Guidelines for digital education platform development in the Baltic States

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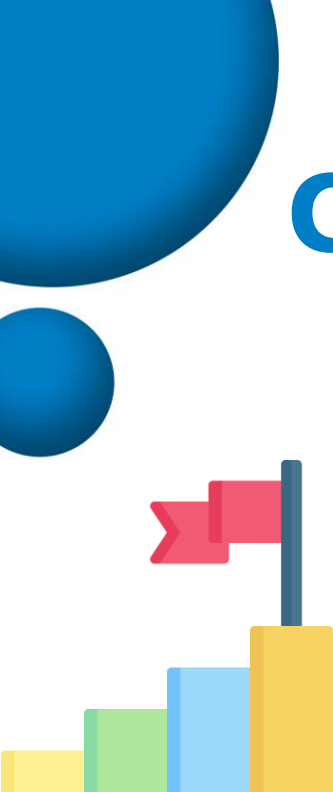
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Research aim and objectives

The primary goal of this study is to explore existing digital platforms in the field of education within the Baltic States (Latvia, Lithuania, Estonia), identify functionality issues, explore opportunities for improvement, and develop a set of comprehensive guidelines for future platform development.

Core Objectives

➢ To review and analyze EU-level regulations and academic literature concerning digital platforms.

➢ To assess the current state of national digital education platforms in the Baltic States.

➢ To analyze usability data gathered from a public study on the Europass platform in Latvia.

➢ To collect findings and formulate focused, practical guidelines for developers and policy-makers.

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Methodology and analyzed platforms

The study employed a mixed-method approach:
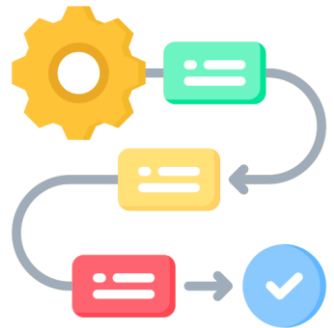
1. Literature Review: Analysis of normative documents (EU and national) and scientific publications.

2. Platform Analysis: Testing and technical analysis of key national education databases based on functionality and usability criteria.

3. Usability Data Integration: Utilising an external study on user experiences with the Europass platform in Latvia.

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Platforms and Databases Analysed

The analysis focused on government-maintained platforms that contain information on educational opportunities, qualifications, and curricula.

Platforms / Databases Analysed:

1. Latvia - VIIS (State Education Information System), LQD (Latvian Qualifications Database), NIID (National Database of Educational Opportunities)

2. Lithuania - AIKOS

3. Estonia - EHIS (Estonian Education Information System), KUTSEREGISTER (Professional Qualifications Register)

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Key findings and identified shortcomings

Regulatory Environment

- A lack of specific, detailed national or EU regulations prescribing what kind of information platforms should maintain (beyond general digitization goals).

- Existing EU frameworks (e.g., Digital Education Action Plan) provide broad directions but lack specific quality and content standards for national systems.

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Key findings and identified shortcomings

Platform Deficiencies

- Data Timeliness: Some platforms contained outdated or static data, leading to a lack of user trust.

- User Experience (UX): Many platforms suffer from an inconsistent user experience, often presenting static content (texts, PDFs) instead of interactive tools.

- Language Barrier: Limited language accessibility (e.g., absence of English translation) restricts platform usage for international users and employers.

- Information Detail: Platforms often lack detailed requirements for qualifications, such as sample examinations or precise qualification criteria.

Developed guidelines (core principles)

The guidelines are structured to provide actionable advice for policy-makers and technical teams responsible for maintaining digital education systems.

✓ User-Centered Design

- ✓ Prioritize the User: Platform viability is determined by user numbers and their willingness to use the system.
- ✓ Usability Focus: Implement User-Centered Design (UCD) principles to ensure simplicity and high perceived usefulness.
- ✓ Interface Quality (UI): The interface must be optimal, non-distracting, and allow users to focus purely on information retrieval.

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Developed guidelines (core principles)

✓ Data Transparency and Content

✓ Language Accessibility: The platform must be available in the national language and, crucially, in English. If full professional translation is unavailable, automatic translation tools should be integrated.

✓ Data Authenticity: Ensure the data is regularly updated and synchronized with other relevant national registers to guarantee relevance and authenticity.

✓ Provide Detail: Offer clear, comprehensive information about the national education system and include detailed qualification requirements and exam examples.

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Developed guidelines (core principles)

✓Technological Integration

✓AI Implementation: Introduce Artificial Intelligence tools to facilitate advanced data search, filtering processes, and terminology support.

✓Database Synchronization: Improve data structuring and representation to ensure seamless search capabilities and data exchange between national and international registers.

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Conclusion

➢ Digital platforms in the Baltic States are evolving but possess significant potential for content and technical enhancement.

➢ The developed guidelines, informed by platform testing and Europass usability analysis, provide a clear roadmap for addressing functional and technical shortcomings.

➢ To achieve optimal functional utility and user acceptance, implementers must integrate the core user-centric and transparency aspects outlined in this research.

➢ This study and its guidelines can serve as a valuable reference for platform development and maintenance both within the Baltic States and in other regions.

Thank you for your attention!

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