SeniorVlog

INSPIRING AND EMPOWERING SENIORS
TO BECOME VLOGGERS AND CONQUER THE INTERNET

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Synthesis of country specific and EU level recommendations for the SeniorVlog Training Programme

SENIOR VLOG

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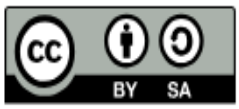

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The SeniorVlog project, which is co-funded by the Eramus+ Programme of the European Union, aims to empower senior citizens in the European Union by enhancing their social media presence and vlogging skills. The project focuses on three key areas: inclusivity, digital literacy, and entrepreneurial empowerment. It aims to dismantle barriers in digital engagement, improve digital competencies among participants, and encourage seniors to view vlogging as a professional pursuit. The project includes designing a comparative research study, designing a training program curriculum, developing a mentoring guidebook, and creating an online version of the Senior Vlogging Guide. The project targets senior adult learners, adult educators, adult internet users, and ICT educators. The online version of the Senior Vlogging Guide is accessible to all, and stakeholders at the policy level are engaged to advocate for the adoption of ICT-focused programs to mitigate the digital divide among seniors.

The key findings from Senior Vlogging Training Programmes held in Cyprus, Greece, Italy, Poland, and Portugal can be summarized as follows:

Challenges:

- **Attendance decline:** Programs experienced decreasing attendance.
- **Varying skill levels:** Participants had differing digital literacy and vlogging experience.
- **Course duration:** Some desired longer sessions.
- **Meeting expectations:** Aligning content with diverse participant expectations was challenging.

Positive outcomes:

- **Increased confidence:** Participants felt more confident using the internet and social media.
- **Improved vlogging skills:** Participants noted advancements in vlogging, especially in equipment handling.
- **Individual mentorship:** One-on-one sessions were highly valued.
- **Vlogging potential:** Trainers recognized seniors' valuable life experiences, suggesting potential for engaging vlogs.

The key recommendations aimed at enhancing senior digital literacy across the European Union, that draw insights from Cyprus, Greece, Italy, Poland, and Portugal, include:

1. **Cross-country collaboration**: The report suggests facilitating learning exchanges, promoting funding for collaborative projects, establishing policy platforms, investing in research, peer networks, and capacity-building.
2. **Supporting Policy Frameworks**: It recommends developing an EU Digital Inclusion Strategy, integrating senior digital inclusion into EU policies, prioritizing funding, establishing coordination mechanisms, and launching advocacy campaigns.

3. **Sharing best practices and resources**: The report advocates for establishing a Knowledge Sharing Platform, organizing networking events, creating online communities, developing a resource clearinghouse, fostering peer networks, allocating funding for knowledge sharing, and instituting a recognition programme.
4. **Funding opportunities**: It proposes a Digital Education Fund, suggests introducing matching grants, establishing competitive grant opportunities, encouraging public-private partnerships, and exploring social impact investment.

INTRODUCTION

BACKGROUND OF THE SENIORVLOG PROJECT

Europe's population is aging rapidly, coinciding with a surge in digitalization. Public services increasingly shift online, leaving those without basic digital skills at risk of exclusion[1]. This trend is particularly pronounced among the elderly, as evidenced by Eurostat data in 2019[2], indicating that over 43% of individuals aged 65-74 and over 21% of those aged 55-64 did not utilize the internet within the last three months preceding the survey. Efforts to bridge this digital divide between generations face challenges, with older individuals exhibiting slower adoption rates of new technologies.

Among older adults aged 65-74, common online activities include sending emails (44%), seeking health information (34%), conducting internet banking transactions (31%), and engaging in phone/video calls (24%). While individuals aged 55-64 display slightly higher participation rates in these activities, there remains a notable gap in ICT usage compared to the general population.

Furthermore, social media engagement among seniors aged 65-74 remains low, with only approximately 18% actively participating in social media platforms, contrasting sharply with the 54% of EU-27 adults aged 17-64 who regularly utilize these communication channels. This discrepancy underscores the need for targeted interventions to empower older adults to leverage digital tools effectively and participate more fully in the online sphere.

Newer Eurostat data[3] paints a concerning picture, with only a quarter of EU citizens aged 65 to 74 possessing at least basic digital skills. Disparities are particularly pronounced in countries like Greece (12.84%), Italy (19.33%), Cyprus (11.12%), Poland (12.55%), and Portugal (18.52%), where the EU average for basic or above basic digital skills (28.19%) is significantly higher (figure 1).

This digital illiteracy among older adults can lead to social isolation, limited access to crucial online services (government, healthcare, banking), and difficulty staying connected with loved ones. Urgent action is needed to equip older adults with the digital skills necessary to thrive in today's world. Targeted programs must address the unique challenges this demographic faces, including

[1] https://fra.europa.eu/en/news/2023/ensuring-access-public-services-older-people-digital-societies#:~:text=Europe's%20ageing%20population%20is%20ever,at%20least%20basic%20digital%20skills
[2] https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/databrowser/bookmark/d73554dd-9a2d-4562-aaaa-07120704786f?lang=en
[3] https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/databrowser/bookmark/a3754a5d-845b-4997-9acf-4563a08de9da?lang=en

age-related declines in cognitive function, fear of technology, and lack of access to devices and the internet. Initiatives like the SeniorVlog project offer a promising approach, providing tools and confidence to navigate the online world and bridging the digital divide for Europe's aging population.

