DIGILEARN

Co-funded by the European Union

DIGITAL SKILLS FOR SENIORS

Best Practices from Albania, France, Italy, and Spain

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ABOUT DIGI-LEARN PROJECT

The digital age is transforming how we live, connect, learn, and work. While it offers incredible opportunities for learning, it also highlights the need for continuous skill development.

In this regard, the DIGI-LEARN project aims to equip European citizens with the skills to navigate the technology-driven changes in the workforce.

Among its main objectives, the DIGI-LEARN project envisions to:

- **Identify best practices** in learning to learn in accessible digital spaces;
- **Develop digital training materials** designed for senior citizens and digitally underskilled individuals, in order to foster their ability to adapt and thrive in a fast-evolving technological landscape;
- **Create a methodological framework for educators** working with marginalized adults facing social exclusion, long-term unemployment or migration backgrounds.

ABOUT RESEARCH

Today's EU and global societies are undergoing fundamental changes, such as the ageing of populations and digital innovation. Digital innovation can be an opportunity to improve the quality of life of our ageing societies and to shift towards more sustainable and inclusive health and care systems, creating economic growth and jobs.

The research "DIGI-LEARN (Learning to learn in digital environments) aims to assess how digitalization and lifelong learning are seen in different countries andto share good practices on the topic of digital skills for seniors in the project partner countries: Albania, Italy, Spain and France. The goal is to identify relevant best practices in learning to learn strategies in digital environments and in creation of digital training programs for senior learners or learners with low digital skills.

Methodology

The methodology used for the analysis presented in this document combines desk research and in-depth interviews in four partner countries: Albania, Italy, France and Spain.

Desk Research

The desk research examines the current state of digital literacy and training programs available for seniors, comparing digital training opportunities and participation rates among elderly populations in Albania, Italy, Spain, and France.

Each country conducted a thorough literature review, focusing on several key areas:

- Demographic trends: Internet Use in each partner country, the gender and age digital divide.
- Policy and program analysis: Review of national and regional initiatives aimed at improving digital literacy among the elderly, including strategic plans and specific programs.
- Social movements and advocacy: Overview of social movements and campaigns advocating for the digital inclusion of the elderly, highlighting their impact and public response.

Quantitative Method

The research utilized a quantitative approach, combining stakeholder surveys and interviews with adult learners to gather comprehensive insights. Each partner conducted in-depth interviews with experts and stakeholders to assess institutional requirements in seniors' ICT education. The questions focused on the current level of services for seniors, areas needing improvement, strategies to enhance institutional impact, and training needs for staff.

Types of stakeholders interviewed:

- Public libraries contributing to electronic information access and digital literacy training for seniors.
- Senior citizens organizations offering educational programs and services in ICT for seniors.
- Academic institutions providing adult and senior citizen training.
- Seniors Retirement Homes delivering educational programs to seniors at their residences.
- Stakeholders from organizations promoting effective technology use in daily life, such as rural assistance centers and associations for people with disabilities.

Sample questions

1. *From your perspective, what essential services are currently provided for seniors in terms of ICT education, and how effective are they?*
2. *What are the most significant challenges seniors face regarding digital competence or ICT education?*
3. *In your opinion, what are the critical training requirements for staff members involved in seniors' ICT education?*
4. *Are there specific technologies or tools that you believe are particularly effective for teaching digital skills to seniors?*
5. *How can institutions increase their impact in promoting digital competence among senior citizens?*
6. *Can you provide examples of successful initiatives or programs aimed at promoting digital competence and literacy among senior citizens?*

Interviews with adult learners:

- Adult learners over 45 years old that have low digital skills.
- Adult learners over 45 years old that have medium digital skills and have been enrolled in courses and workshops to acquire digital skills during the past 12 months prior to the interviews.

Sample questions:

1. *From your perspective, what essential services are currently provided for seniors in terms of ICT education, and how effective are they?*
2. *What are the most significant challenges seniors face regarding digital competence or ICT education?*
3. *In your opinion, what are the critical training requirements for staff members involved in seniors' ICT education?*
4. *Are there specific technologies or tools that you believe are particularly effective for teaching digital skills to seniors?*
5. *How can institutions increase their impact in promoting digital competence among senior citizens?*
6. *Can you provide examples of successful initiatives or programs aimed at promoting digital competence and literacy among senior citizens?*
7. *Do you think it is essential nowadays to educate with digital devices?*
8. *Do you think that the use of digital devices for educational purposes makes us less reflective and more dependent? Why?*

Qualitative Method:

The research also involved collecting good practices in digital skills and seniors as digital learners in the national level.

The aim was to explore successful approaches, upskilling initiatives and projects with a proven impact on bridging the digital skills gap that have the potential to be replicated in other countries and different contexts.

Each partner has identified 3-5 good practices in the national level.

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DESK RESEARCH

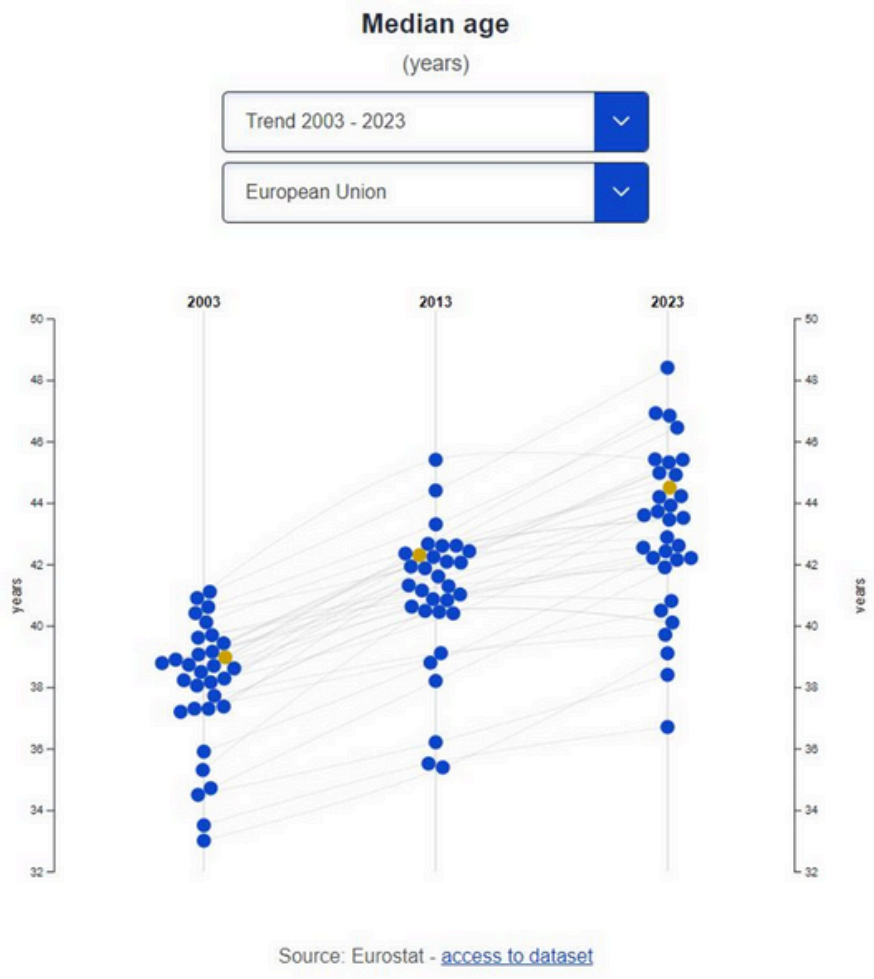
The digital landscape in four partner countries: Albania, France, Italy, Spain.

DEMOGRAPHIC CHANGE IN EUROPE

On 1 January 2023, there were 448.8 million people living in the European Union (EU). The most populous EU country was Germany (84.4 million, 19% of the EU total), followed by France (68.2 million, 15%), Italy (59.0 million, 13%), Spain (48.1 million, 11%) and Poland (36.8 million, 8%). In total, these five EU countries accounted for 66% of the EU population.[1]

The median age increased in the period 2003 to 2023: it was 39.0 years in 2003, 42.2 years in 2013 and 44.5 years in 2023 (on the 1 January). This means an increase of 5.5 years in the median age in the EU during this 20-year period. Among the EU countries, the highest median age on 1 January 2023 was observed in Italy (48.4 years).

Figure 1: Demographic change in Europe (2003 - 2023)



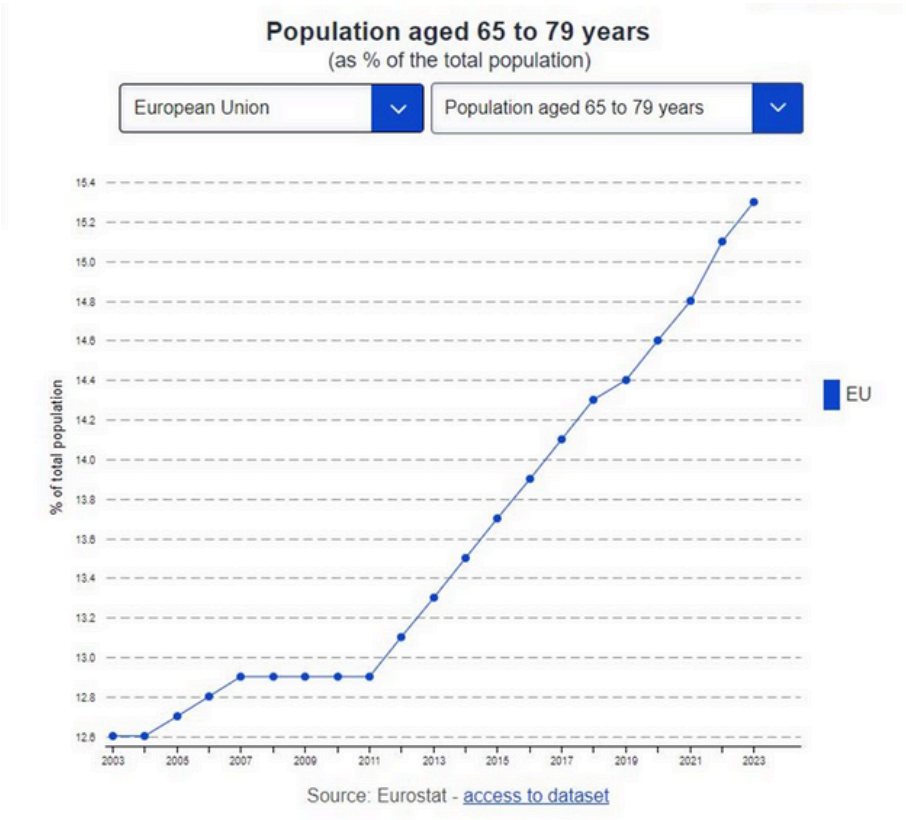
[1] https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/web/interactive-publications/demography-2024

