

EUCIP – The European Certification of Information Professionals

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What is the EUCIP System and how is it operated?

EUCIP provides for the definition and measurement of ICT skills and is currently used as the basis for the provision of certification and services in seven countries across Europe¹. The EUCIP certification program is a professional certification and competency development scheme, aimed at informatics professionals and practitioners². EUCIP is promoted by CEPIS across Europe and nationally in participating countries, including AICA in Italy. The EUCIP certification offerings include EUCIP Core, EUCIP Professional and EUCIP IT Administrator.

Which are the innovations introduced by the EUCIP System?

The EUCIP System introduces many innovations:

- It is based on a structured set of knowledge objects (3.000), configures 150 competence categories to build up 21+1 profiles that cover both needs of IT demand and supply industries;
- The syllabus granularity allows to develop its own certifications but also recognizes and measures the proximity of certifications of other suppliers (mainly vendors) and recognizes contributions of the certifications to EUCIP Certification Elective;
- The syllabus is used, at least in Italy, to implement new courses in secondary schools and in universities, where a gap of competences requested by the labor market emerges.

What are EUCIP Services?

In addition to certifications, several services are defined and realized to manage competence analysis and development:

- Business services on behalf of HR Departments' needs: the services are related to obtain an IT-skills inventory for the company, recruit the right resources for defined processes and projects, design and monitor learning paths focused on the gap of competences of the employed specialist;
- Professional services on behalf of individual specialists: competence assessment and recognition of the proximity profile; competence gap analysis to be covered, personalized design of learning paths and monitoring, support to identify the strengths and weaknesses of the individual professional career position.

What is e-CF?

The European e-Competence Framework (e-CF) is a reference framework of 36 ICT competences that can be used and understood by ICT demand and supply companies, the public sector, educational and social partners across Europe³. The development and promotion of the e-CF has been carried out through CEN, the European Committee for Standardization, and CENELEC, the European Committee for Electro-technical Standardization, within their standards work in the domain of Information and Communication Technologies (ICT), and specifically through a series of CEN ICT Skills Workshop projects (supported by European Commission DG Enterprise and Industry).

CEPIS, the promoter of EUCIP, as well as CEPIS members, including AICA, are participating in the CEN ICT Skills Workshop and its projects where e-CF versions 1 and 2 have been developed. Further work will include professional profiles largely corresponding to the EUCIP profiles, which cross-reference the e-CF.

¹ <http://www.cepis.org/index.jsp?p=1116&n=1124>

² www.eucip.org

³ <http://www.ecompetences.eu/>

Alignment of EUCIP and e-CF

CEPIS supports the dissemination of the e-CF and is committed to accomplish the integration of ICT HR Management Services (including certification) centered on the e-CF framework and enriched with various components of the EUCIP Syllabus with a higher level of granularity.

As part of this alignment with e-CF, CEPIS and AICA have realized two specific projects:

- The Sloop2desc project⁴ that involved hundreds of computer science teachers in 3 countries (Romania, Slovenia and Italy) has created a conducive climate for the diffusion of the e-CF in informatics schools. The open educational resources, designed with reference to the EUCIP syllabus, can be easily adapted to the e-CF framework but, above all, the spread - sponsored by Sloop2desc – of the culture of competence-based learning and the reference to an external competence framework, has created a climate for the diffusion of e-CF in informatics schools.
- The CEPIS Survey on Professional e-Competence provided an insight into the Professional e-Competences held in Europe⁵. This research was conducted using an online self-assessment tool based on the European e-Competence Framework. A set of 18 IT career profiles, recognized by the labor market, and 44 enhanced e-competences derived from the European e-Competence Framework, formed the pillars of the assessment tool.

The CEPIS Survey Results

Nearly 2000 IT professionals from 28 countries across Europe participated in the survey. The objective of this CEPIS research was the evaluation of competence gaps among IT professionals across Europe.

As ICT pervades all industries, companies rely increasingly on technology for productivity, and to compete globally. Yet the cost of IT project failures is estimated at €4.5 trillion worldwide, and with over half of IT projects running over budget - IT professionals are inextricably linked with Europe's ability to thrive and compete globally.

The anticipated shortage of IT professionals with the right competences and the associated costs paint a frightening picture for Europe's industry. Yet, do we really know what e-competences IT professionals in Europe currently have? Identifying and analyzing the e-competences of IT professionals across Europe can enable European employers, industry (including SMEs and entrepreneurs), policymakers, and educators to develop and implement a vision to manage the mismatches and shortfalls that threaten Europe's competitiveness and productivity. This can help better match the skills of our labor market to what future jobs will require. Knowing the e-competences of European IT professionals will enable us to tackle these issues, anticipate the effects in the short and long-term and mitigate the fallout.

CEPIS has carried out this pioneering research to produce and assess an up-to-date picture of the actual e-competences of IT professionals in Europe today. A European Report and ten country reports are available from the CEPIS website⁶.

Conclusions

In general, we can say that CEPIS is today most advanced and ready to offer services that could be of interest to the e-CF targets. The added value of the CEPIS approach derived from the EUCIP System expertise is to offer to the market practical and focused services helping business and specialist targets to manage HR IT resources for recruiting, organizing, training and learning, certifying, etc.

⁴ <http://www.sloop2desc.eu/>

⁵ <http://cepis.org/professionalecompetence>

⁶ <http://cepis.org/professionalecompetence>