



## **Digital Social Innovation: new educational competences for social inclusion**

**Project no. 2018-1-IT02-KA204-048479**

### **Final Report from Poland**

#### **1. Introductory remarks**

On the national scale, Poland needs to support the development and improvement of digitally competent citizens who will use digital technologies in a confident and safe way for various purposes, such as: working, getting a job, learning, shopping on-line, obtaining health information, being included and participating in society, entertainment, etc. If we look into digital competencies globally, it appears that approximately 40% of Europeans have insufficient or no digital skills and 42% of those people who have no digital skills are unemployed (DigComp. *The digital competence...*, 2019).

As regards the state of human capital in Poland, reported by Social Diagnosis, Analysis of Qualifications and Key Competences for Increasing the Opportunities of Graduates in the Labour Market, there is a strong demand for the increase of skills that are essential to implement the government Strategy for Responsible Development until 2020 (with a forecast up to 2030).

Together with transversal skills (such as language skills, communication skills or entrepreneurship) and professional skills of highly qualified staffs:

- Digital skills are crucial for effective performance in the modern world, regardless of age or physical condition. They enable reading digital contents, evaluating its credibility, using it in everyday life, and expanding the potential of e-services provided by public and business units (*Youth policies in Poland - 2018*).



## 2. Digital Social Innovation (DSI) competence description

### 2.1. Digital competence in school curricula

The development of digital competence shows its presence "[...] through school curricula, teacher-specific digital competencies, the assessment of students' digital competencies and the use of technology in assessment and testing, and finally, the strategic approaches to digital education across Europe with specific reference to policies supporting schools" ( *Digital Education at School in Europe*, 2019, p. 9).

The development of digital competence is included in the huge majority of European Union countries at all education levels. However, in contrast with traditional school subjects, it is not only considered as a topic in its own right, but also as a transversal key competence. The education system in Poland combines two approaches: digital competence is either addressed as a compulsory separate subject or integrated into other compulsory subjects. Learning outcomes relate to all five digital competence areas set out by the European Digital Competence Framework for Citizens - known as DigComp and launched in 2015:

- information and data literacy,
- communication and collaboration,
- digital content creation,
- safety,
- and problem solving.

As regards the area of information and data literacy, schools focus on the competence of evaluating data, information and digital content.

For the area of communication and collaboration, particular attention is given to collaborating through digital technologies and to managing digital identity.

As regards digital content creation area, the emphasis is given to developing digital content and programming/coding.

For safety area, particular significance is addressed to protecting personal data and privacy, as well as protecting health and well-being.

As regards problem solving area, identifying digital competence gaps is stressed, in particular.



## 2.2. Digital competences for school social workers

In contemporary Poland, similarly as in other European Union countries, there is an unquestionable demand for assistance and support provided by social workers in school environments. Professionals in this field are equally necessary for students with behavioral disorders or for those with cultural and economic disturbances and difficulties, as for children who are exposed to cyber threats, whenever their safety is at risk. Research shows that professionals who possess extensive skills and knowledge as school social workers are expected to have digital competences in the following scopes:

- Digital technology understanding - this encompasses knowledge about the multifarious dimensions of the digital revolution and the impact on school activities.
- Digital-based educational processes - these comprises both theoretical and practical knowledge of online educational models, as well as teaching-learning practices that can support the implementation and running of e-learning and distance learning programs.
- Some sectorial knowledge - this includes knowledge in specific fields, such as social learning, social telerehabilitation, and social networking tools" (Marzano, Lizut, Ochoa, 2019, p. 324).

To master social media and to be thoroughly proficient in the use of mobile phones, and the Internet, in general, constitute indispensable conditions for effective performance of the school social workers in their everyday work.

## 2.3. The dimension of competences within the area of communication and collaboration

This area is reflected by a set of competences that can be grouped in the following six dimensions:

- Interacting through a variety of digital technologies, which means understanding appropriate digital communication for a given context.
- Sharing through digital technologies, which means sharing data, information and digital content with other users through appropriate digital technologies, as well as acting as an intermediary, and knowing about referencing and attribution practices.
- Engaging in citizenship through digital technologies, which means participating in society with the help of public and private digital services, seeking opportunities for self-empowerment and for active, participatory citizenship through appropriate digital technologies.



- Collaborating through digital technologies, which means using digital tools for collaborative activities that lead to the construction and creation of resources and knowledge through combined efforts.
- Netiquette, which means to be aware of behavioral norms and know-how while using digital technologies and interacting in their environments, as well as to be aware of cultural and generational diversity in digital environments, and to adapt specific communication strategies.
- Managing digital identity, which means to create and manage one or multiple digital identities, to know how to protect one's own reputation, and how to deal with the data that come from various digital tools, environments and services (*DigComp. Digital Competence Framework for Citizens*, 2019).

### **3. Receivers and beneficiaries target groups of digital competences**

From among five key digital competence areas, a particular importance should be directed towards the second area of communication and collaboration that consists of:

- interacting through digital technologies,
- sharing information and content through digital technologies,
- engaging in citizenship through digital technology,
- collaborating through digital technology.

Digital competences can be put to practical use across diverse sectors in order to facilitate and support collaboration and development work for educators, trainers, employers, professional bodies and policy-makers. From among an extensive list of users of digital competences, the following receivers are particularly important:

- employment services assessing and certifying job seekers' competences and providing career guidance and necessary training;
- job seekers' who are able to certificate their own level of digital competences with the help of the Europass CV;
- teachers improving their professional development;
- learners working on their digital competences which they expect to apply in the future.



The promotion of social innovation in Poland is under way within the framework of the Knowledge, Education, Development Operational Program for 2014-2020. A remarkably broad, multisectorial and multifaceted spectrum of the target groups to which project activities are addressed comprises: the young generation from 15 to 29 years old (NEET category of those who are "not in employment, education and training), together with the disabled; micro-, small- and medium-sized enterprises and their staffs, social economy units, social enterprises and their support centers, public administration, judiciary staff, local governments, labour market institutions, employment services, Voluntary Labour Corps, social partners, schools and other educational institutions, universities and research centers, working groups at risk of losing a job, health and care providers and their medical staff, people in custody, Gypsies, among others (Klimczuk, 2015).

#### **4. Social innovation developed by the Janusz Korczak Pedagogical University in Warsaw**

This higher education institution fosters, among others, the dissemination and promotion of social innovation, advocates innovative actions in the areas of education, pedagogy, social policy and social work. Since 2013, the Institute for Social Innovation has been in operation. The aim of this organizational unit is to deliver the above-listed activities. The University in question has expertise in the education of social workers through level I (the Warsaw Faculty) and level II (the Katowice Faculty and the Szczecin Faculty) study programs, postgraduate courses, specialized training courses for social workers, professional training of social workers.

In addition to those study programs and related activities, there is a need of:

- competencies enabling changes and improvements of the effectiveness of actions;
- competences to use networks of institutions, organizations and specialists in order to solve local community problems successfully;
- practical, technical competencies and expertise in modern technological tools in order to facilitate planning and execution of assistance/support measures.

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