An ageing population

The EU population is ageing, evident from various statistics like the elderly population's share, old-age dependency ratio, and median age. Between 2003 and 2023, the proportion of those aged 80 and above rose from 3.7% to 6.0%, with Greece and Latvia seeing the largest increases. Meanwhile, the share of individuals aged 65 and older increased by 5.1 percentage points, from 16.2% to 21.3%. Conversely, the proportion of children under 15 dropped from 16.4% to 14.9%, with the most significant declines in Malta and Cyprus.

This demographic shift presents challenges, particularly in digitalization and integrating seniors into the digital world. According to the Digital Economy and Society Index 2022[2], only 54% of Europeans aged 16-74 possess basic digital skills, with even lower rates among older adults[3]. Digitalization is expected to further outdated older workers' skills, as the age gap in using digital technologies widens with their complexities.

Figure 2: Population aged 65 to 79 years (as % of the total population)



[2] https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/web/interactive-publications/demography-2024

[3] https://read.oecd-ilibrary.org/employment/preventing-ageing-unequally_9789264279087-en#page57

EU DIGITAL STRATEGY

At a time when the internet and digital technologies are transforming our world, a Europe fit for the digital age is one of the European Commission's six political priorities.

In March 2021 the Commission proposed a path to the Digital Decade.[4] The Digital Decade policy programme looks to improve Europe's "human-centric" digitalisation by 2030, setting "measurable goals" on connectivity, uptake of technology, and upskilling of the labour force.

The Compass indicates four cardinal points for this trajectory: digital skills, secure and performant digital infrastructure, digital transformation of businesses and the digitalisation of public services. This political agenda aligns with EU norms and standards to strengthen the EU's digital sovereignty. A number of budgetary instruments will support the investments necessary to build Europe's Digital Decade on solid foundations.

The agenda calls for an intensification of work that began in the previous decade to accelerate Europe's digital transformation, building on progress towards a fully functioning Digital Single Market.

The EU's Digital Single Market Strategy paved the way for closer digital harmonisation between the EU Member States. Launched in 2015, it aimed to contribute to economic growth, boosting jobs, competition, investment and innovation in the EU, based on three pillars:

- **Access:** better access for consumers and businesses to digital goods and services across Europe;
- **Environment:** creating the right conditions and a level playing field for digital networks and innovative services to flourish;
- **Economy & Society:** maximising the growth potential of the digital economy.

Because digital is an EU priority, it is also a priority for the EU strategic partner countries to build towards a better and more harmonised digital environment. The Eastern Partnership (EaP) policy objectives for beyond 2020 include target actions that will support the development of the Digital Single Market: investment in competitive and innovative economies, in people and knowledge societies, in security and cyber resilience and in digital transformation.

Extending the benefits of the Digital Single Market to Eastern partner countries is an important objective of the EU4Digital Facility.

[4] https://digital-strategy.ec.europa.eu/en/policies/europes-digital-decade

A digital policy for people and society: Digital skills and public services

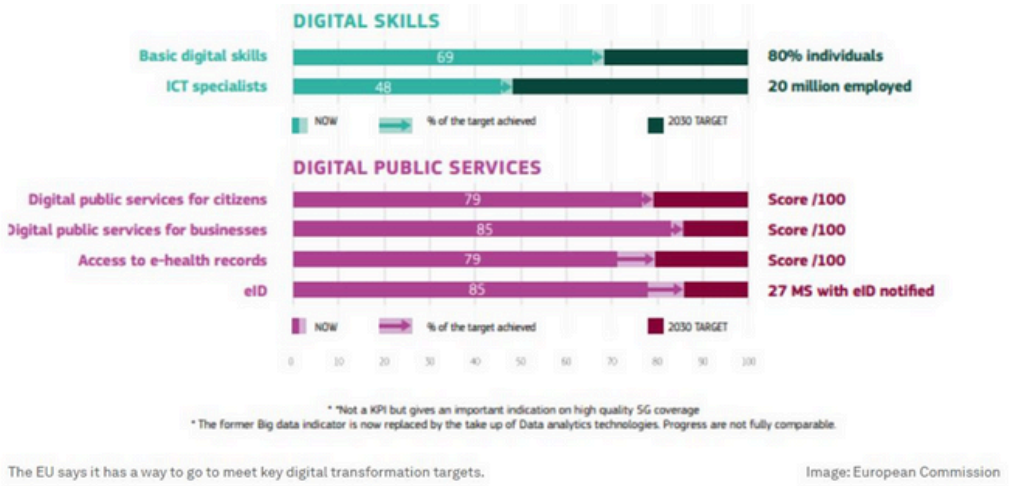
Although the number of older people who are digitally connected continues to rise, there are still millions of people over the age of 55 who are not online. And while factors such as income and levels of education play a part, age is still the biggest indicator of who's digitally excluded.

The Digital Decade initiative in Europe was created with the vision that digital technology benefits all citizens in the European Union (EU). Proposed in 2021, it set a series of 2030 targets designed to empower citizens and help businesses prosper. However, a new report suggests that current progress may be insufficient to meet these targets.

The latest instalment of the State of the Digital Decade report[5] identifies crucial gaps, including the need for more investment, at both EU and national levels.
Digital skills targets are "still far from being achieved", with only 55.6% of the EU population having at least basic digital skills. Fibre networks needed for people to use cutting-edge technology, including AI and cloud computing, only reach 64% of households, while high-quality 5G only reaches 50% of EU territory.

Another major challenge identified is tackling the limited spread of digital technologies beyond large cities.

Figure 3: Digital skills and public services



The EU says it has a way to go to meet key digital transformation targets. Image: European Commission

[5] https://digital-strategy.ec.europa.eu/en/policies/europes-digital-decade

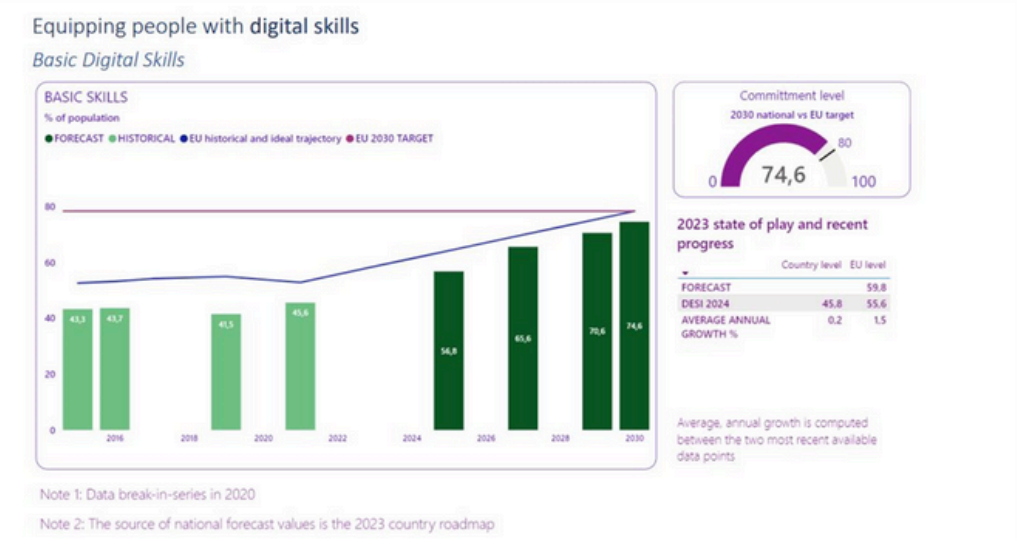
For the first time, Member States submitted to the Commission national roadmaps, detailing their planned actions to reach the 2030 Digital Decade targets. The Commission published country-specific and cross-cutting recommendations for every EU Member State to address the identified shortcomings.

The digital landscape in Italy

Italy it is one of the EU Member States with the lowest levels of basic digital skills. In 2023, **only 45.8% of the people in Italy had at least basic digital skills**, against an EU average of 55.6%. In the last 2 years, there has been no overall significant improvement (the value increased by only 0.2% annually compared to 2021). The indicator is particularly low for people who have low or no formal education, with only 22.6% of them having at least basic digital skills (versus 33.6% in the EU), and for people between 55 and 74 years old, for which the value is 30% (vs 37% in the EU).

