



Digital Citizenship Education
and Foreign Language Learning

DiCE.Lang Handbook: A guide for teachers to digital citizenship education and foreign language learning

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Design: Joana Pereira

Publisher:

UA Editora

Universidade de Aveiro

Serviços de Biblioteca, Informação Documental e Museologia

1st edition - February 2023

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.48528/55ez-e636>



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Co-funded by the
Erasmus+ Programme
of the European Union



Project Ref: 2020-1-DE01-KA203-005712

The creation of these resources has been (partially) funded by the ERASMUS+ grant program of the European Union under grant no. 2020-1-DE01-KA203-005712. Neither the European Commission nor the project's national funding agency DAAD are responsible for the content or liable for any losses or damage resulting from the use of these resources.

Financially supported by National Funds through FCT – Fundação para a Ciência e a Tecnologia, I.P., under the projects UIDB/00194/2020 and UIDP/00194/2020.



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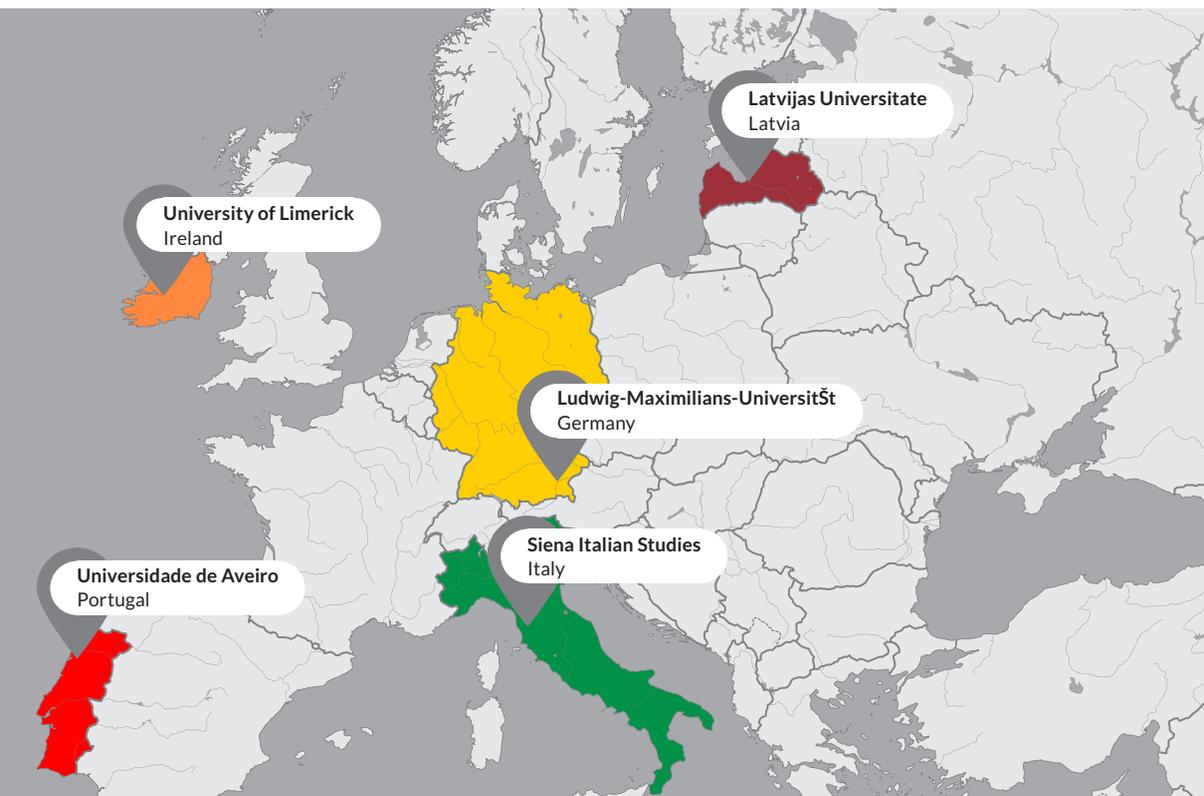
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Contents

1. DiCE.Lang: short project description	5
Survey	7
Open Educational Resources.....	8
Teacher Training Package.....	9
Policy Framework.....	9
2. Theoretical background	10
3. DiCE.Lang framework proposal	15
Template of the Teaching Units	18
Teaching Unit	19
4. Teacher Training Package and its components	20
5. Assessment of Digital Citizenship Education: observations, reflections, proposals.....	22
References	24

