Deliverable 3.2:

CONTEXT ANALYSIS

Part 3: Final users

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)
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Preface

In coherence with the project objectives, this cross-country context analysis is aimed to provide systemised information from the field (at local level) to facilitate a further realistic implementation of the pilot phase where the intergenerational exchange will take place. Knowing better the particularities of each national context (pilot area), the partnership will be able to design, plan and carry on the different training activities described in the Intergenerational Learning Circle duly adapted and contextualized to each country, thus incrementing guarantees of success.

The context analysis is presented in three parts. Part 1 is devoted to those Intermediaries who were identified as potential field actors by the project partners - the organizations that are active in the provision of social services to disadvantaged people, particularly to youngsters or elders-, i.e. Local Stakeholder Organisations (LSO) which manifested an interest to participate in the Pilot activities and to further exploit the results of this project. Part 2 presents the needs and opinions of the professionals or volunteers who are in direct contact with those target groups, the so-called Facilitators who group a range of socio-digital profiles. Parts 3 reflect the voices of the final beneficiaries of the planned activity (i.e. the youths and the seniors), captured through a multi-country online survey (which was the selected tool to collect the opinions of final beneficiaries).

To carry out that online survey, D-O-T designed the questionnaires getting partially inspiration from “Key Competences for all” project (co-funded by LLP-Grundtvig). The questionnaires were validated with project partners and then programmed by D-O-T in Lime Survey (http://survey.escouts.eu, hosted by F. Esplai in its powerful data centre). The survey was conducted by the six partners involved in pilot activities, following common instructions conceding a certain level of flexibility for its implementation (in Spain it was taken online, in the other countries it was taken on paper and then introduced in LimeSurvey by somebody from the partner organisation).

The final results of the last part of the cross-country analysis was presented and discussed during a partnership meeting in Barcelona, October 2011. This document incorporates the feedback provided by project partners there, enriching its findings and conclusions. The overall quality of this exercise is assured by L’apis.
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

**Actual sample:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Survey</th>
<th>Date of creation</th>
<th>Complete</th>
<th>Partial</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>eScouts - Elderly survey</td>
<td>01.06.2011</td>
<td>159</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>168</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>eScouts - Youth survey</td>
<td>07.06.2011</td>
<td>158</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>172</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


**Anonymity:** guaranteed. However, those interested to engage in the activities of the intergenerational learning cycle at a later stage (training, etc) were offered the possibility to enter a contact email or phone number (and a 30% of Seniors and a 44% of Youngsters did provide it).

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Senior sample</th>
<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>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Italy*</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>20.75%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>United Kingdom</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>16.35%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Germany</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>16.35%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poland</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>14.47%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bulgaria</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>18.24%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>159</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Young sample</th>
<th>Country</th>
<th>No of Surveys</th>
<th>% of Surveys</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Spain</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>17.09%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Italy*</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>21.52%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>United Kingdom</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>15.82%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Germany</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>14.56%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poland</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>15.19%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bulgaria</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>15.82%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>158</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td></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 Youth

**Socio-cultural profile**

**Demographics:** most of the sampled youths are aged between 17 and 21 (1st and 3rd quartile respectively, being 18.5 the median age). There are some more males (51%) than males (49%) in the sample. Only 3 of the participants have children (less than 2%). Most of them live with their family or relatives (66%); a 32% lives with pairs (friends, flat/roommates, partners, or in a student accommodation) and only 3 youngsters (less than 2%) live on their own.

**Education and training:**

Taking in consideration that the average age is 18-19 years, it is coherent that an 82% is still studying, that 46% have finalized the Middle School and a 35% the High School, while a 21% has already achieved higher studies (vocational training and university). In addition, roughly a 6% of them have received non-formal training.
Despite 18% of them have already stop studying, it seems to be a well-educated group (the average of school drops-out is higher in the total European young population). Perhaps this is biased by the dissemination channels of the survey (which were educational centres in some of the areas, e.g. in Eastern Italy). The reasons given not to being in education are difficult to analyze since half the answers weren’t any of the listed possible options, but working (either as a choice or as a need) is most cited reason not to study.