Population living in rural areas also records lower levels of digital skills, with 40.6% recording at least a basic level (vs 47.5% in the EU). The gap between Italy and the rest of the EU is significant especially when considering the youngest generations and people living in urban areas, which are groups generally expected to have higher levels of digital skills. In Italy, only 59% of people aged 16-24 and 54% of those aged 25-54 have at least basic digital skills. The EU averages are 10 percentage points above with, 70% and 64% respectively. Similarly, only 51% of the population living in urban areas has at least basic digital skills, vs 63% in the EU, with a 12 percentage points gap. Italy only narrows the gap with the EU for people with medium and high education levels.[6]

Figure 4: Italy's key performance indicators - Basic digital skills



[6] https://digital-strategy.ec.europa.eu/en/policies/europes-digital-decade

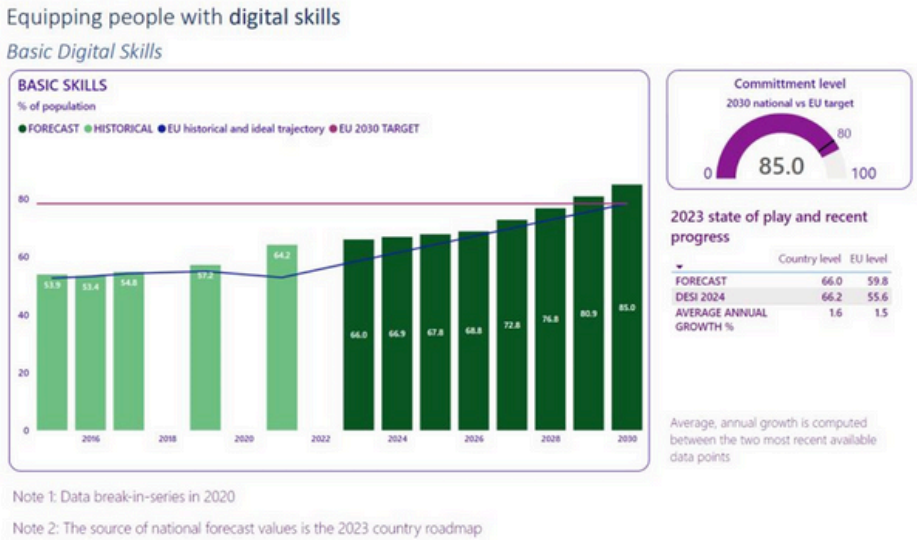
The digital landscape in Spain

Spain brings a very strong contribution to the EU's Digital Decade target on basic digital skills and shows a positive dynamic. In 2023, **66.2% of the Spanish population had at least basic digital skills**. That is above the EU average of 55.6%, although Spain is not one of EU's front-runners.

Average annual growth is 1.6% while the EU average is 1.5%. Other digital skills indicators such as internet use (94.5%), above-basic digital skills (38.7%), and basic digital skills in content creation (73.8%) point to a similar performance in those areas.

While the level of digital skills in all sociodemographic groups in Spain exceeds the European Union average, the digital divide means that there are still significant differences between groups. The differences relate more to age, occupation, and level of education, than to place of residence and gender (the 66% of the population with basic digital skills was made up half-and-half of men and women).

Figure 5: Spain's key performance indicators - Basic digital skills [7]



In general, among the Spanish population, the activities most performed on the Internet in 2023 are related to communication (93.8%), among which instant messaging services and making video calls stand out, followed by information services (85.8%) and online shopping (69.6%). However, among the population aged 65 to 74, the most frequent uses of the Internet are the use of electronic banking, searching for information on goods or services and requesting appointments at healthcare centers.

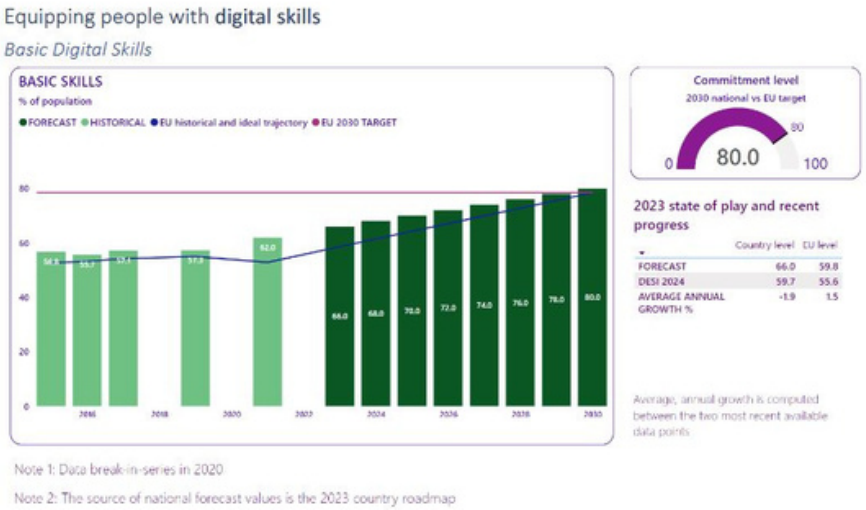
[7] https://digital-strategy.ec.europa.eu/en/policies/europes-digital-decade

The digital landscape in France

France brings a positive contribution to the EU's Digital Decade target on basic digital skills but demonstrates very limited dynamics. In 2023, **59.7% of the French population had at least basic digital skills**. It is above the EU average of 55.6%, but behind the frontrunners' performance.

The indicator is slightly below the level reached in 2021 (62.0%), while the EU progressed slightly over the same period. The decrease could however be explained by post-COVID-19 effects with a decreased digital activity of the population with, for example, less telework or use of e-commerce between 2021 and 2023. Other digital skills indicators such as internet use (92.2%), above basic digital skills (30.6%), and basic digital skills in content creation (71.8%) point to a similar performance: France is above the EU average, but behind the frontrunners, and ranks in the second quartile of the EU distribution.

Figure 6: France's key performance indicators - Basic digital skills[8]

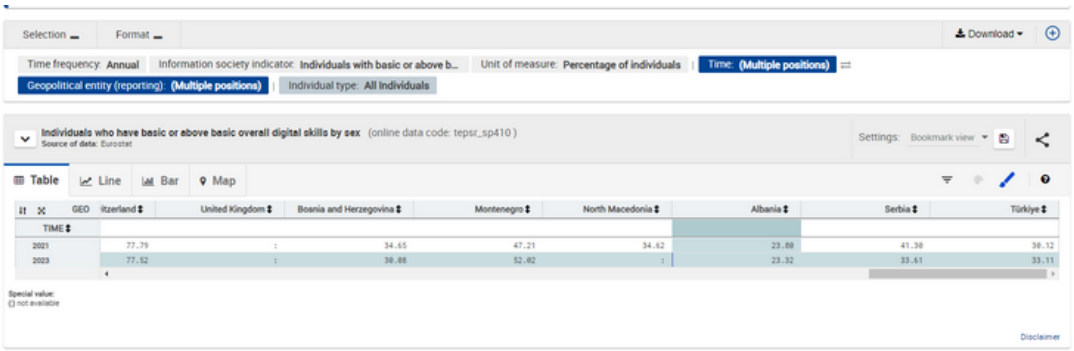


[8] https://digital-strategy.ec.europa.eu/en/policies/europes-digital-decade

The digital landscape in Albania

Eurostat comparative statistics for all European countries found that, in 2023, only 23.32% of Albanians aged 16 to 74 had basic digital knowledge. This was the lowest percentage among European countries.[9]

Figure 7: Albania's key performance indicators - Basic digital skills



Based on the results of the Information Technology (IT) Usage Survey for the year 2023, 83.1% of the population aged 16-74 use the internet. Official data from the Institute of Statistics (INSTAT) in Albania on "The Use of Information and Communication Technology in Households, 2023" show that 32.3% of the age group 65-74 in Albania report that they have never used the internet.[10]

The transition to providing public services exclusively online, with a complete absence of physical service counters, has left Albanian citizens with very few alternatives for accessing public services. Meanwhile, according to data from AKEP, it is estimated that in 2022, the penetration rate of broadband access from fixed networks was around 81% for households and 20.9% for the population.

Albania still faces obstacles in developing broadband infrastructure, especially in rural areas. Despite continuous growth in recent years, the figures show that the divide between urban and rural areas remains significant. Internet access is increasingly becoming a necessity for obtaining and accessing public services, especially now that most government services are offered via the e-Albania platform. This poses a problem for those living in rural areas or those with low internet literacy, creating a significant gap for citizens living in rural areas to access the services offered online. To address this issue, it is necessary to develop a financing scheme and mechanisms, as well as various incentives for investment in these areas.

[9] https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/databrowser/view/TEPSR_SP410__custom_1227093/bookmark/table?lang=en&bookmarkId=14c634ce-9867-4c12-9361-06e4343152fa
[10] https://www.instat.gov.al/al/temat/kushtet-sociale/teknologjis%C3%AB-s%C3%AB-informacionit-dhe-komunikimit-tik-n%C3%AB-familje-dhe-nga-individ%C3%ABt/publikimet/2023/p%C3%ABrdorimi-i-teknologjis%C3%AB-s%C3%AB-informacionit-dhe-komunikimit-n%C3%AB-familje-2023/

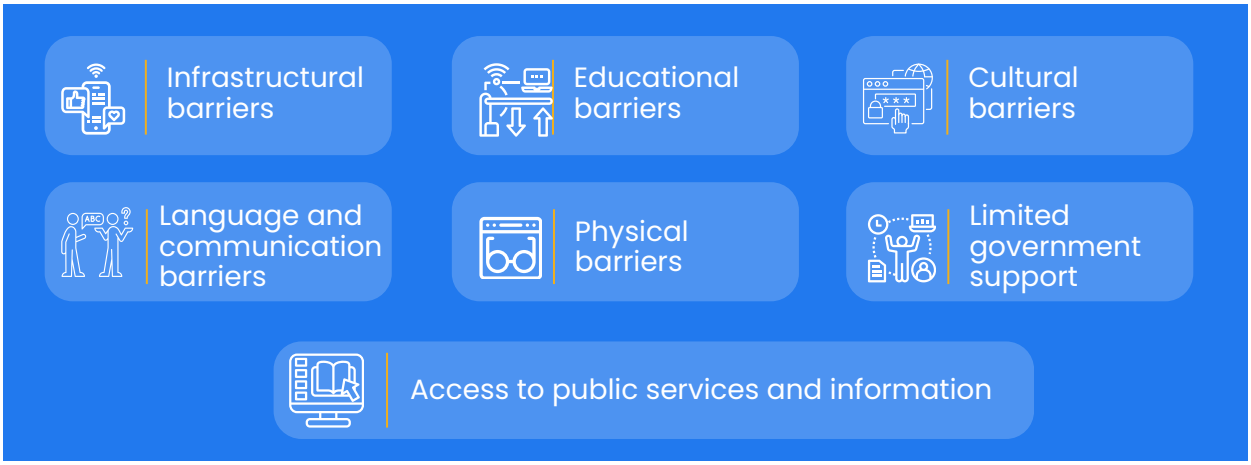
KEY FINDINGS

BARRIERS TO DIGITAL INCLUSION FOR SENIORS

Digital exclusion is a form of social exclusion, primarily due to low or nonexistent digital competence. Proficiency in information and communication technology (ICT), access to new media and the Internet, the ability to use popular e-services, motivation to use ICT, and critical-constructive analysis and attitudes towards ICT are crucial for effective functioning in the information society.