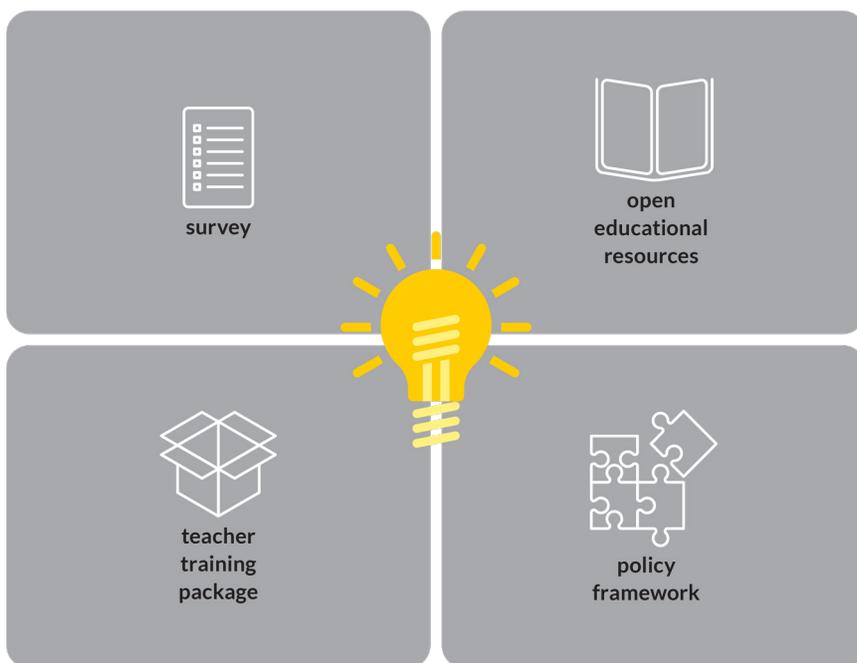
1. DICE.LANG: SHORT PROJECT DESCRIPTION

DiCE.Lang, an acronym for Digital Citizenship Education and Foreign Language Learning, is a three-year transnational European Erasmus + Strategic Partnership project (September 2021 - August 2023). The partner consortium is composed of five institutions from five different European countries: Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität in Munich (Germany), University of Limerick (Ireland), Universidade de Aveiro (Portugal), Latvijas Universitate (Latvia) and Siena Italian Studies (Italy).



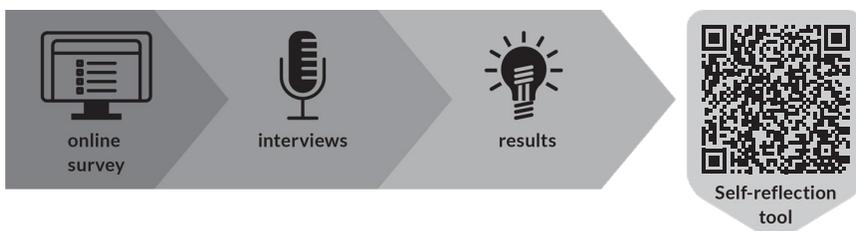
The project’s overall aim is to strengthen the profile of Digital Citizenship Education (DCE) vis-à-vis Foreign Language Education. Digital Citizenship Education has emerged as a supranational priority and has proved to play a crucial role in education: in fact, the Council of Europe has produced a set of documents and tools that analyze “good practice in digital citizenship education as well as the gaps and challenges in formal and informal learning contexts” (Richardson and Milovidov, 2019, p. 9). In order to facilitate the implementation of DCE in schools and in curricula across Europe, subject-specific adaptations are required which, at moment, are still lacking despite being explicitly called for in available DCE publications published by the Council of Europe. This implementation would include a thorough adaptation of DCE principles and objectives into foreign language education (FLE).

The DiCE.Lang project has envisaged four intellectual outputs: a survey, a set of open educational resources, a teacher training package, and a policy framework.



