Skills4Retail
Building sustainable growth

D3.2 EU Recognised Micro-Credentials and Certifications

Recognition and Certification Framework

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About the Skills4Retail project

The Skills4Retail project focuses on fast-tracking the 'Triple Transition' of Green, Digital and Resilience in the Retail sector, helping retailers to embrace ecommerce and ensuring their new business models are sustainable from the start. The project's goal is to design a new Retail Skills Strategy and VET Training Programme that will address the urgent and emerging skills needs of retailers in the key areas of Digital, Green and Resilience. It will focus on training fresh new talent for the sector through training programmes in VET Schools and Higher Education Institutions, and the reskilling of the existing workforce via work-based learning and short-term modular courses.

Work Package 3 of the Skills4Retail project focuses on the development of the Skills4Retail curriculum, training programmes and supporting delivery frameworks. An important component of this work concerns the recognition and communication of learning achievements, ensuring that participation in Skills4Retail learning activities can be appropriately recognised across different educational and training contexts.

Deliverable D3.2 presents the Skills4Retail Recognition and Certification Framework. The deliverable outlines the project's approach to learner recognition, the mechanisms through which Skills4Retail learning may be recognised and the implementation approaches adopted across participating countries. It also examines the achievements, challenges and lessons arising from the implementation of the framework.

The Skills4Retail Consortium

The Skills4Retail consortium is an Erasmus + Partnerships for Innovation Funded project, bringing together 29 partners.

1	Partner	Acronym	Country
2	Junior Achievement-Young Enterprise Latvija	JA-YE Latvia	Latvia
3	Profesionalas Izglitibas Kompetences Centram Rigas Valsts Tehnikums	RSTS	Latvia
4	Matrix Internet Applications Limited	Matrix Internet	Ireland
5	Karlínská obchodní akademie	Karlínská	Czechia
6	Schuman Associates SCRL	Schuman	Belgium
7	Junior Achievement Austria – Unternehmerische Praxis- und Kompetenzbildung	JA Austria	Austria
8	Scoala Superioara Comerciala Nicolae Kretzulescu	SSCNK	Romania
9	Wirtschaftskammer Österreich	WKO	Austria
10	Universitatea din Bucuresti	UB	Romania
11	Digital Technology Skills Limited	DTSL	Ireland
12	Escola Profissional de Vila do Conde	EPVC, Vila do Conde	Portugal
13	Junior Achievement Magyarország Oktatási, Vállalkozásszervezési Alapítvány	JA Hungary	Hungary
14	Aprender a Empreender - Associação de Jovens Empreendedores de Portugal	JA Portugal	Portugal
15	Asociatia Junior Achievement of Romania	JA Romania	Romania
16	Skillnet Ireland Company Limited by Guarantee	Skillnet	Ireland
17	Vállalkozók és Munkáltatók Országos Szövetsége	VOSZ	Hungary
18	Szent Gyorgy Hang - Es Filmmuveszeti Technikum	SZGYF	Hungary
19	Junior Achievement, OPS	JA Czech	Czechia
20	Junior Achievement Young Enterprise Malta Foundation	JA Malta	Malta
21	Junior Achievement Young Enterprise Ireland	JA Ireland	Ireland
22	OTB Europe	OTB Europe	Portugal
23	Accenture SA	Accenture SA	Belgium

No	Associated Partner	Acronym	Country
1	Intel Technology Poland Spółka z ograniczoną odpowiedzialnością	INTEL Poland	Poland
2	JMH, SGPS, S.A.	JerónimoMartins	Portugal
3	EuroCommerce	EuroCommerce	Belgium
4	SPAR Österreichische Warenhandels AG	SPAR	Austria
5	Svaz obchodu a cestovního ruchu České republiky	SOCR CR	Czechia
6	Szegedi Tudományegyetem	USZ	Hungary
7	UNI Europa*	UNI Europa	Belgium

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1. Introduction

The retail sector continues to experience significant change driven by digitalisation, sustainability requirements, evolving consumer expectations and new approaches to workforce development. These changes have increased demand for flexible learning opportunities capable of supporting both initial education and continuing professional development. Within this context, the recognition of learning has become an increasingly important consideration, enabling learners to demonstrate acquired competences and supporting employers in understanding the knowledge and skills developed through training activities.

The Skills4Retail project responds to these challenges through the development of occupational profiles, curricula, training programmes and learning resources designed to support the digital, green and resilience transitions within the retail sector. Work Package 3 (WP3) focuses on the development and delivery of these learning solutions and, critically, the mechanisms through which learning achievements can be recognised and communicated.

Deliverable D3.2 presents the Skills4Retail Recognition and Certification Framework. Building upon the curriculum architecture previously established and the training programmes developed, the deliverable sets out the principles, objectives and mechanisms through which Skills4Retail learning may be recognised across a range of educational, institutional and national contexts.

The recognition and certification activities presented in this deliverable form an important component of the wider Skills4Retail approach, providing the structures through which learner participation and achievement can be documented and communicated across diverse educational and institutional contexts. For ease of reference, Figure 1.1 provides an overview of the structure of this deliverable.

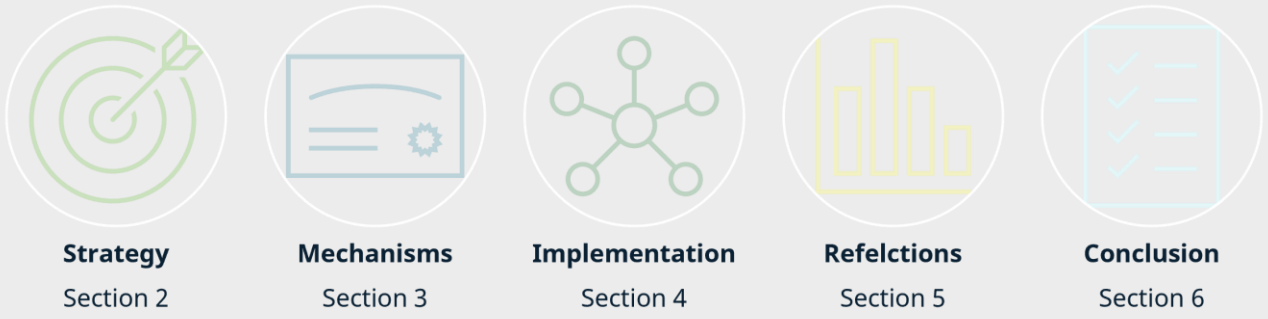


Figure 1.1: Structure of Deliverable D3.2

2. Recognition and Certification Strategy for Skills4Retail

2.1 Principles Underpinning the Skills4Retail Approach

A central ambition of the Skills4Retail project has been to create learning pathways that are accessible and responsive to labour market needs. Achieving this objective requires a credible mechanism through which learning achievements can be recognised and valued by learners, employers and education providers. The Skills4Retail Recognition and Certification Strategy was developed to fulfil this function. It establishes the principles and recognition mechanisms that connect occupational profiles, learning outcomes, modules, pathways, micro-credentials and certifications into a coherent framework capable of supporting workforce development across the European retail sector.

The first principle underpinning the framework is the recognition of learning at different levels of engagement. Not all learners participate in training for the same purpose, nor do all learning activities conclude with formal assessment (for example, school aged children completing a pathway 1 module). The framework therefore differentiates between participation-based recognition and outcomes-based recognition. Learners who successfully complete training activities may receive certification of participation, acknowledging engagement with Skills4Retail modules and pathways. Where learning is accompanied by assessment, learners may additionally receive recognition linked to demonstrated achievement of defined learning outcomes. This dual approach supports inclusivity while maintaining the integrity of recognised achievement.

A second principle is flexibility. The Skills4Retail curriculum was deliberately structured around modular learning components capable of supporting different learner journeys. Learners may complete individual modules to address specific skills needs, participate in broader pathway structures, or progressively accumulate learning over time. The recognition framework reflects this modular philosophy through mechanisms that support both standalone recognition and cumulative progression. Flexibility also extends to implementation, recognising that participating countries operate within different educational, regulatory and credentialing environments.

A third principle is transparency. The value of any credential depends upon a shared understanding of what it represents. For this reason, Skills4Retail credentials are linked to the curriculum structure developed under WP3 and to the associated learning outcomes defined within. This enables learners, employers and training providers to interpret credentials within the context of the knowledge and skills developed through the programme.

The final principle is alignment with existing European and national recognition structures. Skills4Retail was developed with reference to established national and European mechanisms that support the recognition and communication of learning outcomes. These include Europass, national qualifications frameworks and the European Qualifications Framework. Alignment with these instruments supports

comparability of learning achievements, facilitates future recognition activities and enables participating organisations to adopt implementation models that reflect their regulatory and institutional context.