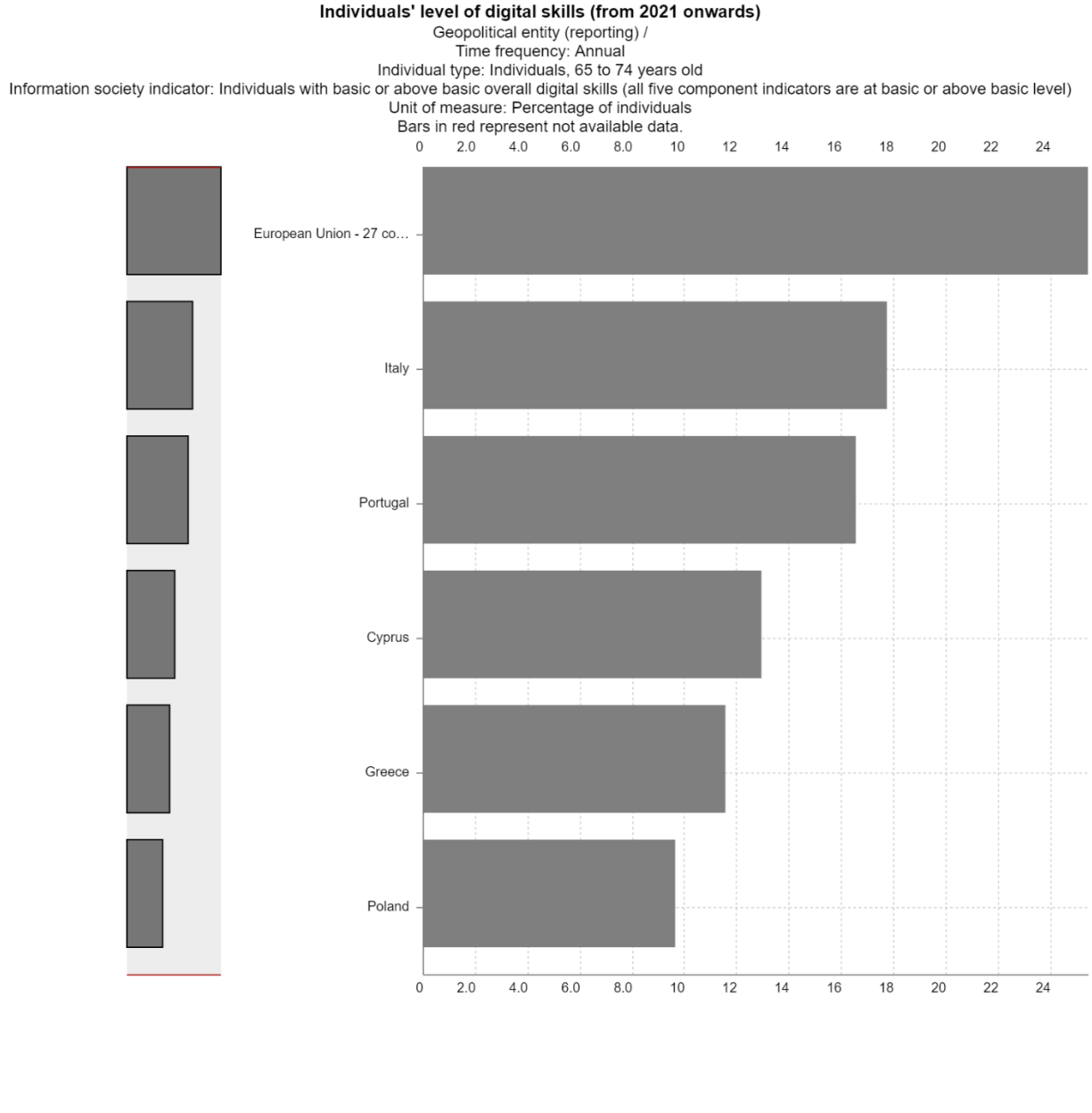

Figure 1 Individuals' level of digital skills (from 2021 onwards) [isoc_sk_dskl_i21__custom_11303660]

SCOPE AND OBJECTIVES

The SeniorVlog project aims to empower senior citizens across the European Union by fostering their social media presence and vlogging skills. The overall scope of the project revolves around three key axes:

1. **Inclusivity**: The project aims to broaden access to lifelong learning opportunities, with a particular focus on individuals vulnerable to social exclusion, age-related biases, and technological marginalization. In particular to digital inclusion, the SeniorVlog training programme is designed to dismantle barriers in digital engagement by challenging the notion that social media and vlogging are reserved solely for younger demographics. Through initiatives such as strengthening seniors' ICT proficiency, fostering self-assurance, and providing paths for continual growth, the programme empowers older adults to actively participate in the digital sphere.

2. **Digital literacy**: Central to the project's mission is the enhancement of digital competencies among programme participants, including both senior adult educators and learners. Utilizing digital tools throughout project activities and management, the aim is to develop an online self-directed learning curriculum grounded in the SeniorVlog training framework.

3. **Entrepreneurial empowerment**: Embedded within the SeniorVlog Training and Mentoring Programme are elements of entrepreneurship education, encouraging seniors to view vlogging as a professional pursuit. By providing guidance in crafting business plans for their vlogs, participants are equipped to leverage their passions for potential income generation, thereby fostering ongoing engagement and activity.

The specific objectives of the project include:

- **Design and delivery of an innovative comparative research study and report** on the social media presence of Senior Vloggers across partnership countries, including insights into popular channels, content themes, and platform saturation, in order to detail the state of play of senior vlogging initiatives.

- **Design of a training programme curriculum**, outlining step-by-step instructions for seniors to navigate the world of social media and vlogging, aimed at breaking the digital barrier for seniors and challenging stereotypes associated with vlogging as a pursuit reserved for younger individuals.

- **Development of a mentoring guidebook and recommendations** tailored to support Senior Vloggers, providing mentors with specific guidelines and resources to effectively mentor seniors in vlogging.

- **Creation of an online version of the Senior Vlogging Guide**, in the format of an interactive online platform utilizing multimedia elements, dynamic schemes, and engaging content to facilitate seniors' learning and engagement.

TARGET GROUPS AND STAKEHOLDERS

The SeniorVlog project targets several key groups:

1. **Senior adult learners**: Those eager to acquire new digital skills and venture into vlogging.
2. **Adult educators**: Including those from partnering institutions and associated partners, aiming to enhance their capacity to teach digital skills and vlogging techniques.
3. **Adult internet users**: Individuals interested in embarking on vlogging journeys, regardless of age.
4. **ICT educators**: Working in NGOs, senior activity centers, or other educational institutions catering to seniors, to empower them with the knowledge to instruct seniors in digital literacy and vlogging.

Additionally, the online version of the Senior Vlogging Guide is designed to be accessible to adult internet users keen on starting their vlogging endeavors, with no strict age restrictions.

Furthermore, the project seeks to engage stakeholders operating at the policy level. This involvement aims to advocate for the adoption and implementation of policies and practices that introduce ICT-focused programs, thereby mitigating the digital divide among seniors.

METHODOLOGY

PILOT TRAINING IMPLEMENTATION OVERVIEW

The pilot training implementation overview outlines the key steps and procedures involved in executing the SeniorVlog pilot training programme, from inception to completion. It provides a comprehensive understanding of how the programme was planned, organized, and executed to achieve its objectives.

1. **Pilot training programme planning and design:** The training programme implementation began with thorough planning and design, wherein the goals, objectives, target audience, and content were conceptualized. The project team collaborated to define the scope of the programme, outline the curriculum structure, and develop training materials tailored to the needs and skill levels of the participants.
2. **Recruitment and participant engagement:** Efforts were made to recruit participants for the training programme through various channels, including community outreach, partner organizations, and promotional campaigns. Information sessions were conducted to engage potential participants, explain the programme's benefits, and encourage their involvement.
3. **Training delivery:** The training sessions were delivered by appointed trainers according to the predefined curriculum and schedule. The training content was structured to cover both theoretical concepts and practical exercises, ensuring participants gained hands-on experience and actionable skills relevant to vlogging.