Survey

The first crucial activity of the project was to construct, implement and evaluate a survey on pre- and in-service teachers' knowledge, skills and attitudes related to the teaching of Digital Citizenship Education in Foreign Language Learning (FLL) settings. Such a survey was necessary because the implementation of DCE in FLL presents researchers with the novel challenge to develop programmes, resources and solutions that are directed at teachers for implementing DCE in subject-specific ways. Indeed, the European *Digital Citizenship Education Handbook* identifies teachers as central transmitters for bringing DCE into Foreign Language Education (FLE). According to the *Handbook*, they play a major role in the level of success achieved by students when implementing strategies and practices that enable learners to develop their full potential as digital and critical citizens in today's and tomorrow's societies. Hence, it is crucial to get insights into teachers' knowledge, skills and attitudes related to DCE in FLE, and in what ways these can facilitate or impede the educational progression towards Digital Citizenship Education in the specific context of FLE. The DiCE.Lang survey was administered in the local contexts of the five partner institutions to a total number of almost 600 respondents.



<https://www.dicelang.anglistik.uni-muenchen.de/intellectual-outputs/teacher-training-package/index.html>

Open Educational Resources

The second intellectual output developed, piloted and evaluated by the project consortium is a set of open educational resources for DCE in FLL which can be used by teachers and educators to teach DCE to learners at all school levels and students at universities. This OER package entails two sets of resources: the first one includes fifty teaching units, most of which are available in English and a few others in the consortium's languages; the second one includes a digital inventory of sixty authentic multilingual resources for DCE in FLE (including digital texts, literature, films and digital games).

Digital Inventory

60 resources
to be used in
FL classrooms

50 Teaching Units

Original lesson plans
to be used in
FL classrooms



Digital Inventory & Teaching units:
<https://www.dicelang.gwi.uni-muenchen.de/index.php>

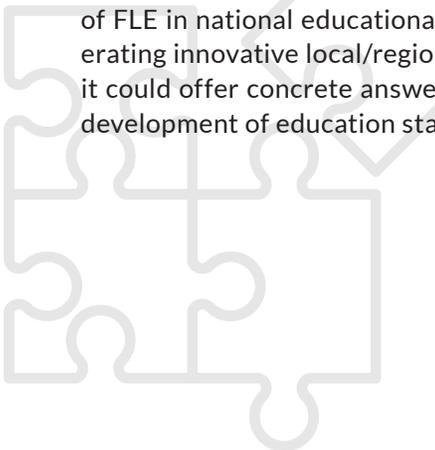


Teacher Training Package

The third output of the project is a teacher training package for teachers of foreign languages dealing with DCE, and it includes five items: the one-off event (composed of an international online session and a local online and/or in-presence session); a free online self-study course for teachers to engage in digital literacy development; a teacher training educational module, available for curricular integration at university level and elaborated for teacher training degrees; a handbook (the present one) that will show the possibility of implementing DCE in FLE contexts; a multilingual guide which will introduce and explain the whole teacher training package.

Policy Framework

The policy framework, based on existing frameworks of DCE, should be utilized in European countries as a reference for local implementations of DCE in FLE; it contains preliminary observations, concepts and practical examples of how DCE can be implemented and localized in the practice of FLE in national educational contexts; it could also be useful for generating innovative local/regional curricula regarding DCE in FLE; finally, it could offer concrete answers for policy guidance on the professional development of education stakeholders.



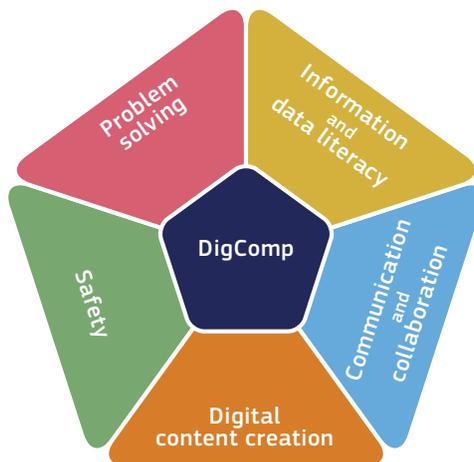
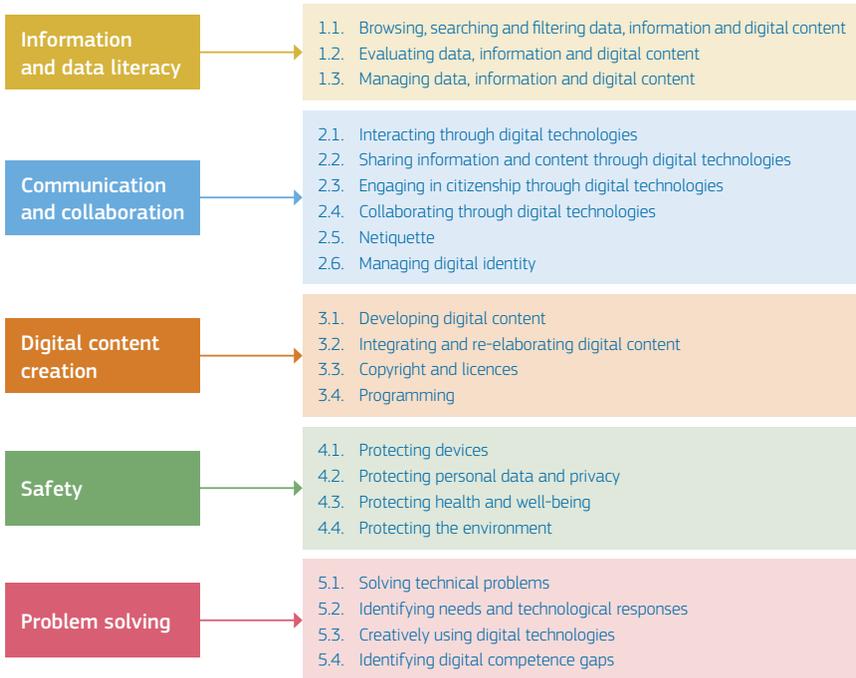
2. THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

