Deliverable 3.2:

CONTEXT ANALYSIS

Final users

Executive Summary

Coordinated by D-O-T

Based on online surveys designed by D-O-T and carried out in each country by ICTD Bulgaria (BG), Technical University of Dortmund (DE), Fundación Esplai (ES), ARCI (IT), PCYF (PL), Reflective Learning (UK+IT)
This document reflects the voices of the final beneficiaries of the planned activity (i.e. the seniors and the youths), captured through a multi-country online survey (which was the selected tool to collect the opinions of final beneficiaries). It summarise the main findings contained in 2 monographic documents, each one devoted to each target group, and contains reflexions, suggestions and recommendations (grey boxes) for the further design and implementation of the intergenerational learning circle.

1. The Survey

**Description:** Online Survey run in the context of an intergenerational learning exchange project (eScouts) where a group of youth will become teachers of digital competences for a group of elderly, and later on, get benefit from a mentoring process led by the elderly, which will help the youth to be better prepared for their participation into the labour market and society. ICT facilitators/educators will prepare, help and support both groups along the process.

**Aim:** know better the competences, needs and aspirations of target users in target countries, helping to design a tailored training path

**Target countries:** Spain, Italy, UK, Germany, Poland and Bulgaria

**Target sample:**

150 Senior people (25 by country) aged between 55 and 75 years old who are willing to acquire digital competences taught by young people AND in return could be interested to give advice to young people with a view to ameliorate their preparation for the labour market and adult life.

150 Young people (25 by country) aged between 16 and 25 years old who are willing to make social work taking advantage of their knowledge of Information and Communication Technologies (ICT), with a view to ameliorate their preparation for the labour market and adult life

**Distribution of sample by country (fully completed surveys only):**

### Senior sample

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>No of Surveys</th>
<th>% of Surveys</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Spain</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>13.84%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Italy*</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>20.75%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>United Kingdom</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>16.35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Germany</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>16.35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poland</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>14.47%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bulgaria</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>18.24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>159</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
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</table>

### Young sample

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Country</th>
<th>No of Surveys</th>
<th>% of Surveys</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Spain</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Italy*</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>21.52%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>United Kingdom</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>15.82%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Germany</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>14.56%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poland</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>15.19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bulgaria</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>15.82%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>158</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Italy sample encompasses two sub-sets of data, one taken by ARCI in Tuscany region and a smaller one taken by Reflective Learning in Eastern Italy (since RL experimentation will be conducted both in UK and Eastern Italy)
2. The Youths

*Socio-cultural profile*

eScouts sampled youths are a kind of socio-economic “elite”. At their early age (most are aged between 17 and 21) they are well educated, have a good level of languages, low drop-out rates from school, high percentage of volunteering, and 94% have private computers with internet access. A third part of them has started an independent living.

While this is a bias that can be induced by the way they were recruited (i.e. via educational organisations and worked with a voluntary questionnaire) which tends to over represent "elites", in the context of eScouts this is rather an opportunity than a fault, since eScouts can benefit from these "elites" to teach the elderly. However, facilitators preparing the youth to become trainers need to be aware of this and carefully reflect on how to keep their interest and motivation along the learning circle when planning their training.

*Digital profile*

**Digital competences:** the sample shows a proficient knowledge of computer and internet operations and administration of operative systems. Even when they are more interested in gaming than studying they are more experienced using office tools than multimedia. And a small part of them is able to write computer programmes or webpages. While they show an intensive use of Web2.0 tools, they are less familiar with more advanced features like content syndication, responsible and confident use of Internet or new copyright schemes (e.g. creative commons) which would require a more critical use of Internet.

Their interest in gaming is an aspect to reflect on when designing the learning path for youths, both in their role of trainers or mentees: to what extent can "gaming" be merged with (or embedded in) "learning/teaching"?