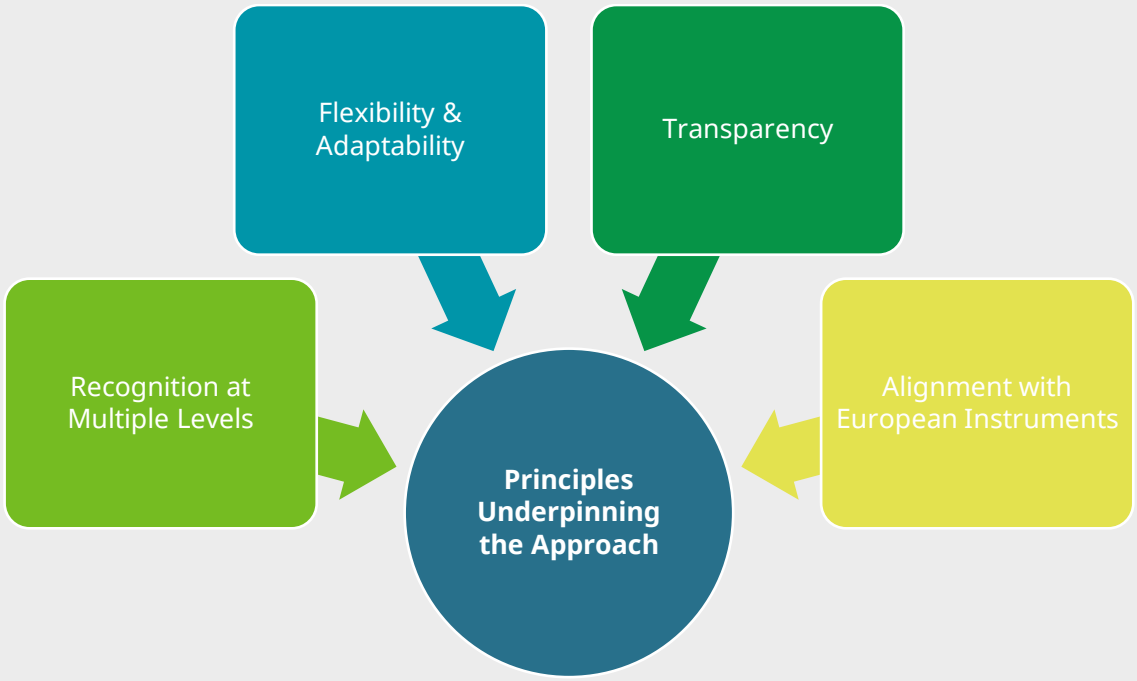


Figure 2.1: Core Principles of the Skills4Retail Recognition and Certification Strategy

2.2 Objectives of the Recognition and Certification Framework

The Skills4Retail Recognition and Certification Framework was developed to complement the curriculum and training architecture established under WP3 by providing a structured approach to recognising and communicating learner achievement. The framework seeks to ensure that learning undertaken through Skills4Retail is visible to learners, employers, training providers and other stakeholders, while maintaining sufficient flexibility to accommodate the diverse educational and regulatory environments represented within the partnership and across Europe.

A primary objective of the framework is to provide learners with tangible recognition for engagement in Skills4Retail learning activities. Learners participate in training for different purposes and at different levels of intensity. The framework therefore supports both the recognition of participation and the recognition of assessed achievement, allowing individuals to evidence their involvement in Skills4Retail programmes while also providing mechanisms through which successful attainment of learning outcomes can be formally recognised.

A second objective is to improve the visibility of learner achievement. Skills4Retail participants develop a range of digital, green and resilience-related competences that are directly relevant to contemporary retail roles. The recognition framework provides a common mechanism through which these

achievements can be documented and communicated, thereby supporting their interpretation by learners, employers and training providers.

A third objective is to support learner progression through the recognition of incremental achievement. The modular structure of the Skills4Retail curriculum allows learners to engage with training according to their individual development needs rather than requiring completion of a predetermined programme of study. The recognition framework reflects this philosophy by enabling learning achievements to be recognised at module level, ensuring that learners receive meaningful recognition for completed learning activities irrespective of the extent of their participation in the broader curriculum.

A further objective is to improve the comparability and transferability of learning achievements across organisational and national boundaries. Although responsibility for qualifications and certification remains primarily a national competence, the framework seeks to establish common reference points through alignment with recognised European instruments and standards. This supports greater consistency in the description and interpretation of learning achievements while facilitating future recognition activities.

Finally, the framework seeks to support future recognition and accreditation activities beyond the lifetime of the project. During the curriculum design phase, consideration was given to the relationship between Skills4Retail modules and established European approaches to measuring learning volume. The full version of each module developed under WP3 was designed around approximately 24 hours of guided learning, broadly equivalent to one ECTS credit. Additional learner effort associated with independent study, work-based learning activities and assessment further increases the notional learning volume attached to each module. While formal recognition remains the responsibility of national authorities and credentialing bodies, this approach provides a credible foundation for engagement with qualification framework and micro-credential initiatives (as discussed in section 2.3)



Figure 2.2: Objectives of the Skills4Retail Recognition and Certification Framework

2.3 Recognition Routes within Skills4Retail

The Skills4Retail Recognition and Certification Strategy was designed to support recognition of learning across a diverse range of educational, institutional and national contexts. Consistent with the modular philosophy underpinning the curriculum, the framework enables Skills4Retail learning to be recognised through a number of complementary routes, allowing participating organisations to adopt approaches that align with local requirements while maintaining a common Skills4Retail identity.

At the core of the framework are the Skills4Retail certifications, developed to provide a common mechanism through which learners can evidence their participation in, or successful completion of, Skills4Retail learning activities. These certifications establish a shared recognition framework across the consortium while supporting consistent communication of learner achievement.

In addition to Skills4Retail certifications, participating organisations may utilise their own institutional certification mechanisms to recognise learner participation and achievement. This approach enables Skills4Retail learning to be delivered and recognised within existing organisational structures and quality assurance arrangements. Some participating organisations elected to utilise institutional certificates of participation or completion as part of their implementation model.

The framework also accommodates the use of Europass tools as a mechanism for documenting and communicating Skills4Retail learning achievements. Europass provides a recognised European framework through which learning can be recorded and shared across national contexts. Within Skills4Retail, Europass has been identified as an appropriate vehicle for supporting the visibility and portability of learner achievements, particularly in circumstances where training providers wish to complement existing certification practices with a recognised European instrument. The framework therefore supports both the use of established Europass certification tools and the future adoption of Europass Digital Credentials where this aligns with institutional and national requirements.

A further recognition route involves engagement with national and European qualifications frameworks. During curriculum development, consideration was given to module volume, learning outcomes and assessment design in order to support future recognition activities. The full version of each Skills4Retail module was developed around approximately 24 hours of guided learning, broadly equivalent to one ECTS credit, with additional learner effort arising through independent study, work-based learning activities and assessment. This provides a credible foundation for engagement with qualification authorities and accreditation bodies. The approach has already informed initiatives such as the submission of an application to Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI) seeking recognition of Pathway 2 modules within the Irish National Framework of Qualifications. Successful recognition would position these modules within the Irish qualifications system and, through Ireland's established referencing arrangements, provide corresponding alignment with the European Qualifications Framework (EQF).

Finally, several participating institutions have integrated Skills4Retail modules within existing accredited programmes of study. In Latvia and Romania this approach is most advanced (as explained in section 4). This approach enables Skills4Retail learning outcomes to contribute directly towards recognised qualifications delivered through established education and training provision. As a result, learners are able to develop Skills4Retail competences within programmes that already hold formal recognition within national qualification systems. This provides a particularly strong route to recognition, as learner

achievement may ultimately be recognised within established national qualifications frameworks and, where applicable, corresponding European Qualifications Framework (EQF) levels.

Taken together, these recognition routes provide a flexible but coherent approach to recognising Skills4Retail learning. Rather than relying upon a single certification mechanism, the framework supports multiple pathways through which learner achievement can be documented and recognised, thereby increasing the accessibility and long-term sustainability of Skills4Retail across different national contexts.