In recent years European institutions have produced three main frameworks regarding digital competences, digital citizenship education and democratic competences, the whole set of which are closely interrelated.

The first one, the European Digital Competence Framework (DigComp), is a reference framework created by the European Commission to offer a common comprehensive understanding of what digital competences are. It was first elaborated in 2013 and its most recent update was released in March 2022: since “its adoption, DigComp has provided a scientifically solid and technology-neutral basis for a common understanding of digital skills and framing policy” (Vuorikari et al., 2022, p. 1) in European countries. Digital knowledge, skills and attitudes are considered lifelong learning competences of EU citizens. According to this publication, digital competence

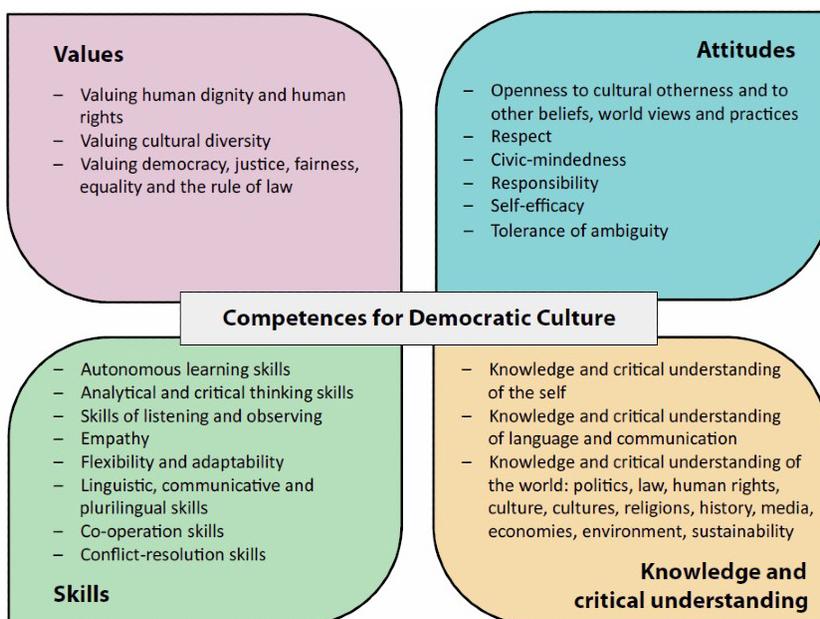
involves the confident, critical and responsible use of, and engagement with, digital technologies for learning, at work, and for participation in society. It includes information and data literacy, communication and collaboration, media literacy, digital content creation (including programming), safety (including digital well-being and competences related to cybersecurity), intellectual property related questions, problem solving and critical thinking. (Council Recommendation on Key Competences for Lifelong Learning, 22 May 2018, ST 9009 2018 INIT) (Vuorikari et al., 2022, p. 3).

DigComp envisages 21 competences grouped in five areas: information and data literacy, communication and collaboration, digital content creation, safety, and problem solving. The entire list of competences reads as follows (see Vuorikari et al., p. 4):



The DigComp conceptual reference model, 2022.

