



Acquisition of Key Competences for Economic and Social Sustainability



AXESS

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Intellectual Output 2:

Mapping of digital skills and competences

Country Snapshots - SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS



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Introduction

Project AXESS is the concrete answer to specific needs in the field of upskilling adults, with focus on Digital Skills for low-skilled adult women.¹ The choice for the topic (Digital Skills) is due to the relevance of digital skills in modern social and economic environment.

This Summary of Key Findings is part of the output of work package Mapping of Digital Skills & Competences for Low Skilled Adults (Intellectual Output 2) and summarises the key findings from country snapshots. The full document is available on www.axesslearning.eu.

The country snapshots outline real and perceived learning needs, through a series of qualitative and quantitative data and information. They include the analysis of training needs and recommendations of courses to be developed in IO3.

All project partners prepared Country Snapshots that mapped Digital Skills and Competences in individual countries² and in the EU according to a common methodology (The common structure of Country Snapshots is in the Annex). The main sources for desk research were documents and data preferably not older than 2012: EU and national documents and initiatives such as Europa 2020 and ET 2020, Digital Agenda for Europe, Digital Skills and Jobs Coalition, Digital Competence Framework for Citizens, European e-Competence Framework, New Skills Agenda for Europe as well as statistical data. Some partners opted also for additional sources, namely interviews and/or questionnaires for specific target groups.

Key Findings

1. EU has issued a number of documents and initiatives on Digital Agenda and Digital Skills which outline the overall strategies. One element is training. As there is no direct EU funding for that, the Member States are expected to put these initiatives into practice.
2. A whole range of stakeholders take part and cooperate in implementation of digital agenda through training programmes. However, there is no large scale programme on digital skills that could be used across borders. In general, the states and businesses focus primarily on producing ICT professionals not on citizens. The Digital Competence Framework (DigComp) was developed as a reference for building digital competences.
3. According to the DESI index (Digital Economy and Society Index), the digital skills within the AXESS countries are below the EU average.
4. All of the AXESS project countries have national agencies that include the digital agenda in their titles – showing the importance of this issue. The informatisation / digital strategies concern mainly the economy and business (digital agenda), public administration (e-

¹ "Low-skilled" is understood throughout the project and this document as persons with minimum ISCED 3 level education who lack certain skills. "Low-skilled" here is not synonymous with „low-qualified“.

² Greece, Italy, Macedonia, Romania, Slovakia and Spain

Governance) and schools (teacher skills, equipment). Only some of the national strategies include also building the digital skills of citizens.

5. Although there are differences in the countries, gender policies are still high on the agenda.
6. There is a number of studies that show that women are less represented in the digital area – overall there are fewer female ICT professionals, and also women use the ICT less as they have less confidence in using the technology in general. According to one of the studies, better digital skills help improve productivity, increase the opportunities of finding a job and helps balance personal and professional lives, that is a key issue for adult women.
7. The initiatives related to women in the digital area are typically motivated by economic reasons, i.e. they deal with increasing the numbers of female ICT professionals rather than with the digital skills of women in general.
8. Mobile phones / smartphones are largely used to access Internet today and make many operations. However, the use of smartphones is not equal to the digital competence.
9. It's noteworthy that the lack of appropriate digital skills is the fastest-growing factor deterring households from having internet access at home (+10% since 2010), meaning that society and job market are digitalising more than people are doing. According to the EU statistics, Europeans have the appropriate infrastructure but they do not have the digital skills needed to embrace and fully take advantage of the digital transformation.
10. 79% of Europeans go online regularly³ even if 44% of them still do not have basic digital skills. Such circumstance leads to the conclusion that training courses addressed to low-skilled adults, notably women, can easily reach the target group if delivered online via OER Platforms.

³ At least once per week