

FUTURE OF THE EUROPEAN DIGITAL COMPETENCE FRAMEWORK



The future implementation and take-up of the
European Digital Competence Framework
(DigComp 2.0)



Joint position paper

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ECDL Foundation • European e-Skills Association



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Future of the European Digital Competence Framework

THE FUTURE IMPLEMENTATION AND TAKE-UP OF THE EUROPEAN DIGITAL COMPETENCE FRAMEWORK (DIGCOMP 2.0)

We believe that an effective implementation of the competence framework should be built around three main pillars: education, awareness-raising and funding.

1. Education

We expect DigComp to be used as the reference for **learning, teaching, assessment and certification of digital skills** by most digital skills training providers, similarly to how the [Common European Framework of Reference for Languages](#) (CERF) is used for language learning, teaching and assessment in Europe and beyond. Thus, it will ensure that when we are talking about digital skills of citizens (non-ICT professionals) we have a common understanding and that we have a transparent, coherent and comprehensive basis for syllabuses and curriculum guidelines, design of teaching materials, and assessment of digital literacy proficiency.

The framework should be used both in the formal education system (from primary school to higher education) as well as in non-formal education and lifelong learning.

For it to be a success, the European Commission should provide clear guidelines to national bodies (Ministries of Education, Labour or Welfare as well as State employment agencies) on DigComp. The Commission should advise them to link existing training and certification programmes that they administer and supervise, to the framework. This is especially relevant where EU funds and financing are involved.

The guidelines from the EC should provide clear recommendations on how public bodies should interpret and use DigComp. This will avoid government and other players misinterpreting the Framework and applying it incorrectly. Existing incorrect applications include a strict interpretation of the framework as the basis for assigning EU funds at national level. Positive examples exist in member states that have taken a more flexible

'referencing' approach. Given the broad competence areas and many proficiency levels (8 for each competence with version 2.0), we wish to emphasise that DigComp should be applied flexibly – it should not only be perceived in its entirety but also in its separate competence areas. The elements of the framework – the competence areas, the competences and their levels – should be a key standard reference against which a range of innovative solutions can be built – not a rigid standard that defines all aspects of solutions. For example, solutions that address only certain competences at certain levels must be facilitated by the framework, as well as more comprehensive solutions. This is important in order to ensure that it is useful for a diverse range of training and competence development programmes and target groups.

2. Awareness-raising

We expect significant **awareness-raising campaign(s)** targeting specific groups (public authorities in member states, employers, training providers, end users). The campaign(s) should emphasize the different benefits of DigComp for these stakeholders and explain the added value of using DigComp. These campaigns should also reference and connect with EU policy initiatives such as the Digital Single Market and the New Skills Agenda.

The first and most important step in this awareness-raising process is to clarify the correct use of DigComp with the member states. Wider awareness-raising at national level should be conducted after member state ministry officials fully understand how to use the framework and once there is a **governance structure**, overseen by the EC, in place to monitor and support its correct usage. Awareness raising and promotion without the necessary education and oversight may lead to issues with the implementation of DigComp.

3. Funding

For a successful implementation and roll-out of DigComp, there should be **targeted support** in European programmes for organizations who want to align their competence development solutions to the framework, run pilot projects or raise awareness. If new derivative frameworks are developed for specific profiles (e.g. youth worker, teacher), stakeholders should be invited to actively participate in the development phase and **supported by the EC for doing so**. Related priorities can be defined in upcoming Erasmus+ or H2020 societal challenges calls, but also through other financial instruments.

Funding at the national level should also be linked to correct usage of DigComp in alignment with the guidance issued by the European Commission.

4. Recommendations for key elements of an EU-level Action Plan for an effective implementation of DigComp

The three points above – **education, awareness-raising** and **funding** – are key elements of such an action plan.

Another key element is the establishment of an effective **governance structure** overseen by the EC and the evaluation of synergies with key certification programmes such as ECDL, which covers DigComp competence areas.

It is important that all stakeholders – governments, industry, educators and NGOs – are well informed, motivated and involved in order to support the framework’s implementation.

We also believe the action plan should be delivered within a clear timeframe.

5. Stakeholder support

The stakeholders to be involved in the implementation of DigComp and their main roles should be:

- **Member states** (Ministries of Education, Labour, etc.) should adopt and implement the competence framework within national-level policies.
- Education, training and certification **providers** (formal and non-formal sector) should receive guidelines and financial support to adapt their trainings and certifications to DigComp, as well as to pilot adapted trainings and skills assessment with end users. They are best placed to provide feedback with regards to learners’ needs.
- **Industry** should support and promote the implementation of the competence framework and recognise it.
- **NGOs, ICT associations** and other **sectorial industry associations** and **telecentre networks** will involve stakeholders outside formal education systems, providing advice and contributing to the implementation of the competence framework
- **Career consultants** and state employment agencies should promote and use the competence framework in their programmes, guiding users and employers.
- **Employers organisations** (both within and beyond the EU) should promote and use the competence framework in their respective programmes.