**Language:** statistics show a high number of Youths speaking English among those who are not native speakers (41%). In addition, 8 youngsters know Spanish and 8 Italian without being native speakers. So there is a good linguistic basis for an eventual exchange of experience across countries.

**Activities in the free time:** the most frequent activities of the youngsters in their leisure time are sports (64%), travel (38%) and electronic games (36%).

Volunteering was mentioned as an activity in their free time by almost 30% of the participants, which is a much higher than the corresponding figure in the Seniors sample. However, this percentage could be biased by the fact that some of the surveyed youths are already collaborating somehow with the social organizations that channelled the survey to them.

On the other hand, ICT-related activities were the less scored option, which could imply either that one of the assumptions in which the intergenerational learning cycle is based – i.e. youngster’s familiarity with ICT- is wrong, or that the use of ICT is so embedded in their life that it is rather “invisible” to them. This topic is addressed more in details in following sections.

**Digital profile**

**Digital competences:** the sample shows a proficient knowledge of computer and internet operations and administration of operative systems.

With computers, they know how to make a wide range of operations; indeed more than 70% marked all the listed operation types in the questionnaire, with the exception of “Writing a program using specialist programming languages” (only marked by a 30%).
Even when they could be more interested in *gaming* than *studying* (as we will see more in advance), when asked about computer programmes they expressed to have better knowledge and skills in *office tools* (in which they showed a really confident level: more than 90% knows how to operate Word, and more than 75%, spreadsheets and presentations) than in *multimedia* (where the percentages are lower in general, except basic use of digital photo/video, 71%, and video repositories, 70%).

Expectably, they are also expert Internet users, as the graphic below illustrates. However, like with writing computer programmes, only a 25% knows how to create a webpage (which requires a shift in their relationship with ICT: from *consumers* to *producers*). While this percentage is low in comparison with other more intensive uses they make of Internet, it is also true that knowing how to produce an "old" (Web 1.0) webpage in times of facebook and blogs has a special merit.

![Bar chart showing various Internet activities: Google searches, email, instant messaging, voice calls, creating a webpage, etc.](image)

In the same line, it is also surprising the contrast between their intensive use of Web2.0 tools (more than 80% of the respondents) and other features that they use significantly less. These other features are precisely those more related to *production* than to *consumption* - like *content syndication*, responsible and confident use of Internet or new copyright schemes (like creative commons)- which would require a more critical and proactive use of Internet, and more empowered and emancipated individuals.
Digital learning: asked about how they learnt what they know about new technologies, *formal learning* (at school 69%, at a college/upper secondary institution 25%, at a university 14%) takes a leading role—we must say that unexpectedly, as there are many policy concerns at European level regarding how marginal that role could be. However, the role of *informal learning* is still more impressive (from relatives and friends 68%; self-learning 61%, at a private facility like a commercial Internet point or internet café 7%). By the contrary, the role of *non formal learning* (at a non-profit facility like a telecentre 13%, at a public facility like a job centre or library 4%), is marginal among them.

Paradoxically, the critical, creative, constructive and community-oriented use of internet that eScouts intends to promote seems to follow a reverse tendency, taking 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.*

**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. The questions 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. As a result, while half of the respondents (51%) 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).

**Use of 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 (51% mobile, 61% computer). However, they didn’t mention ICT as a frequent activity in their leisure time (as reflected before, one can wonder whether ICT is so embedded in their daily life that is somehow “invisible” to them).
In contrast with Senior patterns (and with their own consciousness of their intensive digital activity), the Youngsters use fluently and indifferently all these electronic means. And ICT is just this for them, a means so embedded in their life that they don’t 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).

