



Statement on the European Digital Skills Certificate (EDSC)

Context

- The Digital Education Action Plan 2021-2027¹ includes the following actions:
 - 8. “Update the European Digital Competence Framework (DigComp) with a view to including AI and data-related skills. Support the development of AI learning resources for schools, VET organisations, and other training providers. Raise awareness on the opportunities and challenges of AI for education and training.”
 - 9. “Develop a European Digital Skills Certificate (EDSC) that may be recognised and accepted by governments, employers and other stakeholders across Europe. This would allow Europeans to indicate their level of digital competences, corresponding to the Digital Competence Framework proficiency levels. (The EDSC will be supported by a self-assessment approach).”
- DigCompSAT - A self-reflection tool for the European Digital Competence Framework for Citizens² notes that “this tool is not intended to measure the users’ current digital competence in view of its certification or similar purposes. This would require a different approach from that adopted in this project in terms of: test delivery mode (which should be in presence and under controlled conditions rather than self-administered); amount and type of content/questions (a significant number of knowledge questions and practical exercises, real or simulated, would be needed, increasing the cost and complicating their production and maintenance in multiple languages and over time); time needed for taking the test on all 21 competences at different proficiency levels.”

CEPIS Position

The Council of European Professional Informatics Societies (CEPIS) welcomes the announcement of the Digital Education Action Plan (DEAP), which reflects the European Commission’s commitment to tackle challenges related to digital competences. Our organisation recognises the fact that the European Commission is supporting the timely and necessary update of the DigComp framework in the DEAP. In addition, CEPIS supports the idea of promoting digital competence certification in Europe.

However, we would like to seek clarification about the European Digital Skills Certificate (EDSC). The DEAP does not provide details about this action. We believe a clear guidance regarding its implementation should be shared with stakeholders. We hope the following suggestions prove useful in developing such a guidance.

CEPIS believes that the European Commission should map different digital competence certification schemes and quality assurance requirements to the DigComp framework across Europe. After successful mapping, the Commission should enable them to use the label of European Digital Skills Certificate.

1. We strongly advise against developing a new European certificate competing with the certification schemes already existing in the European market. The European Commission should

¹ European Commission Communication “Digital Education Action Plan 2021-2027”, 30.9.2020, COM (2020) 624 final.

² Joint Research Centre, “DigCompSAT. A Self-reflection Tool for the European Digital Competence Framework for Citizens”, 2020, <https://ec.europa.eu/jrc/en/publication/digcompsat>.



support the promotion and transparent application of DigComp across the European markets instead of competing with the existing solutions.

2. CEPIS would see the role of the European Commission as an independent evaluator of the existing certifications in Europe and recognising their coverage of the DigComp framework and quality assurance requirements. A good example would be a UNESCO's report³ which maps different certification schemes to the DigComp framework. The European Commission should develop a mechanism to assess the certifications that currently exist in the market and provide them with quality labels based on their coverage of the DigComp framework. The output of this work would be a publicly available mapping of digital skills certifications referring to the extent that they cover the 21 DigComp competences.

3. The aforementioned mapping and recognition of the existing certification schemes against the DigComp framework would provide a new opportunity for visibility of the framework and encourage its wider adoption across Europe. The criteria for the mapping and for the quality assurance requirements should be developed in close cooperation with relevant stakeholders, in a transparent and public way. This task should be led by a competent and experienced body, such as the Joint Research Centre (JRC). The recognition and mapping could be implemented by an external and neutral organisation not having commercial interests in DigComp or initiatives deriving from it.

4. CEPIS supports the Self-reflection Tool for DigComp recently launched by JRC. The tool is a valuable first step for any user interested in assessing their digital competence. However, as noted in the report, this tool cannot be used as a "measure of the users' current digital competence in view of its certification". To provide an independent proof of the existing digital competence, reliable and high-quality certification schemes mapped to DigComp are a must.

CEPIS commitment

- CEPIS will continue supporting the development of DigComp 2.2. through the Community of Practice established by ALL DIGITAL.
- CEPIS is ready to join other stakeholders in supporting the European Commission in developing clear and transparent criteria for mapping the existing certification schemes to the DigComp framework, whether it is done through the Community of Practice or other channels.
- CEPIS will promote the adoption of the DigComp framework and its mapping to the certification schemes through its Europe-wide network.

³ P.12. UNESCO "A Global Framework of Reference on Digital Literacy Skills for Indicator 4.4.2", 2018, <http://uis.unesco.org/sites/default/files/documents/ip51-global-framework-reference-digital-literacy-skills-2018-en.pdf>.



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About CEPIS

The Council of European Professional Informatics Societies (CEPIS) is the representative body of national informatics associations throughout greater Europe. Established in 1989 by 9 European informatics societies, CEPIS has since grown to represent hundreds of thousands of ICT professionals in 28 countries. Our ambition is that informatics professionals' voice be heard and respected in Europe. As a civil society institution, we care about the social impact of information technology and raise our voice when an issue is close to the content of our concern. Digital skills are one of these key issues.