Based on inputs from seniors and stakeholders in four partner countries (Albania, Italy, France, and Spain), several barriers to the digital inclusion of seniors were identified. A summary of the most significant challenges seniors face regarding digital competence and ICT education is shown in Figure 7, while a detailed analysis of individual barriers is presented in the following subchapters.

Figure 8: Barriers to digital inclusion for seniors



- **Infrastructural barriers**

The lack of infrastructure significantly hinders seniors' ability to acquire basic digital skills, creating a digital divide that impacts their access to information, services, and social connections. In Albania, for example, many rural and remote areas still lack reliable internet connectivity. Seniors living in these areas often have little to no access to online resources, which prevents them from developing digital skills. Even in urban areas, internet affordability can be a barrier for those on fixed incomes.
Lack of digital devices is also notable in these areas. Seniors may not have access to digital devices such as computers, tablets, or smartphones, which are essential for practicing and developing digital skills.

- **Educational barriers**

Educational barriers pose significant challenges for seniors in adapting to digital technologies. The lack of targeted educational programs and support systems makes it difficult for older adults to learn and engage with digital tools. Additionally, limited access to computers and other digital devices is a major hurdle, as many seniors rely on mobile phones that do not offer the same ease of access to online courses and digital resources as computers do. The absence of tailored tutorials and training programs further complicates this situation, leaving seniors dependent on others for assistance and guidance. Personalized training and ongoing support are crucial for building digital confidence among older adults.

> *"Many older people do not have a computer, and currently, platforms for taking courses from cell phones do not facilitate this process. One of the most common reasons for course abandonment that I observe is the inability to complete courses using a mobile phone," says a teacher from Spain.*

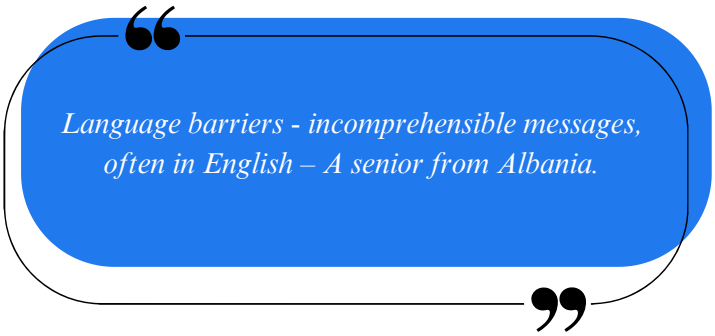
- **Cultural barriers**

For some seniors, language barriers or cultural attitudes towards technology can impact their willingness to engage with digital tools. Without supportive environments that encourage learning and experimentation, seniors may feel intimidated or uninterested in digital skills. Many seniors experience fear and anxiety when using new technologies, often stemming from concerns about making mistakes, security issues, or breaking the device. This fear can prevent them from trying or fully engaging with digital tools.

> *I feel uneasy when I can't figure out how to use a device, and depending on someone smarter irritates me. To give an example, one thing I just can't remember is passwords. The fact that I always have to create new passwords and infinite accounts for different devices doesn't help me at all, I'm not nimble with technology. – A senior from Italy.*

- **Language and communication barriers**

Language barriers also make it harder for seniors to use digital technology, especially in areas where the primary language of technology differs from their own. Many older adults encounter confusing messages or instructions in English, which makes it difficult for them to use digital devices. This language gap can make them feel isolated and more likely to rely on traditional ways of communicating and obtaining information, such as making phone calls or having face-to-face interactions.



- **Physical barriers**

Physical barriers also play a significant role in limiting seniors' digital inclusion. As people age, they may experience impaired vision, hearing, and dexterity, which can make interacting with digital devices difficult. Seniors often encounter challenges such as reading small text on screens, distinguishing between different audio alerts, or using touchscreens and keyboards if they have tremors or limited hand coordination.

- **Access to public services and information**

The digitalization of public services presents another significant barrier to digital inclusion for seniors. As more administrative and governmental processes move online, seniors may struggle to access essential services such as filing taxes, managing healthcare accounts, accessing public transportation, community centers, etc. Ensuring that these platforms are user-friendly and accessible to those with limited digital skills is essential.

> *The digitalization of services in Albania has presented challenges for many citizens, particularly the elderly and young people who lack the knowledge or ability to apply online. As a result, they often need to spend money on offices or notary services to obtain documents from the digital platform e-Albania. To ensure effective access to digital services, it is essential to provide the population with guidance on how to use these online platforms. – An IT trainer from Albania*

- **Limited government support**

Enhancing digital literacy among seniors requires a multifaceted approach that includes improving infrastructure, increasing government support, and developing tailored training programs. Italy, France, and Spain generally have better infrastructure to support digital literacy programs compared to Albania, where rural areas are particularly underserved. France and Spain have more comprehensive national strategies for digital inclusion that include specific measures for seniors, while Italy has made efforts to address regional disparities. Albania, however, lacks a coordinated national strategy and relies more on localized efforts, such as partnerships with non-governmental organizations to deliver digital skills training.

KEY TRAINING REQUIREMENTS FOR STAFF MEMBERS INVOLVED IN SENIORS' ICT EDUCATION

As the digital world becomes increasingly integral to daily life, ensuring that seniors can effectively engage with Information and Communication Technology (ICT) is crucial. This calls for a specialized approach to training staff involved in seniors' ICT education. Educators must be equipped with the right skills, knowledge, and attitudes to address the unique challenges seniors face in learning digital technologies.

Stakeholders involved in the analysis were asked about the critical training requirements for staff members involved in seniors' ICT education. They suggested several key training requirements for educators, emphasizing the importance of social skills, innovative teaching methods, and a deep understanding of seniors' learning needs. A summary is shown in Figure 8 while a detailed analysis of key training requirements for educators is presented in the following subchapters.

Figure 9: Key training requirements for educators

- **Continuous training and skill enhancement**

Continuous professional development is essential for educators to stay updated on the latest ICT advancements and teaching methodologies. Regular training sessions, workshops, and seminars can help educators refine their skills and adapt to emerging trends in digital education. This ongoing learning ensures that educators are well-equipped to address the evolving needs of seniors in ICT education.

- **Specialized pedagogy and adaptive methods**

Educators should be trained in specialized pedagogy that considers seniors' unique learning needs. This includes developing methodologies that cater to different learning paces and styles, such as hands-on practice, visual aids, and interactive activities. Educators should also be skilled in using adaptive technologies and tools that enhance accessibility and usability for seniors with physical or cognitive limitations.

- **Creating tailored tutorials and resources**

Developing tailored tutorials and resources is crucial for facilitating seniors' ICT learning. Educators should be trained in designing instructional materials that are clear, concise, and relevant to seniors' needs. Tutorials should include step-by-step instructions, visual aids, and real-world examples to enhance comprehension and retention.

- **Gamification and innovative teaching techniques**

Incorporating gamification and innovative teaching techniques can make ICT learning more engaging and enjoyable for seniors. Gamification involves using game-like elements, such as points, rewards, and challenges, to motivate and sustain learners' interest. This approach can help transform the learning process into an enjoyable experience, encouraging seniors to actively participate and persist in their education.

- **Social skills and communication**

Strong social skills are critical for educators to effectively engage with seniors. Clear and accessible communication is essential, as is the ability to explain complex concepts in simple, relatable terms. Educators should focus on building rapport with seniors, creating a friendly and open atmosphere where learners feel comfortable asking questions and expressing concerns.

- **Patience and empathy**

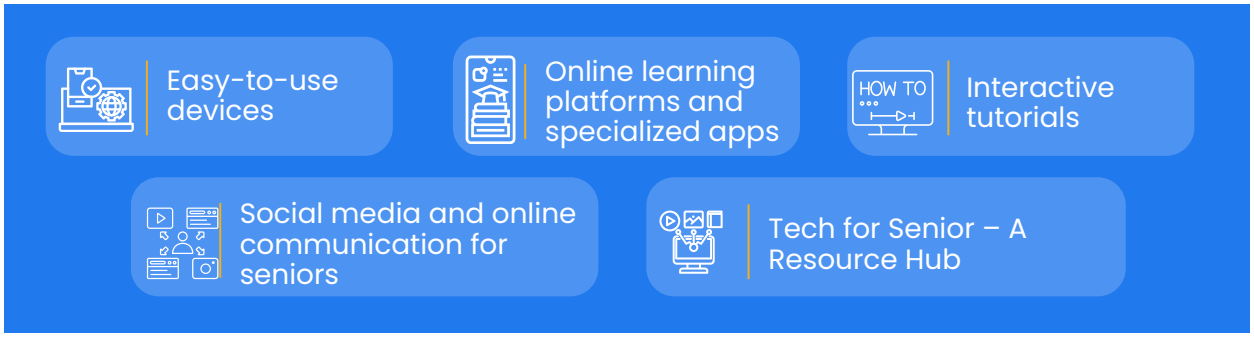
Patience and empathy are foundational qualities for educators working with seniors. Understanding that seniors may take longer to grasp new concepts and may require repeated explanations is vital. Educators should demonstrate a willingness to listen to seniors' concerns, acknowledge their frustrations, and provide reassurance and encouragement. This empathetic approach fosters a supportive learning environment where seniors feel valued and understood.

