



Workshop on “Digital Literacy in Compulsory Education”

Organized by the e-START Digital Literacy Network
ISSEP 2008, July 2008, Torun, Poland

The premise, aims, and scope of the Workshop

It has become apparent over the last few years that digital literacy is an essential, fundamental and critical educational goal constituting an important life skill, in the same way as literacy and numeracy. The importance that has been assigned to its development within compulsory education can be clearly evidenced in the rationale of official EU reports and OECD publications, as well as the content of contemporary initiatives and action plans undertaken at national, European and international levels. In particular, as it is suggested in a recent OECD official publication, ICT enriches the curriculum in at least two fundamental ways. *“The first is as an enhancement across almost every subject and activity...(and) the second, yet more radical, is the pursuit of digital literacy in its own right, whereby the individual becomes empowered as a discriminating and autonomous learner”* (OECD, 2001:36). Similarly, as it is stated in the eEurope 2002 Action Plan, *“pupils must be digitally literate by the time they have left school” and teachers should be trained so that they can adapt their curriculum to new technologies* (EC, 2002a:13). The same emphasis on the urgency of digital literacy development in compulsory education, in response to the broadening of the digital divide phenomenon, can be detected in a range of other EU publications (EC, 2001; EC, 2002b), which amongst others seem to propose the establishment and implementation of a pan-European digital literacy curriculum (EC, 2004:4; Tornero, 2004). Yet, for such a curriculum to be realized, certain issues need firstly to be addressed, considered and analyzed with respect to the meaning of the term ‘digital literacy’, its relationship to other similar concepts and in particular with the “digital divide” as well as the creation and formation of mechanisms and strategies that would enable the development of a common digital literacy framework. A key focus of such mechanisms and strategies should clearly be **teacher education**, either pre-service or in-service.

The Workshop will focus on Compulsory (K-9) education, will particularly address teachers’ issues, and will have the following aims:

- (1) To look at **school curricula related to Digital Literacy** across Europe and analyze their different characteristics
- (2) To critically review **actions and policies** towards digital literacy and identify **best practice** in the classroom

Introduction to the Workshop's Themes and Proceedings

It has become apparent over the last few years that digital literacy is an essential, fundamental and critical educational goal, and at the same time an important life skill. The importance assigned to the pursuit of digital literacy within compulsory education is clearly illustrated in a number of reports and publications, initiatives and action plans undertaken at national, European and international levels. In many of these cases, the endorsement of digital literacy is perceived as an act in response to the emergence and broadening of the “digital divide” and the promotion of an e-inclusive pedagogy.

The Workshop will address the following issues:

- (1) What are the commonalities and differences of the **different curricula related to Digital Literacy** across Europe?
- (2) What are the **characteristics** of an inclusive European digital literacy curriculum?
- (3) What are the **success/failure factors in action plans and policies** for digital literacy, and what lessons can be learnt as **best practice for the classroom**.

Following this rationale, the activities of this Workshop will attempt:

- to initiate and activate the participants' reflections on these issues through short presentations/overviews of previous results, and
- to foster dialogue, active collaboration and exchange of creative ideas among participants through the organization of thematic working sessions.

The Workshop will have a *convenor* to initiate the discussion, but it will be **an open event** for all ISSEP 2008 participants.

Our discussion forum methodology

The Workshop will kick off with a brief introduction presenting the premise and aims of the workshop and a brief tour of the activities of the e-START Digital Literacy Network, and will comprise three main interactive sessions of 30min, in the form of open forums. All three sessions will start with a brief (15 min) presentation introducing previous results on the three themes. A panel discussion will summarize the forum outcomes at the end.

Workshop duration: 2hr

Teachers and educators are particularly welcome to participate.

Organization of the Workshop

The following people have been allocated **organizational roles** for this Workshop:

- Valentina Dagiene, to serve as **Workshop Chair**
- **Organising Committee:** Valentina Dagiene, Maciej Syslo, Lampros Stergioulas
- Marina Bogovac, to serve as communication manager.

The Workshop is organized by the e-START EU-funded project (e-START Digital Literacy Network, e-Learning Programme, Contract No.: 2006-4530/001-001 ELE ELEB11), which aims to build an EU-wide network of experts and key stakeholders that will provide a communication base for understanding, supporting and promoting "Digital Literacy" in compulsory education (K-9) across Europe.

Contact person: Lampros Stergioulas, Brunel University. Email: Lampros.stergioulas@brunel.ac.uk