**Place of access:** their preferred location for accessing internet is at home (94%) and at home of friends and relatives (46%). 35% of them accesses Internet from educational centres while a 23% uses internet cafés and wifi connections at pubs. What the youngsters use scarcely is 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.

**Purpose of use:** daily use reported by youngsters is concentrated on gaming (almost 40%), study (almost 30%) or hobbies (20%). On the other hand, never using Internet is reported in higher percentages for work, household management and public services, which are more clearly activities typical of adults (over 25).
While the use of Internet to study is expectable due to youth status as students, the complementary use they make of Internet is clearly more focused on entertainment than on serious uses linked to responsibilities of more adult life. 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"?

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%).
On purpose-oriented activities, study is on top (72%) followed by job seeking (53%) and travel (50%) – a serious purpose and a leisure purpose similarly rated. Then, surprisingly health follows with a 40%. Work has a modest 23%, which can anyway be significant due to youth low rate of employment. Finally, e-commerce (32% buys, 25% sells) and e-banking (another 25%) are more popular than online public procedures (9%).

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 other words, consumers have become producers, while their productions are increasingly collective rather than individual acts.

In the Youth sample, an intensive activity as consumers and communicators (most of them use Web 2.0 tools, even if a few "publish"), there is less evidence of more creative, collaborative and productive uses of Internet. Even when communication (Web 2.0) can be considered a "productive use" in itself due to the relevance of communication for service jobs, which are called to predominate in the knowledge society (and therefore fitting perfectly to future job market challenges, at least on a macro level perspective), there is no proof that the youngsters are aware of the potential that this may have for their future employability.

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, since the youngsters can hardly promote the use of ICT for others to become empowered when they are unconscious of the potential that ICT has for their own empowerment and emancipation.

Therefore, 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. Probably this perception about the usefulness of Internet for economic activities is influenced by their urgency to start being economically productive – as part of their imminent entering into adult life.
Learning activities instead come in third place. Here it is interesting to note that they consider more useful the use of Internet to acquire specific skills than e-Learning (which is supposed to be specifically designed for that). This seems to confirm the high value conceded to informal learning in Web 2.0 times. Finally, the less valued utility of Internet for this group is helping others.

The contrast between their perceptions on economic (high valued) versus social utility (low valued) of Internet (with learning somewhere in between) is for sure an expression of youngsters personal priorities for this phase of their lives.

However, eScouts 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:** despite nearly a 60% said to have gotten a job at least one time in their lives, almost a 70% of the surveyed youths currently get economical support from their families to carry on their studies. In return, around half of the sampled youngsters is giving some kind of support to their families, meaning this helping with family business (25%), providing economic support or providing care to family members (16% each one respectively).

Those with working experience have worked or are working in a diversity of fields, with Tourism and catering (17%), Arts and creative jobs (16%) and Manual jobs (construction, logistics) (15%)
being the most popular sectors. While 18 of the respondents have experience in Education and training, only 5 have experience working with new technologies.

The kind of job they enjoy or have enjoyed is largely temporary (including holiday jobs the proportion raises to 53%), being fix term employment reserved to a small group (17%). Traineeships or au-pairs are insignificant in this sample, while being a volunteer (as a kind of formal job) is hardly reported by a 12%. Yet, when asked whether they work/collaborate in a nonprofit organization (Charity, co-operative, etc) positive answers rose to 29%.

Asked about how much they think that their occupation is/was related to their training/field of study, the opinion of respondents (94) was rather negative: 31 said that “not at all” and 19 “a little”, versus 25 “partially” and 19 “completely”. However, they assessed somehow better the level in which their jobs satisfied their expectations, with 31 “partially” and 21 “completely” (versus 26 “a little” and 12 “not at all”).

On the other hand, those not currently working (117) argued the difficulty of combining studies with work as the main stopper (33%), or a lack of need (27%). 24 youngsters (21%) said to have failed finding a job.

