3.2. Seniors and digital skills around Europe

MODULE 3 - Codesigning activities to promote digital competence with seniors
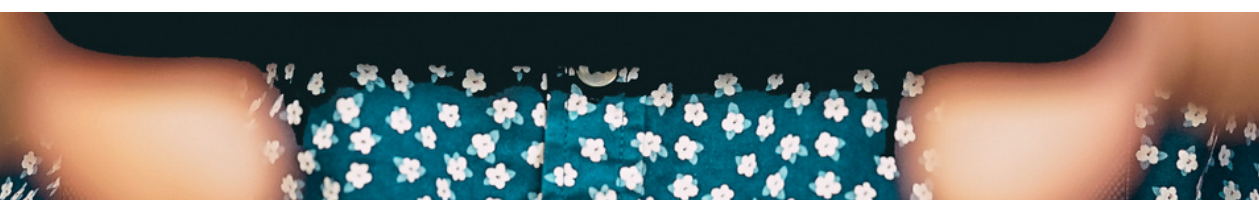
- Following Commission President Ursula von der Leyen's call for greater digital leadership and a common vision for 2030 as well as the European Council's request that the EU develop a Digital Compass, the Commission adopted in March 2021 the **2030 Digital Compass: the European Way for the Digital Decade Communication**. It sets out the EU's digital ambitions and lays out its vision for digital transformation by 2030.

- As projected in the Communication and in response to a call from the European Council, on 15 September 2021 the Commission adopted a proposal for a Decision on a Path to the Digital Decade, setting out the digital targets the EU as a whole is expected to reach by the end of the decade. **The 2030 target of the Digital Compass is that at least 80% of citizens have at least basic digital skills.**
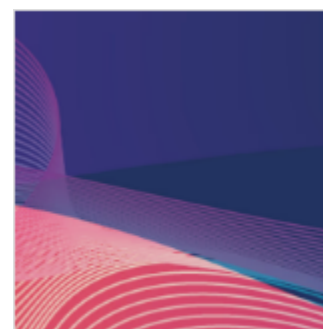
Europe's Digital Decade: digital targets for 2030

Europe plans to empower businesses and people in a human-centred, sustainable and prosperous digital future,...

European Commission

More info here

The most current data on digital literacy in Europe are provided by a report published annually by the **Digital Economy and Society Index of the European Commission (DESI)**, which monitors Europe's overall digital performance and tracks the progress of EU countries in their digital competitiveness.

- 87% of people (aged 16-74) used the internet regularly in 2021, only 54% possessed at least basic digital skills.
- Only 42% of those aged 55-64 and 25% after 65 years old have at least basic digital skills.
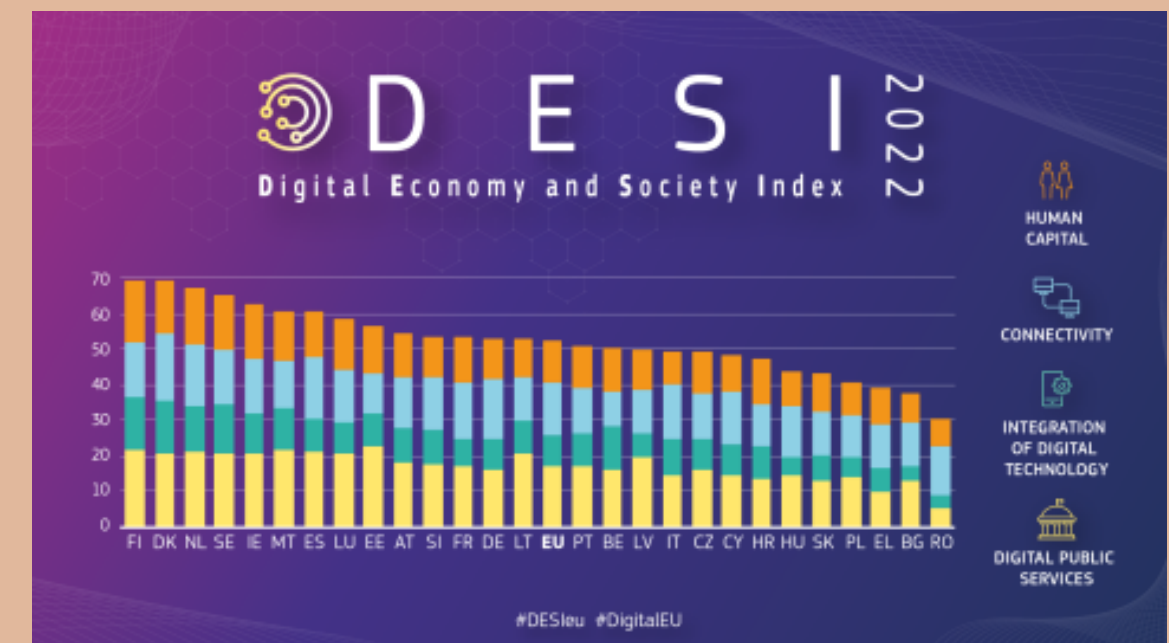
Concerns of the Elderly Population regarding TECHNOLOGY

- Many seniors struggle with touch screens due to a condition called leathery fingers.

- Mastering new technology is often complicated as the seniors have no experience in using technology to use as a baseline.

- Technological Accessibility is still not a reality – small letters, complicated instructions, lack of contrast....

- Data Protection worries a lot of seniors and they recognise they need more Digital Literacy, Including Familiarity With Terminology

- But also Technologists need more Aging Literacy!

- Voice-Activated Tools is one of the best tools for technological inclusion of seniors.

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General Guidelines Regarding Digital Education with Seniors

Digital literacy programs can empower older persons, foster social participation, and increase older adults' autonomy. Independence and tailored peer- or intergenerational training initiatives targeted at older persons have proven to be effective in enhancing their digital literacy. Having in mind a practical framework of digital competence is crucial to choose the content and methodology of the training program.

To be fully inclusive, the digital education action plan should also seek to:

- improve the accessibility of online learning content;
- improve the 'physical' accessibility of digital devices;
- encourage digital training attendance in places where older persons are and live, such as in long-term care services or public libraries;
- fully embrace opportunities of non-formal and informal learning;
- **cocreate** the content and structure of the training with the seniors in order to meet their needs and interests!

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