The second framework is the Reference Framework of Competences for Democratic Culture (RFCDC), first elaborated in 2015 and enriched in the following years with other publications. This framework describes the competences needed by learners “if they are to participate effectively in a culture of democracy and live peacefully together with others in culturally diverse democratic societies” (Council of Europe, 2018a, p.11). Visualized as a “butterfly” or “flower”, it encompasses a total set of 20 competences, grouped in four areas (“wings” or “petals”): values, attitudes, skills, and knowledge and critical understanding.



Reference Framework of Competences for Democratic Culture
(Council of Europe, 2018a)

The third reference framework – Digital Citizenship Education (DCE) – concerns, as its name already gives away, digital citizenship education. This concept is defined as the empowerment of “children through education, developing the competences they need to actively learn and participate in today’s highly digitised society”¹: DCE, as men-

¹ <https://www.coe.int/en/web/digital-citizenship-education/about-us>

tioned before, has come to play a crucial role in education, especially during and after the pandemic crisis. Furthermore the pandemic has been accompanied by a total affirmation of digital citizenship and the exercise of its rights and duties. Since 2016, the Council of Europe had already started a consultation and taken action in this regard by producing a set of documents and tools.

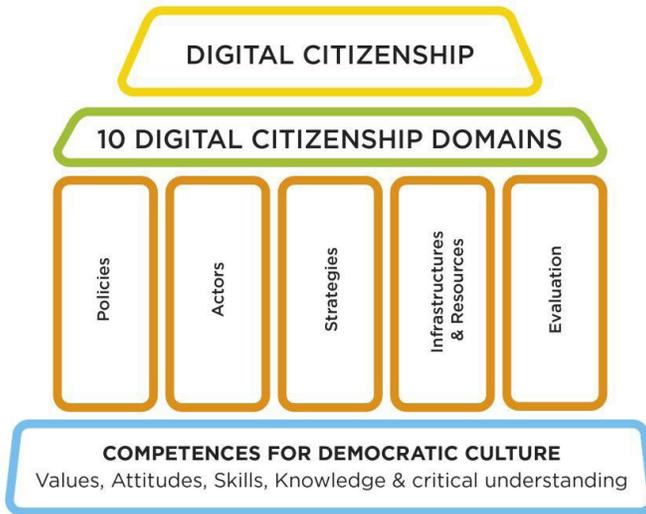
The imperative for present-day students and future citizens is their ability to be digital citizens, i.e., someone “who, through the development of a broad range of competences, is able to actively, positively and responsibly engage in both on- and offline communities, whether local, national or global” (Richardson & Milovidov, 2019, p. 11). Educational stakeholders need to take these new demands into consideration and digital citizenship education ought to be implemented from the earliest years of childhood “at home and at school, in formal, informal and non-formal educational settings” (*ibidem*, p. 11).

The DCE conceptual framework is visually represented as a “temple”, whose foundations lay on the democratic competences of the RFCDC. Five constructs emerge as being essential in developing effective digital citizenship practices. These are depicted as pillars in this temple structure. While the competences for democratic culture lay the foundation for digital citizenship, the five pillars uphold the whole structure of digital citizenship development and they consist of policies, stakeholders, strategies, infrastructures and resources and evaluation.

To place these competences into the digital environment in which young people grow up today, and drawing on research from frequently cited experts and organizations in the field, a set of 10 digital domains have been defined as underpinning the overall concept of digital citizenship (*ibidem*, p. 13)

As a result, a competence framework, encompassing 10 domains grouped in three main areas, was elaborated (Council of Europe, 2018c). The three main areas include:

- being online: access and inclusion, learning and creativity, media and information literacy
- wellbeing online: ethics and empathy, health and wellbeing, e-presence and communication
- rights online: active participation, rights and responsibilities, privacy and security, consumer awareness.