Regarding the future, in a mid-term time (3 years aprox.) they massively imagine themselves doing some kind of work (71%). Only half of the respondents (51%) see themselves studying during the coming years (having in mind their average age, the percentage is low). Settling down and having a family, instead, is a mid-term expectation for only a 12%.

In the long-term they aspire to work in a range of fields, with Arts and creative jobs (38 answers), closely followed by Health and Social work (34), Administration and management (34) and Education and training (33) are the preferred sectors. A smaller number (21) would like to work in the field of new technologies. In general, quite a different landscape that their current engagement in the labour market.
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.

Asked about their feelings on their future at work and in adult life, they think rather positively, seen themselves -around a 20% absolutely, a 30% a lot and another 30% fairly- optimistic, useful, able to deal with problems well, to think with clarity and make friends easily; and -roughly a 5% absolutely, a 10% a lot and a 15% fairly- unhappy or depressed, unconfident (of others) and angry [should we say “indignado”?]. Finally, on the need to consult others to take a decision they show themselves in the way to emancipation, with a 20% not needing it at all and a 30% needing that only a little bit.

On their motivations when looking for a job: earning a good salary is their main motivation, followed by balancing work and family and having an interesting job, and then by getting personal

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1 Even when there is no such movement in other countries (or, at least, not with Spanish strength and philosophy), the Spanish word “indignado” has become a recognizable label across borders for youngster “angriness” expressed publicly
realization/satisfaction and being economically independent. In few words, they aspire to get a job that is well paid, fulfils them professionally and don’t interfere with their private life. They pay less attention to two “social” motivations that are often opposed: getting a prestigious position and contributing to their community/society.

Still projecting themselves towards the future, asked about mobility -an increasing resource for well-prepared youths who are frustrated by the lack of labour opportunities they find in their local communities (for example in Spain, where youth unemployment currently climbs to almost 40%)- 54% answered to see themselves having a job in the same city where they are living now.

Particularly for the other 46% who seem themselves working somewhere else (in another city in the country, or even abroad), living the eScouts intergenerational learning experience could provide them with 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.

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.

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**

**Voluntary/social work:** asked once more about volunteering, 54% declared to participate in any kind of social work/volunteering. The kind of non-profit bodies, associations or movements they frequent is diversified, with sports and youth associations clearly on top.

The kind of volunteering activity they perform is even more diversified, with Education and Youth/Kids care on top (over 20% of answers each). Besides, 40% declared to have experience in leadership roles (e.g. coordinator of a youth group) and 33% as a group facilitator.

Their experience dealing with elder/senior people was firstly matured inside their family (75% *uniquely* with family and relatives). Almost a third part had matured a kind of alternative experience with teachers (32%) and another third with neighbours (30%), and less volunteering (21%) or at work (17%).
Youth perception about people aged over 55 highlights the lack of understanding of new technologies of the latest (65%) over exclusion from the labour market (58%). Moreover, they assess as less influential those constraints of more social nature, like social isolation (48%), increasing dependency from others (39%) and mobility constraints (31%).

These opinions suggest that for youngsters, the lack of digital competences produced a worst exclusion effect from society than being unemployed, unhealthy or isolated.

In the same line, their vision on what digital competences can improve is quite optimistic. It makes honour to common sense when puts breaking social isolation (60%) and understanding ICT (58%) on top, followed by inclusion to the labour market (43%), diminishing dependency from others (37%) and diminishing mobility constraints (27%).

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), which constitutes a unique opportunity for eScouts due to the accent it puts in valorising exactly that human capital through the Senior-to-Youth mentoring path.

Facilitation background: 33% of the sampled youngsters has already tasted the experience of being a 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.
Asked about their Interest in learning how to teach Digital Competences to Seniors, 62% answered positively. Even a bigger number of positive answers was received when they were asked about their interest in receiving advice from the Seniors (64%) to improve their personal readiness to join the labour market and the responsibilities of adult life.

