



XXI Adults

**Adaptation of the adult educational
system to the XXI Century**

The Good Practices Template



INSTITUTE for
ROMA and
MINORITIES
INCLUSION



**DIPUTACIÓN
DE VALLADOLID**



E-SCHOOL
EDUCATIONAL GROUP



EMPODERAR
DESENVOLVIMENTO ORGANIZACIONAL, SOCIAL, PROFISSIONAL E PESSOAL



Co-funded by
the European Union



Name of the Good Practice

Digital Literacy Circles for Older Adults

Summary of the Practice

Brief, easy-to-understand summary: What is the practice, for whom, and for what purpose?

Digital Literacy Circles for Older Adults is a peer-led, community-based initiative designed to improve essential digital skills among adults aged 50–75. It aims to address the digital divide by promoting practical, confidence-building learning in a supportive and non-formal setting. The practice supports the broader goals of the Adult Education by empowering vulnerable populations with 21st-century digital skills, helping to improve their quality of life and employment potential.

Description of the Practice – min. 2000 characters

1) Context / Background

What was the initial need or problem?

Who was the target group?

Was it part of a larger programme or project?

In many parts of Europe, especially in rural and depopulating areas, older adults often lack the digital competencies needed to actively participate in today's increasingly online society. This digital divide has long been present but became much more visible after the COVID-19 pandemic, which accelerated the digitisation of essential services such as healthcare, banking, and public administration. As a result, many seniors found themselves excluded from key aspects of daily life, unable to carry out basic tasks or stay connected with others.

Studies show that around 33% of Europeans do not have sufficient digital skills, and this figure rises dramatically among senior citizens—up to 75% in some regions. These numbers highlight the urgent need for inclusive educational initiatives that specifically address older populations.

The **“Digital Literacy Circles for Older Adults”** were developed as a response to this issue. Designed to improve digital skills among seniors, these informal groups offer accessible, peer-supported learning environments. Participants receive guidance tailored to their needs and pace, helping them gain confidence in using digital devices and navigating online platforms.

This initiative is part of a broader Erasmus+ project called “EUfolk”, which focuses on promoting cultural heritage and community-based learning. While older adults are not the project's main target group, it became clear that their digital exclusion needed to be addressed to enable their





active participation in cultural and educational activities. Therefore, improving digital literacy became a key supporting objective.

The circles proved to be an effective way of fostering social inclusion, lifelong learning, and intergenerational exchange. They offered older adults not only practical digital skills but also a renewed sense of independence and connection in an increasingly digital world.

2) Objectives

What were the goals of the practice?

What did it aim to improve or change?

- Equip older adults with practical digital skills (e.g., using email, accessing government portals, online safety, videoing).
- Reduce digital exclusion and promote independence.
- Foster social connection and community engagement through collaborative learning.
- Support adult education centers in modernizing their outreach and inclusivity strategies.

3) Implementation / Methodology

How was the practice carried out step by step?

What activities or methods were used?

How long did it take?

Step-by-step:

- **Recruitment:** Local education centers invited older adults and community volunteers to participate.
- **Training of facilitators:** Volunteers (including younger adults and trained educators) received a short orientation on adult learning principles and digital tools.
- **Circle Formation:** Small groups (6–10 participants) were formed, meeting weekly for 90-minute sessions over 6 weeks.
- **Content Customization:** Each group chose topics relevant to their needs (e.g., mobile phone basics, online banking, video calls, video creation).
- **Learning by Doing:** Sessions were hands-on, using real-life tasks (e.g., creating email accounts, booking appointments, making small videos).
- **Peer Support:** Group members helped each other, and facilitators provided guidance when necessary.
- **Feedback Loop:** Mid- and post-program evaluations helped improve future sessions.





4) Results / Outcomes

What were the concrete results?

How did the practice impact the participants?

- Over 100 older adults across 3 countries improved their digital skills.
- Participants reported increased confidence in using smartphones, email, and digital services.
- Several participants re-entered part-time work or began volunteering online.
- Strengthened community bonds and intergenerational dialogue.

5) Participants' Stories – optional

Short quotes, personal reflections or experiences shared by participant

“Before this, I asked my grandson to do everything online. Now, I pay my bills and even talk to him on WhatsApp. I feel younger!” – Maria, 68, Poland.

“It’s not just about the computer. It’s about not feeling left out anymore.” – Antonis, 71, Greece.

“Now I am able to record important moments in my life, such as meetings with my grandchildren who live far away, and watch them when I feel lonely. I really feel like they are right there with me.”, Teresa, 70, Spain.

6) Success Factors

What made the practice effective or innovative?

Were there any unique or creative elements?

- Safe, small-group learning environment tailored to seniors' pace.
- Real-world, practical topics (e.g., health portals, digital communication, video creation).
- Intergenerational learning encouraged through youth volunteers.
- Flexibility in content and approach across different countries.

7) Transferability / Recommendations

Can the practice be used elsewhere?

What conditions are needed for successful implementation?





Yes, this practice is highly transferable. Any adult education center can implement it with:

- Access to basic ICT infrastructure (Wi-Fi, tablets/laptops).
- Community outreach capabilities.
- Volunteer recruitment or partnerships with youth organizations.

