

DIGCOMPEDU FOR SOCIAL STUDIES: DEFINING TEACHERS' DIGITAL COMPETENCIES IN BULGARIAN SCHOOLS

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Maya Vasileva

PhD Katya Misheva

Sofia University, Bulgaria

ABSTRACT

The European DigCompEdu framework defines teachers' digital competence across 22 competencies applicable to all school subjects. To determine whether a subject-specific adaptation is necessary for social studies teachers in Bulgarian schools, 32 teachers took part in semi-structured interviews. Their selection followed the methodological framework of a nationally representative study currently conducted in Bulgaria under the SUMMIT project BG-RRP-2.004-0008, funded by the EU through NextGenerationEU.

For each of the six competence areas, participants suggested scenarios in the context of social studies instruction where one or more DigCompEdu competencies would be relevant. These results guided the development of a preliminary proposal for seven subject-specific components of the DigCompEdu self-assessment tool. Data coding and analysis were performed with QDA Miner 2025. Inter-coder reliability was ensured by two independent coders who analyzed the entire dataset, including the seven competencies, the example scenarios, and the justifications for non-adaptation.

The specification of the proposed elements drew on both content analysis and the authors' adaptation proposals. The findings provide a basis for designing training programs for Bulgarian social studies teachers, aimed at strengthening their subject-specific professional digital competence in accordance with the DigCompEdu framework.

Keywords: DigCompEdu, Digital Competence of Teachers, Social Sciences Education, Self-Assessment Tool

INTRODUCTION

The potential of digital media in the educational process, including in the teaching of social sciences (geography, history, philosophy, and civic education), is still not fully utilized by teachers in Bulgaria. Results from series of national studies, conducted during 2024 – 2025 in 30 schools across the country indicate that only 32.2% of Bulgarian teachers use digital media on a daily basis in their teaching practice [1], [4], [8], [10], [11], [14]. Although this percentage is higher than that reported in ICILS (9.1%), it remains significantly below both the international average (47.9%) and the EU comparison group average (47.6%).

When it comes to individualized student support, the potential of digital media is used frequently or consistently by only 14.8% of teachers in Bulgaria. Instead, Bulgarian