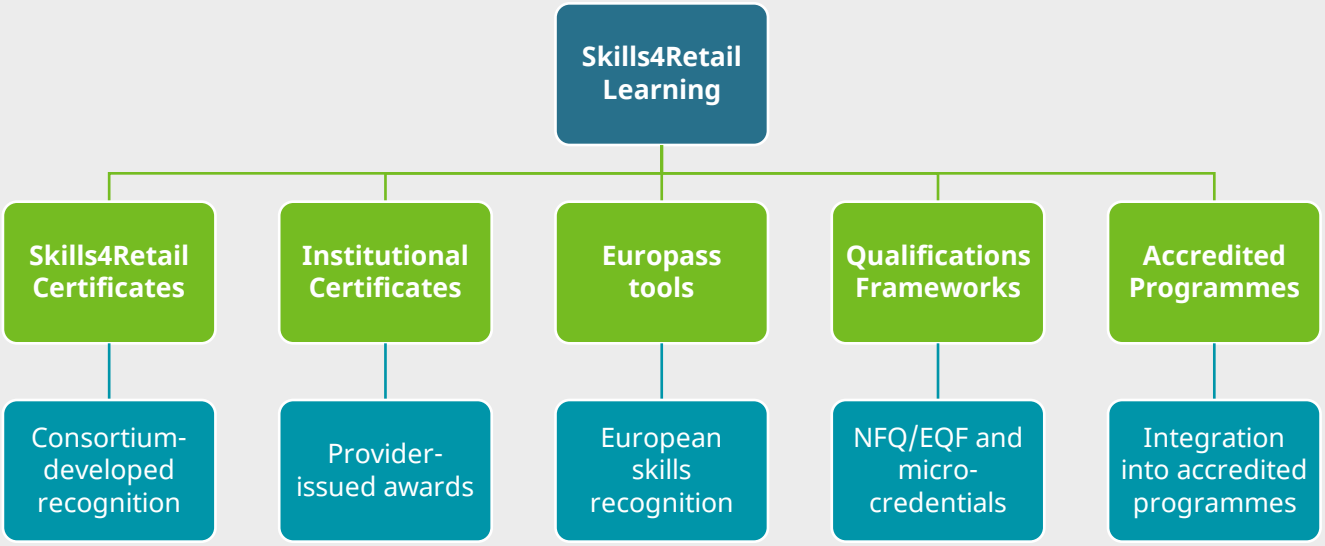


Figure 2.3: Recognition Routes within Skills4Retail

Each of these mechanisms are now explained in section 3.

3. Skills4Retail Recognition Mechanisms

3.1 Skills4Retail Certifications

To support consistent recognition of Skills4Retail learning across the consortium, two certification types were developed. This approach reflects the diverse profile of participating training providers and learner groups involved in the project. While some partners deliver Skills4Retail within vocational, professional or higher education environments where assessment forms part of programme delivery, others work primarily with school-aged learners who may engage with selected modules or condensed versions of modules as part of broader educational activities. In these contexts, formal assessment is not always appropriate or feasible.

To accommodate these differing delivery models, the Skills4Retail certification framework distinguishes between Certificate of Participation and Certificate of Completion. The first acknowledges engagement in Skills4Retail learning activities, while the second recognises successful attainment of defined learning outcomes through assessment. Together, these certifications provide a flexible framework capable of

supporting a wide range of learning contexts whilst maintaining a common Skills4Retail approach to recognition.

3.1.1 Certificate of Participation

The Skills4Retail Certificate of Participation was developed to recognise learner engagement in Skills4Retail learning activities where formal assessment is not undertaken. As introduce in the session 3.1, this certification responds to the diversity of training environments represented within the consortium, including schools, vocational education providers, higher education institutions and professional training organisations. In some contexts, learners may complete individual modules, selected learning activities, or condensed versions of modules without undertaking the full assessment requirements associated with outcomes-based recognition.

The certificate therefore provides formal acknowledgement of participation in Skills4Retail learning and confirms engagement with the knowledge and competences addressed within a particular module. It is particularly suited to school-aged learners, introductory retail training and other learning contexts where learner engagement and exposure to new concepts are prioritised over formal assessment.

Although the Certificate of Participation does not verify achievement of specific learning outcomes, it provides learners with documented evidence of their involvement in Skills4Retail activities and supports the visibility of learning undertaken through the programme. This can be viewed in Annex A.

3.1.2 Certificate of Completion

The Skills4Retail Certificate of Completion was developed to recognise the successful attainment of defined learning outcomes through assessment. It is intended for use in educational and training contexts where learners are required to demonstrate the knowledge and competences associated with a Skills4Retail module or pathway.

Award of the certificate is contingent upon successful completion of assessment activities determined by the training provider. As a result, recognition is linked directly to demonstrated achievement rather than participation alone. This provides assurance that learners have met the intended learning outcomes and can evidence the competences developed through their participation in the programme.

Together, the Certificate of Participation and Certificate of Completion enable Skills4Retail learning to be recognised appropriately across a wide range of learner groups and delivery contexts, while maintaining a consistent recognition framework across the consortium. This can be viewed in Annex B.

3.2 National and European Qualifications Frameworks

The Skills4Retail curriculum was designed with recognition within national and European qualifications systems in mind. During curriculum development, consideration was given to learning outcomes and learner workload to ensure that individual modules could support future engagement with accreditation bodies and micro-credential initiatives.

Particular attention was given to module volume. The full version of each Skills4Retail module comprises approximately 24 hours of guided learning, broadly equivalent to one ECTS credit. Additional learner effort associated with independent study, work-based learning activities and assessment further increases the overall learning volume attached to each module. This provides a credible foundation for future recognition and accreditation activities.

In the grant agreement, the project originally proposed that opportunities for recognition through National Qualifications Frameworks (NQFs) would be explored where appropriate first. During the implementation phase, this objective progressed beyond curriculum design through engagement with national qualification authorities. The most advanced example emerged in Ireland, where an application was submitted to Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI) seeking recognition of four Pathway 2 modules as micro-credentials within the Irish National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ).

Recognition through the NFQ would provide formal national recognition of the learning undertaken through these modules. As the Irish NFQ is referenced to the European Qualifications Framework (EQF), successful recognition would also provide corresponding EQF recognition. Such an outcome would represent a significant achievement for both the project and the wider European retail skills ecosystem, demonstrating how project-developed learning can progress from curriculum innovation to formally recognised credentials within established qualification frameworks.

The work undertaken under Task 3.2 demonstrates that the Skills4Retail curriculum has been developed in a manner consistent with recognised qualification and credentialing methodologies. Through the development of outcomes-based modules, consideration of learner workload and engagement with national qualification authorities, the project has established credible pathways through which Skills4Retail learning may achieve formal recognition at both national and European level.

3.3 Europass Tools

Europass represents a well-established European framework for documenting and communicating learning achievements and skills. As such, it was identified within Skills4Retail as an appropriate mechanism through which learner achievement could be recognised and communicated.

The Skills4Retail Recognition and Certification Strategy supports the use of Europass tools, providing participating organisations with access to recognised European instruments that enhance the visibility and portability of learning. Europass also offers flexibility in implementation, allowing training providers to select approaches that align with local requirements and national guidance.

During the pilot phase, participating organisations explored a range of Europass options. The most developed implementation emerged through the use of the Europass Mobility certificate format to document completion of Skills4Retail learning activities (as advised by national Europass support centre). To support this approach, pathway-specific templates and accompanying issuer guidance were developed under Task 3.2 (as can be seen in Annex C).

In parallel, training partners expressed interest in the future use of Europass Digital Credentials for Learning (EDCLs). These credentials have the potential to provide learners with secure, digitally verifiable records of achievement that can be shared across educational and employment contexts. While deployment approaches continue to evolve across participating countries, the Skills4Retail framework has been designed to accommodate future adoption of such instruments where appropriate.

The incorporation of Europass within the Skills4Retail Recognition and Certification Strategy reflects the broader objective of supporting transferable and internationally recognisable evidence of learning while maintaining flexibility in how recognition is implemented across different national contexts.

3.4 Integration into Accredited Programmes

The integration of Skills4Retail modules into existing accredited programmes represents a further route through which Skills4Retail learning may be recognised. Several participating institutions identified opportunities to embed Skills4Retail content within accredited vocational education and higher education programmes already operating within their organisations.

This approach enables Skills4Retail learning outcomes to contribute directly towards established programmes of study and allows learners to acquire Skills4Retail competences within educational provision that already possesses recognised status within national qualification systems. As a result, learner achievement may be recognised through existing accreditation arrangements.

The integration of Skills4Retail content into accredited provision also supports the sustainability of project outputs beyond the lifetime of the project. By embedding modules, learning outcomes and learning materials within established educational programmes, participating institutions can continue to deliver Skills4Retail content as part of their regular provision while maintaining alignment with recognised qualification pathways.

For learners, this route provides one of the strongest forms of recognition available within the Skills4Retail framework. Learning undertaken through Skills4Retail can contribute towards qualifications that already hold formal standing within national education systems and, where applicable, corresponding levels of the European Qualifications Framework (EQF).