They learnt what they know about new technologies mainly at educational organisations (formal learning) and via informal learning (from relatives and friends or by their own). By the contrary, the role of non formal learning (telecentres, job centres or libraries) is marginal for them. Similarly, their preferred location to access Internet is at home; a third part accesses Internet from educational centres, but they use scarcely the access facilities of nonprofits and public internet access centres, surely because they have enough online resources in their “natural” environment as to be online either at home or in mobility.

Paradoxically, the critical, creative, constructive and community-oriented use of internet that eScouts intends to promote takes place mainly in non formal training courses embedded in social initiatives delivered by Third Sector organizations (like Conecta Joven network in Spain), happening in less measure at school (where occasionally the critical use is reinforced, but not the other uses enumerated above) and occasionally in informal learning (as here it is contingent to the capacities of informal learners and their improvised trainers).
If this reflection is correct, eScouts would have a great opportunity to promote a virtuous intergenerational learning cycle not only across the Third Sector, but also in Education, provoking a cascade effect in Society. This means finding effective strategies to engage schools and school teachers in the process (i.e. formal training actors) and infect them with eScouts community-service approach for digital teaching. Examples of appropriation of eScouts by the Education system might be the youngsters delivering digital training to non-IT school teachers, or embedding the training of youngsters to become e-facilitators in secondary/upper school programmes. eScouts territorial partners might consider to explore these strategies in depth (if not in this project, in a further one) as they have implications for the future dissemination, exploitation and sustainability of eScouts innovative methodology.

**Use of ICT resources:** More than 80% of the youth use the computer, Internet and the mobile daily, while more than a half uses them more than 2 hours each day. However, they didn’t mention ICT as a frequent activity in their leisure time. ICT is a means so embedded in their life that they don’t see to be aware of and valorise sufficiently their own digital competences.

Therefore, what probably **eScouts learning design should address** (in the initial modules of the training of youngster trainers) is how to raise their awareness about the potential of their digital capital, and how this capital can benefit themselves (e.g. for their employability) and society in general (e.g. sharing their know-how with less digitally competent citizens).

**Digital competence training:** In view of their expected role as digital trainers of adults over 55, the youngsters were asked about their knowledge of different aspects related to such kind of training. As a result, half of the youths expressed their knowledge about criteria to search, select and share digital information; a 30% declared to be familiar with free/open source software fundamentals, principles and social uses; a 24% to know training resources for digital competence training; and only a 16% to be somehow familiar with training to special target groups (elderly, migrants, disabled, etc).

This question attempted to overcome a frequent misconception which considers ICT learning as merely technical learning, covering a variety of non-technical aspects that helping others to become digitally literate may involve. **eScouts facilitators** are expected to manage well this distinction.

**Activities done during the last 12 months:** communication, communication, communication: social networking (92%), e-mailing (91%) and more interactive ways of communication (VOIP calls, chatting, blogging) (75%) are on top. And information and more information: web TV/radio (82%), online newspapers (73%).
While more than a 90% of the sample takes part of social networks, it is contrasting that 90% don’t contribute to online newspapers, 89% don’t have their own website and 80% don’t have a personal blog. Despite what a reverse reading could suggest (92% are communicating via social media and 20% have a blog, so they are intensive communicators), these important instruments for expressing oneself opinions online (as individual or a group) are not so extensively exploited by youngsters as their technical knowledge could allow.

Internet, particularly in times of Web 2.0, offers a range of opportunities that goes beyond the mere consume of information. Movements like blogging, Open Source or p2p have created the conditions for users to take the word and express their ideas or dreams, to share and circulate their creations and works, and in doing so, to collaborate at distance. In the Youth sample we observe an intensive activity as consumers and communicators (most of them use Web 2.0 tools, even if a few "publish") but less evidence of more creative, collaborative and productive uses of Internet. And despite the value that their ability to communicate can have for service jobs - which are those they prefer and are those called to predominate in the future - there is no proof that the youngsters are aware of the potential that this may have for their future employability and fulfilled life.