EFFECTIVE TECHNOLOGIES FOR TEACHING DIGITAL SKILLS TO SENIORS

The digital divide among seniors is a significant issue as technological advancements continue to shape everyday life. Bridging this gap requires identifying and implementing effective tools and technologies tailored to the unique learning needs of seniors. In our research, we explored the perspectives of both seniors and stakeholders, including public libraries, senior citizen organizations offering educational programs and services in ICT for seniors, and academic institutions.

Our goal was to determine the most effective tools and methods for teaching digital skills to adult learners over 45 with varying levels of digital proficiency. A summary is shown in Figure 9, while a detailed analysis of technologies or tools that are particularly effective for teaching digital skills to seniors is presented in the following subchapters.

Figure 10: Technologies or tools that are particularly effective for teaching digital skills to seniors



- **Easy-to-use Devices**

Many seniors have limited access to digital devices, often possessing only smartphones. Effective training should focus on commonly owned devices like smartphones and include workshops on maximizing their use for web searches, network security, email, cloud management, and online procedures. Tablets and iPads, with their user-friendly touch interfaces, are easier for seniors to navigate than traditional computers. Apps on these devices can be customized to suit different learning levels and interests.

Devices with simplified interfaces and larger screens, such as Chromebooks or specially designed computers for seniors (e.g., Telikin), can be very effective. The development of tablets like GrandPad, designed for people aged 75 and above, exemplifies simplicity, offering seniors an easy-to-use interface that facilitates connectivity without the complexities of typical mobile phones or tablets.

In addition to communication tools, companion robots, such as those from Ageless Innovations, provide emotional support and help alleviate the social isolation often experienced by older adults. Their animatronic pets offer companionship similar to having a real pet without caregiving tasks.

- **Online learning platforms and specialized apps**

Online learning platforms for basic digital skills have become essential tools in bridging the digital divide for seniors. Platforms like Coursera, Udemy, and Khan Academy offer courses specifically designed for seniors or beginners in digital skills. These courses equip senior citizens with basic computer skills to stay in touch with children, grandchildren, friends, and family. Apps like Eldy, which provide a simplified email and internet experience, and tutorials for apps like Facebook or Zoom, help seniors connect with loved ones online.

- **Interactive tutorials**

Websites like GCFGlobal and TechBoomers offer free, easy-to-follow tutorials on various digital skills, including using social media, email, and basic internet browsing. YouTube hosts numerous channels dedicated to teaching seniors how to use technology with step-by-step guides. Short videos, tutorials, and simple infographics are preferred as they provide concise, easily digestible information. Video calls and interactive sessions can facilitate real-time learning and feedback.

- **Social media and online communication for seniors**

Technology enables seniors to stay connected, with social media becoming increasingly popular among older adults. It's not just about sharing photos or news but also about creating bonds and reducing loneliness. Interactive games and simulations that teach digital skills can make learning enjoyable for seniors. Websites like Lumosity offer cognitive games that also improve digital navigation skills.

- **Tech for Senior – A Resource Hub**

Tech for Senior, a community on Facebook, serves as an invaluable resource hub. They host live streams and archived episodes of their show on their page, providing an interactive platform for questions, tips, and companionship. Their YouTube channel offers visual guides to simplify tech understanding, covering everything from setting up video chats to exploring new hobbies online. With resources like these readily available, mastering social media becomes less daunting and more inviting.

INSTITUTION ROLE IN PROMOTING DIGITAL COMPETENCE AMONG SENIOR CITIZENS

The role of governments in promoting digital skills among senior citizens is critical for achieving digital inclusivity.

By implementing targeted strategies, fostering partnerships, and promoting awareness, governments can significantly enhance digital literacy, empowering citizens to participate fully in the digital world. These efforts contribute to social inclusion, independence, and an improved quality of life for the elderly population.

Italy

Italy has initiated several programs to boost digital literacy among seniors, often collaborating with local communities and private organizations. These initiatives include free digital literacy courses and workshops focusing on practical skills necessary for everyday life, such as online banking and accessing government services. Two main measures aimed at providing citizens with basic digital skills include:

- Digital Civic Service[11]: In 2023, this program involved around 1,900 young volunteers who reached approximately 80,000 citizens.
- Network of Digital Facilitation Services: The opening of 504 facilitation services (Punti Digitale Facile)[12] across the country in 2023 supported about 6,000 people in using digital services.

France

The French government has implemented various projects under its national digital strategy, focusing on bridging the digital divide through accessible education and support. Notable initiatives include:

- Hub Francilien[13]: Provides training and resources for seniors.
- Digital Advisors Training: Aims to train 20,000 ‘helpers’ by 2025, supporting over 2 million French people in performing digital tasks.

These measures are key to reducing digital divides, especially in rural areas, and addressing issues related to the centralization of economic activities and decisions.

[11] https://www.italiadomani.gov.it/content/sogei-ng/it/en/Interventi/investimenti/competenze-digitali-di-base.html
[12] https://digitale.regione.emilia-romagna.it/punti-digitale-facile
[13] https://www.francilin.fr/

Spain

Spain's approach includes comprehensive digital inclusion programs targeting rural and less-populated areas. Volunteer-led training and awareness campaigns promote digital skills as essential for enhancing the quality of life and independence among seniors.

Key initiatives include:

- Generation D Campaign: Launched in 2023 by RTVE to explain digital transformation and help citizens adapt.[14]
- Pact for Generation D: A government initiative gathering over 200 members and 900 learning initiatives.
- Digital Rural Challenge Plan: Announced in February 2023 with a EUR 90 million investment to train over 380,000 people in rural areas by 2025.[15]
- Digital Skills for Children Program (CODI): Launched to teach digital skills to children, with a EUR 97 million grant allocated to train over 418,000 children.

Spain also participated in the European Digital Skills Certificate pilot and implemented various programs for advanced digital skills, such as the State Network of Digital Training Centres.

Albania

In Albania, significant efforts have been made in digitizing public services, but challenges remain in ensuring equitable access for citizens with limited digital skills or access to IT equipment. The European Commission's Albania 2023 Report[16] highlights the need to improve labor market relevance and quality of vocational education and training (VET) and invest in the digital skills of young people and adults.

Efforts must focus on reducing the digital divide across communities, strengthening digital transformation in education and training systems, and enhancing digital security and personal data protection, especially after recent cyberattacks.

[14] https://mijasinternational.com/actualidad/27939/generation-d-an-initiative-to-bridge-the-digital-divide/
[15] https://ec.europa.eu/enrd/sites/enrd/files/enrd_publications/digital-strategies_case-study_es.pdf
[16] https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/QANDA_23_5612

RECOMMENDATIONS

01.

Prioritize investment in digital education and skills - Public institutions should allocate resources to develop and implement comprehensive digital literacy programs for seniors, and to ensure that funding supports both technological infrastructure and educational initiatives.

02.

Support lifelong learning and STEM exposure - By promoting lifelong learning in ICT and encouraging early STEM exposure, institutions can create a supportive environment for seniors and young people alike. These efforts are crucial for fostering digital competence and ensuring that all generations are prepared to navigate the challenges and opportunities of an increasingly digital world. Additionally, fostering early exposure to STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics) for young people, particularly girls, is essential to creating intergenerational learning opportunities.

03.

Leverage community centers and libraries - Community centers and libraries are valuable resources for promoting digital literacy among seniors, offering accessible venues and personalized support tailored to their needs. In EU states like France, Italy, and Spain, these institutions are well-established and equipped to deliver a wide range of digital literacy programs. In contrast, Albania faces unique challenges but is making progress through strategic partnerships and localized initiatives. By leveraging these community resources, countries can ensure that seniors are equipped with the digital skills necessary to thrive in today's technology-driven world.

04.

Foster public-private partnerships - Public institutions should actively seek collaborations with private sector companies and non-profit organizations to create innovative digital learning opportunities. These partnerships can leverage diverse expertise and resources to expand digital literacy programs and reach a broader audience.

05.

Invest in digital infrastructure - Governments must focus on improving internet connectivity in rural and underserved areas. By investing in infrastructure, they can ensure that all citizens have access to affordable and reliable digital services, thereby bridging the digital divide.

06.

Enhance digital security awareness - Institutions should provide training programs on digital safety, focusing on protecting personal data and practicing safe internet habits. Special attention should be given to vulnerable populations, including seniors, to equip them with the knowledge needed to navigate digital environments securely.

07.

Promote continuous education and upskilling - Encourage individuals to engage in lifelong learning by providing access to online platforms that offer flexible learning paths. These platforms should cater to different career stages and life circumstances, helping individuals adapt to changing technological landscapes.

08.

Ensure accessible digital public services - It is crucial to make digital public services secure, interoperable, and accessible to everyone, including older adults and people with disabilities. Investment and regulatory measures should focus on designing user-friendly interfaces and support systems to ensure inclusivity.

09.

Support digital literacy through community engagement - Leverage community centers, libraries, and local organizations to offer digital literacy workshops and personalized support. These venues can serve as hubs for digital learning, providing resources and assistance to individuals seeking to improve their digital skills.

BEST PRACTICES

Each partner has identified 3-5 good practices in digital skills and seniors as digital learners in national level (Albania, France, Italy, Spain). The aim is to explore successful approaches, upskilling initiatives and projects with a proven impact on bridging the digital skills gap that have the potential to be replicated in other countries and different contexts.