The adoption of this approach by several consortium partners demonstrates the adaptability of the Skills4Retail curriculum and its potential to enhance existing education and training provision across a variety of national contexts, which are elaborated upon in section 4.

3.5 Institutional Certificates

Institutional certifications represent an additional route through which Skills4Retail learning may be recognised. Some participating organisations already operate established certification systems as part of their existing education and training provision. These systems provide recognised mechanisms for

documenting learner participation and achievement and, in some cases, form part of wider institutional quality assurance arrangements.

Institutional certification enables Skills4Retail learning to be recognised through existing provider-level certification arrangements while maintaining a clear association with the project. In practice, certificates may incorporate Skills4Retail branding, references to Skills4Retail modules, and acknowledgement of Erasmus+ support (as can be seen in the example in Annex D). Learners therefore benefit from both the recognition associated with the issuing institution and the visibility of their participation in Skills4Retail activities.

This approach allows participating organisations to integrate Skills4Retail learning within established certification practices familiar to learners, employers and other stakeholders, while contributing to the longer-term sustainability and recognition of project outputs.

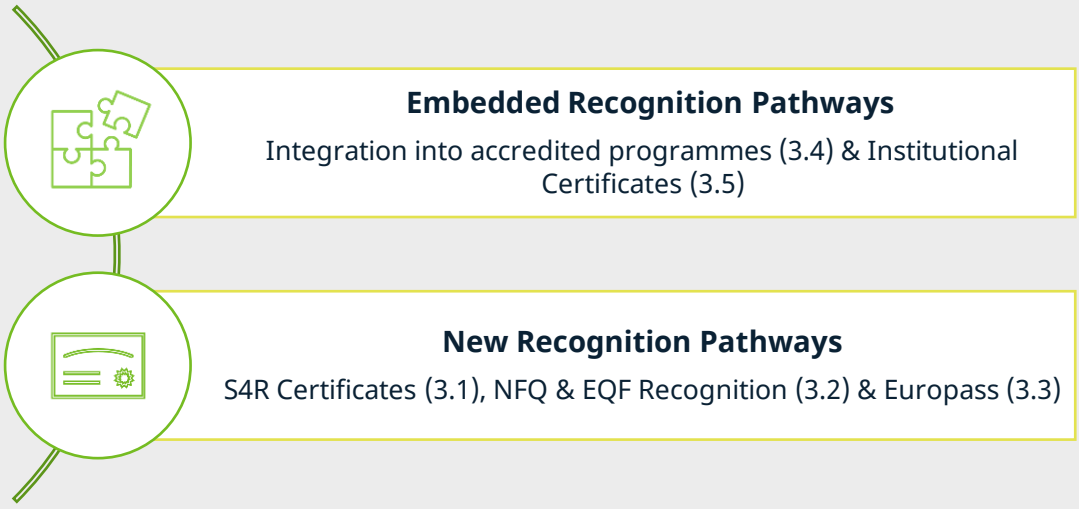


Figure 3.1: Categories of Recognition Supported by the Skills4Retail Framework

4. Implementation of the Skills4Retail Recognition Framework

4.1 Overview

As explained in Section 2, the Skills4Retail Recognition and Certification Strategy was intentionally designed to support multiple implementation pathways. While the project established a common framework for recognising Skills4Retail learning, participating organisations differed significantly in terms of learner profile and national regulatory environment. The approach adopted by each partner was therefore influenced by local circumstances, particularly the age profile, career stage and educational context of the target learners. Consequently, implementation does not follow a single model across the consortium, with all training providers adopting at least one of the recognition

mechanisms described in Sections 3.1 to 3.5 and several partners implementing multiple approaches simultaneously.

This diversity of implementation reflects one of the core principles underpinning the Skills4Retail Recognition and Certification Strategy: flexibility. Rather than requiring all partners to adopt a uniform recognition mechanism, the framework was designed to facilitate meaningful recognition within different educational contexts, whilst maintaining a common Skills4Retail identity. As a result, partners were able to select recognition approaches that aligned with local requirements while remaining connected to the broader objectives of the project.

The following sections provide an overview of how participating organisations implemented the Skills4Retail Recognition and Certification Strategy within their respective national and institutional contexts.

4.2 Ireland

4.2.1 Retail Ireland Skillnet

Retail Ireland Skillnet adopted a recognition approach focused primarily on engagement with existing qualification and credentialing structures. The most significant activity undertaken thus far, was the submission of an application to Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI) seeking recognition of four Pathway 2 modules as micro-credentials within the Irish National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ).

The application seeks recognition of the modules *Retail Workforce Management, Coaching, Mentoring & Performance Management*, *Leading with Integrity* and *Leadership in the Experience Economy* as standalone micro-credentials at NFQ Level 6. In parallel, recognition has also been sought for the complete suite of Pathway 2 modules as a Higher Certificate award at the same level.

This approach aligns closely with the modular philosophy underpinning the Skills4Retail curriculum. Learners may achieve recognition for individual modules through micro-credentials, while those completing the full pathway may progress towards recognition of a larger and more comprehensive body of learning.

Recognition on the Irish National Framework of Qualifications would also result in corresponding recognition through the European Qualifications Framework (EQF), as the Irish NFQ is formally referenced to the EQF. Consequently, successful recognition would provide Skills4Retail learners with both national and European recognition of their learning achievements. For context, the Irish NFQ is explained in full here and the Irish EQF referencing report is available here.

The application represents an important step in demonstrating how Skills4Retail learning can engage with established qualification systems and provides a practical example of the project's commitment to supporting recognised and transferable learning outcomes.

4.2.2 JA Ireland

JA Ireland implemented the Skills4Retail Recognition and Certification Strategy primarily through the use of the Skills4Retail Certificate of Participation. This approach reflected the profile of the target learner group, which consisted predominantly of school-aged children participating in Skills4Retail learning activities as part of broader educational development programme.

Within this context, the primary objective was to expose learners to contemporary retail topics and develop awareness of the skills required within the sector. Completion of formal assessment activities was not considered a priority and learners engaged with selected modules rather than the full assessed programme.

The Skills4Retail Certificate of Participation therefore provided an appropriate mechanism through which learner engagement could be formally recognised. The certificate enabled students to evidence participation in Skills4Retail learning activities while ensuring that recognition remained aligned with the educational context in which the training was delivered.

The JA Ireland approach demonstrates the importance of providing participation-based recognition alongside outcomes-based recognition within the Skills4Retail framework. It illustrates how the project's certification architecture can support meaningful learner recognition in school-based environments where exposure to new concepts and potential career exploration are often prioritised over formal assessment and accreditation.

4.2.3 20Fifty Partners

20FIFTY Partners also implemented the Skills4Retail Recognition and Certification Strategy through the use of the Skills4Retail Certificate of Participation. Delivery focused on the *Introduction to Sustainability in Retail* module and targeted school-aged learners participating in introductory retail education activities, in a local University setting.

As with other school-based implementations within the consortium, the primary objective was to introduce learners to contemporary sustainability challenges and opportunities within the retail sector rather than to assess achievement against a comprehensive set of learning outcomes. Consequently, participation-based recognition was considered the most appropriate mechanism for acknowledging learner engagement.

The approach ensured that learners received formal recognition for their participation in Skills4Retail activities while preserving a consistent recognition model across the consortium.

4.3 Romania

4.3.1 University of Bucharest

The implementation approach adopted by the University of Bucharest centred on the integration of Skills4Retail content within existing accredited higher education provision. Skills4Retail Pathway 1

modules were delivered to first-year students within the Marketing Specialisation of the Faculty of Business and Administration.

The course is positioned at EQF Level 6, enabling Skills4Retail learning outcomes to contribute directly to a recognised higher education programme. Through this approach, the knowledge and competences developed through Skills4Retail are delivered and assessed within an established academic framework, providing learners with recognition through an existing accredited qualification pathway.

The integration of Skills4Retail content into the curriculum of a leading European higher education institution demonstrates both the academic relevance and adaptability of the programme. Rather than operating as a standalone training intervention, Skills4Retail learning has been embedded within recognised university provision, creating a sustainable mechanism for delivery and recognition beyond the lifetime of the project.

This approach represents a significant form of recognition within the consortium, as Skills4Retail learning contributes directly to accredited higher education studies and associated qualification outcomes.

4.3.2 Economic College Nicolae Kretzulescu

Economic College Nicolae Kretzulescu implemented the Skills4Retail Recognition and Certification Strategy through the adoption of the Skills4Retail Certificate of Participation. As discussed in Section 4.2.2, participation-based recognition was particularly suited to school-based delivery contexts where formal assessment was not a primary objective.

The institution adopted the project-developed certification framework to recognise learner engagement with Skills4Retail activities, thereby contributing to a consistent approach to learner recognition across the consortium.