Thus, untapping new potential uses of what they already know is a challenge for the training that will prepare them to become facilitators or trainers of the elderly. Stimulating a critical, pro-active and creative attitude towards the new technologies is a key issue that needs to be considered in the design of their training, and not only when preparing them to become trainers but when they are training others as well. Indeed, how their pupils use Internet for their own personal purposes can make them discover innovative uses for their own lives, so feedback mechanisms need to be inserted in the training modules as to promote that the youth learn innovative uses of ICT for empowerment while teaching.

Potential usefulness: as seen by surveyed Youths, Internet can be dramatically useful for job seeking, and in second term for information searching and –surprisingly- marketing. The contrast
between their perceptions on economic (high valued) versus social utility (low valued) Internet, with learning somewhere in between, is for sure an expression of youngsters personal priorities for this phase of their lives.

However, eScouts learning cycle can help changing their perceptions by demonstrating them that helping others (like volunteering) is not only altruism but an opportunity to develop personal skills that can increase their further employability. Additionally, in return to their voluntary teaching to elders they will receive recompense (be mentored by those who they had previously trained). This kind of training can perfectly enhance their ethical values and sense of community while contributing to satisfy their more urgent aims (study and work).

**Economic profile**

**Occupation:** almost a 70% of the surveyed youths currently get economical support from their families to carry on their studies, which is a privileged situation that confirms they are a kind of “elite”. In return, around half of the sampled youngsters are giving some kind of support to their families, helping with family business, providing economic support or providing care to family members.

Those with working experience (roughly a 40%) have worked or are working in a diversity of fields, particularly in the service sector (tourism and catering, arts and creative jobs, etc). A few of them have experience in education and only 5 have experience working with new technologies. Despite the precariousness of their jobs and their scarce relation with their education, more than a half of the youths found that their jobs satisfied (partially or totally) their expectations. 24 youngsters said to have failed finding a job.

In a mid-term time (3 years aprox.) they massively imagine themselves doing some kind of work (71%). In the long-term they aspire to work in a range of fields which differ significantly from their current positions in the labour market, but still concentrated in the service sector: Arts and creative jobs, Health and Social work, Administration and management and Education and training. A smaller number would like to work in the field of new technologies.

Most of these occupations are within service jobs; this is important to keep in mind for the design of the mentoring process, since it illustrates the aims of the potential youth beneficiaries.

On their motivations when looking for a job, they aspire to get a job that is well paid, fulfils them professionally and don’t interfere with their private life, paying less attention to a potential contribution to their community/society. Asked about their feelings on their future at work and in adult life, they think rather positively, seen themselves optimistic, useful, able to deal with problems well, to think with clarity and make friends easily. Regarding their future roles, 58% see themselves collaborating with others, while 22% leading a group and 20% working by their own (quite a stimulating number of people willing to engage with others through their jobs). On mobility -an increasing resource for well-prepared youths who are frustrated by the lack of labour
opportunities they find in their local communities 46% see themselves having a job in a city or country different from where they are living now.

For those who envisage working in a different location, experiencing the eScouts intergenerational learning circle could provide a valuable background to become employable e-facilitators, or more in general, multipliers of digital competences, which is retained to be one of the most demanded key competences for the jobs of the future in a knowledge society like Europe will be.

Summarising, the sample shows quite a range of diverse profiles and expectations, which makes complex or artificial extracting conclusions for the design of the intergenerational learning cycle. However, precisely for this complexity, all the aspects listed above needs to be taken into account, particularly their feelings towards the precariousness of their job status in an ever changing labour market, the role currently played by their families as enabler or stopper in their transition to adult life, and their local communities (as a sort of larger family) as the place where they can fulfil their personal aspirations while contributing to make a better society.