4. **Data collection and evaluation:** Throughout the training programme, data collection methods were employed to gather information about the participants' demographics, skill levels, and feedback on the training content and delivery. Pre- and post-training questionnaires were administered to assess changes in participants' skills and confidence levels over the course of the programme. Feedback forms were distributed after each training session to capture immediate impressions and suggestions for improvement.
5. **Analysis and reflection:** The collected data were analyzed using a mixed-methods approach, combining quantitative data analysis with qualitative thematic analysis. The analysis aimed to identify trends, patterns, and areas for improvement based on participants' feedback and self-evaluation scores. The project team reflected on the findings to draw insights, lessons learned, and recommendations for enhancing future training initiatives.
6. **Documentation and reporting:** Throughout the project implementation, documentation was maintained to record key activities, milestones, and outcomes. A final report summarizing the project's objectives, activities, achievements, and lessons learned was compiled to provide stakeholders with a comprehensive overview of the programme's impact and effectiveness.

DATA COLLECTION METHODS

For data collection, a multi-faceted approach was adopted, comprising both quantitative and qualitative methods to ensure a comprehensive understanding of the participants' experiences and perceptions throughout the training programme.

1. **Pre- and post-training questionnaires:** Prior to the commencement of the training programme, participants were asked to complete a questionnaire aimed at gathering demographic information, previous experience with digital tools, and their self-evaluation of skills related to internet usage, social media, and vlogging. Similarly, a post-training questionnaire was administered after the completion of the programme to assess any changes in participants' skills, confidence levels, and overall satisfaction with the training.
2. **Feedback forms after each training session:** Following each training session, participants were provided with feedback forms to capture their immediate impressions and opinions about the content, delivery, and effectiveness of the training. These forms solicited both quantitative ratings and qualitative comments, allowing participants to express their views in a structured manner while also providing space for detailed feedback.

ANALYSIS FRAMEWORK

The analysis framework employed a mixed-methods approach, integrating both quantitative data analysis and qualitative thematic analysis to derive meaningful insights from the collected data.

1. **Quantitative data analysis:** The quantitative data gathered from the pre- and post-training questionnaires were subjected to statistical analysis to identify trends, patterns, and changes in participants' self-evaluation scores before and after the training programme.
2. **Qualitative thematic analysis:** The qualitative comments collected from the feedback forms after each training session were analyzed using thematic analysis. Open-ended responses were coded and categorized into themes and subthemes to identify recurring patterns, issues, and areas of improvement related to the content, delivery, and format of the training programme. This qualitative analysis provided rich insights into participants' experiences, perceptions, and suggestions for enhancing the effectiveness of future training initiatives.

KEY FINDINGS

TRAINING PROGRAMME IN CYPRUS

Participant statistics:

- Initially, 10 participants applied and attended the first module. However, this number gradually declined to 8 for subsequent modules and further decreased to 4 by the last module.
- Out of the 10 initial participants, only 4 successfully completed all modules of the course.
- The majority of participants were over 70 years old (80%), with two participants falling between the ages of 66-70.
- 1 participant indicated that they had never utilized the internet or social media. 1 participant stated that they have been utilizing these platforms for less than a year, whereas 8 reported using them for more than a year.
- Out of the total number of participants surveyed, only 2 confirmed their prior involvement in IT training or seminars related to social media, the internet, and vlogging.

Evaluation of programme effectiveness:

- The evaluation revealed significant improvements in participants' confidence and skills related to internet usage and social media.
- Notably, participants reported feeling safer using the internet and social media platforms, as well as feeling more equipped to protect themselves online after completing the training programme.
- They also acknowledged that the training significantly improved their vlogging skills (4.29 out of 5 on a Likert scale) and provided valuable insights into equipment used for successful vlog recording (4.14 out of 5 on a Likert scale).

- Overall, participants expressed satisfaction with the training duration, rating its sufficiency at 4.71 out of 5 on a Likert scale.
- Participants also indicated that the time allocated for the individual mentorship sessions was sufficient (4.71 out of 5 on a Likert scale).

Conclusion: The evaluation report highlights the positive impact of the SeniorVlog training programme on participants' confidence and skills in vlogging and online safety. However, the small sample size necessitates further testing to validate these findings. Recommendations for future improvements include expanding the sample size and refining the programme content based on participant feedback.

TRAINING PROGRAMME IN GREECE

Participant statistics:

- Initially, the training course attracted 24 applicants, out of which 19 participants attended the first session. However, attendance gradually declined throughout the programme.
- Session attracted 19 participants, with a surprising increase to 23 for session two.
- Attendance dipped to 15 for session three, further declining to 11 for session four.
- The final session saw a significant drop to only 6 participants, likely impacted by a national strike coinciding with the session.
- A pre-questionnaire was completed by 14 participants, with 12 being female.
- 64% of respondents indicated using social media and navigating the internet for over a year, showcasing a strong foundation in digital literacy among the majority.
- Another 22% reported using social media and the internet for less than a year, indicating a growing familiarity with digital tools.
- The remaining 14% of participants had no prior experience with social media or the internet.
- None of the participants reported prior experience with IT training, workshops focused on social media, internet navigation, or vlog creation.

Evaluation of programme effectiveness:

- Participants felt the programme wasn’t adequately tailored to their needs, as they rated the duration’s efficiency with a 2.5 out of 5 on a Likert scale, suggesting a longer programme duration.
- Feedback regarding the impact on vlogging skills was mixed, with some reporting improvement while others felt they lacked necessary knowledge and tools (2.7 out of 5 on a Likert scale).
- Participants were introduced to building online communities and viewer interaction, but a significant majority remained hesitant to share their vlogs with a wider audience.

- The allocated time for individual mentorship sessions was deemed sufficient and valuable by participants (3.3 out of 5 on a Likert scale).
- The comprehensive curriculum provided a solid foundation but revealed a lack of basic digital literacy skills among some participants.
- Mixed expectations from participants, with some anticipating solely computer skill improvement rather than vlogging-specific content, led to occasional impatience during sessions.
- Trainers observed a wide range of digital proficiency levels among participants, making individual instruction challenging due to impatience within the group.

Conclusion: The training programme in Greece faced challenges such as declining attendance and mixed participant feedback. While participants desired a longer, more tailored programme, they appreciated individual mentorship sessions and the comprehensive curriculum. Trainers noted seniors' wealth of knowledge, highlighting the potential for authentic vlogging content. Despite the challenges, the programme emphasized the importance of empowering seniors to bridge the digital divide through vlogging. However, the small sample size necessitates further testing to validate these findings. Addressing digital literacy gaps and aligning participant expectations could enhance future initiatives' effectiveness.

TRAINING PROGRAMME IN ITALY

Participant statistics:

- A total of 10 individuals signed up for the course.
- 6 participants successfully completed the course.
- Among the 6 participants who completed the pre-course evaluation questionnaire, the average age is 63.67 years.
- The majority of participants reported using social media/Internet for an average of 10 to 15 years, with only 1 participant being relatively new to these tools.
- Apart from 1 participant, they had not previously engaged in specialized ICT training related to social media, internet usage, or vlogging.

