

Webinar Report: Diploma Supplement Network Spring Webinar 2026

Future of LLL, Implementation of the DS, Receiver's Perspectives and Global Trends

The Spring webinar had nearly 300 registered participants from around the world. From this report you can find introduction of the topics presented by our speakers, as well as a summary of the discussions.

Webinar Agenda

14.00 Welcome

Yolanda Brännström

Senior credential evaluator, ENIC-NARIC Sweden, Swedish Council for Higher Education

14.10 Policy Findings and Future Perspectives

Shaping the Future of Lifelong Learning: Policy Scenarios for 2040.

Transparency and transferability of learning outcomes

Zelda Azzarà

Expert in Qualifications and Credentials, CEDEFOP

14.30 European Digital Credentials in Practice

European Digital Credentials: A Practical Tool for Organisations.

Experience from SEPIE - Servicio Español para la Internacionalización de la Educación

David Delgado

Deputy Head of the Spanish National Europass Centre, SEPIE

14.45 Employer Perspective

Employer View on the Diploma Supplement

Mikko Vieltojärvi

Adviser, Confederation of Finnish Industries

15.00 Break

15.10 The Diploma Supplement Network

Best Practices and Information Sharing

Diploma Supplement in Norway

Einar Meier

Head of the Department of Foreign Higher Education II

Norwegian Directorate for Higher Education and Skills

Diploma Supplement Information Gathering Exercise: How to Collect Comparable Data on Diploma Supplement Practices Across Countries

Susanna Kärki

Senior Specialist, Data Streams Unit, Finnish National Agency for Education

15.30 Global Perspective

The European Diploma Supplement: A United States Perspective

Christopher Adams

Senior Associate Director of International Admissions, Indiana University

Past President of The Association of International Credential Evaluation Professionals (TAICEP)

15.50 UNESCO Higher Education Global Trends Report - Brief Overview

Vanja Gutović

Senior Programme Specialist, UNESCO IESALC

Notes of the webinar

The notes below are an interpretation of the speakers' presentations. Please also refer to the published PPTs here: <https://www.oph.fi/en/diploma-supplement-network>

Zelda Azzarà – Future of Lifelong Learning Policy and Transparency of Learning Outcomes

Zelda Azzarà presented findings from a Cedefop research project, compiled in the research paper: [Shaping the future of lifelong learning: policy scenarios for 2040. Transparency and transferability of learning outcomes.](#)

Project Aim and Scope:

Map and analyse European and national policy initiatives (2000–2020) promoting transparency and transferability of learning outcomes; examine their coherence and joint contribution at system and individual levels; and explore future policy directions towards 2040, to provide a basis for discussion.

Key Barriers Identified (2020):

Underdeveloped credit systems in VET; limited cross-sector tools and efforts; fragmented validation and low take-up; VET still seen as lower status education; recognition and mobility differ across learner groups; diverse quality assurance frameworks.

The portability of skills and qualifications across borders is crucial for building the Union of Skills, where qualifications travel with people.

Five Future Policy Scenarios:

Scenario 1 Flex Max – High flexibility and high permeability

Scenario 2 Rigid Islands – Low flexibility and low permeability

Scenario 3 Fragmented flexibility – High flexibility and low permeability

Scenario 4 Rigid but internationally connected – Low flexibility and moderate permeability

Scenario 5 Gated communities – Moderate flexibility and moderate permeability

These five scenarios, with different implications for learners, providers and policymakers, illustrate varying degrees of flexibility and permeability, ranging from diverse learning opportunities and seamless mobility (scenario 1) to rigid, linear pathways with limited transitions (scenario 2)

Key Considerations: Progress in common frameworks; increasing coherence; learning outcomes as unifying element; more convergence; stronger synergies within sectors than across; higher education more integrated than VET.

Europass, Diploma Supplement (DS) and other European tools can act as tools for increased transparency contributing to flexibility and permeability.

Cedefop's ongoing work:

- Further focus on digital credentials.
- A paper will be published soon and a workshop to discuss findings and future research priorities is planned for late 2026.
- If you are interested in join the discussion, please contact zelda.azzara@cedefop.europa.eu

David Delgado – European Digital Credentials in Practice (SEPIE)

David Delgado presented implementation of European Digital Credentials (EDC) at the Spanish Erasmus+ National Agency (SEPIE).

Use Case: Certificates of Attendance through the EDC infrastructure for events SEPIE organizes. The certificates include participant data, event details and links to presentations and recordings.

Motivation: Alignment with European Commission initiatives and promotion of Europass.

Achievements: Over 15,000 credentials issued since November 2022; first Spanish public body to implement EDCs; full transition away from PDFs.

Challenges: Initial complexity and workload; need for teamwork; difficulty completing all required fields; need for structured data collection including Europass Wallet IDs.

Implementation Structure: IT units handled technical setup; communication teams developed and issued credentials; internal guides ensured continuity.

Operational Features: No manual work is required beyond entering the credential content and clicking to seal it. Credentials delivered via email and file; recipients store their credentials independently; QR code for verification; If the QR code has expired, it's no longer possible to check the validity or the content included in the credential, However, you can always export the EDC again and extend the expiration time.