**Final remark**

eScouts sampled youths are a kind of socio-economic “elite”. 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. While this is probably 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.

On the other hand, 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 (against making sports, travelling or gaming), 29% to collaborate somehow with nonprofit organizations (charity, co-operative, etc) and 54% to participate in any kind of social work/volunteering (e.g. on sport or youth associations). 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). Nonetheless, they perceive that seniors’ lack of digital competences can produce a worst exclusion effect than being unemployed, unhealthy or isolated, so it is the role of eScouts training to align these elements and show the youths how they can volunteer to help others (the seniors) acquiring digital competences to have a more fulfilled life.
3. The Seniors

Socio-cultural profile

Demographics: most of the sampled seniors are aged between 57 and 69 (1st and 3rd quartile respectively, being 61 the median). There are some more females (52%) than males (48%), probably reflecting the demographics of aged population. Almost 80% of them have daughters or sons. Most of them live with their family (42%), partner (28%) or relatives (3%), but almost a quarter live on their own (17%) or in an elderly accommodation (9%).

![Pie chart showing living arrangements]

Education and training:

Their level of formal education is more or less equally distributed in four different and contrasting levels, showing a disparity of educational profiles: 26% has a university degree (level 1, 2 or master/postgraduate), 21% a VET diploma, (27%) has finished the higher school while a 21% has got a middle school certificate.

![Pie chart showing educational levels]
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?

Almost a 40% declared to be in training at the moment of being surveyed, which potentially shows a positive openness and permeability to new learning experiences (that can be appreciated by eScouts). However, this percentage can be biased by the channels used to collect the survey, particularly in Spain and Bulgaria where the channel organizations are telecentres offering digital literacy courses. This presumption seems to be confirmed by the fact that 40 out of the 61 seniors in training were attending digital literacy courses. As for the rest, eclectic preferences are shown by seniors attending training course on gym/sports (19) to language (15) or leisure (gardening, arts…) (12).

The total quantity of training courses reported (94) suggests that probably a half of the seniors in training (around a 20% of the total sample) are attending two courses contemporarily (which is positive for eScouts).

In contrast, the 60% who is not in training shows a lower level of participation in recent training activities (most of them –represented by values between quartile 1 and 3- have not participated to training during the last 10 to 35 years). The most alluded reasons not to have taken training are the lack of interest (28%) or the cost of training (23%).

This might require paying a special attention –particularly at the time of recruiting or start the training plan- to those not being in training for a long period of time, on a country-basis. Indeed, a deeper view to statistics by country show that 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.
Language: statistics show a few number of seniors speaking a language from a country that is not the country where they live and were surveyed (19 speak English, 5 German, 3 Spanish, 2 Italian, and 1 Polish).

Limited knowledge of foreign languages can make hard an eventual exchange of experience across countries. In case this was planned, English knowledge should be a pre-requisite to select those seniors who will act as mentors (at least for one of them by country).

Activities in the free time: apart of the 19% of free time spent on ICT (which can again be biased by the organizations channelling the survey), senior respondents reported to spend their free time travelling (46%), doing sports (42%) or in artistic activities (25%).

Only a 16% spend time volunteering, while this is exactly what those selected for mentoring the youngsters are supposed to do during the second part of the intergenerational learning cycle. This low percentage might suggest the need to investigate the volunteering experience and willingness of potential participants more into details during the phase of selection of senior participants for the eScouts pilot.

Digital profile

Digital competences: the graphic below shows that 61 out of the 159 respondents (38%) is not able to perform any of the listed basic computational operations (that are those used by EUROSTAT to determine the high/medium/low/none digital competences of European population).

Among the rest of the sample, almost all of the respondents can perform 2 basic operations, and almost half of them can perform another 3; more advanced skills like programming or digital edition are only known by around a quarter.

