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## Digital Education Action Plan Update Stakeholder online workshop – 30 March 2020 Report

Stakeholder online workshop from 30<sup>th</sup> March was the last activity in the consultation period for Digital Education Action Plan (DEAP) Update that the Commission will publish in June 2020. Organizations and institutions that gave all necessary contribution within the consultation period (41 total), amongst which is ECSWE, were asked to participate in the online workshop and in such a way give their final standpoints on the upcoming Update.

Workshop hosts were Deirdre Hodson and Simona Petkova from Digital education team at Commission's Directorate General for Education and Culture (DG EAC). Workshop was carried out through Zoom call with 51 participant amongst which 21 person actively joined discussions, within which were both ECSWE delegates – Paula Bleckmann and Dora Šimunović.

First session on the context and reasons for an update of DEAP was carried out by Georgi Dimitrov, Deputy Head of Unit 'Innovation and EIT' and Project Leader on the Update of Digital Education Action Plan at DG EAC. He stressed that DEAP Update comes from the reflection of the current policy combined with the insights from all stakeholders with primer goal to widen the scope to non-formal education. Dimitrov also stressed that DEAP is to have a longer period of implementation than only two years.

The next vivid discussion occurred around the question of current limitations to the DEAP. Enrico Nardelli from University of Rome was the first of a few to state that there is an insufficient level of digital competences with a part of the population, to which Andrew Todd from Life Long Learning Platform (LLLPL) stressed that DEAP should be also applicable to life-long learning programs. Another idea presented was the need for adaptation of the DEAP on each member state's level as a guide to good practice, whether as a universal document or as a sample to be used for each member's own similar document. At this point, Paula Blackmann pointed out the limitation of DEAP in its need for fast implementation of high-tech learning environment while long-term risks of such approach are not taken into account. She reminded that "we need to separate the path from goal".

The discussion then reflected on the implications of COVID-19 to education and training system as such. Main testimony was that basically all formal education institutions had to transfer into virtual space for online classes in order to maintain the education service but a challenge is to provide a quality content, enable valid assessment practices and make sure that all parties included have sufficient set of skills and equipment to participate. Claudio Masotti from Council of European Professional Informatics Societies (CEPIS) pointed out a risk of online classes that often disables parents from keeping in track with their kids studies because they now have a "valid reason" to hide in their rooms behind their computers. Enrico Nardelli also stated here that we should still think about what educational practices will be once we get back to "normality". He also agreed with Paula Bleckmann on a value of a step in media literacy basic education without the usage of digital devices.



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In redefining DEAP priorities (3), the following came about:

Priority 1 would be *supporting digital literacy, competences and skills for all* which would encompass digital literacy, ethics and privacy, artificial intelligence – knowledge and understanding, computing education/informatics/computational thinking and recognition and certification of digital skills.

In the discussion on Priority 1, there had been distinguished comments on AI usage and certification of digital skills but the most focus was put on the definition of digital literacy. Within that discussion, Dora Šimunović explained the need for low- or no-tech digital literacy education in its beginning stages of pre-school and primary school setting, which gives healthy base for further high-tech digital literacy. Andrew Todd from LLLP agreed and added that digital skills should be understood in the broader sense.

Priority 2 would be *making digital learning a reality for all* which would encompass pedagogies for teaching and learning with technologies, teacher competences in the pedagogical use of technologies, high-quality online education content (including OER), inclusion, including learners with special needs and recognition of online blended learning.

In the discussion on Priority 2, there was a mention of importance of robotic science and AI in serving people with disabilities and the importance of general acceptance of online interaction as a valid pathway to accreditations and certificates. The point that Paula Bleckmann delivered in this segment was that we need to be careful when implementing technology into class so that we do not fall into a trap of blind rely on technology but to always empower teachers on how to use it in a positive manner and, even more importantly, when to choose not to use it because in the particular situation the analog practice gives better learning outcome. Florian Ramplet from Hochschulforum Digitalisierung (HFD) and Stifterverband AI Campus agreed with Paula's point explaining that only quality digital content is worth using.

Priority 3 would be *harnessing data and foresight* which would encompass cross-disciplinary, comparative and longitudinal studies, skills foresight and graduate tracking.

In the discussion on Priority 3, Claudio Masotti from CEPIS opened with the reminder on the developmental relevance of soft skills and importance of preserving them within digital education. Florian Schildheuer from JE Europe referred to the need of having an open conversation with the business sphere to keep in track with its needs within job market while Enrico Nardelli provided a good example from University of Rome on graduate tracking. In this segment, Paula Bleckmann reminded on the danger of media addiction and once again stressed the importance of introducing digital technology only when pupils and schools raise up to, so called, media maturity. Then she shared a [link](#) to an example of an ongoing research using the new Instrument of MMM (Media Maturity Matrix).

All in all, we are satisfied with the level of participation our two delegates provided at the workshop and one evidence of the success was the general oral summary of the workshop by Deirdre Hodson who, amongst other prominent take-aways, stated that teachers should be empowered to use digital technology in a thoughtful way and also with age appropriateness.