4.4 Czech Republic

4.4.1 Karlínská Business Academy

Karlínská Business Academy adopted a dual recognition approach, combining Skills4Retail Certificates with the use of Europass Mobility documentation. This approach provided learners with recognition through both the project-developed certification framework and a recognised European instrument.

The Europass approach emerged following engagement with the Czech National Europass Support Centre. Guidance received through this process confirmed that the Europass Mobility document is the most commonly utilised approach locally, to record completion of structured learning activities via Europass. The Mobility format was subsequently adopted as the basis for the Czech implementation.

To support this approach, pathway-specific Europass templates and accompanying issuer guidance were developed under Task 3.2. The school subsequently issued the Europass certificates to participating learners alongside a supplement to the school report card. This enabled Skills4Retail

learning achievements to be formally documented within an approach that aligned with both national guidance and local school procedures.

The Karlínská Business Academy implementation provided an important practical example of how existing European recognition instruments can be adapted to support Skills4Retail learning in a school-based environment.

4.5 Latvia

4.5.1 Riga State Technical School

Riga State Technical School adopted a multi-faceted implementation approach combining integration into accredited programmes, institutional certification and the use of Europass.

All Pathway 1 modules were tested, delivered and integrated into several EQF Level 4 qualifications. This approach enabled Skills4Retail learning outcomes to be embedded within existing accredited vocational provision, allowing project content to contribute directly to recognised programmes of study. The breadth of integration achieved within Riga State Technical School demonstrates the adaptability of the Skills4Retail curriculum.

Learners who successfully completed the training received a Riga State Technical School Certificate of Completion, providing institutional recognition of their achievement through the school's established certification processes.

In addition, Europass documentation was utilised and signed following successful completion of the mobility programme. This provided learners with an additional European-level mechanism through which their Skills4Retail learning experience could be documented and communicated.

4.6 Austria

4.6.1 WKO WIFI

WKO WIFI implemented the Skills4Retail Recognition and Certification Strategy through its existing institutional certification framework. Participants received a WIFI Certificate of Attendance or, where an assessment formed part of the training and was successfully completed, a WIFI Certificate of Completion.

The approach demonstrates how Skills4Retail learning can be recognised through established provider certification systems while maintaining a visible connection to the project. WIFI certificates incorporated the Skills4Retail logo and acknowledged the support of the Erasmus+ programme, ensuring that learner achievement was recognised within both the institutional and project contexts.

Where assessment was undertaken, certificates also included information relating to the assessment completed and the learner's result. This provided an additional level of detail regarding learner achievement while remaining consistent with existing WIFI certification practices.

An example of the certificate issued by WKO WIFI is provided in Annex D.

4.7 Malta

4.7.1 Knights College

Knights College adopted the Skills4Retail certificates as its primary recognition mechanism. This approach enabled learner participation and achievement within Skills4Retail activities to be recognised through the project-developed certification model, ensuring consistency with the wider consortium approach.

4.8 Hungary

4.8.1 Szent György Hang- és Filmtechnikum

Szent György Hang- és Filmtechnikum also adopted the Skills4Retail certificates to recognise learner participation and achievement. The institution utilised the project-developed credentials as a means of formally documenting engagement with Skills4Retail learning activities.

4.9 Portugal

4.9.1 Escola de Comércio de Lisboa and Escola de Comércio do Porto

In Portugal, both Escola de Comércio de Lisboa and Escola de Comércio do Porto adopted the Skills4Retail certificates as their preferred recognition mechanism. The use of a common certification model ensured that learner participation in Skills4Retail activities could be recognised through credentials directly linked to the project and its learning outcomes.



Figure 4.1: Recognition Approaches Adopted Across the Participating Countries

5. Key Achievements, Challenges and Lessons Learned

5.1 Key Achievements

Task 3.2 has established a comprehensive recognition and certification framework capable of supporting the diverse delivery models, learner groups and institutional contexts represented within the Skills4Retail consortium. The framework provides multiple recognition pathways, enabling participating organisations to select approaches that align with local requirements while maintaining a common Skills4Retail identity.

A significant achievement of T3.2 was the development of the Skills4Retail Certificate of Participation and Skills4Retail Certificate of Achievement. Together, these certifications provide a common consortium-wide mechanism for recognising both learner engagement and assessed achievement, ensuring that recognition can be applied appropriately across school-based, vocational, higher education and professional training environments.

The project also succeeded in establishing recognition routes beyond project-developed certifications. Participating organisations integrated Skills4Retail learning within institutional certification systems, accredited programmes of study, Europass instruments and qualifications framework initiatives. This demonstrates that the curriculum developed under WP3 is sufficiently flexible to operate within a variety of recognition environments.

Particularly notable progress was achieved in relation to qualifications framework recognition. The submission of an application to Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI) seeking recognition of four Pathway 2 modules as micro-credentials within the Irish National Framework of Qualifications represents a significant step towards formal recognition of Skills4Retail learning. Should the application be successful, these modules would also achieve corresponding recognition through the European Qualifications Framework (decisions expected December 2026).

The implementation of Europass Mobility certificates in Czechia represents a further important achievement. Working in collaboration with the Czech National Europass Support Centre, the project developed a practical model through which Skills4Retail learning activities could be documented using established Europass instruments. The accompanying templates and issuer guidance produced under Task 3.2 have created a reusable resource that may support future deployment by additional partners.

The integration of Skills4Retail modules within accredited programmes of study provides further evidence of the quality and relevance of the curriculum. The incorporation of Pathway 1 content within recognised higher education and vocational programmes demonstrates that Skills4Retail learning outcomes can contribute directly to established educational provision and recognised qualification pathways.

Taken together, these achievements demonstrate that the Skills4Retail Recognition and Certification Strategy has progressed beyond conceptual design and into practical implementation. The framework now supports multiple routes to recognition, ranging from project-level certification and Europass documentation through to engagement with qualifications frameworks and accredited education programmes. This provides a strong foundation for the continued recognition and sustainability of Skills4Retail learning beyond the lifetime of the project.

5.2 Challenges Encountered

The implementation of the Skills4Retail Recognition and Certification Strategy highlighted the complexity of establishing a common recognition framework across multiple national, institutional and educational contexts. While the flexibility built into the framework proved beneficial, it also revealed considerable variation in the recognition systems available to participating organisations.

One of the principal challenges concerned the diversity of learner profiles across the consortium. Skills4Retail activities were delivered to school-aged learners, vocational learners, higher education students and adult professionals. As a result, approaches that were appropriate in one context were not necessarily suitable in another. In particular, the role of assessment varied significantly between partners, influencing whether participation-based or achievement-based recognition could be applied.

A second challenge related to differences in national recognition structures. Participating organisations operated within distinct educational and regulatory environments, each with its own qualification frameworks, accreditation arrangements and certification practices. This limited the feasibility of adopting a single recognition mechanism across all countries and reinforced the need for multiple implementation pathways within the overall framework.

The pursuit of formal recognition through qualifications frameworks introduced additional complexities. Engagement with qualification authorities often involves lengthy review processes, detailed application requirements and evaluation procedures that could extend beyond the timescales of an Erasmus+ project. Consequently, while significant progress was made in areas such as the QQI micro-credential application (explained in section 4.2.1), the outcome of said application is outstanding at the time of this deliverable submission.

Despite these challenges, the implementation phase demonstrated that a common recognition and certification strategy can be successfully applied across a diverse consortium, provided sufficient flexibility is built into its design and delivery.

5.3 Lessons Learned

The implementation of Task 3.2 demonstrated that flexibility is a critical requirement when designing recognition frameworks for multinational projects. The diversity of learner groups, educational settings and national systems across the consortium meant that a single recognition mechanism would not have been capable of meeting all partner requirements. The availability of multiple recognition routes

allowed organisations to adopt approaches that were both achievable and meaningful within their local context.

A second lesson relates to the importance of designing recognition considerations into the curriculum development process from the outset. The inclusion of clearly defined learning outcomes, assessment approaches and consideration of learner workload within the Skills4Retail curriculum provided a foundation upon which subsequent recognition activities could be built. This proved particularly valuable when engaging with qualifications authorities and exploring opportunities for micro-credential recognition.

The project also demonstrated that meaningful recognition does not always require the creation of new credentials. In some instances, the most effective approach involved embedding Skills4Retail learning within existing certification arrangements or accredited programmes. Leveraging established structures reduced implementation barriers and increased the likelihood of long-term sustainability beyond the lifetime of the project.

Engagement with external recognition bodies highlighted the value of early consultation. The experience gained through interactions with Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI) and the Czech National Europass Support Centre demonstrated that specialist guidance can play an important role in identifying appropriate recognition pathways and ensuring alignment with existing policies and procedures.