![Digital Competences Graph](image)

Looking at their competence in the use of Internet, it is possible to observe that the level of digital illiterates diminishes (to 29%).
For the rest, almost all of the respondents can use a search engine (107 out of 113), and a big number is able to send emails with attachments (76, around a half the sample). More sophisticated operations are performed by a significantly decreasing numbers of seniors (40, 32, 24 and 12 respectively).

In few words, around a third part of the sample (29 to 38%) can be considered digitally illiterate. On the other extreme, an estimated 25% shows having a medium-high level of competence. The rest of the sample can be hardly considered digital competent, due to the low level of their skills. This numbers, roughly confirmed by statistical data at European level (EUROSTAT), justify the need for interventions like eScouts to equip people over 55 with digital competences and contribute to avoid their exclusion from the Information Society.

**Digital learning:** asked about how they learnt what they know with new technologies, informal learning (from relatives and friends 47%; self-taught 31%) prevails over formal and non formal learning (at an education centre 16%, public facility like a job centre or library 12%; non-profit entity like an association, online centre or cooperative 10%; private facility 2%). Again, around a quarter declare “nowhere” as they are not familiar with new technologies.

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.

**Use of resources:** 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 and 29%) or even they don’t use these resources at all (24 and 24%). This represents an opportunity for eScouts digital literacy training to fill in that competences gap.

**Limited/no use:** those providing reasons for not using Internet regularly (85 out of 159) mention *never have learned how / do not understand how* to use them (33%) or *not having a computer or cellular phone with Internet access* (32%) as the main reasons.

**Place of access:** 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 is significantly less frequent -at a public location (job centre, library...) 14%, at a non-profit centre 9%, at an Internet coffee 8%, at a university or educational centre 4%.

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.

Available date suggests that access to Internet is not a problem for most of the seniors. What instead seems to limit their use (as we will see later) is their limited digital competences.

**Purposes of use:** for each one of the listed possible purposes, around a half declared never using Internet. On the opposite side (frequent use), we can observe that *work* and *study/investigate* seem to be the main drivers to use internet. We ignore if other uses, which are more dependent on user willingness, are less frequent due to a lack of interest or knowledge/competence.
In general, 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.

Activities done during the last 12 months: a deeper glance to actual uses of Internet offers a complementary insight. 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 suggested 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 again 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.

**Potential usefulness:** as seen by surveyed seniors, information is the most obvious utility of ICT, followed by acquiring specific skills (while e-Learning seems to be the less useful) and economic-oriented activities (looking for jobs AND marketing products).

ICT use for helping others is retained not too much useful, which 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:** 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.

When asked about volunteering as an occupation, only a 3% declared to be volunteering and 2% being interested to volunteer. But when asked exclusively whether they were working or collaborating in a non-profit organization (charity, cooperative...), a quarter of them (25%) answered positively.

Asked about their past, most of the sampled seniors have worked at least once in their lives (94%) in the more diverse fields, but only 19 of them worked as educators and 1 with new technologies. Two third of them (65%) answered to have enjoyed a secured employment (fix term) while 14% has been self-employed, a 4% home-based worker, a 3% entrepreneur and only 1% volunteer.

Asked about how much they think that their (present or past) occupation is/was related to their training/field of study, a 61% answered “partly” or “completely” in similar proportions (30/30). Regarding the level in which their job life has satisfied their expectations, instead, a 44% answered “partly” while a 24% said “completely”. Overall speaking, their level of satisfaction is medium-high.

Their main motivations (priorities) when looking for a job have been economics (77%, between maintaining their families and making money) and 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 for example with their hobbies (43%), travelling (38%), learning in training courses (21%) or taking care of their grandsons (20%). Only a 12% of them foresee to collaborate with social organizations.

Engaging in voluntary mentoring to the Youth

Voluntary/social work: asked once more about volunteering (“Did/do you do any kind of social work/volunteering?”), the number of positive answers rose to 42%. The number still raised more (indirectly) when asked about which non-profit bodies/associations they do/did frequent (only 52 respondents, which represents a 33% of the sample, answered “none”). Among the diversity of entities frequented, 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).