6. Governance of DigComp

We also believe that a **coordination/secretariat body** for the implementation of DigComp should be established and supported by the European Commission. TE is interested in taking an active role in leading the efforts of such a structure. CEPIS, ECDL Foundation and EeSA are willing to actively contribute to such a body.

Note that while stakeholders should have a supporting role, the governance of DigComp needs to have the support of the EC. A governance body is only likely to be effective with the EC's weight and authority behind it. A governance body could have responsibility for:

- Ensuring the guidance issued by the EC is adopted in the Member States. Where the framework is incorrectly used, the Governance body should have a mandate to provide instruction to rectify this.
- Reporting misuses to the EC.
- Raising awareness of the framework and its intended usage.
- Providing assistance on how to reference/map to the framework.
- Providing a central information point for information on the framework, including where and how it is currently (correctly) used.

7. Our concrete actions and commitments to support DigComp

- **Telecentre Europe**

TE will spread the message to its members in all EU countries. These members include leading telecentre or library networks, ICT associations and other innovative organizations in the non-formal sector of digital skills education. TE introduced DigComp 2.0 to its members during a dedicated workshop at its 2016 annual conference and organised a webinar on the adoption of DigComp with examples from the TE network – [IKANOS](#) and [Pane e Internet](#). TE will continue to inform and encourage its members to use the framework when they update their training offers and certification.

TE, together with DIGITALEUROPE and European Schoolnet, leads the National Coalitions for Digital Jobs, which include the highest level of target stakeholders. DigComp should be a priority of the action plans of the National Coalitions. Specific workshops on the framework for National Coalition coordinators can be provided by Telecentre Europe with the support from the European Commission.

New training curricula created in TE projects like [CODEMOB](#) are mapped to DigComp 2.0. TE already has a first experience integrating DigComp in an online assessment tool for digital skills called Skillage. This integration helped better position TE's tool with its target groups and users. The connection between [Skillage](#) and DigComp is mentioned under the European implementation examples (available [here](#)).

TE also runs a series of projects that are linked to the organisation's strategic goals. These aim to develop job profiles and training materials in digital skills areas. TE would be interested to increase activities in this area both with EU funding support or in cooperation with the ICT industry. TE's main advantage in this case is the direct outreach to a large number of target beneficiaries from all age groups.

- **ECDL Foundation**

ECDL Foundation delivers certification programmes all across Europe that cover competences outlined in DigComp. ECDL Foundation will develop and publish a technical mapping of its programmes, including new modules such as those relating to Computing, against DigComp. All ECDL certification programmes are fully compatible with DigComp.

ECDL Foundation has an extensive partner network in Europe and worldwide. 22 organisations from Members of the European Union as well as Norway, Serbia, Switzerland and Turkey are members of ECDL Foundation. ECDL Foundation can act as a multiplier disseminating information and raising awareness about DigComp and its implementation through our network of national partners in Europe.

ECDL Foundation can also provide its expertise and feedback on the update of DigComp

- **CEPIS**

CEPIS has a pan-European network of professional informatics associations and computer societies of 32 countries and will provide a channel for DigComp dissemination and promotion.

CEPIS can provide feedback from its Member Societies on DigComp implementation in almost all European countries.

CEPIS can provide expertise and guidance on DigComp future revisions and updates.

About Telecentre Europe

Telecentre Europe is a European non-for-profit organisation (NGO) and a member based association with a central office in Brussels, Belgium. We represent publicly funded telecentres/telecentre networks, ICT learning centres, adult education centres and libraries across Europe where everyone can access the Internet and digital technologies, learn the latest digital skills and keep up to date with technology and community developments. We coordinate projects, programmes and campaigns that empower people through ICT by finding new paths to employment, community life, relevant information and staying in touch with friends and family. Our members and partners believe that ICT has an enormous potential to combat social exclusion and poverty.

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About ECDL Foundation

ECDL Foundation is an international organisation dedicated to raising digital competence standards in the workforce, education and society. Our certification programmes, delivered through an active network in more than 100 countries, enable individuals and organisations to assess, build and certify their competence in the use of computers and digital tools to the globally-recognised ECDL standard, known as ICDL worldwide. We work with education and training partners, local & regional authorities, national governments, international development organisations as well as public and private sector employers in all sectors.

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About CEPIS

The Council of European Professional Informatics Societies (CEPIS) is a non-profit organisation seeking to improve and promote a high standard among ICT professionals, in recognition of the impact that ICT has on employment, business and society. CEPIS represents 32 member societies in 31 countries across greater Europe. Through its members, which are the professional ICT bodies at national level, CEPIS represents 450,000 ICT professionals. Established in 1989, CEPIS has since grown to become the independent authority on - and network for - ICT Professionalism in Europe.

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About European e-skills Association

The European e-Skills Association (EeSA) is a community of stakeholders supporting the development of e-skills and digital literacy in Europe. EeSA is an umbrella organisation that works in partnership with the European Commission, public authorities across Europe, SMEs and all relevant stakeholders to build upon the European Commission recommendations and other reference initiatives on digital skills.

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