

Hi everyone,

My name is Ben Hertz and I am the coordinator of the European Schoolnet Academy. I will be guiding you through this course and look forward to interacting with you on the forum and other communication channels.

In this first module we look at some broad questions revolving around computing teaching: what is computing? Why teach computing? And what to focus on when teaching computing?

What is computing?

The term computing is so broad and vague for many of us that we replace it quite randomly with other terms such as ICT, programming, coding, computer science, informatics, etc. However, these terms are not the same and we should understand the difference in order to decide better what areas to focus on.

Most recently there has been a strong push towards a focus on coding in the classroom. And this recent push for coding in the classroom is also what triggered this course. However, while the course will indeed have a strong focus on teaching coding in the classroom, we don't want to completely ignore the other areas that can be captured under the broad term computing.

Why teach computing?

Computing as a topic or even subject is quite rarely embedded into what is taught at primary schools. And many might argue that it is a much too technical topic to be relevant at primary level. That computing does not necessarily need to be very technical is something we look at later in the course but even if it were, there are many reasons why we should be looking at computing with students at a very early age.

The videos in this module provide you with a range of reasons why computing-related skills and knowledge are fundamentally important for the lives of our students and not just for the sake of understanding technology. The key about learning to programme is that it is a transferable skill that can be used in many different areas of life.

What to focus on?

What exactly is it that we should be teaching when looking at computing in our classrooms? Clearly basic skills of coding and how to programme machines will be a part of this but you will notice when watching the videos in this module that these aspects actually play only a very small role in what teachers and academics argue should be at the heart of teaching computing.

In most of the sections, there will be a small task to complete or question to answer. The main activity of this module is for you to add your answers to these tasks to your Learning Diary.

I hope you will enjoy the module. See you in Module 2.