Evaluation of programme effectiveness:

- All participants unanimously expressed a desire for a longer duration of the training, indicating that the length of the course did not fully meet their needs.
- Feedback on the effectiveness of the training course varied (3.4 out of 5 on a Likert scale), with three participants agreeing, one being neutral, and one disagreeing. This diversity of responses underscores the importance of providing additional support and insights tailored to individual participant needs.

- The majority of participants recognized the effectiveness of the training in imparting knowledge of video recording equipment (4 out of 5 on a Likert scale), with 1 participant strongly agreeing (rating 5), 3 participants agreeing and 1 participant being neutral.
- Participants generally agreed that the training encouraged reflection on building and maintaining interactions with fans (3.6 out of 5 on a Likert scale), with 3 participants agreeing and 2 being neutral.
- Responses regarding the adequacy of the time allocated to training were mostly neutral (3.2 out of 5 on a Likert scale).

Conclusion: The feedback from participants provides valuable insights into their experiences and perceptions of the training course. While there were positive trends in understanding equipment and reflecting on audience engagement, areas for improvement include addressing varying skill levels, providing additional support, and possibly extending the training duration to better meet participants' needs. However, the small sample size necessitates further testing to validate these findings. Tailoring training content and support mechanisms to individual preferences and skill levels can enhance the overall effectiveness and satisfaction of future training initiatives.

TRAINING PROGRAMME IN POLAND

Participant statistics:

In Poland, a total of 9 individuals participated in the training programme.

All of them were over 65 and two of them were over 70 years old.

During the course, 1 participant dropped out, and another was invited from the waiting list to take their place. The replacement participant received individual consultations to catch up on missed modules and tasks.

The course was successfully completed by 8 participants.

All participants had over 1 year of experience using social media, but none had utilized social media or the internet for vlogging purposes.

Evaluation of programme effectiveness:

- Only 25% of respondents agreed that the course duration met their needs, indicating a desire for more training sessions.
- 50% of participants agreed or strongly agreed that the course helped improve their vlogging skills, while the remainder provided neutral responses.
- The majority of respondents agreed (50%) or strongly agreed (13%) that the training helped them learn about vlogging equipment, with no disagreements but some neutral responses (37%).
- Most participants agreed (63%) that the training empowered them with fan interactions, while others provided neutral responses (37%).

- Only one participant thought the allotted time for the training was adequate, while the remaining 87% was neutral. This indicates that the participants encountered difficulties in assessing the adequacy of the allocated time.

Conclusion: The feedback from participants in Poland underscores the need for additional sessions to meet their learning needs effectively. While there was a mixed response regarding the impact of the training on vlogging skills, participants generally acknowledged the value of learning about vlogging equipment and fan interactions. However, the small sample size necessitates further testing to validate these findings. Further exploration of participant expectations and adjustments to course duration may enhance the overall effectiveness and satisfaction of future training programmes.

TRAINING PROGRAMME IN PORTUGAL

Participant statistics:

- Initially, 14 participants expressed interest in the training programme.
- Attendance gradually declined over subsequent sessions, resulting in a decrease to 9 participants by the end of the programme. The participants' health issues, not a lack of interest in the training course, account for this decline.
- The majority of participants (78%) were aged between 67 and 83 years old, with only a few falling between 66 and 70.
- Only 3 out of 9 participants indicated prior experience with video and social media content development.

Evaluation of programme effectiveness:

- The post training self-assessment evaluation showed significant improvements in participants' confidence and skills related to internet usage and social media.
- Additionally, participants reported feeling more confident using the internet and social networks, as well as feeling prepared to create vlogs based on their own style.
- Participants generally agreed that the duration of individual mentorship sessions was sufficient, at 3.4 out of 5 on a Likert scale.
- They also indicated that the training significantly improved their vlogging skills, at 4.3 out of 5 on a Likert scale.
- Overall, participants expressed satisfaction with the training duration, at 3.4 out of 5 on a Likert scale.

Conclusion: The training programme in Portugal showed promise in improving participants' confidence and skills in internet usage, social media, and vlogging. Despite some challenges, such as declining attendance and varying levels of prior experience among participants, the programme effectively addressed key areas of creating vlogs. However, due to the small sample

size, caution is advised in interpreting these results, and further testing with a larger sample size is recommended to draw accurate conclusions about the programme's effectiveness. Moving forward, it is essential to consider the feedback provided by participants and adjust the programme structure accordingly to better meet the needs of older adults in Portugal. Additionally, expanding the programme's reach and ensuring adequate support for participants with health issues will be crucial for promoting digital inclusion and empowering seniors in the digital age.

COUNTRY-SPECIFIC RECOMMENDATIONS

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR SENIOR DIGITAL LITERACY AND VLOGGING PROGRAMME IN CYPRUS

The programme curriculum in Cyprus should be customized to include a higher proportion of practical exercises and hands-on learning opportunities, as per participants' feedback preferring more activities and less theory. This adjustment would cater to the preferences of participants and enhance engagement throughout the training.

Programme materials and examples should be developed to be culturally relevant and resonate with the experiences of seniors in Cyprus. Incorporating local references, stories, and case studies would make the content more relatable and impactful for participants, fostering a deeper connection with the training material.

Workshops or sessions specifically focused on familiarizing participants with video recording equipment, mobile devices, and internet usage should be organized. Providing practical demonstrations, hands-on practice sessions, and guidance on where to find and purchase relevant equipment in Cyprus would empower participants with necessary skills.

Building on the general recommendations and considering the context of Cyprus, it is recommended to advance even farther in the following fronts:

1. Leveraging existing networks:

- It is recommended to collaborate with **Community Centers and Senior Associations in Cyprus (Σύνδεσμοι Συνταξιούχων)** to promote the vlogging programme and offer training sessions at their locations. This approach takes advantage of the existing infrastructure and caters to established social networks among seniors.
- It is recommended to collaborate with the **Cyprus Third Age Observatory**, which provides educational opportunities specifically designed for retired individuals. It is recommended that the community and gerontology nursing module in the postgraduate program at the Cyprus University of Technology be updated to include training for student nurses. This training should focus on educating seniors during their clinical placements in community centers.

2. Culturally relevant content and language:

- **Focus on Cypriot platforms:** It is recommended to include training on popular Cypriot social media platforms alongside international ones. Platforms like Alpha News Live or Philelefthеros could be considered, if widely used by seniors.
- **Local topics and vlogging ideas:** It is advisable to feature successful Cypriot senior vloggers or content creators as examples. Participants should be encouraged to explore topics relevant to their lives and experiences in Cyprus, like Cypriot cuisine, history, or local traditions.
- **Provide bilingual training in Greek, English and Turkish (for Turkish Cypriots):** It is necessary to acknowledge the multilingualism of Cyprus. Thus, it is recommended to provide training materials, presentations, and mentorship sessions in both Greek, English and Turkish (specifically Turkish Cypriot dialect) for optimal comprehension.

