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Vocational Education and Training

Tech Up-Skilling for a New Workforce: AI, Data, and Digital Competencies for Students

Project Acronym: Tech Up

Activity 1

Report about stakeholders' opinion on the future challenges for VET education and for future workers connected with the AI, data and digital competences in general

Report made in April 2026

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Expected Results of the Activity 1

They are a Comprehensive Digital Competencies Curriculum for VET Students: The primary tangible result will be a fully developed and finalized curriculum designed to equip VET students with essential skills in artificial intelligence, data analysis, and digital tools. This curriculum will include theoretical modules, practical exercises, and interactive learning resources aligned with the European Digital Competence Framework (DigComp). It will serve as a ready-to-implement educational package for VET institutions, bridging the gap between academic knowledge and industry needs.

Innovative Digital Learning Materials and Tools: Complementing the curriculum, a suite of digital learning resources will be created. These resources, such as gamified exercises, real-world case studies, and interactive simulations, will enhance student engagement and learning outcomes. These materials will be designed for scalability, enabling other VET institutions to adopt them easily and ensuring their long-term usability beyond the project lifecycle.

A Pilot-Tested and Refined Curriculum: The curriculum will undergo testing and refinement with input from educators, students, and industry stakeholders during its development. This iterative process will result in a high-quality, validated educational resource that reflects real-world needs and is adaptable to different VET contexts. The pilot-testing phase will provide critical data on the curriculum's effectiveness, ensuring it meets the expectations of both learners and employers.



Results of the Piloting

The pilot testing phase of the Development of Digital Competencies Curriculum was implemented through a structured dissemination and validation workshop held on 2 April in Novara, Italy. The activity involved ten participants including VET educators, VET learners and representatives from local industry, selected to ensure diversity of professional backgrounds and practical experience in vocational education and training contexts. The objective of the pilot was to test the clarity, relevance, pedagogical structure and labour-market alignment of the curriculum while collecting qualitative and quantitative feedback to support refinement.

The workshop followed a participatory validation methodology combining guided presentation, collaborative review and structured feedback collection. The session opened with an overview of the curriculum architecture, including competence areas, learning outcomes, suggested learning activities and assessment approaches. Particular attention was given to the alignment with digital competences required in VET environments such as data handling, collaborative digital tools, problem solving in technology-rich workplaces and responsible use of AI and automation tools. Participants received excerpts of the curriculum and evaluation sheets structured around relevance, clarity, usability, adaptability and coherence with VET training pathways.

During the collaborative discussion phase, participants were organised in a discussion circle to promote peer exchange and co-creation. Educators focused on pedagogical usability, workload balance, and integration into existing VET programmes. Students contributed feedback on clarity of learning outcomes, accessibility of activities and perceived relevance to employability. Industry representatives assessed the correspondence between proposed competences and workplace expectations, highlighting the importance of practical scenarios, project-based learning and transversal digital problem-solving skills. The iterative discussion enabled identification of minor adjustments related to sequencing of modules, inclusion of additional real-world case studies and clearer assessment rubrics.

The pilot also included a short-simulated implementation of selected activities. Participants tested collaborative tasks based on digital problem solving and curriculum-guided project design. Observations collected during this phase confirmed that the curriculum supports active learning, encourages teamwork and promotes applied digital competences relevant for VET learners. The testing further highlighted the adaptability of the curriculum across



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different vocational sectors, including technical, service and administrative training environments.

Feedback was collected through structured questionnaires and moderated discussion. Results indicated strong overall validation of the curriculum structure, with participants emphasising clarity of competence progression, coherence between learning outcomes and activities, and relevance to labour-market needs. Suggestions focused mainly on expanding guidance for trainers and providing optional differentiated activities for learners with different digital skill levels. These recommendations were integrated into the refined version of the curriculum.

The dissemination component of the workshop supported awareness raising and transferability. Participants discussed potential implementation in their institutions and identified opportunities for integration into ongoing VET programmes. The session concluded with agreement that the pilot-tested curriculum represents a validated and adaptable educational resource. The data collected during the pilot confirmed its effectiveness in supporting digital competence development while ensuring alignment with employer expectations and flexibility for diverse VET contexts.



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Pictures from the Workshop





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