ALBANIA

Increasing Roma access to online public services in E-Albania

This initiative aimed to enhance the Roma community's awareness and skills in accessing services via the E-Albania digital platform. The project responded to the challenges faced by Roma in adapting to the Albanian government's shift to online public services. A mobile office was used to facilitate access to public services for Roma in remote areas of Divjake and Lushnje municipalities.

MAIN ACTIVITIES

Information sessions for members of the Roma community on how to access online services in the E-Albania portal

Information sessions in groups with 10-15 participants were organized near Roma settlements. The IRCA's local facilitators trained the community members how to open a personal account on the online portal; how to generate the documents they need from the portal according to the relevant sections: family, work, education, health, etc.

Direct assistance for Roma to access online services

Direct support was provided via an improvised mobile office (minivan) for those without internet access or electronic devices, including the elderly and individuals with limited abilities..

ID Card Provision

100 Roma community members were assisted with ID card applications, crucial for accessing the portal, by providing coupons to offset costs.

RESPONSIBLE AUTHORITY/ORGANIZATION:

Institute of Romani Culture in Albania (IRCA)

Effectiveness

The project successfully piloted in two remote Albanian municipalities, organizing 10 information sessions with nearly 150 Roma participants. It directly assisted 100 individuals in accessing online services and acquiring ID cards, significantly improving their ability to use the E-Albania portal.

Transferability Assessment

The digital skills and knowledge gained by participants will enable continued access to online services beyond the project's duration. Participants can also transfer their knowledge to others in the community.

TIMELINE	August 2023 – February 2024
LOCATIONS	Municipality of Lushnje and Divjake in Albania

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

The Roma community often has low education levels, with many illiterate individuals. The project highlighted the ongoing need to enhance digital skills. Young people, who adapt quickly to technological changes, were identified as key targets for short-term interventions since they can assist other family members. Tailoring approaches to individual needs through face-to-face meetings and small group work proved effective for transferring knowledge to vulnerable groups.

ALBANIA

AKTIVIZON.AL

e-Learning platform for youth workers and practicioners

The Aktivizon.al platform is a virtual platform for youth workers and practitioners in Albania, which comes with an asynchronous learning approach.

MAIN ACTIVITIES

Online training and mentoring

The platform provides access to learning through the use of online training without the need to meet face-to-face with a trainer/facilitator.

On the platform you will find 5 modules built by relevant experts in 5 different topics of work with young people, according to the model of European Competencies and the comprehensive educational theory of non-formal education and self-directed education.

The platform also has integrated a number of digital tools padlet, mentimeter, kahoot etc., which will make the learning more interactive for the users. Each training aims to raise the capacities of the trainees by improving their knowledge, attitudes, skills and behavior. A trainer/facilitator support trainings during the periods where courses are opened.

RESPONSIBLE AUTHORITY/ORGANIZATION:

Beyond Barriers Association

Effectiveness

There are 5 modules online in the platform:

1. Human Rights Education with young people in youth work
2. Non formal education and competences approach in youth work
3. Social rights
4. Volunteering, values and benefits for young people

Intercultural learning in youth work

Transferability Assessment

In September 2024, staff of BBA will start preparations to incorporate another module in the platform through support of cascading funds of Horizon program. The module will contain online methods to train young researchers in the ORRI methodology through e-learning tools to get equipped and apply it in the youth sector and other fields.

TIMELINE	Started in November 2022 (first courses)
LOCATIONS	Online platform, Albania

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

The courses in the platform are opened based in a calendar scheduled by BBA, are free to anyone and from any part of Albania - internet access is enough - and it is all in the Albanian language so that any young Albanian who has basic knowledge of internet navigation can easily use it.

ALBANIA

BIBLIOTECH

The BiblioTech program aims to transform public spaces into technological hubs that serve both young and older community members. The program focuses on enhancing digital literacy and safety for children and teens, thereby contributing to a stronger, more technologically-savvy community.

MAIN ACTIVITIES

Since its launch in 2019, BiblioTech has achieved several milestones:

- Conducted over 120 information and training sessions in more than 30 schools and BiblioTech Corners, engaging 815 children and youth.
- Organized three editions of the BiblioTech Challenge, a mentoring and competition program for 440 youth from Tirana, Shkodra, Kukes, and Korça.
- Held four Tech Camps, training over 90 youth from Shkodra and Tirana.
- Produced 18 online video tutorials as learning tools.
- Reached over 750,000 youth through social media with messages on digital skills, online safety, and combating human trafficking.

The program plans to continue empowering Albanian youth by:

- Expanding reach to more regions and municipalities.
- Developing new and innovative programs and training modules.
- Enhancing the experience of youth in existing BiblioTech Corners.

RESPONSIBLE AUTHORITY/ORGANIZATION:

ASDO – Albania Sustainable Development Organization
https://asdo.al/en/projects/bibliotech

Effectiveness

The BiblioTech strategy focuses on:

- Leveraging pre-established communities and networks.
- Utilizing local human and infrastructure resources.
- Minimizing environmental impact and travel costs.
- Enhancing local staff and expert capacities.

Transferability Assessment

The program engages all community members, from children to the elderly, providing essential skills for community development, safety information, and digital literacy that enhances their value as skilled workers in the future job market.

TIMELINE	Started in 2019 and ongoing
LOCATIONS	Albania

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

The intervention has proven to be sustainable, impactful, and effective, equipping Albanian citizens with essential digital skills and enabling them to positively engage and thrive within their communities.

For more information, please visit www.asdo.al

Nonni su Internet

Digital literacy project for people 60 years old and older. The project's objectives include the training of volunteers specialised in helping senior citizens achieve digital literacy. These volunteers need valid skills in information technology, management, teaching, and personal relations. Men and women of any age can become knowledge volunteers: current students and even retired teachers.

MAIN ACTIVITIES

Courses are held in the computerised classrooms of schools of all kinds. The "learners" are local residents over 60 years old, perhaps the real grandparents of the students at the schools or elderly people registered at Social Centers for the Elderly or other associations. **Classes of 20-25 elderly people are formed at each participating school. The tutors are school children coordinated by an expert ICT teacher. The ideal tutor/learner ratio is 1/2.**

The duration of the free course is 30 hours, divided into 15 weekly lessons of 2-hour duration each. Participating seniors, student tutors, and teacher supervisors all receive an attendance certificate at the end of the course. The project's educational validity has been appreciated by the schools to the extent that it has been inserted in their Training Offer Plan (Piano dell'offerta formativa) and that credits are awarded to the student tutors.

ITALY

RESPONSIBLE AUTHORITY/ORGANIZATION:

Fondazione Mondo Digitale

Effectiveness

In the 14 editions of this digital literacy project for people 60 years old and older conducted so far, over 30,000 senior citizens have become certified "Internauts" through instruction by 21,000 student tutors and 2,100 IT teacher coordinators.

In the 2015-16 school year, this intergenerational learning model was applied in 20 Italian regions and 11 different nations.

TIMELINE	2007 - ongoing (18 editions)
LOCATIONS	School classes all over Italy

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

For more information, please visit https://www.mondodigitale.org/en/projects/nonni-su-internet

ITALY

DIGIBREAKER PLUS

Digi-Breaker+

Breaking barriers and building community for an effective, sustainable and inclusive digitalization of adult guidance services.

MAIN ACTIVITIES

- **Research and Analysis**: Collect and review 30 cases showcasing the application of digital tools and methodologies in employment.
- **BRIDGE THE GAP**: Develop multimedia tools to integrate digital solutions into adult orientation services, supporting skills development and employment opportunities.
- **Community Development Action Plan (CDAP):** Build a transnational network of orientation services for adult education.
- **Implementation of DIGI-BREAKER Approach**: Encourage operators, consultants, local learning centers, and libraries to adopt innovative digital methods.
- **Integrated Courses with Lab Activities**: Offer practical application of acquired information for employment seeking.
- **Strategic Action Plan**: Develop a policy recommendations guidebook for transferring and scaling results to interested countries.
- **Massive Open Online Course (MOOC)**: Provide a 3-hour course focusing on green and digital competences to embed sustainability in job searches. The course includes three modules with three 20-minute lessons each: Basic Skills, Group and Classify Your Skills, Arrange and Outline Your Skills.

RESPONSIBLE AUTHORITY/ORGANIZATION:

Fondazione Mondo Digitale

Effectiveness

Digi-Breaker+ will design, develop, and test a sustainability-based digital skills framework. This framework will be available as an e-book and MOOC for adult learners and employment counselors, promoting a digital, green, open, and multi-channel approach to career guidance. It aims to foster dialogue between unemployed adults and career counselors/adult educators while raising awareness about embedding digital sustainability in job searches.

TIMELINE	December 2022 – November 2024
LOCATIONS	Belgium, Italy, Lithuania, Sweden, Bulgaria

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Thanks to a portfolio of didactic materials and a flexible approach, the project addresses the need to qualify and requalify workers to adapt to market transformations during the transition towards a climate-neutral economy.

Project partners:

- Alphabet Formation, Belgium (lead partner)
- Fondazione Mondo Digitale, Italy
- All Digital Aisbl, Belgium
- Imotec, Lithuania
- Igitego, Sweden
- Globalni Biblioteki – Bulgariya, Bulgaria

ITALY

Smile

SMart Innovative Learning for Employment

The project focuses on developing basic digital skills (such as Microsoft 365 and generative AI/ChatGPT) and professional skills in areas like Sales, Customer Service, Retail, Graphic Design, and Social Media Marketing.

MAIN ACTIVITIES

The SMILE initiative aims to assist unemployed and unemployable individuals aged 34-50 in re-entering the workforce by focusing on acquiring and enhancing digital skills. These skills add value to their existing professional experience and facilitate workplace reintegration.

The training courses are modular and flexible, divided into three key areas of 40 hours each:

- Skills for Life: Including stress management, empathy, and critical thinking.
- Basic Digital Skills: Covering Microsoft 365 programs (Word, Excel, PowerPoint) and generative artificial intelligence.
- Profession-Specific Digital Skills: Tailored to specific work areas.