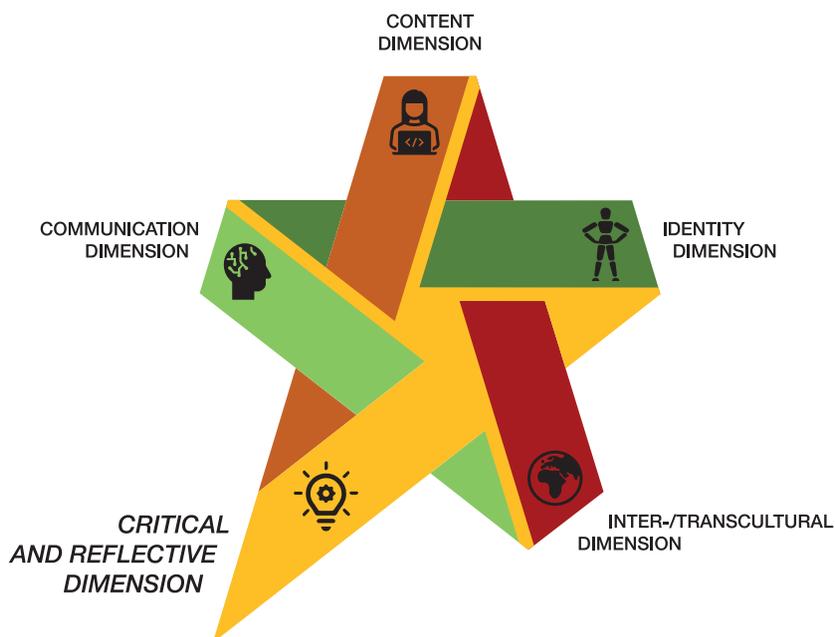


Conceptual model of digital citizenship (Council of Europe, 2019)

All the three frameworks concern the competences needed by 21st-century citizens, who live in culturally diverse societies both in its real and virtual dimensions, and, as such, they are necessarily critically and strictly interconnected.

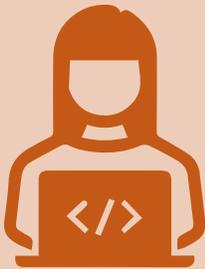
3. DICE.LANG FRAMEWORK PROPOSAL

In order to substantiate and harmonize the project’s intellectual outputs, a guiding framework (hence the DiCE.Lang framework) has been developed, so that teachers and educators may be easily oriented in the choice and the use of the different resources. In this framework five dimensions are presented, as shown in the graphics below (see also the DiCE.Lang Policy Framework for categories interconnectedness and evolution).





1. *Communication Dimension: Global and digital literacies* - this component distinguishes those units in which activities are aimed at developing and/or enhancing a set of competencies and analytical viewpoints that will allow learners to fully participate in the digital world and enhance their understanding, interpretation, management, creation and sharing of digital content;



2. *Content Dimension: Global and digital contexts* - units labeled with this acronym are meant to present current topics and issues of digital media, thus allowing learners to engage effectively and critically;



3. *Identity Dimension: Global and digital participation* - the units in this area are aimed at strengthening learners' awareness of both their real and digital identity being their online presence more and more frequent and intense;



4. *Inter- and transcultural Dimension: Global and Digital interaction* - these teaching units are dedicated to raising awareness on intercultural encounters in the digital world, so that students may promote positive and constructive relationships across different cultures and engage as global citizens both in the real and in the digital environment;



5. *Critical and Reflective Dimension: Awareness for global and digital diversity* - the units in this area aim at developing and/or enhancing critical thinking skills and reflective attitudes in learners, so that they become aware of the complexities of the digital environment.

Template of the Teaching Units

The following template was elaborated by the DiCE.Lang team taking into account the above mentioned European Frameworks and the DiCE.Lang working framework. Each one of the 50 teaching units are structured according to the following.



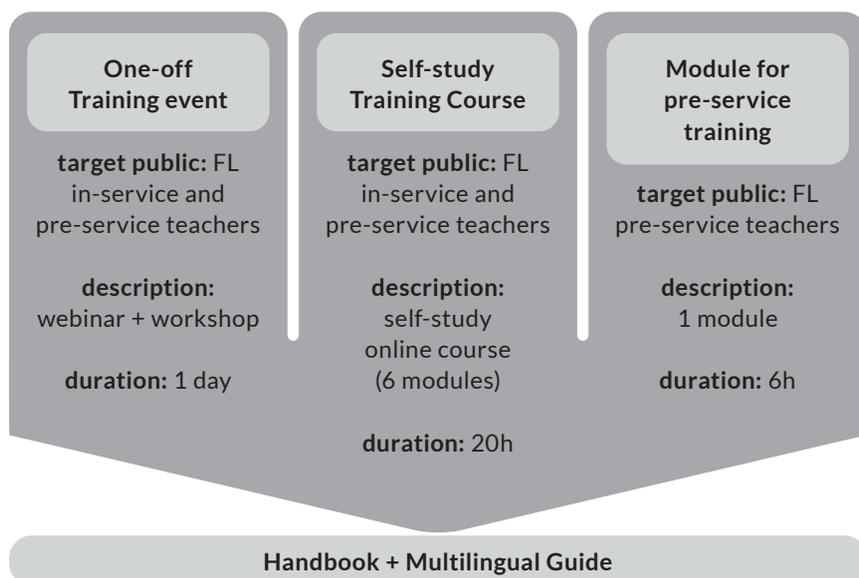
Teaching Units:
[https://www.dicelang.gwi.uni-muenchen.de/
teachingUnits.php](https://www.dicelang.gwi.uni-muenchen.de/teachingUnits.php)