Engaging in voluntary training to the Seniors

Engaging with seniors: apart from family ties, their past engagement with seniors has been relative (32% with teachers, 21% volunteering, 17% at work). Youth perception about problems faced by people aged over 55 highlights suggests that for youngsters, the lack of digital competences produced a worst exclusion effect from society than being unemployed, unhealthy or isolated. Congruently, their vision on what other dimensions of life digital competences can improve is quite optimistic. It is interesting to see that what youths mostly appreciate from seniors is their life experience (84%) together with their job experience and solid values/moral strengths (47% and 39% respectively).

Youth appreciation of seniors’ human capital and the importance of digital competence for a fulfilled life constitute a unique opportunity for eScouts due to the accent it puts in valorising exactly youngsters’ digital capital for the digital literacy training of the seniors and seniors’ human capital in the Senior-to-Youth mentoring path.

Volunteering: while only 12% reported volunteering as a formal labour activity, 30% of them expressed to perform some kind of volunteer activity in their free time (versus making sports, travelling or gaming), 29% to collaborate with nonprofit organizations (charity, co-operative, etc) and 54% to participate in some kind of social work/volunteering (e.g. on sport or youth associations). The kind of volunteering activity they perform is diversified, with Education and Youth/Kids care on top (over 20% of answers each), and a modest 13% experienced in caring elders.

This openness to engage in volunteer activities contrasts with their scepticism on the value of ICT to help others (compared with labour or study uses).

Facilitating/Leading a group: 40% declared to have experience in leadership roles (e.g. coordinator of a youth group) and 33% as a group facilitator (either as trainers of school subjects or arts,
monitors for leisure or sport activities, or even as trainers of digital competences (13 youths). Additionally, 17% of the respondents have already worked with seniors.

Two third of them are willing to engage with eScouts project.

3. The Seniors

Socio-cultural profile
Most of the sampled seniors are aged between 57 and 69. There are some more women than men. Almost a quarter of them live alone or in a residence. The sample shows a range of educational background "types": 26% are highly qualified while 21% has only a middle school certificate; a third part is digitally illiterate while a quarter is middle-high e-skilled, etc.

In general, this educational heterogeneity of the senior target group is a challenge for the design of the learning circle: how to tackle different target groups (well educated/low educated) in eScouts modules? How to deal with this diversity? How to benefit from it?

A 40% declared to be in training at the moment of being surveyed and a part of them is contemporarily in more than one course, while most of those who are not in training have not been for one to three decades...

At the time of recruiting or start the training plan, a special attention needs to be paid in some countries to those who have not been in training for a long period of time.

Most of these are concentrated in UK, Germany and Bulgaria (where only a few are in training), and to a minor extent in Italy and Poland (where around 50% are in training). In Spain, 100% of respondents are currently in training.

Most of the sampled don’t speak foreign languages, which would impede an exchange across countries.

Digital profile
Around a third part of the sample is digitally illiterate, and most of the rest is able to perform basic and more common operations (use a search engine, send emails with attachments) but only a 25% shows having a medium-high level of competence. They learnt what they know with new technologies mainly through informal learning (from relatives and friends 47%; self-taught 31%).

This informal aspect of learning suggest the need to make participants feeling to be “like at home”, for example giving them a warming welcome and creating a friendly atmosphere where the learning will take place. This implies devoting time to, for example, addressing the fear to technology many of them could feel.
The surveyed seniors express a remarkable preference for the use of mobiles. More than half of them either use the computer or access internet occasionally (28-29%) or never (24%). The number of frequent internet users contrasts with a similar proportion of those who never use it.

This polarization of Internet profiles (competences, uses) represents an important challenge for the training that the youths will deliver to seniors, and needs to be carefully addressed by the training that will prepare the youngsters to become e-facilitators.

Those using internet do it usually from home (60%) or the home of friends and family (19%), or even at work (27%). The use of Internet at public spaces (at a job centre, library, non-profit centre, Internet coffee, educational centre) is significantly less frequent.

