

# Shaping digital education policy



See the full study

Since 2000, the issue of improving the quality of education and the role of 'digital' in the world, has now come to the fore and enjoys a high-priority status on the European agenda. The EU has emphasised the need to modernise education and training systems for living and working in a knowledge-based society: **digital** is referred to as a **key aspect of modernising education**.

## Main considerations and challenges

Digital technologies are increasingly integrated into education, and the Digital Education Action Plan (DEAP) 2018-2020 sustained the setting of the agenda. However, **more action is needed to complete the digital transformation**, which, due to **COVID-19**, has become even more urgent.

### The study:

assesses the 2018 Digital Education Action Plan (DEAP) in terms of organisational and content-related challenges. It outlines recommendations on how an **updated Digital Education Action Plan** could mitigate the weaknesses of the current plan.

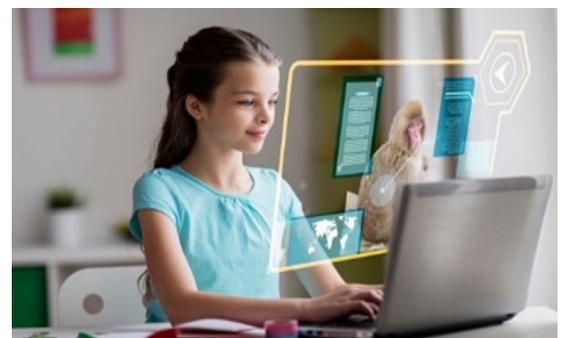
In terms of **organisational challenge**, the DEAP lacks a comprehensive vision on digital education, has too short a timeframe to function as a reference point for policy reforms, and fails to sufficiently ensure synergies between different EU investments.

In terms of **content-related challenge**, the DEAP could reflect more on what digital competence means in a digitalised world, better ensure equal opportunities, pay more attention to adult learning, and give more support to educators' Continuing Professional Development (CPD).

Some important considerations for the DEAP post-2020 concern:

1. Developing a **more holistic vision** of the digital transformation in education; extending the timeframe; ensuring synergies across actions; and connecting digital education more strongly with for instance inclusiveness and greening.

2. Strengthening the **focus on quality infrastructure for digital education for all**, in the home too; addressing the persisting barriers that hamper learners and educators in applying digital technologies; and focusing more on adult learning.



3. Stimulating the **further empowerment and CPD of educators** in pursuing more advanced integration of digital technologies in education.
4. Stimulating the further development of **'whole-school' approaches** to digital education by ensuring quality vision, leadership, infrastructure, guidance, assessment, and CPD for educators; ensuring collaboration with school stakeholders.

## Conclusions and policy recommendations

Faced with these challenges, the study recommends to:

- Develop a **more comprehensive approach**, based on a clear orientation, inspired by a holistic vision on how to facilitate the digital transformation in education.
- Consider **including additional specific targets and measurable output indicators**, for the separate actions within each DEAP priority, as well as for the DEAP as a whole.
- Consider **increasing the time-frame for the new DEAP (DEAPII) to seven years**.



- Gather, analyse and present **the results of EU investments** across actions and **funding programmes** in digital education.
- **Connect digital education** more strongly with **other policy areas** and show how digital education contributes to fair and just societies, inclusive and innovative economies, and sustainable and green societies.
- Further conceptually **develop digital competence**, the role of computational thinking, and the use of digital competence in society and at work.
- Undertake further research into **what is needed to teach and learn digital competences** in education and training leading to the best learning outcomes.
- Strengthen the focus on **ensuring quality infrastructure** for digital education for all, in education institutions and in the home.
- **Address** with more intensity **the persisting barriers** that hamper learners and educators in beneficially applying digital tools besides the lack of infrastructure and skills.
- **Strengthen the focus** of digital education **across all education levels** and sectors including adult learning and non-formal education.
- Improve the **infrastructure for adult learning** providers and the educators' competences and skills in embedding digital technologies in education.
- Stimulate the further **empowerment of educators** in

### Key areas for EU action

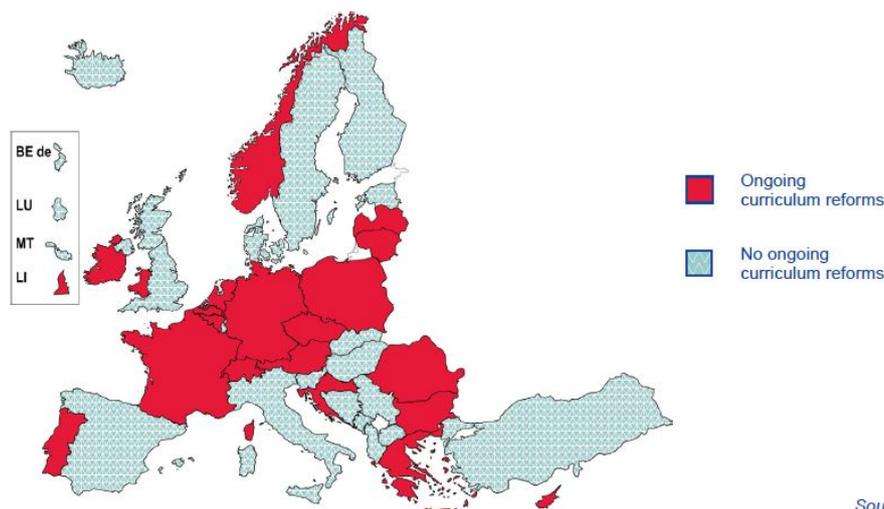
1. Consider increasing the timeframe for the new DEAP (DEAPII) to seven years.
2. Emphasise the connection between digital education and other EU policy areas.
3. Strengthen the focus of digital education across all education levels and sectors, including adult learning and non-formal education.

digital education and pursue more **advanced integration of digital tools**, through offering quality and 'recognised' CPD courses as well as through providing school support.

- Stimulate the **further development of 'whole-school' approaches to digital education**, by ensuring quality vision, leadership, infrastructure, guidance, assessment, and CPD for educators.

*On-going curriculum reforms related to digital competences in primary and general secondary education (ISCED 1-3), 2018/19*

Figure 1.4: Ongoing curriculum reforms related to digital competences in primary and general secondary education (ISCED 1-3), 2018/19



Source: Eurydice.

#### Country-specific notes

**Denmark:** During the 2017/18 school year, the Ministry of Education began a four-year pilot programme on teaching 'technological comprehension' in primary and lower secondary education, testing it both as an optional subject and as a component of other subjects.

**Germany:** As the reform is linked to the strategy 'Education in the digital World' covering primary and lower secondary education, it is only valid for those two educational levels.

**Switzerland:** The digital competence areas have already been introduced into the new curricula for compulsory education (ISCED 1 and 2), while in general upper secondary education a new, but not yet fully implemented framework curriculum for informatics/information technology is available (to be completed by 2022/23).

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