

DIGITAL EDUCATION ACTION PLAN

Policy briefing

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Short summary of the policy

The Digital Education Action Plan (2021-2027) is an EU initiative promoting high-quality, inclusive, and accessible digital education. Adopted on 30 September 2020, it encourages European cooperation to address digital education challenges, especially after COVID-19. It aligns with the EU's digital transformation goals, supporting the Recovery and Resilience Facility and Next Generation EU. A public consultation from July to September 2020 gathered input from citizens, institutions, and organizations to shape the proposal.

In line with its two strategic priorities “Fostering the development of a high-performing digital education system” and “Enhancing digital skills and competences for the digital transformation”, a set of actions to support these priorities is defined. The aim is to ensure a coordinated effort at EU level to support education/training systems that address current challenges while providing a vision for the way ahead.

The Action Plan supports the objective of the European Skills Agenda on basic skills as well as it supports the [council recommendation on vocational training \(VET\)](#). The actions set in the Education Plan are benefiting from several programmes, the Digital Europe Programme (DEP) is one of them.

Main objectives of the policy

To support the high-performing digital education system, the EC defines [14 actions](#) under the Education Action Plan which can be considered as the main objectives and can be found online.

In summary, the idea of the Action Plan is to make the education and training system fit for the digital age. This includes making the whole society (everyone and everywhere) capable of participating in digital transformation and benefiting from digital transformation. Further, it targets also the economic side by forcing appropriate investments in connectivity and equipment combined with a strong focus on educating the workforce. The consideration of ethical aspects and the protection of personal rights and data is fundamental.

Context and relation to the Digital Europe Programme (DEP)

The Digital Education Action Plan (2021-2027) and the DEP (2021-2027) are both EU initiatives aimed at advancing digital transformation, but they address different aspects of this goal. The Digital Education Action Plan focuses on enhancing digital skills, education systems, and infrastructure to ensure that all citizens can benefit from digital opportunities, while DEP funds projects that build strategic digital capacities, including AI, cybersecurity, and supercomputing. They complement each other by ensuring that a well-trained digital workforce, developed through education initiatives, can effectively engage with and contribute to the cutting-edge digital technologies funded under DEP.

Parts of the policy directly related to specific objectives (SO) in DEP

Fully in line with both priorities of the Action Plan in general, by having a closer look at the actions, the following are identified as the most related ones to activities funded under DEP.

- **Action 10** – Provision of digital skills in education and training
- **Action 12** – Digital opportunity Traineeships
- **Action 13** – Women’s participation in STEM

These actions belong to the second priority of the Action Plan with the aim to enhance digital competences. They are supported mainly by activities funded under DEP Advanced Digital Skills (SO4) but also by other activities funded under DEP (e.g. SO2 – EDIHs, AI topics). Further, Action 6 (Ethical guidelines on AI & data in teaching/learning) and Action 8 (Update of Digital Competence Framework for AI/data skills) are connected to DEP goals.

Activities in the DEP Work Programme 2025-27 contributing to the objectives of the policy

Within the DEP, mainly activities funded under SO4 contribute to the Action Plan’s goals. A few further call topics (SO2, SO5) also include activities that are in line with and supporting the objectives of the Digital Education Action Plan (DEAP).

Topics in the Work Programme	DEP Call	Linked Digital Education Action(s)	Reason
Sectoral digital skills academies	2, 4	Action 10	Directly builds advanced, sector-specific training capacity and certifications for learners and workers, supporting DEAP targets to improve provision and recognition of digital skills.
ELEVATE: European League of Advanced Digital Skills Academies	2	Action 10 Action 12	Matches DEAP goals on better provision and traineeship pipelines.
European Advanced Digital Skills Competitions	2	Action 10 Action 11	Competitions raise excellence and visibility of advanced digital skills, supporting DEAP efforts to measure and improve digital skills provision across Member States.

Digital Skills and Jobs Platform CSA	3	Action 9	The Platform coordinates certification, training offers and stakeholder matchmaking - core to DEAP's vision for portable digital skills.
EdTech Accelerator	3	Action 5	Accelerates EdTech uptake and market-readiness of pedagogical tools, aligning to DEAP's objective of supporting the use of digital tools.
Excellence in higher education and training programmes in key digital areas and applied technologies	3, 4	Action 11 Action 12	Funds curriculum excellence and capacity in Higher Education, directly supporting DEAP's target to strengthen higher education provision in key digital areas.
Data Space for Skills	4	Action 11	A skills dataspace enables sharing and re-use of skills data (training outcomes, certifications) across borders, supporting DEAP's objectives on measurement and recognition of digital skills.
Testing genAI4EU application at scale and under real-world condition	2, 4	Action 6 Action 8	Real-world testing of generative AI tools informs DEAP work on ethical AI guidance for educators and skills frameworks requiring AI/data literacy.
Apply AI: GenAI for public administration – CSA	2	Action 6 Action 8	While targeted at public admin, GenAI pilots produce methodology and ethical practices transferable to education contexts (teacher tools, assessment utilities).
Consolidation of the Network of EDIHs	2, 3	Action 1	EDIHs strengthen local/regional capacity and support education institutions in adopting digital technologies - a core DEAP delivery channel.
Supporting the coordination of the Cybersecurity Skills Academy	4	Action 10 Action 13	Cybersecurity skill-building complements DEAP's advanced skills priorities and supports safe digital education infrastructure and curricula.

Related policies and further information

The Action Plan is a crucial component in establishing the European Education Area and as an initiative it contributes to several European Commission priorities, including the Union of Skills, the European Skills Agenda and amongst others, of course also to the 2030 Digital Compass.

Check out the following online calendars for information about related events: [Shaping Europe's digital future](#), [HADEA](#), [Digital Skills & Jobs Platform](#)