The recruitment strategy has to consider how to attract seniors to public Internet access venues for training, which can be particularly difficult with those who have been out of training for years.

Those not using Internet regularly (53%) mention never have learned how / do not understand how to use them or not having a computer or cellular phone with Internet access as the main reasons.

More than the access to Internet, their limited digital competences seems to be what limits Internet use. This justifies the need for interventions like eScouts to equip people over 55 with digital competences and contribute to avoid their exclusion from the Information Society.

But what they use Internet for? Available data can be ranked and grouped into five groups which respond not only to user interests (purposes) but also to the complexity of the task and its potential risk (security issues). This suggests a classification where 1) basic communication use (email) is on top, followed by 2) information-related uses, then 3) more sophisticated communication (social networking, VOIP), information and transactions (travel, health). On a lower level we find 4) more purposeful uses (work, study, looking for a job) and on bottom 5) commercial transactions (banking and purchasing) and public procedures. On the other hand, a quarter of the respondents (26%) declared not to have used Internet during the last 12 months.
While a 25% takes part of a social network, only a 5% declare to have a personal blog or a website and a 4% writing or contributing to online newspapers, web radios, web TV, portals. These important activities for raising their voice online (as individuals or collectively) are evidently underdeveloped, and we ignore whether the reasons is a lack of knowledge/competence or a lack of interest/motivation.

Increasing the online social participation and self expression of elders requires a digital competence training that not only teaches how to perform online operations but digitally empowers them. This requires trainers who are already aware of the potential of ICT in modern society.

The potential usefulness of Internet for them is obtaining information, over acquiring specific skills and economic-oriented activities. ICT use for helping others is retained not too much useful.

This suggests the need of helping them understanding the potential of Internet to improve the life of society (when they are trained on digital competences by the youngsters). At the same time, this perception prevents taking a pure online approach for their mentoring activity to the Youngsters; instead, a face-to-face approach where the mediation of ICT is progressively introduced (blended learning) seems to be a more convenient approach.

In conclusion, digital literacy courses are driven by user motivation, which is expressed through proxies like declared purposes, actual uses and potential usefulness assigned to ICT. Seniors motivation needs further exploration by their trainers, an aspect that the design of training for the digital trainers of the Elderly (i.e. the Youngsters) should consider in order to equip them with psycho-pedagogic resources to facilitate that exploration.

**Economic profile**

**Occupation:** most of the sampled seniors have worked at least once in their lives (94%) in the more diverse fields. Today, almost a half (47%) is currently retired, while around a third part (32%) is still working. Among those not working at this moment, a 14% complains of not finding a job while a 6% recognize their need of re-skilling/training to adapt their competences to current job offer. Only a 3% does not work because they don’t need or don’t like the current job offer.

Even when their (present or past) occupation is/was related to their training/field of study (61%), their jobs have satisfied less their expectations (44%). Their main motivations (priorities) when looking for a job have been economics (77%) followed by personal realization/satisfaction (42%). Only an 18% has been guided by the desire of having enough free time to be able to do other activities and a 14% to contribute to their community/society.

In the framework of the training to Senior to become mentors (and in their previous selection) it is important to reflect on how a sort of frustration or lack of satisfaction with their working life can be transformed in a learning opportunity for themselves and for their future mentees.
Regarding the future, in a mid-term time (3 years aprox.) they imagine themselves enjoying their free time (hobbies, travelling, learning in training courses or taking care of their grandsons). Only a 12% of them foresee to collaborate with social organizations.

**Engaging in voluntary mentoring to the Youth**

**Engaging with youths:** what the seniors mostly appreciate from the youngsters is their energy (58%), sense of initiative (45%), idealism (37%), communicative attitude (36%) and friendly spirit (33%). Senior respondents think that young people of their community suffer exclusion of the labour market (58%) and therefore economic dependence from family (55%), but also other more manageable circumstances. Indeed, if they could coach the youngsters, they think they could alleviate their lack of effort and dedication capacity (40%), exclusion of the labour market (36%), emotional instability (30%), lack of interest on studies (25%) and economic dependency from parents (25%).