RESPONSIBLE AUTHORITY/ORGANIZATION:

Fondazione Mondo Digitale

Effectiveness

The SMILE project implements a new training paradigm that integrates the 'learning to learn' competence. This approach encourages participants to self-assess their training needs, search for, select, and utilize Open Educational Resources (OER) available online. The process is supported by continuous interaction with tutors and expert trainers within the ‘Smart Learning’ Community, inspired by the Smart Learning Design methodology developed by the Politecnico di Milano.
The project includes a 'Catalogue-Library' of courses, allowing beneficiaries to choose with guidance from a counsellor-tutor to best enhance their potential and professional profiles for job placement. A chatbot is available on the platform to provide continuous assistance during individual work sessions. The project plans to conduct 16 class editions with approximately 15 participants each. Participants can access all courses in the catalogue-library asynchronously for the duration of the project.

TIMELINE	2022-2026
LOCATIONS	Emilia Romagna, Lazio, Piedmont, Lombardy, Tuscany

Migrant Liter@cies

Migrant Liter@cies is a European project, co-funded by the European Commission's Erasmus plus programme, with the aim of developing **innovative practices in the use of ICT for media literacy and digital literacy integration in the education of adult migrants** (refugees, asylum seekers, young people and migrant women).

MAIN ACTIVITIES

The project aims to develop multiple learning paths embedded in the national contexts of partner countries, providing innovative tools for educators and teachers. This includes the development of 45 workshops and 8 national toolkits focused on language learning using ICT and media literacy skills.

- **Development of workshops and toolkits:** Creation of 45 workshops and 8 national toolkits to teach languages using ICT and media literacy skills.
- **Research**: Identifying good practices and methodologies in adult migrant literacy programs that utilize innovative ICT methods for language learning and social media.
- **Training**: Engaging partner staff and approximately 200 educators across 8 European countries in trainings.
- **Implementation:** Conducting 45 experimental workshops with around 500 migrants, testing and implementing innovative practices in ICT for literacy and media integration.

ITALY

RESPONSIBLE AUTHORITY/ORGANIZATION:

Centro per l'educazione ai media (Italy)

Effectiveness

The workshops focused on effectively and creatively using new media and apps in literacy, developing innovative methodologies for integrating media and digital literacy in adult migrant education, promoting social inclusion, and enhancing social, civic, and intercultural competences. All 45 tested workshops are available for download in English from the project website, with detailed descriptions and visual materials to facilitate replication and adaptation by educators and teachers. The Italian Toolkit, developed by the Zaffiria coordinator and the Fo.Co. network, presents 13 workshops: 8 tested in Italy and 5 from European partners' experiments.

TIMELINE	2017
LOCATIONS	Belgium, Estonia, Italy, Germany, Netherland, Poland, Slovakia, Spain

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

For more information, please visit https://www.migrantliteracies.eu/

Mini-workshops Open Classroom

Given the increasingly digitalized society and the digital divide that can limit older adults' access to information, Fundación "la Caixa" provides tools and resources to integrate them into the digital world. The project offers short training sessions, or mini-workshops, aimed at elderly volunteers. These volunteers then help others in their community centers familiarize themselves with common digital applications.

MAIN ACTIVITIES

The "la Caixa" Foundation provides the following mini-workshops, each lasting 4 sessions of 2 hours:

- **Introduction to Computers and Internet Communication**: Basics of computer use and online communication.
- **Internet Procedures**: Learning to use digital tools for interacting with government services through "My Citizen's Folder."
  - My Citizen's Folder: Manage data and conduct formalities with public administrations, like renewing IDs or handling tax-related issues.
- **My Health**: Navigate online public health systems, access health records, request appointments, and download diagnostic tests.
- **Online booking**: Skills for purchasing tickets for events and shopping online while identifying and avoiding fraud.
- **Online finance**: Safe use of online banking and financial applications, including apps like Bizum.

RESPONSIBLE AUTHORITY/ORGANIZATION:

Fundación “la Caixa”

Effectiveness

The program has been successful, with 406,351 older adults participating in 16,986 activities across 629 centers during the 2022-2023 academic year. The workshops help seniors acquire new skills, enhance existing ones, and discover new abilities. The course promotes relationships, well-being, personal development, and active social participation among older adults.

Transferability Assessment

This practice could be adapted for the DIGI-LEARN project, as both initiatives aim to provide digital skills to vulnerable populations, particularly older adults. Notable transferable elements include the widespread presence of courses across Spain and training volunteers from the same generation as participants, which fosters a deeper connection and understanding between educators and learners.

TIMELINE	2022-2024
LOCATIONS	Spain

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Fundación "la Caixa" has over a century of experience in elder programs, addressing challenges of aging, fostering personal development, and building supportive relationships for a fulfilling life committed to community involvement.

For more information, please visit https://fundacionlacaixa.org/es/home

Digital literacy for seniors: bridging the digital divide

The National University of Distance Education (UNED) offers a free 40-hour course funded by the Government of Navarra. It aims to equip the older population with training, tools, and digital resources to reduce the intergenerational digital divide and inequality of opportunities. The initiative supports active and healthy aging by bridging the gap between technologies and non-digital native populations. The course fosters technological capabilities, broadening access to knowledge and social activities in conditions comparable to the rest of society.

MAIN ACTIVITIES

The program consists of 20 courses, each 2 hours long, which participants can take individually or as a complete set. Those who enroll and pass the entire course earn 2 ECTS credits. A MOODLE platform supplements the sessions with videos and materials, and participants can interact with speakers for questions. Attendance options include in-person, live online, or recorded sessions.

Key topics include:

- Introduction to the Internet: navigation and email
- Using mobile phones: iPhone and Android
- Learning to use WhatsApp
- Video calls and videoconferences: connecting with family and friends
- Using social networks

RESPONSIBLE AUTHORITY/ORGANIZATION:

National University of Distance Education (UNED)

Effectiveness

The course was fully attended, providing participants with essential tools to overcome digital gaps.

Transferability Assessment

This best practice can be effectively applied to the DIGI-LEARN project, which also aims to bridge the digital divide. Notably, this practice offers several valuable features: its content is accessible online, through live and recorded sessions. The sessions are concise, at just two hours each, which helps users maintain concentration. This is complemented by online platforms featuring videos, supplementary materials, and forums where users can ask relevant questions.

TIMELINE	From October 5 to November 30, 2020
LOCATIONS	Navarra, Spain

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

To earn the course certificate, participants must correctly answer a short questionnaire for each section on the MOODLE platform.

For more information, please visit https://extension.uned.es/actividad/23005

SPAIN

ONLINE SUPPORT for PROFESSIONAL SKILLS of DISADVANTAGED PEOPLE

Online Support for the Professional Skills of Disadvantaged People

The project aims to enhance the professional qualifications of support professionals working with disadvantaged unemployed adults. It focuses on developing basic technological skills, implementing successful methodologies from other regions, and increasing the technological competencies of disadvantaged individuals, thereby reducing their barriers to entering the labor market.

MAIN ACTIVITIES

The project provides ICT tools for delivering services and training to unemployed adults, removes barriers to online resources for disadvantaged groups, and implements training service platforms designed for smartphones. It has developed two transnational learning activities:

- C1: "Addressing Barriers to Online Learning in Disadvantaged Groups"
- C2: "Analysis of Existing ICT Tools for the Development of Online Services for Disadvantaged Unemployed Adults"

Main activities:

- Achieve social and labor inclusion for disadvantaged unemployed individuals by teaching basic skills through ICTs.
- Enhance the professional profiles of beneficiaries, particularly vulnerable adults, by providing key skills for a digital environment.
- Empower adults facing barriers with practical skills and knowledge for job searching using digital devices.
- Improve online services for unemployed individuals.
- Enhance the skills of employment service teams to address learning challenges related to equity, diversity, and inclusion through ICTs.

RESPONSIBLE AUTHORITY/ORGANIZATION:

Instituto Leonés de Desarrollo Económico, Formación y Empleo (ILDEFE)

Effectiveness

This project has been highly effective in providing ICT tools to unemployed adults, thereby eliminating barriers to accessing online resources for disadvantaged groups.

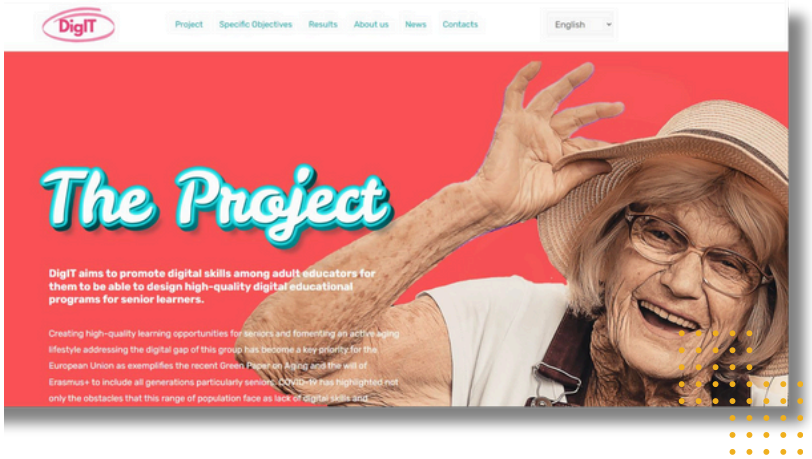
Transferability Assessment

This practice can be adapted for the DIGI-LEARN project, as it provides training for professionals to further their qualifications in digital competence, supporting disadvantaged unemployed adults.