3. Community-based support networks: Establishing community-based support networks or peer learning groups in Cyprus would provide additional guidance, encouragement, and mentorship to participants. These networks could serve as valuable resources for sharing experiences, troubleshooting challenges, and fostering social connections among seniors interested in vlogging.

4. Intergenerational learning:

- **Pair seniors with younger mentors:** It is recommended to encourage collaboration with younger volunteers (grandchildren, tech-savvy community members) to facilitate peer-to-peer learning and provide additional support beyond scheduled sessions.
- **Focus on family connection:** It is recommended to highlight the potential for vlogging to connect Cypriot seniors with family members living abroad.

5. Policy advocacy: It is recommended to advocate for policies at the national level that support lifelong learning initiatives for seniors, including digital skills development programmes. Collaborate with government agencies, educational institutions, and civil society organizations to prioritize funding and resources for these initiatives and promote digital inclusion among older adults.

6. Promotion of lifelong learning: It is recommended to promote the SeniorVlog Training Programme as part of a broader initiative to encourage lifelong learning and digital skills development among seniors in Cyprus. Highlighting the benefits of staying engaged and active in learning new technologies would foster a culture of continuous growth and personal enrichment.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR SENIOR DIGITAL LITERACY AND VLOGGING PROGRAMME IN GREECE

Considering participants' preferences for a more comprehensive learning experience, an extension of the programme's duration is suggested to cater to diverse learning needs and facilitate skill development over an extended period.

The integration of foundational digital literacy modules into the curriculum is recommended to accommodate varying levels of digital proficiency among participants. Sessions focusing on basic

computer skills, internet navigation, and social media usage can ensure participants grasp essential concepts before delving into vlogging topics.

Conducting pre-training assessments to understand participants' expectations, goals, and preferred learning styles is recommended. This information will guide the design and customization of the training programme to better meet participants' specific needs and interests.

It is also recommended that participants are encouraged to actively engage with online communities and share their vlogs with a wider audience. Guidance on building online presence and interacting with viewers can boost confidence and participation in the digital sphere.

Building on the general recommendations and considering the context of Greece, it is recommended to advance even farther in the following fronts:

1. Cater to Diverse Skill Levels:

- **Pre-assessment and leveled learning:** It is recommended to implement a pre-assessment to evaluate participants' existing digital literacy and vlogging experience in order to design differentiated learning modules catering to beginners, intermediate, and advanced users. This ensures content resonates with each participant's skill level.
- **Offer optional foundation courses:** Consider offering introductory modules on internet basics, social media platforms popular in Greece (like Facebook and WhatsApp), and basic computer skills for beginners before the vlogging programme.

2. Leverage Existing Infrastructure:

- **Open Care Centers:** It is recommended to partner with these government-run senior centers to offer vlogging training modules on-site or virtually. Utilizing their established network and trusted environment may prove to be an effective way of attracting participants.
- **Third Age Learning Programmes:** It is suggested to collaborate with existing programmes offered by municipalities or NGOs (such as People Behind - Πανεπιστήμιο Τρίτης Ηλικίας) that cater to seniors' educational needs. It is recommended to work together to integrate vlogging modules or digital literacy training into their curriculum.

3. Culturally relevant content:

- **Focus on Greek platforms:** It is suggested to include training on popular Greek social media platforms like Facebook (heavily used by seniors) and Viber alongside international platforms.
- **Local topics and vlogging ideas:** It is recommended to incorporate examples and case studies of successful Greek senior vloggers or content creators to inspire participants. Seniors should be encouraged to explore topics relevant to their lives and experiences in Greece.

4. Intergenerational Learning:

- **Pair seniors with younger mentors:** It is advised to encourage collaboration between younger volunteers (grandchildren, tech-savvy community members) and senior participants. This can facilitate peer-to-peer learning and provide additional support.

- **Focus on family connection:** It is recommended to highlight the potential for vlogging to connect seniors with family members who live abroad or are geographically distant.

5. Policy advocacy: It is recommended to advocate for policies at the national level that support lifelong learning initiatives for seniors, including digital skills development programmes. Collaborate with government agencies, educational institutions, and civil society organizations to prioritize funding and resources for these initiatives and promote digital inclusion among older adults.

6. Promotion of lifelong learning: It is suggested to promote the SeniorVlog Training Programme as part of a broader initiative to encourage lifelong learning and digital skills development among seniors in Greece. Highlighting the benefits of staying engaged and active in learning new technologies would foster a culture of continuous growth and personal enrichment.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR SENIOR DIGITAL LITERACY AND VLOGGING PROGRAMME IN ITALY

Considering the average age of participants and their diverse levels of experience with social media/Internet, it is suggested to customize the training content to address their specific needs and skill levels, by providing introductory sessions for those who are new to digital tools while offering advanced techniques for more experienced users.

Responding to participants' expressed desire for more time for training, it is recommended to extend the duration of the course to allow for deeper exploration of topics and more hands-on practice. This adjustment will better accommodate participants' learning preferences and ensure comprehensive skill development.

It is also advisable to implement robust methods for assessing participant skills and progress throughout the training, including pre-course evaluations, regular check-ins, and post-course assessments. By utilizing this data to customize the training content and support systems, it will more effectively satisfy individual needs and improve overall learning outcomes.

Building on the general recommendations and considering the context of Italy, it is recommended to advance even farther in the following fronts:

1. Cater to diverse skill levels:

- **Pre-assessment and leveled learning:** It is recommended to implement a pre-assessment to evaluate participants' existing digital literacy and vlogging experience in order to design differentiated learning modules catering to beginners, intermediate, and advanced users. This ensures content resonates with each participant's skill level.
- **Offer optional foundation courses:** It is advisable to offer introductory modules on internet basics, social media platforms popular in Italy (like Facebook and WhatsApp), and basic computer skills for beginners before the vlogging programme.

2. Leverage Italian resources and expertise:

- **Local instructors and content:** It is recommended to incorporate Italian vloggers or tech experts as guest instructors to share local success stories and insights relevant to the Italian audience. Encourage participants to explore topics relevant to their lives and interests in Italy.

4. Ongoing support and community building:

- **Mentorship and peer support:** Offer ongoing mentorship opportunities with experienced vloggers or tech-savvy volunteers who can provide personalized support beyond the training programme.

5. Policy advocacy: It is recommended to advocate for policies at the national level that support lifelong learning initiatives for seniors, including digital skills development programmes. Collaborate with government agencies, educational institutions, and civil society organizations to prioritize funding and resources for these initiatives and promote digital inclusion among older adults.

