PROGRAMMING IN PRIMARY EDUCATION AND BUILDING 21ST CENTURY COMPETENCIES

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Abstract. *This paper offers an overview of the original concept of introducing computer programming into the classroom.*

The key features of Scratch, currently the most widely used programming language for teaching elementary students, are outlined. Additionally, the factors contributing to Scratch's growing popularity are examined, along with its role in fostering students' computational thinking. Recommendations are made for integrating Scratch into new educational contexts, and some of the most significant challenges impeding the teaching of programming to young learners are identified.

The relevance and role of programming-related curricular topics for students, in the context of developing 21st-century competencies, are explored. In this regard, the European Digital Competence Framework for Citizens (DigComp 2.2) is reviewed, with particular attention to the programming competency. Examples from DigComp 2.2 are provided to illustrate how this competence manifests in terms of knowledge, skills, and attitudes.

Key words: Programming for Students, Scratch, DigComp.

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