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XXIAdults

Adaptation of the adult educational system to the XXI Century

The Good Practices Template

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Name of the Good Practice
Digital Life Simulations: Learning Through Everyday Scenarios

Summary of the Practice Brief, easy-to-understand summary: What is the practice, for whom, and for what purpose?
Digital Life Simulations is an experiential learning model where adult learners are guided through realistic, everyday digital scenarios—such as booking a medical appointment, sending an email, or filling out an online form—in a simulated, safe environment. The practice emphasizes *"learning by doing"* and is especially impactful for adults with low qualifications or low confidence in digital environments. It contributes directly to Adult Education goals by offering a learner-centered, non-formal method to build essential digital competences while boosting independence and civic participation.

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?
Many adult learners—particularly those aged 50 and over, or those from socially or economically disadvantaged backgrounds—continue to face challenges in navigating the digital world. Their lack of confidence with digital tools is often not due to unwillingness to learn, but rather a result of limited exposure and the absence of supportive environments in which to practice. A common fear among these learners is that they might "break something," make a costly mistake, or feel embarrassed asking for help. This emotional barrier often prevents them from even beginning their digital learning journey. Meanwhile, digitalisation in public services has accelerated across Europe. Tasks such as booking medical appointments, accessing pension or tax information, applying for public subsidies, or managing online banking are now expected to be completed digitally. For those lacking basic digital skills, this creates not only inconvenience but also a form of exclusion from essential services.

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In response to this growing need, the **Digital Life Simulations** initiative was developed. The approach is based on creating short, practical learning sessions that replicate real-life digital interactions in a safe, step-by-step environment. These simulations can take place in adult education centers, libraries, or community hubs and were facilitated by trained educators who guided learners through everyday online scenarios—such as filling out forms, checking health records, or navigating government websites.

The primary target group included adults with low digital confidence who need practical experience rather than abstract instruction. The simulations were designed to be highly relevant, building directly on tasks learners are likely to encounter in daily life. By practicing in a low-pressure setting, participants gradually developed the skills and confidence they need to function more independently in a digital society.

Overall, **Digital Life Simulations** offered a learner-centered, empowering approach to digital education, helping adults overcome fear and gain competence through real-world practice.

2) Objectives

What were the goals of the practice?
What did it aim to improve or change?

- Teach functional digital skills for real-world situations (e-citizenship, health, finance, communication)
- Reduce digital anxiety by offering practice in a risk-free setting
- Encourage autonomy and active civic participation
- Help adult education providers embed digital content into everyday life topics.

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 Structure:

1. **Needs Assessment:** Educators surveyed learners to identify the most pressing real-life tasks they struggle with (e.g., submitting a job application online, reading digital utility bills).
2. **Scenario Design:** Trainers developed simulation modules that reflect these tasks. Each included:

- Visual step-by-step guides
- Dummy accounts (e.g., fake emails or booking platforms)
- Role-playing elements (e.g., "You need to book a vaccine appointment")

3. **Workshop Sessions:**
   - 6–8 sessions, each focused on one theme.
   - Participants went through the task in pairs or small groups, using laptops or tablets.
   - Trainers guided but don't intervened unless necessary—emphasis was on trial and error.
4. **Reflection & Debrief:**
   - After each simulation, participants discussed challenges, emotions, and key learnings.
   - Trainers provided printed take-home guides for further practice.
5. **Optional Extension:** Participants repeated tasks using their real accounts (under supervision) once they felt ready.

Themes of Simulation Sessions:

- Health: Book a doctor's appointment, find medical test results
- Finance: Pay a bill online, set up online banking alerts
- Government: Request proof of residence, access tax records
- Communication: Send and reply to emails, attach documents
- Employment: Search job platforms, fill out application forms.

4) Results / Outcomes

What were the concrete results?

How did the practice impact the participants?

- Significant improvement in learner confidence and independence reported by the organizing centre.
- 85% of participants were later able to repeat at least 3 tasks on their own.
- Local municipalities saw a decrease in requests for in-person form assistance.
- Adult education staff reported higher motivation and progress among their learners.

5) Participants' Stories – optional

Short quotes, personal reflections or experiences shared by participant

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"I was afraid of everything online. I didn't know what was real. Now I can pay my bills and talk to my doctor through the website." – Roula, 67, Greece. "This helped me search for a job. Before, I didn't even know how to upload my CV." – Petros, 54, Greece. "I have an email account now and I am confident in using it. It used to be "all Greek" to me, but now I understand a lot more about technology and I feel connected" – Vassilis, 70, Greece.
6) Success Factors What made the practice effective or innovative? Were there any unique or creative elements?
• Grounded in real, relatable needs—no abstract content • Safe, supervised setting that encourages mistakes as part of learning • Combination of practice + reflection enhances retention • Emotional engagement: learners feel they're solving real problems.
7) Transferability / Recommendations Can the practice be used elsewhere? What conditions are needed for successful implementation?
• Can be implemented by any adult education centre, municipality, or NGO with basic digital tools • Scenarios can be customized to local e-government services or public platforms • Recommended to start with 3–4 scenarios and expand based on learner feedback.
8) Tips / Implementation Advice – optional Checklists, lessons, or advice for those wishing to implement the practice.

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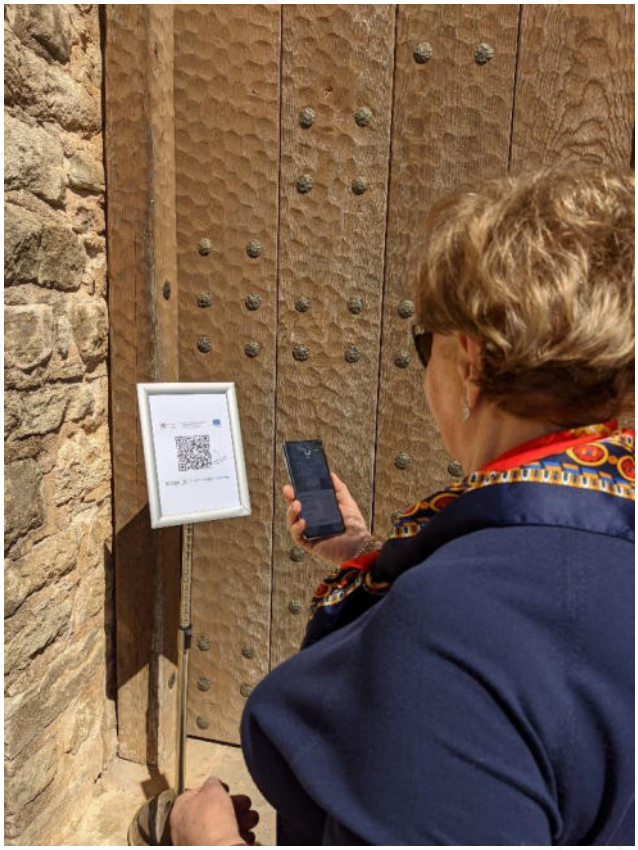

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PRACTICE PROFILE – CLASSIFICATION CHECKLIST

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

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☐	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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