



1. The key competences are those that employers expect, and need, people to have at the point at which they enter the labour market, and which will be further developed thereafter. As such it is important that these competences are attained by all, irrespective of their gender and background.
2. The scope of the existing Key Competences Framework broadly reflects the range of competences that employers look for in their (potential) workers and which enable companies to be productive and competitive. In this respect the review should be about adapting the existing framework of the 8 key competences, where needed;
3. The eight competences outlined in the Framework can be used as a basis to develop a shared understanding of what constitute key competences and to further encourage their acquisition during primary and secondary education, in the first instance, and to a higher level through the further development and updating of competences and skills throughout working life;
4. The starting point at the very early stages of education needs to be **literacy and numeracy**. Competence in these areas is crucial for a person's educational and personal development;
5. In this respect, literacy should be understood as developing competences in reading, writing, listening and speaking in the language of the member state in which a person is raised/resides. In the vast majority of cases this is the natural mother tongue and the language in which education and training will be provided;
6. Building on this is the essential role of **science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM)** related competences and skills.;
7. STEM competences and skills are often thought of as being acquired at upper secondary and tertiary levels. However, these skills can, and should, be acquired at all levels of education and training, including at primary and secondary school, and through general or vocational education. They can also be developed and enhanced throughout the course of a person's working life. Early learning opportunities are important for developing the aptitude to develop of STEM skills and competences later in life;
8. STEM skills help to foster transversal skills, notably **systemic and critical thinking**, as well as **inter-disciplinary learning**, in which people develop the ability to think and act in different situations. These three issues should be mainstreamed across the revised framework;
9. Therefore, STEM-related competences and skills should be more prominent in the revised framework and should be closely aligned with another area that is under-developed in the current framework, which is **digital competences** and an understanding of the way in which digitisation is impacting upon the world of work and education and training. As part of this, it is important to observe that digitisation impacts upon sectors in different ways and so there needs to be sufficient flexibility for a variety of approaches to the acquisition of digital competences and skills;
10. The five main areas of competence outlined in the 2016 version of the Digital Competence Framework for Citizens should be the primary source of content for strengthening the role of digital competences in the revised Key Competences Framework;
11. In addition to what is mentioned in the **Digital Competence Framework**, reference could be made to developing competence in using digital means to participate in education and training. For example, under the "communication and collaboration" competence field there is a sub-heading on "Engaging in citizenship through digital technologies". **An additional sub-heading could be added on "Engaging in education and training through digital technologies"**. This could include

competences, such as: using digital learning platforms; accessing digital resources; using various digital technologies to interact with teachers/trainers/fellow students and to learn independently;

12. It is also important to highlight the need for competences in digital media literacy, starting as part of basic literacy and developing throughout a person's education and career;
13. Literacy in one's own language is an essential pre-condition for **learning an additional language(s)**. It is increasingly important that people develop competences in one or more languages other than their own. Within the EU, priority should be given to learning the language of another Member State(s). It can be recalled that Member States have agreed the objective for all EU citizens to speak two languages in addition to their mother tongue;
14. The ability to hold a conversation, to navigate a website, to read a newspaper or information board and to work in a language other than your own are competences that can play an important role in shaping a person's future education and employment opportunities as well as enhancing cultural exchanges and travel experiences;
15. **Entrepreneurship** should be viewed as comprising several elements. It is about developing a mind-set to be entrepreneurial; fostering the creation of new start-ups; and strengthening the abilities of entrepreneurs that have already established a company. Being an entrepreneur involves competences such as creativity, creative thinking, problem solving, individual initiative, self-motivation, and a positive attitude towards sustainable risk-taking. Such competences should also be developed among employees in the form of intra-preneurship. To encourage entrepreneurship it is important to provide classes in schools about how to run a business and to make it successful;
16. The three main areas of competence presented in the 2016 Entrepreneurship Competence Framework should be the basis for revising the Key Competences Framework;
17. The notion of **learning to learn** is an important one and **should continue to primarily focus on life-long learning** in the framework of career development and labour market participation.
18. People need to be encouraged to feel more responsible for their learning and work trajectories. They need to be given the means to think for themselves and learn continuously in their lives, to contribute more to economic and work performance.
19. A final point concerns the importance of developing competences **in service orientation and inter-personal skills** that are relevant for work and social settings and which take into account cultural and human (societal) diversity. This might be elaborated as part of the point in the existing framework on cultural awareness and expression and/or in other areas of the framework;
20. To conclude, the aim should be for as many people as possible to have developed a basic to intermediate level of the competences outlined within the Framework by the time that they have completed their initial education and training and at the point at which they are ready to enter the labour market. This is vital for fostering their employability and employment opportunities;
21. This does not exclude the fact that the development of competences takes place over the course of a life time and career and are something that should be further enhanced as part of a life-long learning approach;
22. As part of this it would be helpful, at European level, to promote and exchange practices on national initiatives that enable people to assess their skills and competences, relative to employers' needs.