Finally, the project confirmed that recognition and certification activities often extend beyond the timescales of individual projects. While significant progress can be achieved during implementation, formal recognition processes frequently continue after project completion. Designing project outputs in a manner that supports future engagement with qualification authorities, accreditation bodies and European recognition instruments is therefore an important consideration for long-term impact and sustainability.

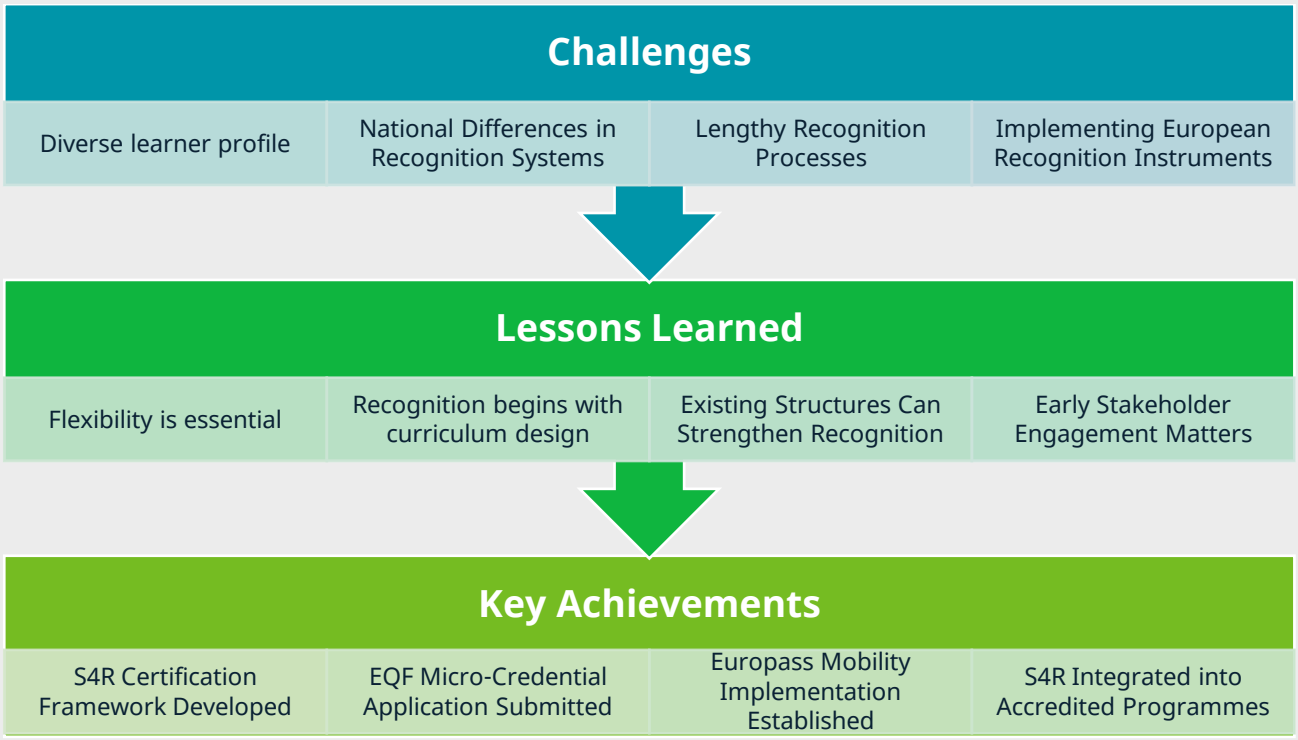


Figure 5.1: Key Achievements, Challenges and Lessons Learned from the Implementation of the Skills4Retail Recognition Framework

6. Conclusion

Task 3.2 set out to establish a framework through which Skills4Retail learning could be recognised across a range of educational, institutional and national contexts. The work undertaken demonstrates that a common recognition and certification strategy can be successfully applied across diverse learner groups and delivery environments while retaining sufficient flexibility to accommodate differing national requirements and organisational practices.

A central outcome of the task has been the development of a recognition framework that supports multiple pathways to recognition. These pathways include Skills4Retail certificates, institutional certification arrangements, Europass instruments, engagement with national and European qualifications frameworks and the integration of Skills4Retail modules within accredited programmes of study. Collectively, these mechanisms provide learners with a range of opportunities through which participation and achievement can be formally recognised.

Implementation across the consortium confirmed the value of a flexible approach to recognition. Participating organisations adopted different recognition routes according to their institutional context, and learner profile. School-based providers primarily utilised participation certificates, while higher education institutions and vocational providers demonstrated opportunities to integrate Skills4Retail learning within accredited provision and existing certification systems. At the same time, engagement

with qualifications authorities and Europass structures showed that project-developed learning can be positioned within established recognition ecosystems.

Particularly significant progress was achieved in relation to qualifications framework recognition and the use of European recognition instruments. The application submitted to Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI) seeking recognition of Pathway 2 modules as EQF recognised micro-credentials illustrates the potential for Skills4Retail learning to engage with formal qualification structures. Similarly, the implementation of Europass tools in Czechia demonstrated how existing European tools can be adapted to support the documentation and communication of Skills4Retail learning achievements.

The project has therefore moved beyond the design of a conceptual recognition model and demonstrated practical implementation across multiple countries and educational settings. Through the development of certification tools, guidance materials and recognition pathways, Task 3.2 has established a foundation upon which future recognition, accreditation and credentialing activities can continue to build.

The experience gained through the project suggests that the long-term value of Skills4Retail lies in the ability of the framework to operate across different systems whilst maintaining a coherent approach to recognising learner achievement. This flexibility has proven to be one of the framework's principal strengths and provides a strong basis for the continued use and development of Skills4Retail learning beyond the lifetime of the project.

7. Annexes

Annex A. Skills4Retail Certificate of Participation

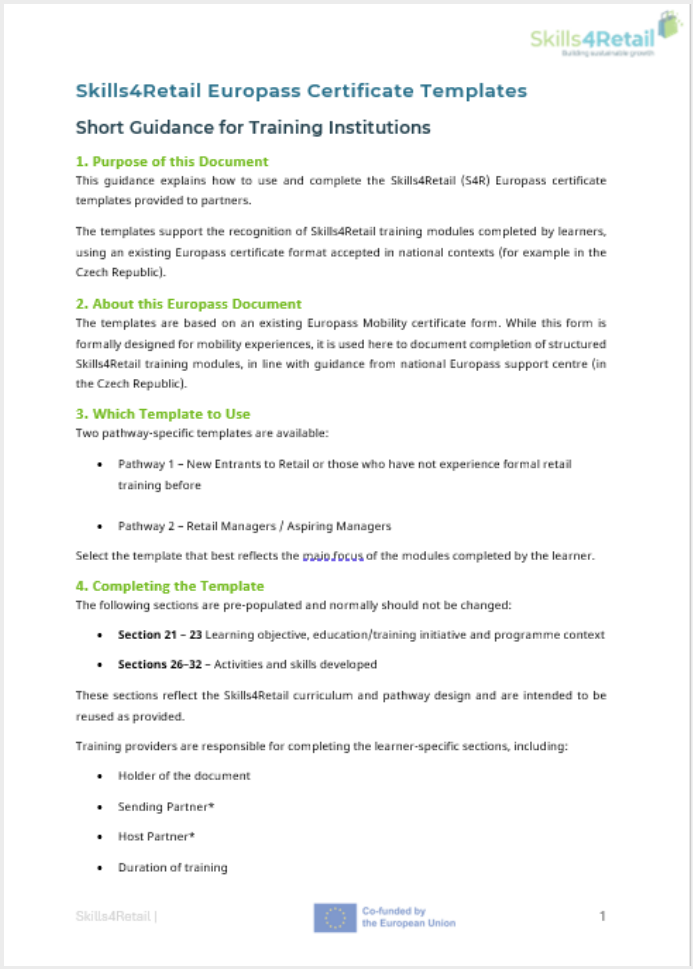


Annex B. Skills4Retail Certificate of Completion



Annex C. Europass Mobility Guidance and Templates

Guidance Note



Skills4Retail

Skills4Retail Europass Certificate Templates

Short Guidance for Training Institutions

1. Purpose of this Document

This guidance explains how to use and complete the Skills4Retail (S4R) Europass certificate templates provided to partners.

The templates support the recognition of Skills4Retail training modules completed by learners, using an existing Europass certificate format accepted in national contexts (for example in the Czech Republic).