TIMELINE	September 2020-August 2022
LOCATIONS	León, Spain

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

For more information, please visit https://erasmus-plus.ec.europa.eu/projects/search/details/2020-1-ES01-KA204-082753



DigIT: Promotion of digital skills among older generation adult educators

The DigIT project aims to promote digital skills among adult educators for them to be able to design high-quality digital educational programs for senior learners

OBJECTIVES

With this project, the project partners aimed to promote the valorization of adult educators in the active aging promotion. By creating a booklet of digital tools to be used in the teaching of +60 senior learners and organize training opportunities for adult educators, they contributed to the professional development of adult educators and ultimately to the availability of high-quality learning opportunities for senior adults, particularly for seniors with a low level of skills, knowledge and competences.

1. Promoting the exchange of Good Practices and work methodologies, encouraging strong international teamwork, capacitating the involved organizations, particularly in terms of using innovative educational digital tools.
2. Providing an opportunity to adult educators to participate in a transnational educational exchange among professionals from different countries, reinforcing a European identity and Intercultural learning.
3. Empowering facilitators and educators on how to promote key digital competencies and personal development among seniors.
4. Exploring different digital tools for the design of educational opportunities for seniors.
5. Introducing and reflecting on the design of non-formal education for seniors.
6. Deepening the needs and potential of the seniors' population regarding digital literacy.

SPAIN

RESPONSIBLE AUTHORITY/ORGANIZATION:

ADI & SALUS SERSOC SL (Spain); Associação Animam Viventem (Portugal); BASE3 Società Cooperativa (Italy).

Effectiveness

This practice has successfully trained numerous teachers, who have subsequently empowered individuals with low digital skills, helping to bridge the digital divide for older and other vulnerable populations.

Transferability Assessment

The methodology of this project can be adapted to address the digital divide and can be applied to learning any subject of interest to citizens.

TIMELINE	March 1, 2022 - July 2, 2023
LOCATIONS	Spain, Italy, and Portugal

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

For more information, please visit https://www.projectdigit.eu/

SPAIN

Technological attention in the library

Providing technological assistance in libraries

MAIN ACTIVITIES

The Council of A Coruña employs a specialist to provide personalized technological assistance to individuals who struggle with digital devices at each of the city's seven municipal libraries. The service is available without an appointment, on a first-come, first-served basis, and is offered at various times throughout the week, including remote assistance if needed.

The technology expert provides assistance with tasks such as booking appointments for public administration, teaching the use of digital devices, and making calls to doctors. The expert offers guidance but does not perform tasks on behalf of the user.

RESPONSIBLE AUTHORITY/ORGANIZATION:

ADI & SALUS SERSOC SL (Spain); Associação Animam Viventem (Portugal); BASE3 Società Cooperativa (Italy).

Effectiveness

This service is highly effective as it provides personalized technological support, addressing specific user needs. For instance, the expert can assist with tasks like sending a resume to a company or connecting to a Teams meeting.

Transferability Assessment

This good practice can be transferred to the DIGI-LEARN project due to its agility and personalized attention, which are crucial in effectively assisting individuals with digital challenges.

TIMELINE Monday - Friday, with specific hours varying by library. Remote assistance is also available.

LOCATIONS Various municipal libraries in A Coruña

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

In addition to personalized technological assistance, the libraries offer a comprehensive educational program aimed at helping citizens improve their digital skills. The courses, which are free of charge, cover various topics such as "Mobile from Zero," "The Computer from Zero," and "Administrative Procedures," promoting the safe, critical, and responsible use of digital devices for leisure, work, and active participation in society. Remote assistance is also available for those who prefer it.

For more information, please visit
https://www.coruna.gal/bibliotecas/gl/usa-as-bibliotecas/as-bibliotecas-ofrecenche/atencion-tecnoloxica?argIdioma=gl

Solidarité Numérique

Providing digital assistance and resources to seniors and vulnerable individuals.

MAIN ACTIVITIES

Solidarité Numérique provides a hotline service to assist citizens with digital tools. It offers online tutorials and guides on various digital topics and organizes individual support sessions to solve specific problems.

Key services include:

- **Telephone assistance:** A dedicated phone line for personalized advice on using digital tools.
- **Tutorials and guides:** Online resources covering topics like email usage, internet navigation, and accessing online public services.
- **Individual support:** One-on-one sessions to address specific issues related to digital technology.

RESPONSIBLE AUTHORITY/ORGANIZATION:

The project is managed by the Secretary of State for Digital Transition and Electronic Communications with oversight by ANCT

Effectiveness

The Digital Society program of ANCT oversees the Solidarité Numérique platform, with operational support from MedNum, the national cooperative of digital mediation actors. Since its creation, more than 30,000 individuals have received personalized support.

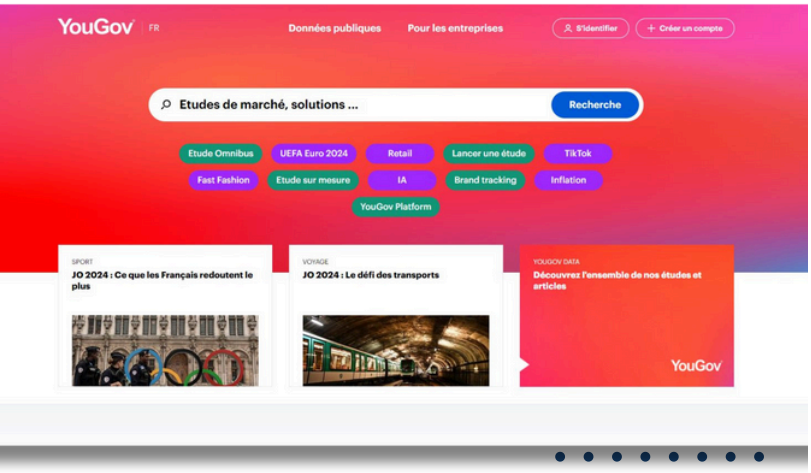
Transferability Assessment

This project could be effectively transferred to countries with socio-economic similarities to France, where digital inequalities are also prevalent.

TIMELINE	2020
LOCATIONS	France

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

For more information, please visit
https://www.solidarite-numerique.fr/a-propos/



Digital Solutions to Combat Senior Isolation

The program focuses on providing training and support to seniors for using social media, aiming to bridge the digital divide and combat isolation among seniors. The program offers a comprehensive approach that includes practical workshops, personalized mentoring, and online support groups.

MAIN ACTIVITIES

- **Training Workshops**

Conduct hands-on workshops for seniors to learn Facebook and Messenger, covering account creation, News Feed navigation, posting, and interacting. Sessions also address online security and privacy, including settings, personal information protection, and scam recognition. Participants learn to use Messenger for sending messages, photos, making video calls, and managing notifications.

- **Personalized Support**

Provide one-on-one mentoring from young volunteers or digital trainers to address specific questions and technical issues, helping seniors build confidence and proficiency in using digital tools.

- **Online Support Groups**

Create Facebook groups for seniors to share experiences, ask questions, and receive advice, fostering a supportive community and offering peer encouragement.

FRANCE

RESPONSIBLE AUTHORITY/ORGANIZATION:

YouGov

Effectiveness

Surveys by YouGov in 2017 and 2019 highlight the program's effectiveness, revealing that 75% of seniors were online in 2017, and 70% used the internet to research purchases, even when shopping in physical stores. These statistics demonstrate substantial digital engagement among seniors.

Transferability Assessment

Digital strategies used to target seniors can be effective and transferable to other contexts where seniors are connected.

TIMELINE	2017 and ongoing
LOCATIONS	Paris, France

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

For more information, please visit https://fr.yougov.com/

Digital mediators

Digital education and support for seniors and vulnerable individuals

MAIN ACTIVITIES

This initiative focuses on teaching specific digital skills, solving technical problems, and educating individuals on good digital practices through personalized support and adapted training, often provided at home.

Main activities

- Personalized support and training: Delivering customized training sessions at home to help individuals acquire essential digital skills for everyday use.

RESPONSIBLE AUTHORITY/ORGANIZATION:

Agence Nationale de la Cohésion des Territoires (ANCT) / National Agency for Territorial Cohesion

Effectiveness

In 2022, approximately 650,000 people sought assistance through this program.

Transferability Assessment

As many European countries aim to accelerate digital transitions, digital mediators can play a crucial role in helping individuals and communities adapt to and benefit from new technologies. To be effective, these mediators should be available in different languages and consider the cultural and social specificities of each European region.

TIMELINE	2020 and ongoing

LOCATIONS	Paris, France

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

For more information, please visit
https://www.mediation-numerique.fr/

FRANCE

Pass Numérique

Promoting digital inclusion through training and workshops.

MAIN ACTIVITIES

The Pass Numérique initiative aims to reduce the digital divide by offering checks or coupons to individuals who struggle with digital technology. These vouchers provide access to training and workshops, promoting digital inclusion by supporting those furthest from technology. The program facilitates the digital transition by helping citizens use online services essential for administrative tasks, employment, and daily life.

Main activities

- **Training workshops:** Organize workshops to teach basic digital skills, such as email usage and internet browsing. These sessions, often conducted in collaboration with libraries and community centers, help bridge the digital divide by equipping participants with essential digital skills.

RESPONSIBLE AUTHORITY/ORGANIZATION:

Agence Nationale de la Cohésion des Territoires (ANCT) / National Agency for Territorial Cohesion

Effectiveness

Since 2020, more than 66,000 digital passes have been distributed, providing significant support to individuals in need.

Transferability Assessment

Many European countries face similar challenges with the digital divide, particularly among the elderly, unemployed, migrants, and low-income individuals. Cooperation among European nations can facilitate the exchange of best practices, resources, and expertise in digital inclusion. Transnational pilot projects could be launched to test the effectiveness of the Pass Numérique in different contexts. It is essential to adapt the content and training methods to meet the specific needs of each country and linguistic community.

TIMELINE	2020 and ongoing
LOCATIONS	Paris, France

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

For more information, please visit https://societenumerique.gouv.fr/fr/dispositif/pass-numerique/

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Learning to learn in digital environments

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