

Public consultation on Key Competences Framework

Estonian Position Paper

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In Estonia, the EU key competences framework has been quite broadly adopted. It has been taken into consideration upon drafting of strategies, development of curricula, as well as description of learning outcomes in formal education as well as in non-formal learning. It is positive that the descriptions of competences have been sufficiently generic, enabling each Member State to set their own objectives upon acquisition of competences.

The society is constantly changing, causing also changes in the competences needed for succeeding in life. Taking account of the fact that the recommendation was adopted in 2006, we agree that in the view of the development of the society, economy and technology, the descriptions of competences need updating and the selection of the competences should be re-considered. Current definitions and descriptions are mostly long and difficult to follow. Therefore, they should be made more compact and clear, approximating also the use of terminology, taking account of the terms used in other international organisations. Furthermore, when updating descriptions of competences, account should be taken of the competence models completed after 2006 (e.g. *Digital Competence Framework: the Conceptual Reference Model*, *Entrepreneurship Competence Framework*). Similar models could be developed also for other competences. The framework document should provide the core of each competence, while detailed explanation would be provided in the models.

It is important to draw closer connection with the skills of 21st century and key competencies. It is essential to adequately describe digital competence within this framework, focussing on its relations with other competencies and 21st century skills. Estonia has already included digital competence in the curricula of basic and upper secondary schools.

We find that the communication competence should not be limited to the ability to express oneself in a clear and appropriate manner in both oral and written form only, but should also include the ability to notice, listen, motivate and empathise with others etc. Special attention should be paid to media literacy and critical thinking, as the influence of various media has significantly increased, and the ability to find adequate information from a large set of information is inevitable. Taking account of the fact that in a contemporary multilingual society the mother tongue of people may differ from the language space they live, study and work in, the consolidation of the competences of mother tongue and foreign language into a single language competence could be considered.

The importance of learning to learn should be increased, especially in the context of contemporary learning approaches and lifelong learning. The wish to learn and the ability to recognise the need for additional learning is necessary to make a successful career and actively participate in the society. The link with critical thinking skills should be paid special attention here.

The reflection of the European values in social and civic competences is an essential point. In this regard, it would be relevant to create a connection with the definitions and models of human rights education and education for democratic citizenship of the European Council, the UN Declaration on Human Rights Education and Training, UNESCO global citizenship education and other such concepts. Also the question of tackling violent extremism and

prevention of radicalisation which is addressed in all the above mentioned fora and at the EU should be born in mind when reviewing these competences.

The current description of the cultural competence is focussed on cultural aesthetics. We find, however, that stress should rather be laid on cultural identity and intercultural dimension. Furthermore, in regard to cultural competence, cooperation could be conducted with the European Federation for Intercultural Learning (EFIL), which is also currently working on the interpretation of cultural competence.

For further implementation of the framework, it is undoubtedly necessary to continue supporting mutual learning, and including the framework in Erasmus+ programme and other project support schemes.