Regarding their activities as volunteers, again a diversity of answers emerged, among which it is remarkable the number of cases related to youth care (19), cultural animation (20), social awareness/campaign events (14) or education (12, between environmental and general), all them activities which are positive precedents for the mentoring role the elders are expected to play with the youths.

All these social experiences are positive precedents for the mentoring role the elders are expected to play with the youths.
Seniors’ perceptions about the Youth: the senior respondents think that young people of their community suffer exclusion of the labour market (58%) and therefore economic dependence from family (55%), which can be considered non manageable circumstances. However, they see the youngsters lacking of effort and dedication capacity (35%) or lacking of interest on studies (34%), and emotionally instable (26%).

However, if they could guide the youngsters, they think they could produce a positive effect on all the negative aspects mentioned above, alleviating by coaching youngsters’ 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.

It is interesting to see the aspects that seniors mostly appreciate from the youngsters. They highlight their energy (58%), sense of initiative (45%), idealism (37%), communicative attitude (36%) and friendly spirit (33%).
Seniors experience of frequent interaction with young people (under 25) has particularly taken place in their private lives (76%), even in their neighbourhoods (27%). However, some of them had such experience as consequence of organized activities: 11% has interacted with youngsters as teachers, 12% as coordinators, 8% as volunteers and 3% by participating in an exchange program.

**Facilitation background:** about their experience as group leaders (e.g. coordinator of a youth group), around a third part (32%) answered positively. Besides, a 21% of the sampled seniors have some time been a group facilitator, in any of the activities illustrated in the graphic below (number into parentheses indicate no. of cases). 36 of the respondents (23%) assures that through those activities have experienced 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.

**Final remark**

Seniors show a range of educational background "types": 26% are highly qualified, but a number of them don’t speak languages; the number of frequent internet users contrasts with a similar proportion of those who never use it; etc. This 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?

On the other hand, the seniors show are optimistic on the results that they could obtain by mentoring the youth. And the youth appreciate the job and life experience of the seniors, as well as their ethical values. This is an excellent starting point for a virtuous exchange to be sustained by the training of mentors and the seniors’ mentoring of the youths.
4. The Youths vs. the Seniors: some comparisons

### Educational level

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Educational Level</th>
<th>Youths</th>
<th>Seniors</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Middle school certificate, A/S levels</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High school diploma, A levels</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vocational training</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level 1 (three year) university degree</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level 2 (higher) university degree</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Master and/or PhD</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Internet skills

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Internet skill</th>
<th>Seniors</th>
<th>Youths</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>None of the listed operations</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Create a web page (using WordPress, Dreamweaver, etc)</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use shared files/documents and/or exchange music, videos, films, etc</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Make voice calls (using Skype, Messenger, oovoo, etc)</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Send messages using Instant Messaging chats, newsgroups, or online</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Send e-mails with files/documents attached</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use a search engine (Google, Yahoo, etc)</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Job sector

#### Youths expectation
- Arts and creative jobs
- Administration and management
- Health and social work
- Education and training
- Commerce and finance
- Communication
- Travel
- Media
- Journalism

#### Seniors experience
- Manual jobs and construction
- Public services
- Education and training
- Commerce and finance
- Communication
- Travel
- Media
- Journalism

### Internet uses

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Internet use</th>
<th>Seniors</th>
<th>Youths</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Internet not used during the last year</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public procedures (eGovernment)</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Selling items online</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Online banking services</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Online purchases of products/services</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health (information, appointments...)</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Travel (reservations, flight purchase...)</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Looking for a job</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Study, personal development</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information (online newspapers,...)</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communication (VOIP calls, chatting...)</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information (web TV / web radio)</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communication (e-mail)</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social networking (Facebook, Twitter...)</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>