What is the ‘problem’ that digital competence in Swedish teacher education is meant to solve?

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## Authors

Hanell F.

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## Sample

Swedish policy documents dealing with teacher training.

## Implications For Educators About

## Implications For Policy Makers About

Other

## Other PolicyMaker Implication

Digital competence in teacher training

## Implications For Stakeholders About

Researchers

# Abstract

his paper explores how policy makers argue for the importance of digital competence in Swedish teacher education. A policy analysis of key policy documents from the government and from government-affiliated organisations from the time period 2011–2016 is conducted using Carol Bacchi’s ‘what’s the problem represented to be?’ approach. The paper critically examines underlying assumptions and particular viewpoints that underpin how the concept digital competence is formulated in key policy texts.

Digital competence is found to be a part of a globalised policy discourse that conceptualises education as a necessity for a competitive work force. Policy makers describe Swedish schools as unsuccessful in providing pupils with adequate digital competence and how this may cause Sweden to fall behind in global competition. Shortcomings in schools are considered to be caused by low digital competence being developed as part of teacher education. In the studied policy documents, the ‘problem’ that digital competence in teacher education is meant to solve is consequently an issue of economic growth and global competition. The strong emphasis on economic benefits and an instrumental perspective on technology expressed in the global policy discourse on digital competence leads to the need for a renewed focus on Bildung and civic competences.

# Outcome

"[T]he ‘problem’ that [digital competence] in teacher education is meant to solve [in Sweden] is ultimately an issue of economic growth and global competition.... The strong emphasis on economic benefits and an instrumental perspective on technology expressed in the global policy discourse on DC leads to the need for a renewed focus on Bildung and civic competences." (Author, 149)