Teaching Unit

Title:	Duration:
Learning Outcomes: -DCE -RFCDC -Language Potential Product/s =	Level (CEFR) :
Resources Required:	
Possible follow up activity:	
Process & Assessment Activity* Activity steps (following bullet points/numbers)	
This lesson plan can be complemented with: Link to one of our activities from DICELANG.	

4. TEACHER TRAINING PACKAGE AND ITS COMPONENTS

The Teacher Training Package (TTP) is the third output of the DiCE. Lang project. The TTP has five different components which were developed under the coordination of the University of Aveiro in collaboration with the other institutions: a One-off training event (with the University of Munich), a Self-study Free Online Course (with the University of Limerick), a Module for Curricular Integration at University (with the University of Latvia), a Handbook (with the Siena Italian Studies) and a Multilingual Guide.



TTP component	Aims
One-off Training event	Discussing the concept of DCE and sharing practices, methodologies and resources to develop digital literacy in foreign language education (FLE).
Self-study Training Course	Highlighting the importance of oriented educational practices and creating didactic plans and pedagogical resources for the development of digital citizenship education in foreign language teaching and learning.
Module for pre-service training	Providing knowledge and tools to develop DCE in FLE in teacher training courses at university level.
Handbook	Demonstrating the possibilities of implementing DCE in FLE contexts; disseminated in print and digitally to a European audience of teacher trainers.
Multilingual Guide	Introducing and explaining the complete training package.



One-off Training event:
<https://www.dicelang.anglistik.uni-muenchen.de/public-events/index.html>



Self-study Training Course:
<https://dicelang-edu.com>

5. ASSESSMENT OF DIGITAL CITIZENSHIP EDUCATION: OBSERVATIONS, REFLECTIONS, PROPOSALS

For the project's benefit and completeness, the DiCE.Lang consortium has elaborated a proposal of an assessment plan regarding those competences acquired by students that engage with the DiCE.Lang units. The elaboration of this assessment plan is also meant to facilitate teachers' work when they come to assess what their students may (or may not) have learnt during classes devoted to DCE.

As illustrated in the unit template, learning objectives include three main areas: language, competences for democratic culture, DCE domains.

As far as the assessment of language learning objectives is concerned, teachers and educators can reasonably use those assessing tools that they prefer or are familiar with, while the assessment of democratic competences should be carried out by utilizing the descriptors provided by the Council of Europe (2018b) in the second volume of the RFCDC.

As far as DCE domains are concerned, we should keep in mind that the assessment of the Competences for Democratic Culture (CDC) and the DCE domains go hand in hand given the fact that domains are built on the basis of the democratic competences (*DCE Trainers' Pack*, 2020). Still, at present, no official assessment of these domains is given.

Therefore, moving a step forward, we should build on CDC assessment in order to create assessing tools for DCE domains. As already and widely witnessed by research on CDC assessment, also DCE assessment could be multimethod and qualitative and possible methods may include: surveys, open-ended diaries, observational assessment, dynamic assessment,

project-based assessment, portfolio assessment (*Assessing Competences for Democratic Culture*, 2021, p. 25-26).

Also, as recommended in the publication *Assessing competences for democratic culture*, we should opt for an assessment that is low-stakes, proficiency-aimed and criterion-related.

Among the possible tools for assessment some good options may be: a self-assessment survey, a set of domain descriptors and reflective journals kept by learners. All these could be collected in an e-portfolio.

Thus, a set of descriptors that may be used to assess DCE domains and thus learners' competences in this field is coming up as a major priority. Although the elaboration of these descriptors can only be a collateral and complementary work to the DiCE.Lang project, since it goes beyond its objectives, some work and research on the topics has already been carried out (Bracci et al. 2022).

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