2. About this Europass Document

The templates are based on an existing Europass Mobility certificate form. While this form is formally designed for mobility experiences, it is used here to document completion of structured Skills4Retail training modules, in line with guidance from national Europass support centre (in the Czech Republic).

3. Which Template to Use

Two pathway-specific templates are available:

- Pathway 1 – New Entrants to Retail or those who have not experience formal retail training before
- Pathway 2 – Retail Managers / Aspiring Managers

Select the template that best reflects the main focus of the modules completed by the learner.

4. Completing the Template

The following sections are pre-populated and normally should not be changed:

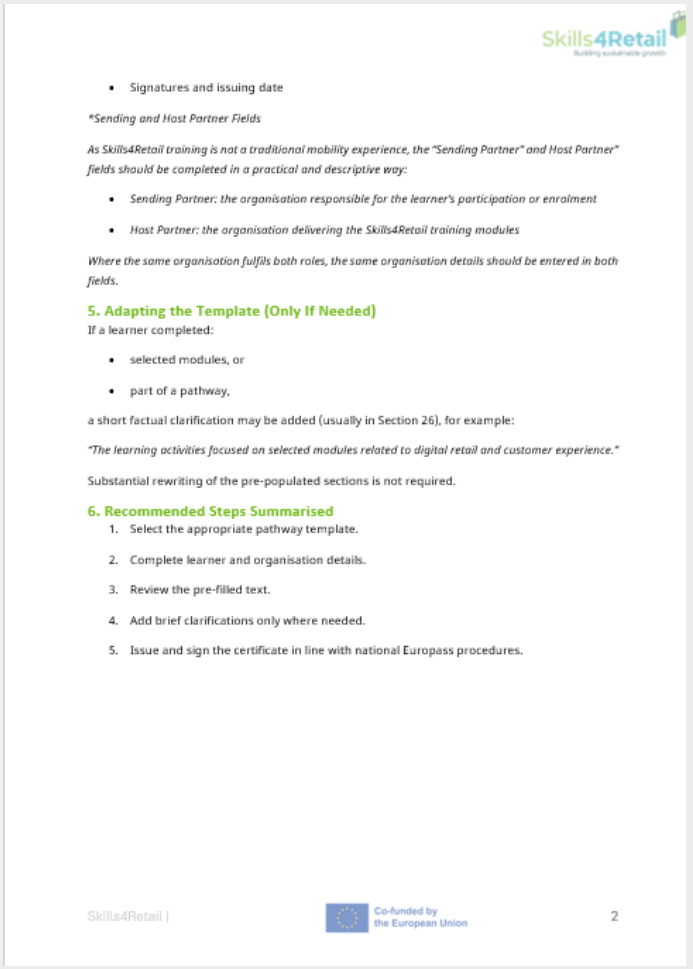
- **Section 21 – 23** Learning objective, education/training initiative and programme context
- **Sections 26–32** – Activities and skills developed

These sections reflect the Skills4Retail curriculum and pathway design and are intended to be reused as provided.

Training providers are responsible for completing the learner-specific sections, including:

- Holder of the document
- Sending Partner*
- Host Partner*
- Duration of training

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Skills4Retail

- Signatures and issuing date

**Sending and Host Partner Fields*

As Skills4Retail training is not a traditional mobility experience, the "Sending Partner" and Host Partner" fields should be completed in a practical and descriptive way:

- *Sending Partner: the organisation responsible for the learner's participation or enrolment*
- *Host Partner: the organisation delivering the Skills4Retail training modules*

Where the same organisation fulfils both roles, the same organisation details should be entered in both fields.

5. Adapting the Template (Only If Needed)

If a learner completed:

- selected modules, or
- part of a pathway,

a short factual clarification may be added (usually in Section 26), for example:

"The learning activities focused on selected modules related to digital retail and customer experience."

Substantial rewriting of the pre-populated sections is not required.

6. Recommended Steps Summarised

1. Select the appropriate pathway template.
2. Complete learner and organisation details.
3. Review the pre-filled text.
4. Add brief clarifications only where needed.
5. Issue and sign the certificate in line with national Europass procedures.

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Pathway 1 Template

europass

Europass Mobility

Holder of the document

1 Surname(s) | 2 First name(s) | 3 Address

4 Date of birth | 5 Nationality

Sending partner

6 Name and address | 10 Website | 11 Surname(s) and first name(s) of reference person / mentor

12 Telephone | 13 Title / position

14 E-mail

Host partner

15 Name and address | 16 Website | 17 Surname(s) and first name(s) of reference person / mentor

18 Telephone | 19 Title / position

20 E-mail

Europass Mobility is a standard European document, which records details of the contents and the results - in terms of skills and competences or of academic achievements - of a period that a person of whatever age, educational level and occupational status has spent in another European country (UE/EFTA/EEA and candidate countries) for learning purposes.

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Europass Mobility

Description of the mobility experience

21 Objective of the mobility experience

To develop practical skills and knowledge relevant to contemporary retail roles, with a focus on digital retail practices, customer experience principles, sustainability awareness and employability-orientated competences supporting entry and progression in the retail sector.

22 Education or training initiative in the course of which the mobility experience was completed

Skills4Retail (S4R): Retail Skills VET Training Programme (Erasmus+)

23 Community or mobility programme involved

Erasmus+ Blueprint for Sectoral Cooperation on Skills. Skills4Retail Project (101111741)

24 Duration of the Europass mobility experience from

To be completed by the issuing org.

25 Duration of the Europass mobility experience to

To be completed by the issuing org.

Skills acquired during the mobility experience

26 Activities/tasks carried out

Participation in a structured learning experience delivered as part of the Skills4Retail (S4R) training programme. The learner engaged in classroom-based online and applied learning activities focused on core areas of retail practice, including customer experience, digital retail concepts and sustainability awareness.

27 Job-related skills

Development of practical job-related skills relevant to contemporary retail roles, including the application of digital retail practices, customer experience principles, sustainability awareness, and the ability to apply structured retail knowledge effectively in day-to-day operational contexts.

28 Language skills

Use of professional language and terminology relevant to the retail sector, including engagement with training materials, participation in discussions and communication of ideas in learning activities delivered in English or the local language, depending on the delivery context.

29 Computer skills

Development of digital competences relevant to modern retail environments, including digital marketing practices, e-commerce concepts, data-supported decision-making and introductory awareness of AI-enabled approaches to retail operations and customer experience.

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Europass Mobility

30 Organisational / managerial skills

Ability to organise tasks and learning activities effectively, manage time and priorities and apply structured approaches to completing activities and solving problems within a learning or work-related context.

31 Communication skills

Development of communication skills relevant to retail customer experience contexts, including clear and professional interaction, active participation in group activities, and effective communication supporting positive customer-focused retail practices.

32 Other skills

Development of transversal skills supporting effective participation in retail environments, including problem awareness, adaptability to digital and customer-facing contexts, responsible decision-making and the ability to reflect on sustainability and ethical considerations in day-to-day retail activities.

33 Date

34 Signature of the reference person / mentor

35 Signature of the holder

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Pathway 2 Template

europass

Europass Mobility

Holder of the document

1 Surname(s) | 2 First name(s) | 3 Address

4 Date of birth | 5 Nationality

Sending partner

9 Name and address | 10 Website | 11 Surname(s) and first name(s) of reference person / mentor

12 Telephone | 13 Title / position

14 E-mail

Host partner

15 Name and address | 16 Website | 17 Surname(s) and first name(s) of reference person / mentor

18 Telephone | 19 Title / position

20 E-mail

Europass Mobility is a standard European document, which records details of the contents and the results - in terms of skills and competences or of academic achievements - of a period that a person of whatever age, educational level and occupational status has spent in another European country (UE/EFTA/EEA and candidate countries) for learning purposes.

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europass

Europass Mobility

Description of the mobility experience

21 Objective of the mobility experience

To strengthen retail management and leadership competences, with a focus on people and performance management, digital and data-supported decision-making customer experience management and the integration of ethical, sustainable and resilient practices in retail organisations.

22 Education or training initiative in the course of which the mobility experience was completed

Skills4Retail (S4R): Retail Skills VET Training Programme (Erasmus+)

23 Community or mobility programme involved

Erasmus+ Blueprint for Sectoral Cooperation on Skills. Skills4Retail Project (101111741)

24 Duration of the Europass mobility experience from | 25 Duration of the Europass mobility experience to

Skills acquired during the mobility experience

26 Activities/tasks carried out

Participation in a structured learning experience delivered as part of the Skills4Retail (S4R) training programme. The learner engaged in workshop-based collaborative and applied learning activities focused on retail management practice, leadership, people management and decision-making in contemporary retail contexts.