Despite the prejudices that their vision of the youths may contain, it is interesting to observe their optimism on the results that they could obtain by coaching.

**Volunteering:** as formal occupation, volunteering is residual in the sample. However, a 25% has some kind of experience collaborating with non-profit organizations and 42% did some kind of social work/volunteering. A 14% has already dealt with Youth associations, while many of them had to do with entities that are usually frequented by youngsters (sports associations, social movements, church, etc). Their activities as volunteers include cultural animation (20 cases), youth care (19), social awareness/campaign events (14) or education (12, between environmental and general).

All these social experiences are positive precedents for the mentoring role the elders are expected to play with the youths.

**Facilitating/Leading a group:** a third part has experience as group leaders (e.g. coordinator of a youth group); a 21% as a group facilitator and a 23% working with young people (under 25).

66% of the seniors would be interested in participate in a training course where young facilitators (under 25) teach digital competences to a group of seniors, while 62% (almost all of the firsts), in return would be interested to be trained to become Youngsters Mentors and guide one or two youngsters to better join the job market and adult life.

Despite the promising numbers, it is needed to investigate senior volunteering experience and willingness of potential participants to engage more into details during the phase of selection of senior participants for the eScouts pilot.
4. The Youths vs. the Seniors: some comparisons

**Educational level**

- Middle school certificate, A/S levels: Youths 40%, Seniors 30%
- High school diploma, A levels: Youths 35%, Seniors 30%
- Vocational training: Youths 20%, Seniors 40%
- Level 1 (three year) university degree: Youths 10%, Seniors 15%
- Level 2 (higher) university degree: Youths 5%, Seniors 10%
- Master and/or PhD: Youths 0%, Seniors 5%

**Internet skills**

- None of the listed operations: Youths 80%, Seniors 60%
- Create a web page (using WordPress, Dreamweaver, etc): Youths 20%, Seniors 30%
- Use shared files/documents and/or exchange music, videos, films, etc: Youths 10%, Seniors 15%
- Make voice calls (using skype, messenger, ooVoo, etc): Youths 5%, Seniors 10%
- Send messages using instant messaging, chats, newsgroups, or online: Youths 5%, Seniors 10%
- Send e-mails with files/documents attached: Youths 0%, Seniors 5%
- Use a search engine (google, yahoo, etc): Youths 10%, Seniors 15%

**Job sector**

- Art and creative jobs: Youths 30%, Seniors 25%
- Administration and clerical: Youths 20%, Seniors 25%
- Education and training: Youths 15%, Seniors 20%
- Commerce and financial: Youths 10%, Seniors 15%
- Communication: Youths 5%, Seniors 10%
- Sport: Youths 0%, Seniors 5%

**Internet uses**

- Internet not used during the last year: Youths 80%, Seniors 70%
- Public procedures (eGovernment): Youths 20%, Seniors 30%
- Work: Youths 15%, Seniors 20%
- Selling items online: Youths 10%, Seniors 15%
- Online banking services: Youths 5%, Seniors 10%
- Online purchases of products/services: Youths 0%, Seniors 5%
- Health (information, appointments...): Youths 5%, Seniors 10%
- Travel (reservations, flight purchase...): Youths 10%, Seniors 15%
- Looking for a job: Youths 0%, Seniors 5%
- Study, personal development: Youths 5%, Seniors 10%
- Information (online newspapers, TV, radio...): Youths 10%, Seniors 20%
- Communication (VOIP calls, chatting...): Youths 10%, Seniors 20%
- Information (web Tv / web radio): Youths 5%, Seniors 10%
- Communication (e-mail): Youths 0%, Seniors 5%
- Social networking (facebook, twitter...): Youths 0%, Seniors 5%