More information: testimonial ([full version](#) and [factsheet](#)) and from: [European Digital Credentials | Europass](#)

Mikko Vieltojärvi – Employer Perspective on the Diploma Supplement

Mikko Vieltojärvi presented the Finnish employer view on the Diploma Supplement: valuable context on the implementation and development of transparency tools.

Survey Results (Finland): 23.79% reported challenges in recognising foreign qualifications; 76.21% reported no challenges. Key issues include language skills and lack of required competences/skills rather than recognition as such.

The DS helps make competences visible, especially for internationally educated candidates. However, awareness is an issue: DS and Europass tools, despite their significant potential, are not widely known among Finnish employers.

Recruitment Insight: Skills matter more than formal qualifications; DS mainly relevant for recent graduates.

Future Need: Development of a database or online comparison tool for qualifications; expectations for action under the Skills Portability Initiative.

There is potential in the Skills Portability Initiative and e.g. Europass already has basic tools for comparing qualifications, though work needs to be done in making them better known, as a webinar participants pointed out. An example of a new practical tool is the: [Compare Qualifications | Europass](#).

Another webinar participants pointed out that the added value of such as tools as Europass CV and the DS is that they benefit both employees and employers by helping individuals identify and clearly describe their skills, competences and acquired knowledge – and be able to use this information and descriptions in various ways, either through transparency tools or otherwise.

Einar Meier– Diploma Supplement in Norway

The Norwegian DS model is standardised and established by law (2002). Key Features: Automatically issued; free of charge; includes transcript and education system description; supports international recognition, EQF levels 6-8.

Framework: Developed collaboratively by Universities Norway; aligned with European model; updated per EHEA revisions; Section 8 last updated in 2025.

Digital DS in Norway: Secure digitally signed PDF integrated into Student Information System (FS); accessible via [Diploma Registry](#); shareable with employers and institutions.

The Diploma Supplement website is currently hosted by [NOKUT](#); however, it will soon be transferred to the [Directorate for Higher Education and Skills \(HK-dir\)](#)

Susanna Kärki – Diploma Supplement Information Gathering Exercise: How to Collect Comparable Data on Diploma Supplement Practices Across Countries

There was an initiative from the DS network to gather information on the DS practises and implementation in Europe. The next step is to create a questionnaire together to collect the data. A concise workshop aimed to refine a draft questionnaire as a joint effort of the network. The overall goal was to ensure that the survey captures diverse user needs and cases while producing clear, relevant, and actionable information on national and local practices.

To achieve this, webinar participants were asked to complete a mock version of the survey. Throughout the process, they were encouraged to provide concise, practical feedback directly within the survey tool.

The working phase focused on three key areas of improvement:

- **Clarity:** identifying questions that were confusing or ambiguous and suggesting ways to make them clearer;
- **Content coverage:** highlighting missing topics or proposing additional questions to better reflect real-world practices;
- **Efficiency:** indicating questions that were unnecessary, repetitive, or could be simplified.

A final survey will be developed based on the feedback and comments collected.

Christopher – A United States Perspective

US higher education is decentralised with autonomous institutions, both public and private. Recognition relies on private evaluation agencies and accreditation bodies such as NACES and AICE.

Use of DS: Generally accepted when accompanying a diploma; sometimes used instead of transcripts. Language requirements vary but English is often sufficient.

Evaluation Approach: Focus on course listings and grades; DS can provide additional context for determining equivalence.

Conclusion: Institutions set their own standards but follow shared best practices; DS supports student mobility.

Vanja Gutović– Global Trends in Higher Education

The new UNESCO report highlights global transformations in higher education systems.

Key Trends: Women outnumber men except at doctoral/senior levels; student mobility has tripled but remains around 3%; most students prefer regional mobility; ~75% of countries have recognition policies; increasing focus on refugee qualifications.

Context: Higher education affected by technological, demographic, geopolitical and pandemic-related changes.

Report Structure: Part 1 covers access, governance, digitalisation, staff; Part 2 covers mobility, recognition, refugees.

Evidence Base: Data from 146 countries via UNESCO-IESALC; analysis across 10 thematic areas including equity, QA, financing, AI and teaching workforce.

Mobility Focus: Includes flows, recognition and refugees and displaced persons.

- [Education Global Trends Report](#)
- [Higher Education Policy Observatory](#)

For questions or comments on the Observatory, please contact v.gutovic@unesco.org

Relevant resources:

- [The Global Convention on the Recognition of Qualifications concerning Higher Education](#)
- [The National Association of Credential Evaluation Services \(NACES\)](#)[The Association of International Credential Evaluators \(AICE\)](#)

Webinar feedback and upcoming Autumn Webinar

Webinar participants were asked to suggest topics for upcoming webinar. Suggestions included focus on the role and practical use of the Diploma Supplement, future of the DS in a digital context, links to skills and labour market needs, and perspectives from employers and international users. There is also interest in comparing national practices, examples and tools, especially for joint degrees, digital documents, and technical solutions such as EDC creation.

Call for input: Diploma Supplement for Joint Degrees

If you have insights, experiences, or reflections on DS for joint degrees, or if you have guidelines you would be willing to share, we would be delighted to hear from you. Your input would help shape a section on this topic in a future.