6. Promotion of lifelong learning: It is recommended to promote the SeniorVlog Training Programme as part of a broader initiative to encourage lifelong learning and digital skills development among seniors in Italy. Highlighting the benefits of staying engaged and active in learning new technologies would foster a culture of continuous growth and personal enrichment.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR SENIOR DIGITAL LITERACY AND VLOGGING PROGRAMME IN POLAND

It is recommended to extend the duration of the training programme in Poland to address participants' expressed desire for more sessions. This adjustment would allow participants sufficient time to absorb the material, practice skills, and fully grasp vlogging concepts.

Given participants' varying levels of experience with social media and lack of vlogging expertise, the training content should be tailored accordingly. Introducing introductory sessions on vlogging fundamentals and progressively advancing to more complex techniques will ensure that participants of all skill levels benefit from the programme.

It is also advisable to implement a pre-course assessment to gauge participants' existing digital literacy skills and their specific learning goals related to vlogging. This helps tailor the course content to their needs and expectations.

To address the mixed responses regarding skill improvement, more robust methods should be implemented for assessing participant progress throughout the training. This may include regular evaluations, practical demonstrations, and individualized feedback sessions to identify areas for improvement and provide targeted support.

Introducing a variety of interactive and hands-on learning activities will actively engage participants. Practical exercises, group discussions, and real-world simulations can deepen understanding and enhance retention of vlogging concepts and techniques.

Building on the general recommendations and considering the context of Poland, it is recommended to advance even farther in the following fronts:

1. Tailored learning for beginners in vlogging:

- **Utilize Polish vlogging examples:** It is recommended to showcase successful Polish vloggers and highlight their work during training sessions. This provides inspiration and relatable examples for participants.

2. Practical support and community building:

- **Individualized attention:** Similar to the approach with the replacement participant, it is advisable to offer short individual consultations to address specific needs and ensure all participants can keep pace with the programme.
- **Create a Polish online community:** It is recommended to establish a dedicated online forum or social media group in Polish. This platform allows participants to connect, share experiences, troubleshoot challenges, and motivate each other on their vlogging journey.

3. Leveraging Polish resources and expertise:

- **Local instructors and mentorship:** It is recommended to partner with Polish vloggers or tech-savvy individuals to serve as instructors and mentors. This provides participants with access to local expertise and insights.
- **Focus on Polish platforms:** While covering international platforms during training, it is advisable to prioritize popular Polish social media platforms like Facebook, YouTube, and Instagram, ensuring participants understand features and functionalities specific to each.

4. Policy advocacy: It is recommended to advocate for policies at the national level that support lifelong learning initiatives for seniors, including digital skills development programmes. Collaborate with government agencies, educational institutions, and civil society organizations to prioritize funding and resources for these initiatives and promote digital inclusion among older adults.

5. Promotion of lifelong learning: It is recommended to promote the SeniorVlog Training Programme as part of a broader initiative to encourage lifelong learning and digital skills development among seniors in Poland. Highlighting the benefits of staying engaged and active in learning new technologies would foster a culture of continuous growth and personal enrichment.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR SENIOR DIGITAL LITERACY AND VLOGGING PROGRAMME IN PORTUGAL

Considering the demographic characteristics and feedback from participants, it is recommended to customize the training content to address specific needs and skill levels. Introductory sessions on vlogging fundamentals should be provided for those with limited experience, while advanced techniques can be incorporated for more seasoned users.

Additionally, given the feedback indicating a desire for more sessions, it is recommended to extend the duration of the training programme in Portugal. This adjustment will allow participants ample time to absorb the material, practice skills, and fully grasp vlogging concepts.

It is also recommended to implement robust methods for assessing participant skills and progress throughout the training. Regular evaluations, practical demonstrations, and individualized feedback sessions can help identify areas for improvement and provide targeted support.

Furthermore, it is advisable to introduce more interactive and hands-on learning activities to engage participants actively. Practical exercises, group discussions, and real-world simulations can deepen understanding and enhance retention of vlogging concepts and techniques.

Building on the general recommendations and considering the context of Portugal, it is recommended to advance even farther in the following fronts:

1. Enhancing outreach and retention strategies:

- **Partner with local senior associations:** It is recommended to collaborate with these associations to raise awareness about the programme and facilitate enrollment. They can leverage existing networks and trusted environments to attract and retain participants.
- **Targeted communication and flexible scheduling:** It is advisable to design targeted outreach materials in Portuguese emphasizing the programme's benefits for social connection and lifelong learning. Offering flexible scheduling options (mornings, evenings, weekends) can accommodate diverse participant needs.

2. Addressing declining attendance and skill gaps:

- **Pre-course assessment:** Implementing a pre-course assessment to gauge participants' digital literacy skills and vlogging experience in Portuguese should be considered. This helps tailor the programme content to address individual needs and knowledge gaps.
- **Offer optional foundation modules:** It is recommended to consider offering introductory modules on basic internet use and social media navigation in Portuguese for participants with limited digital literacy skills. These modules could be completed online at their own pace before the vlogging training begins.

3. Leveraging Portuguese resources and expertise:

- **Local instructors and mentors:** It is advisable to partner with Portuguese vloggers or tech-savvy individuals to lead training sessions and provide mentorship. This offers participants access to local cultural references and real-world insights.
- **Focus on Portuguese platforms:** It is suggested to include popular Portuguese social media platforms like Facebook and Instagram alongside international platforms, while also ensuring training covers functionalities specific to each platform.

4. Policy advocacy: It is recommended to advocate for policies at the national level that support lifelong learning initiatives for seniors, including digital skills development programmes. Collaborate with government agencies, educational institutions, and civil society organizations to prioritize funding and resources for these initiatives and promote digital inclusion among older adults.

5. Promotion of lifelong learning: It is recommended to promote the SeniorVlog Training Programme as part of a broader initiative to encourage lifelong learning and digital skills development among seniors in Portugal. Highlighting the benefits of staying engaged and active

in learning new technologies would foster a culture of continuous growth and personal enrichment.

EU-LEVEL RECOMMENDATIONS FOR SENIOR DIGITAL LITERACY AND VLOGGING PROGRAMMES

The SeniorVlog project draws upon insights from pilot trainings in Cyprus, Greece, Italy, Poland, and Portugal to craft EU-level recommendations aimed at enhancing digital literacy among seniors. These recommendations are informed by key factors such as evidence-based decision-making, scalability, policy advocacy, knowledge sharing, and accountability. By leveraging the lessons learned from the pilot trainings, the project seeks to influence policy, promote collaboration, and drive positive change across the EU landscape in support of senior digital inclusion.

PROMOTING CROSS-COUNTRY COLLABORATION

1. Cross-border learning exchanges: The facilitation of cross-border learning exchanges and study visits among vlogging training providers, educators, policymakers, and practitioners from different EU countries is recommended. These exchanges would enable participants to gain insights into innovative approaches, successful models, and emerging trends in vlogging education for seniors.

