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Brussels arms teachers against AI threats and online disinformation

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The European Commission has published four sets of guidelines to help schoolteachers navigate artificial intelligence, disinformation and digital literacy

The European Commission has issued four sets of guidelines—two new and two updated—aimed at equipping primary and secondary school teachers across the European Union with practical tools to manage the rapidly changing digital landscape in their classrooms.

The announcement, made on 5 March, covers ethical AI use, tackling online disinformation, assessing digital education content and delivering informatics teaching. The resources form part of the Commission's Digital Education Action Plan for 2021 to 2027. The scale of public expectation behind the move is significant: a Flash Eurobarometer survey found that 81 per cent of EU citizens believe teachers should have the skills to use and understand AI, while almost 90 per cent say all teachers should be able to help students recognise disinformation online.

The updated AI guidelines, which build on a 2022 version, are intended for teachers with limited experience of artificial intelligence. They address legal and ethical considerations arising from the EU AI Act and include classroom examples and guidance designed to build teacher confidence while encouraging responsible use of AI tools among students.

A second set of refreshed guidelines tackles disinformation and digital literacy. Updated under the framework of the European Democracy Shield, announced in 2025, they now address the influence of generative AI on the spread of false information, the role of social media influencers, cyberbullying and the importance of critical thinking. The guidelines include lesson plans, a glossary and policy recommendations for school leaders.

Two entirely new documents have also been released. Guidelines on digital education content establish, for the first time at EU level, criteria to help teachers identify, select and

create reliable digital teaching materials, developed by an expert group whose work began in 2024. A separate set on informatics education moves beyond coding to emphasise real-world problem-solving, with adaptable methods suited to both specialist and novice teachers.

Roxana Mînzatu, the Commission's Executive Vice-President responsible for social rights and skills, quality jobs and preparedness, said teachers had become, in effect, "digital guardians" for young people. " Our goal is to equip educators with the skills and confidence they need not just to adapt but to lead in an ever-evolving educational landscape," she said, adding that the guidelines reflect the Commission's commitments under the Union of Skills.

The Commission said the guidelines were developed with input from expert groups drawn from academia, teacher trainers and civil society, with two sets updated through the European Digital Education Hub working groups. All four sets are designed to be accessible to teachers regardless of their level of digital expertise.

The resources support the EU's Digital Decade target of ensuring that 80 per cent of adults aged 16 to 74 possess at least basic digital skills by 2030 — a goal that currently looks challenging, with only around 56 per cent meeting that threshold as of 2023. Later this year the Commission intends to publish a broader Education Package, including a 2030 Roadmap on digital education and skills, intended to modernise schooling across member states.