
Place your name in the centre block in the grid. Write an important aspect of your identity in each of the satellite block e.g. your race, gender, parent status, ability (physical or mental), religion, sexual orientation, personality, nation or origin, age, class or any other descriptor with which you identify.

Then, write about the following:

a. Share a time when you were especially proud to identify with each of the descriptors you chose.

b. Share a time when it was especially painful to be identified with one of the descriptors you chose.

c. Name a stereotype with one of the groups with which you identify that is not consistent with who you are.



- Welcome to Empowering Adult Learners of Basic Skil
- Week 1: The Learning Environment
- Week 2: The Learners' Previous Knowledge, Skills
- Week 3: Empowerment: The Learne
- Week 4: Tools and Measures that Help Learne
- Pilot MOOC Evaluation Form

# Welcome to Empowering Adult Learners of Basic Skills

0. Introduksjon

Empowering Adult Learners of Basic Skills

Estimated time: 45 minutes

Sample Activity

## Activity: My Empowerment Plan

**My Empowerment Plan**

**Empowering Adult Learners | My Empowerment Plan**

This document will guide you through the creation of your Empowerment Plan. Try to think critically about how best to empower your learners. Feel free to go back over the content in the online course to guide you in this process.

| Action Item | Why is this important/ not important in my context | How can I implement this in my Empowerment Plan |
|---|---|---|
| Get to know your learner | The term 'learner' includes people from many different age groups who are learning in different settings. Adults may decide to look for help with their literacy to help them find a job, to improve their chances of promotion or to move into another job. My learners come from many different backgrounds so this is important for me. | |
| Understand how best to work with my learner | | |
| Assess my learners' strengths and goals | | |
| Understand the learner context | | |
| My learners' prior knowledge, skills and experience | | |
| Learning materials that empower me learner | | |

As we have seen from this online course, Adult learning work is based on a philosophy of adult education which is concerned with personal development and social action and that this learning is an active and expressive process which involves student engagement as a key pillar. We also saw that students have the right to explore their own needs and interests, set their own goals and decide how, where and when they wish to learn.

Sample Activity

- Welcome To Basic Literacy!
- Introduce yourself!
- Week 1: Understanding Basic Literacy
- Week 2: Personal Development Upskilling Pa
- Week 3: Learning Resources for Adult Basic S
- Week 4: Best Practice Teaching for Basic Skills
- Pilot MOOC Evaluation Form

# Welcome to Basic Literacy

This image by Pablo Gentile on Unsplash is licensed under Creative Commons 0

Hello and welcome to **Basic Literacy!** This course has specifically been designed to assist you in **understanding the challenges that adults of basic skills face** to enhance your teaching practices. It will introduce you to **factors leading to impaired basic skills** and equip you with **knowledge of personal development upskilling pathways** in your teaching context. It has been developed as part of the EBSN project in tandem with Progress Consult and South East Technological University.

EBSN Professional Development Series

Progress

SETU

## Validation of Prior Learning Activity: Check In Take Off

Validation of Prior Learning Activity: Check In Take Off

checkin takeoff

https://www.skillschecker.ie/

The project CITO, CheckIn TakeOff, is one of the projects under the ERASMUS+ EU Policy experimentation in the fields of Education and Training led by high-level public authorities in Malta, Ireland and Norway.

This project seeks to develop a SkillsChecker that enables a person to independently carry out an initial assessment of their literacy, numeracy and digital skills. This will orientate them to their options regarding a flexible learning opportunity as well as recognising their prior skills while providing further pathways.

# Final 2 MOOCs

Digital Competence for Basic Skills

Course Home | Content | Help | Awards | My Progress

## 0.Welcome Week

Estimated time: 45 minutes

### Welcome to Digital Competence for Basic Skills

Facilitating the Learning Process

Course Home | Content | Help | Awards | My Progress

## 0.Welcome to facilitating the learning process

Estimated time: 45 minutes

### Welcome to Facilitating the Learning Process!

# The Opportunity

- **New European Agenda for Adult Learning**
  - **Professionalization of Adult Educators**

- Micro-credentials offer an opportunity to provide short targeted courses to basic skills teachers in accessible formats
- Delivered in flexible modes (primarily online)
- Can be accessed easily and at a low cost
- Can be accredited and aligned to national and European Qualification frameworks
- May offer an opportunity to be stackable ie to accumulate micro-credentials towards an award