2. EU funding opportunities for collaborative projects: Promoting EU funding opportunities specifically designed to support collaborative projects and initiatives in the field of vlogging training for seniors is advised. Encouraging transnational partnerships and consortia to apply for funding would help develop joint programmes, conduct research, and implement innovative solutions across borders.

3. EU policy platforms for collaboration: Establishing EU policy platforms, working groups, or task forces focused on promoting cross-country collaboration in vlogging training programmes for seniors is suggested. These platforms would provide a forum for policymakers, experts, and stakeholders to exchange ideas, share insights, and co-create strategies for advancing digital skills development initiatives at the EU level.

4. Cross-country research and evaluation initiatives: Supporting cross-country research and evaluation initiatives to assess the impact, effectiveness, and scalability of vlogging training programmes for seniors across different EU member states is recommended. Collaboration among researchers, evaluators, and practitioners should be fostered to generate evidence-based insights and inform policy and practice.

5. EU peer learning networks: Facilitating the formation of EU peer learning networks or communities of practice focused on vlogging training for seniors is advised. These networks would enable practitioners, trainers, and educators to connect, collaborate, and learn from each other's experiences, expertise, and innovations in the field.

6. EU capacity-building initiatives: Investing in EU capacity-building initiatives to strengthen the skills, competencies, and capacities of vlogging training providers and practitioners across member states is recommended. Training programmes, workshops, and resources should be offered to support professional development, quality improvement, and innovation in vlogging education for seniors.

SUPPORTING POLICY FRAMEWORKS

1. EU Digital Inclusion Strategy for seniors: The development of an EU Digital Inclusion Strategy specifically targeting seniors is recommended, focusing on promoting access to digital skills training, resources, and opportunities. This strategy should outline concrete policy objectives, targets, and actions to address digital literacy gaps and empower older adults to fully participate in the digital society.

2. Integration of senior digital inclusion in EU Policy Agendas: It is advised to integrate senior digital inclusion considerations into existing EU policy agendas, such as the Digital Single Market Strategy, the European Digital Education Action Plan, and the Active Ageing Strategy. Policies and initiatives across different sectors should incorporate measures to promote digital literacy, skills development, and access for older adults.

3. EU funding priorities for senior digital inclusion: Prioritizing funding allocations within EU funding programmes, such as the Digital Europe Programme and the European Social Fund Plus, to support initiatives aimed at promoting digital inclusion for seniors is recommended. Resources should be allocated for capacity-building, training programmes, infrastructure development, and awareness campaigns targeted at older adults.

4. EU policy coordination mechanisms: Establishing EU policy coordination mechanisms is suggested to ensure coherence and alignment across member states in promoting senior digital inclusion. Collaboration among relevant EU institutions, national governments, regional authorities, civil society organizations, and private sector stakeholders should be fostered to develop and implement joint policy initiatives.

5. EU policy guidance and support: Providing EU policy guidance and support to member states in developing national policies and strategies for senior digital inclusion is recommended. Technical assistance, knowledge sharing platforms, and capacity-building workshops should be offered to help governments design and implement effective policies, programmes, and initiatives tailored to the needs of older adults.

6. EU monitoring and evaluation framework: The development of an EU monitoring and evaluation framework to track progress, assess impact, and measure outcomes related to senior digital inclusion efforts across member states is advised. Common indicators, benchmarks, and reporting mechanisms should be established to ensure accountability, transparency, and evidence-based policymaking at the EU level.

7. Cross-sectoral collaboration for senior digital inclusion: Promoting cross-sectoral collaboration and partnership building among relevant stakeholders to advance senior digital inclusion objectives is recommended. Collaboration between government agencies, educational institutions, NGOs, industry partners, and community organizations should be encouraged to

leverage resources, expertise, and networks in supporting older adults' digital literacy and skills development.

8. EU advocacy and awareness campaigns: Launching EU advocacy and awareness campaigns to raise visibility and promote understanding of the importance of senior digital inclusion is advised. Policymakers, stakeholders, and the public should be engaged through targeted communication strategies, events, and initiatives to mobilize support, drive action, and foster a culture of digital inclusion for older adults across Europe.

SHARING BEST PRACTICES AND RESOURCES

1. EU Knowledge Sharing Platform: A centralized EU Knowledge Sharing Platform should be established, dedicated to sharing best practices, resources, and insights on digital inclusion initiatives for seniors. This platform would serve as a repository of information, case studies, toolkits, and guidelines, accessible to policymakers, practitioners, researchers, and stakeholders across member states.

2. EU networking events and conferences: The organization of EU networking events, conferences, and workshops focused on senior digital inclusion is recommended. These events would bring together stakeholders from diverse sectors and member states, providing opportunities for knowledge exchange, peer learning, and collaboration on innovative approaches and effective strategies.

3. EU online communities of practice: Establishing EU online communities of practice dedicated to senior digital inclusion is suggested. These virtual communities would provide a platform for ongoing collaboration, discussion, and knowledge sharing among stakeholders, allowing members to connect, exchange ideas, and access resources, thereby fostering a culture of learning and innovation.

4. EU Clearinghouse for Resources: The creation of an EU Clearinghouse for Resources on senior digital inclusion is recommended. This clearinghouse would curate a comprehensive collection of tools, publications, training materials, and good practice examples, serving as a one-stop shop for stakeholders seeking guidance, inspiration, and practical resources to support their digital inclusion efforts for older adults.

5. EU peer learning networks: The development of EU peer learning networks focused on specific aspects of senior digital inclusion, such as digital literacy training, access to technology, or online community engagement, should be fostered. These networks would provide opportunities for practitioners to connect, collaborate, and share experiences, promoting mutual learning and continuous improvement.

6. EU funding for knowledge sharing initiatives: Allocating EU funding to support knowledge sharing initiatives and capacity-building activities focused on senior digital inclusion is advised. Grants, fellowships, and scholarships should be provided to facilitate participation in networking events, study visits, and online communities of practice, ensuring broad access to learning opportunities for stakeholders across member states.

7. EU Recognition and Awards Programme: An EU Recognition and Awards Programme should be established to celebrate and showcase exemplary practices and innovations in senior

digital inclusion. This program would recognize individuals, organizations, and projects that have demonstrated outstanding contributions to advancing digital literacy, skills development, and access for older adults, thereby inspiring others and driving positive change across Europe.

FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

1. EU Digital Education Fund: The creation of an EU Digital Education Fund is proposed to support the development and implementation of vlogging training programs across member states. This fund could provide financial assistance for program design, curriculum development, trainer certification, and participant scholarships.