8) Tips / Implementation Advice – optional

Checklists, lessons, or advice for those wishing to implement the practice.

- Use easy-to-understand visuals and printed step-by-step guides.
- Begin with familiar digital tools (e.g., mobile phones before PCs).
- Celebrate small achievements (e.g., “first email sent” certificates, best video).

9) Lessons Learned - optional

Biggest surprises, obstacles or key takeaways during implementation.

- Seniors learn best when they feel emotionally safe and respected.
- Technical issues can hinder participation—ensure reliable devices and internet access.
- Tailored pace is key: group dynamics should not rush or shame slower learners.

10) Photos illustrating the described practice

Please attach at least 3 photos related to the described good practice





PRACTICE PROFILE – CLASSIFICATION CHECKLIST

Please tick all categories that apply to your described practice. You may choose more than one.

TYPE OF THE PRACTICE

- ☒ Learning by doing
- ☐ Intergenerational learning
- ☒ Community-based learning
- ☒ Digital / blended learning
- ☒ Peer learning
- ☒ Mentoring / coaching
- ☐ Cultural / creative approaches
- ☐ Collaborative / partner-based
- ☐ Other (specify):

TARGET GROUP

- ☒ Adults with low qualifications
- ☐ NEETs (Not in Education, Employment, or Training)
- ☐ Migrants / Refugees
- ☒ Older adults
- ☐ Women
- ☐ People with disabilities
- ☐ Other vulnerable groups
- ☒ General adult population

LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

- ☐ Formal
- ☒ Non-formal
- ☒ Informal

SKILLS / COMPETENCES DEVELOPED





- | | |
|-------------------------------------|--|
| ☐ | Literacy (reading, writing, comprehension) |
| ☐ | Numeracy (maths, logical thinking) |
| ☒ | Digital skills |
| ☐ | STEM (science, technology, engineering, mathematics) |
| ☒ | Personal, social and learning to learn |
| ☒ | Civic competences |
| ☐ | Entrepreneurship |
| ☐ | Cultural awareness and expression |
| ☐ | Language skills |
| ☐ | Job-related / vocational skills |
| ☐ | Green competences |
| ☐ | Other (specify): |

POTENTIAL USERS

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| ☒ | Teachers / Educators |
| ☒ | Administrative staff |
| ☒ | School / Centre management |
| ☒ | Policy makers / Public administration |
| ☒ | NGOs / Community organizations |
| ☐ | Other (specify): |

Glossary of Categories (Explanation of Checklist Items)

Type of the Practice

- Learning by doing – learning through hands-on activities, practice-based methods such as workshops or real tasks.
- Intergenerational learning – activities involving participants from different age groups learning from each other.
- Community-based learning – learning that takes place within the local community, often through real-life engagement.
- Digital / blended learning – education using digital tools (online), or a mix of online and face-to-face methods.
- Peer learning – learning among participants of similar status or experience, supporting each other.
- Mentoring / coaching – one-to-one support from a more experienced person to help learning and personal growth.
- Cultural / creative approaches – use of arts, music, theatre, storytelling etc. as learning tools.
- Collaborative / partner-based – practices involving cooperation between organisations or groups.





- Other (specify) – any other method not listed above.

Target Group

- Adults with low qualifications – adults who have low levels of formal education or basic skills.
- NEETs – people Not in Education, Employment, or Training (often young adults).
- Migrants / Refugees – individuals who moved from another country, often facing integration challenges.
- Older adults – Adults aged 65+
- Women – practices specifically addressing women's needs.
- People with disabilities – individuals with physical, sensory, intellectual, or mental health disabilities.
- Other vulnerable groups – groups at risk of exclusion (e.g. long-term unemployed, homeless).
- General adult population – average adults not in specific categories.

Learning Environment

- Formal – learning within official education systems, certified courses (e.g. schools, universities).
- Non-formal – organised learning outside the formal system (e.g. workshops, community training).
- Informal – learning through everyday experiences, without a structured course (e.g. volunteering, family).

Skills / Competences Developed

- Literacy – reading, writing, and understanding texts (including functional texts like forms).
- Numeracy – using mathematics and logical reasoning.
- Digital skills – using digital tools e.g. CV creation, online tools, online platforms.
- STEM – science, technology, engineering, and mathematics.
- Personal, social and learning to learn – self-awareness, motivation, teamwork, lifelong learning skills.
- Civic competences – active citizenship, understanding of democracy and social responsibilities.
- Entrepreneurship – creativity, innovation, project management, risk-taking.
- Cultural awareness and expression – appreciation and creation of cultural content (e.g. arts, music).
- Language skills – ability to communicate in one or more foreign languages.
- Job-related / vocational skills – practical skills useful in specific jobs or professions.
- Green competences – knowledge and behaviours supporting sustainability and environmental care.





- Other – any other skills developed (please specify).

Potential users – groups who could benefit from applying, adapting, or being inspired by this practice in their work context.

Note: These categories follow EU frameworks such as the Key Competences for Lifelong Learning (2018), the Action Plan on Basic Skills (2025) and the Erasmus+ Programme Guide 2025 – Glossary





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