Erasmus+

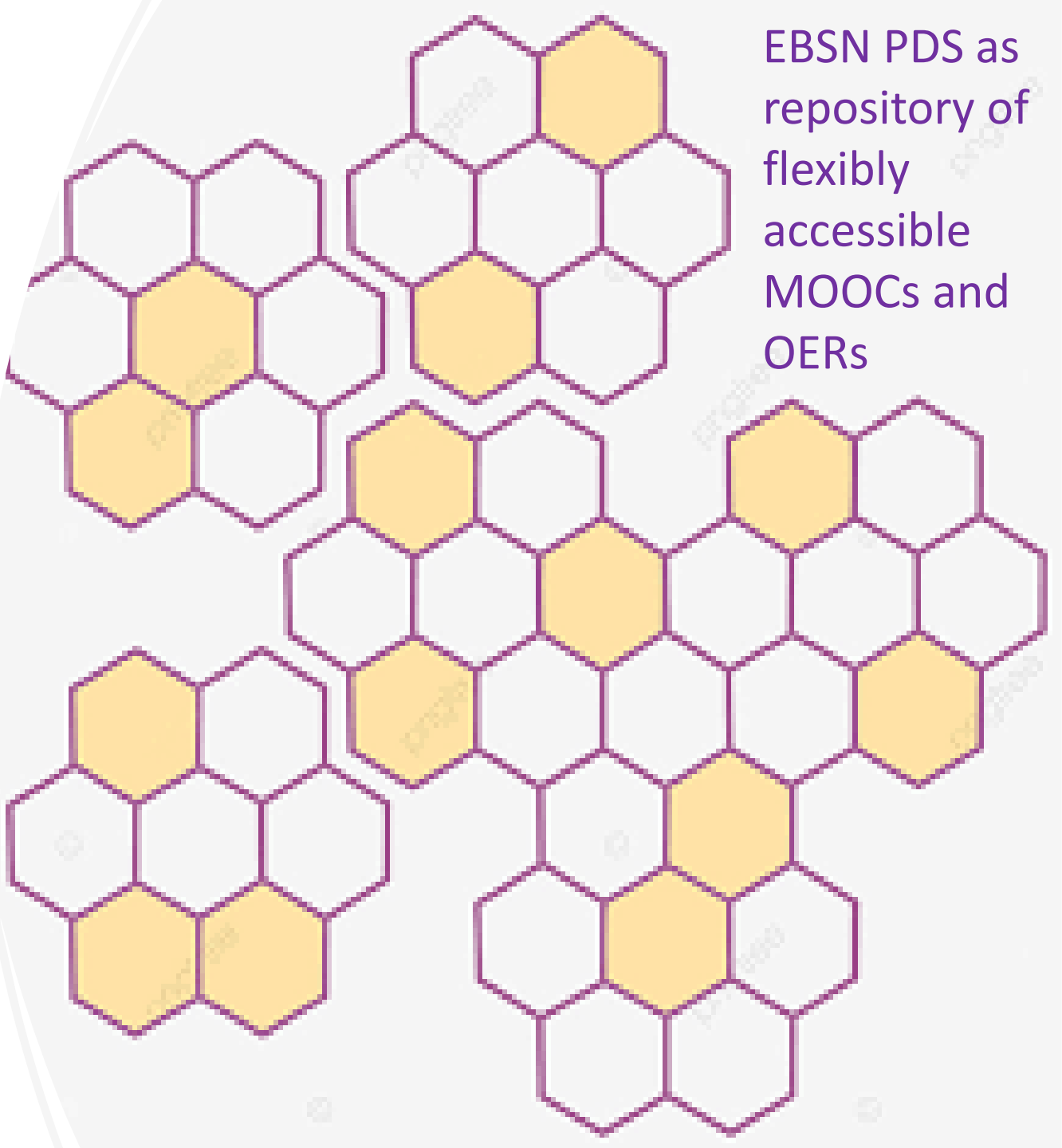
# The Challenge

- ❑A common approach across Europe
- ❑Credit based or not?
- ❑Aligned to European and national qualification frameworks
- ❑Completion rates (some MOOC's complete less than 3%)
- ❑Facilitated or fully self-directed?
- ❑Relevant, contextualized and authentic
- ❑Pedagogically appropriate informed by adult learning theory
- ❑Stackable – ie leading to credit accumulation?
- ❑Recognised by employers (reputational value)

Erasmus+

# Vision for EBSN PDS

- Co-creation of state of the art learning units and open educational resources
- Fast responding to emerging needs
- Multiple co-operation with content developers, providers of teacher training programs as well as policy agents
- Adaptable to national contexts
- Recognised in multiple contexts via microcredentials (i.e. in national framework for CPD)



EBSN
Professional
Development
Series

Erasmus+

# Thank you
# Please raise your questions on padlet or contact:

zoltan.varkonyi@basicskills.eu
Helen.Murphy@setu.ie