2. Matching grants: Introducing matching grant programs at the EU level to incentivize collaboration and investment from national governments, educational institutions, NGOs, and private sector partners in vlogging training initiatives for seniors is recommended. Matching funds should be offered to supplement contributions from other sources and maximize the impact of digital skills development efforts.

3. Competitive grant opportunities: Establishing competitive grant opportunities within existing EU funding programs, such as Horizon Europe or the Digital Europe Programme, to support innovative vlogging training projects for seniors is suggested. Applicants should be encouraged to develop proposals that demonstrate creativity, scalability, and potential for sustainable impact.

4. Public-private partnerships: Encouraging public-private partnerships (PPPs) to leverage resources and expertise from both sectors in funding vlogging training programs for seniors is advised. Collaboration between EU institutions, national governments, corporate sponsors, philanthropic organizations, and technology companies should be facilitated to pool resources and support digital skills development initiatives.

5. Social impact investment: Exploring opportunities for social impact investment in vlogging training programs for seniors is recommended. Private capital should be leveraged to address social challenges while generating financial returns. Impact investors, venture philanthropists, and social finance institutions should be encouraged to invest in innovative models that combine social impact with financial sustainability.

CONCLUSION

RECAP OF KEY FINDINGS

In summary, the SeniorVlog pilot training programmes conducted in Cyprus, Greece, Italy, Poland, and Portugal highlighted the following insights:

Common Challenges:

- **Declining attendance:** All programmes experienced a gradual decrease in participant attendance throughout the course.

- **Mixed skill levels:** Participants possessed varying levels of digital literacy and prior experience with vlogging.
- **Course length:** Feedback from some participants suggested a desire for a longer programme duration.
- **Meeting expectations:** Aligning programme content with participant expectations (e.g., basic digital literacy vs. advanced vlogging techniques) proved to be a challenge.

Positive outcomes:

- **Improved confidence:** Participants across all programmes reported feeling more confident using the internet and social media after completing the training.
- **Enhanced vlogging skills:** Regardless of the programme length, participants noted improvements in their vlogging skills, particularly regarding equipment knowledge.
- **Individual mentorship:** Individual mentorship sessions were consistently viewed as valuable by participants.
- **Potential for vlogging content:** Trainers recognized the wealth of knowledge and life experiences possessed by senior participants, highlighting the potential for engaging vlogs.

SUMMARY OF EU-LEVEL RECOMMENDATIONS

Drawing upon insights gained from pilot trainings conducted in Cyprus, Greece, Italy, Poland, and Portugal, these EU-level recommendations aim to bolster evidence-based decision-making, scalability, policy advocacy, knowledge sharing, and accountability within the project and across the broader EU landscape.

1. Cross-country collaboration

- **Cross-border learning exchanges:** The EU should facilitate learning exchanges for vlogging training across member states.
- **EU funding for collaborative projects:** EU funding opportunities should be promoted to support collaborative projects.
- **EU policy platforms:** Establishing policy platforms for collaboration is recommended.
- **Cross-country research and evaluation:** Supporting research and evaluation initiatives across countries is advised.
- **Peer learning networks:** The creation of peer learning networks should be facilitated.
- **Capacity-building initiatives:** Investment in capacity-building initiatives is essential.

2. Supporting policy frameworks

- **EU Digital Inclusion Strategy for seniors:** An EU Digital Inclusion Strategy targeting seniors should be developed.

- **Integration into EU Policy Agendas:** Senior digital inclusion should be integrated into existing EU policy agendas.
- **Prioritizing funding:** Funding allocations within EU programmes should prioritize senior digital inclusion.
- **Policy coordination mechanisms:** Establishing coordination mechanisms is necessary to ensure coherence across member states.
- **Policy guidance and support:** Providing policy guidance and support to member states is recommended.
- **Monitoring and evaluation framework:** Developing a monitoring and evaluation framework is crucial.
- **Cross-sectoral collaboration:** Promoting collaboration among stakeholders is advised.
- **Advocacy and awareness campaigns:** Launching campaigns to raise awareness of senior digital inclusion is recommended.

3. Sharing best practices and resources

- **Knowledge Sharing Platform:** An EU Knowledge Sharing Platform should be established.
- **Networking events and conferences:** Organizing networking events and conferences is advised.
- **Online communities of practice:** Creating online communities of practice is recommended.
- **Clearinghouse for resources:** Developing a clearinghouse for resources is essential.
- **Peer learning networks:** Fostering peer learning networks should be prioritized.
- **Funding for knowledge sharing:** Allocating funding for knowledge sharing initiatives is necessary.
- **Recognition and awards programme:** Establishing a recognition and awards programme is advised.

4. Funding opportunities:

- **Digital Education Fund:** The creation of a Digital Education Fund is recommended.
- **Matching grants:** Introducing matching grants to incentivize investment is advised.
- **Competitive grants:** Establishing competitive grant opportunities should be prioritized.
- **Public-private partnerships:** Encouraging public-private partnerships is essential.
- **Social impact investment:** Exploring opportunities for social impact investment is recommended.

FUTURE OUTLOOK

The future of senior vlogging and digital literacy in the EU is promising, driven by several key trends:

1. Growing senior population: The EU's senior population is projected to continue growing, with a rising number of individuals over 65 years old. This demographic shift will lead to an increased demand for programmes that cater to their unique needs and interests.

2. Evolving technology: Advancements in technology will make vlogging and digital tools more user-friendly and accessible for seniors. AI-powered interfaces, voice commands, and simplified platforms can lower the barrier to entry for digital novices.

3. Intergenerational connections: Intergenerational learning initiatives can play a crucial role in enabling seniors to learn from younger generations familiar with digital tools. This can foster closer family bonds and provide valuable support for seniors venturing into the digital world.

4. Social impact of vlogging: Senior vlogging has the potential to combat social isolation, promote mental well-being, and empower seniors to share their unique experiences and perspectives with a wider audience. Vlogging can also serve as a valuable tool for advocacy and raising awareness about issues affecting seniors.

5. Evolving programme design: The training programmes will likely move towards a more blended learning approach, combining online modules with in-person sessions for hands-on practice and social interaction. Additionally, programmes will likely become more personalized, catering to individual skill levels and learning styles.

Challenges remain:

- **Bridging the digital divide:** Ensuring equitable access to technology and affordable internet plans for low-income seniors remains a challenge.
- **Digital literacy skills gap:** Addressing the varying levels of digital literacy among seniors will require ongoing efforts to bridge the digital knowledge gap.
- **Combating ageism:** Shifting societal perceptions around technology and promoting its benefits for older adults will be crucial for wider programme adoption.

Overall, the future of senior vlogging and digital literacy in the EU is bright. By embracing technological advancements, fostering intergenerational collaboration, and promoting inclusive programme design, the EU can empower older adults to participate fully in the digital age and unlock the vast potential of vlogging for personal growth, social connection, and meaningful self-expression.

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