

ENHANCING
DIGITAL SKILLS
ACROSS EUROPE

A L L
D I G I T A L

MANI FES TO

for enhancing
digital competences
across Europe

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Abstract

Digital competences are necessary in all aspects of life, whether they are social or personal, relate to labour or leisure, in any sector, public or private. IMPROVED CITIZENSHIP IS THE PRIMARY AIM OF DEVELOPING DIGITAL COMPETENCES. It is our conviction that the education and training (ET) on digital competences need a more consistent approach and a cohesive European system of delivery. That is why we have worked with our network of digital competence centres and relevant expert organisations on a Manifesto on digital competences.

This manifesto contains a series of key principles and recommendations on how to maximise the impact of education and training, as powerful instruments towards a continuous development of digital competences for the European citizens.

We collectively believe that we need enough offer to cover needs at all levels as well as ways to quickly compose new offers when changes in needs are anticipated or identified. We have to make the offer accessible to all EU citizens, independently of group, location, technology level or access mode. The offer can be useful and will be used only if it is of high quality, in terms of content, methodology, delivery and usability; adherence to standards can prove to be a valuable ally. A common European digital competences validation scheme will enable recognition of certificates and mobility. Finally, the development of digital competences must be sustainable; to this end, it must be context-aware, open, persisting, evolving, adaptable and “communicative”, especially with complementary frameworks and EU policies.

This manifesto includes key principles and recommendations under 5 main areas:

1

The education and training offer

TAILORED

Education and training on digital competences should be designed on the basis of real, actual needs of the individuals, organisations, job market, society.

Modular approaches in design and instructional design should ensure the personalization of content and delivery.

VERSATILE

Curricula for formal and non-formal education and training have to be conceived and managed by structures that engage stakeholders from multiple sectors and enable quick adaptation to changing needs of the audiences, technology and context.

QUALIFIED

Education and training at various EQF levels should be offered by qualified educational and training organizations and delivered by qualified trainers / educators. ET organizations should use specialized infrastructure and tools and employ knowledgeable tutors from different backgrounds.



2 Access to education and training

AVAILABLE

There should be enough ET offer on DC to satisfy the needs of society and citizens. Courses should be offered using every possible instruction technique (e.g. online, face-to-face, blended), or a combination of them, so as to facilitate citizens in choosing and completing the learning path, improve chances of participation and maximize impact of ET offer. ET offers in digital competences should ensure that citizens have as many opportunities as possible to shape their learning pathways and pace.



3 Quality of education and training

UNIVERSAL

Technology should be employed to the maximum in order to ensure access to ET for everyone, anytime, from anywhere, no matter what device and operating systems are used. Different access modalities must be incorporated in the design, taking into account individual learning modes, cultural differences, societal norms etc. An investment must be made in order to ensure that every European citizen has easy and affordable access to the minimum required level of digital infrastructure and broadband connectivity.

INCLUSIVE

Supporting citizens to enhance their digital competences should be done with the purpose to include them in modern societies that undergo digital transformation. No citizen should feel excluded (for any reason such as age, race, gender, financial condition, social group etc.) from accessing formal and non-formal education and training on media or digital literacy.

During ET design and delivery, special care should be taken for groups at risk of exclusion. ET offer must be designed to address with appropriate approaches the specific physical, cognitive, emotional and cultural barriers often faced by people at risk of being marginalized, such as migrants, women, NEET, seniors in professional retraining, elderly people, low educated people, disabled people, detainees, LGBTQ+, etc. Absence of requirement for the training and diversity criteria must systematically be considered and supported in ET financing. Special care should also be taken to include vulnerable territories. Sensitive urban zones or very rural areas are often forgotten from digital policies whereas it could be a powerful lever for economic development of these marginalized regions.

SYSTEMATIC

Education and training quality depends greatly on the methodologies and content used. Adhering to frameworks and standards ensures quality of content and processes.

There exist already several European digital competence frameworks (such as DigComp, DigComp for Edu, e-CF etc.) that can serve as the basis to design ET programmes on digital competences. Tested and proven adult education / lifelong learning methodologies should be used, without of course limiting experimentation and innovation when needed.

MEASURED

To ensure quality of results, formal and non-formal education and training curricula must be based on outputs. Learning outcomes should be used to describe what the student will achieve after completing the course. It should be possible to obtain validation of learning achievements (including assessment, recognition and certification) after completing any course.

RECOGNISED

Awarded certifications for specific qualifications should be recognized among all EU member states, therefore enabling mobility of individuals. To achieve this, synergies with tools such as Europass or ESCO must be established.

4 European homogenous validation

ONE CLASSIFICATION

A European digital qualifications classification should be established and encompass all qualifications that include digital competences. It should allow the design of new qualifications and enable mapping of all certifications. DigComp should be the basis of this framework; other widely adopted digital competence frameworks could also be considered.

ONE PROCESS

A common European validation process for awarding certifications should be defined. The process will be based on assessing learning outcomes. It will be well-described for each qualification and will be associated with the qualifications framework, but it will not depend on the process used by the trainee to acquire the digital competences. A process of consultation and engagement of stakeholders similar to the one that led to the standardization of e-CF (the European e-competences framework) should be put in place.

MULTIPLE LEARNING PATHWAYS

Assessment should be based on achieving specific learning outcomes that result from the analysis of digital competence frameworks such as DigComp. Certification should be well-defined and based on assessing those learning outcomes.

(Self-)Assessment, education / training and validation should be independent stages, although their common reference is the digital competence framework and the learning outcomes. Validation should be possible even if the individual has not completed any ET course on digital competences.

MULTIPLE CERTIFICATE FORMATS

All validation stages should be supported by digital means. A trustworthy mechanism for awarding digitally signed certificates should be implemented as part of the validation process. This will contribute to ensuring that the outcome of validation is recognized at European level.

5 Sustainability and development

OPENNESS

Targeted actions to encourage citizens to improve their digital competences should be implemented. Ethics and sustainability should be included. The impact will be maximized if citizens are empowered to access open digital platforms, courses or resources.

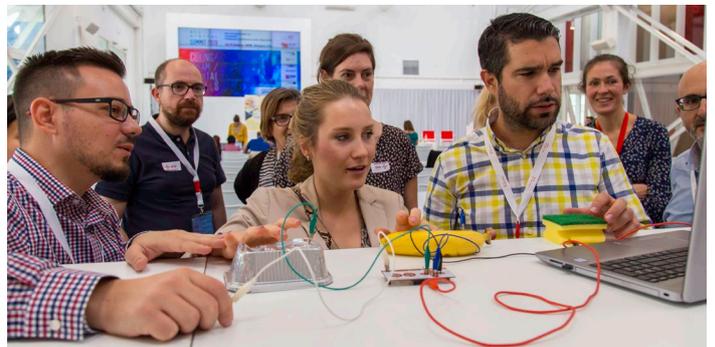
MODULARITY

Digital competences are necessary in different degrees not only for the citizens but also for those working in IT or any non-IT sector. Formal and non-formal education and training courses must provide a holistic training experience, including competences from associated professional and 21st century skills frameworks.

GOVERNANCE

It is for the benefit of society that competence frameworks such as DigComp are maintained, updated, cloned and expanded. A multi-stakeholder community of practice (CoP) is required to make these frameworks usable, useful and used.

Organisations having interest and expertise in promoting digital competences should manage these frameworks and co-develop them together with the relevant European institutions.



If your organisation agrees with the content of this Manifesto, please endorse it by following instructions at www.all-digital.org/manifesto