27 Job-related skills

Development of job-related skills relevant to retail management contexts, including applying management and leadership concepts, supporting people and performance management, using structured approaches to decision-making and integrating customer experience, digital and sustainability considerations into retail operations.

28 Language skills

Use of professional language and terminology relevant to retail management, including participation in discussions, collaborative problem-solving activities and the communication of ideas related to leadership, people management and operational practice.

29 Computer skills

Development of digital competences supporting retail management practice, including the use of digital tools to support planning and analysis, application of digital marketing and e-commerce concepts, data-supported decision-making and awareness of AI-enabled approaches in customer experience, operations and people management.

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Europass Mobility

30 Organisational / managerial skills

Development of organisational and managerial skills relevant to retail management contexts, including planning and prioritising work, managing people and performance, applying structured approaches to problem-solving and supporting team effectiveness and operational delivery.

31 Communication skills

Development of communication skills relevant to retail management contexts, including effective professional communication with teams and stakeholders, conducting performance and feedback conversations, facilitating discussions and applying communication techniques to support leadership, coaching and people management responsibilities.

32 Other skills

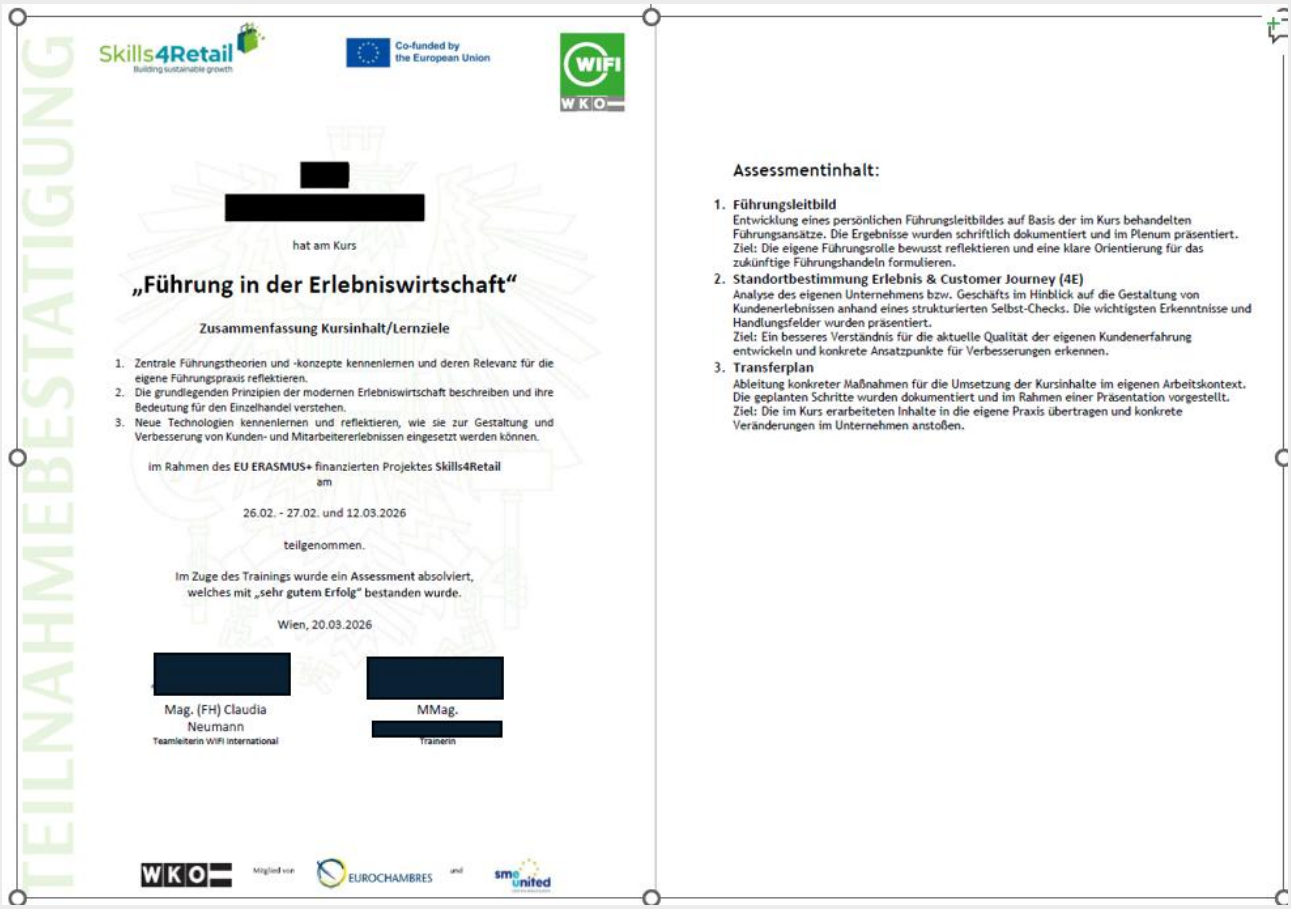
Development of transversal skills relevant to retail leadership contexts, including reflective practice, ethical judgement, accountability, inclusivity, and the ability to consider sustainability and societal impacts when making decisions and supporting teams within retail organisations.

33 Date

34 Signature of the reference person / mentor | 35 Signature of the holder

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Annex D. Example of S4R Integration to Institutional Certificate



TEILNAHMEBESTÄTIGUNG

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WIFI WKO

[redacted]

hat am Kurs

„Führung in der Erlebniswirtschaft"

Zusammenfassung Kursinhalt/Lernziele

1. Zentrale Führungstheorien und -konzepte kennenlernen und deren Relevanz für die eigene Führungspraxis reflektieren.
2. Die grundlegenden Prinzipien der modernen Erlebniswirtschaft beschreiben und ihre Bedeutung für den Einzelhandel verstehen.
3. Neue Technologien kennenlernen und reflektieren, wie sie zur Gestaltung und Verbesserung von Kunden- und Mitarbeitererlebnissen eingesetzt werden können.

im Rahmen des **EU ERASMUS+** finanzierten Projektes **Skills4Retail**
am

26.02. - 27.02. und 12.03.2026

teilgenommen.

Im Zuge des Trainings wurde ein **Assessment** absolviert,
welches mit **„sehr gutem Erfolg"** bestanden wurde.

Wien, 20.03.2026

[redacted]
Mag. (FH) Claudia Neumann
Teamleiterin WIFI International

[redacted]
MMag. [redacted]
Trainerin

WKO Mitglied von EUROCHAMBRES und sme united

Assessmentinhalt:

1. **Führungsleitbild**
   Entwicklung eines persönlichen Führungsleitbildes auf Basis der im Kurs behandelten Führungsansätze. Die Ergebnisse wurden schriftlich dokumentiert und im Plenum präsentiert.
   Ziel: Die eigene Führungsrolle bewusst reflektieren und eine klare Orientierung für das zukünftige Führungshandeln formulieren.
2. **Standortbestimmung Erlebnis & Customer Journey (4E)**
   Analyse des eigenen Unternehmens bzw. Geschäfts im Hinblick auf die Gestaltung von Kundenerlebnissen anhand eines strukturierten Selbst-Checks. Die wichtigsten Erkenntnisse und Handlungsfelder wurden präsentiert.
   Ziel: Ein besseres Verständnis für die aktuelle Qualität der eigenen Kundenerfahrung entwickeln und konkrete Ansatzpunkte für Verbesserungen erkennen.
3. **Transferplan**
   Ableitung konkreter Maßnahmen für die Umsetzung der Kursinhalte im eigenen Arbeitskontext. Die geplanten Schritte wurden dokumentiert und im Rahmen einer Präsentation vorgestellt.
   Ziel: Die im Kurs erarbeiteten Inhalte in die eigene Praxis übertragen und konkrete Veränderungen im Unternehmen anstoßen.

Work Package No/Name	WP3
Deliverable Name	D3.2
Partner(s) involvement	D3.2 EU Recognised Micro-Credentials and Certifications
Submission Deadline (As per Annual Work Plan)	**14.11.2026**

Rate	1	2	3	4	5
Quality Parameter	very low/strongly disagree	low/disagree	moderate/neither nor	high/ agree	very high/strongly agree
1. The work performed corresponds to the requirements and methodological standards of the project.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☒
2. The drafting and structuring of each deliverable include the contribution of all relevant experts.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☒
3. Deliverables use clear and easily understandable language in the text and the design is professional and in line with the project brand identity, guidelines, and document template.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☒
4. The output is in line with the standards adopted by the European Commission.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☒
Name of the WP Leader	**SkillNet Ireland**				
Submission Date	**14/11/2026**				

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Project: 101111741— Skills4Retail — ERASMUS-EDU-2022- PI-ALL-INNO-BLUEPRINT

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