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EVENT DISSEMINATION REPORT

Name				
Activity	Location (Place, City)	Date	Target Audience	Participants reached
Final report for the pre-evaluation and need assessment of digital literacies	Online meeting	29 January 2024	Internal Meeting of Steering Committee	All project partners / Steering Committee
Dissemination Event <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Communication Event <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>			
<p>Brief description of the event:</p> <p>Project partner SCiDEV finalizes the Digital Needs Assessment within the U2SID project. The team presented to the project partners, the findings and the data gathered from students, lecturers, and stakeholders during a two-month assessment period. The findings were compiled in a final report with recommendations which will soon be published on website and social media.</p> <p>The objective of the Digital Needs Assessment was to conduct an evaluation of the current state of digital literacies among lecturers and students in 4 partner universities of the U2SID project namely: University of Shkodra “Luigj Gurakuqi”, University of Korça “Fan S. Noli”, Mediterranean University of Albania, and University of Montenegro. The final report identified the gaps in knowledge, skills and infrastructure that hinder the effective use of digital tools and resources in teaching and learning environments in the universities involved in this project in Albania and Montenegro. The study also included the perspective of stakeholders who are impacted by the digital literacies of lecturers and students that include administrative staff, IT personnel, policy makers and employers. Their input was important to provide an understanding of digital literacies needs, expectations and the potential barriers to implementing digital literacies programs.</p> <p>This report will inform with evidence the future activities to be implemented by the project partners such as the Digital Literacies Accelerator Programme and the Digital Transformation Challenge. SCiDEV methodology included both quantitative and qualitative data collection methods, harmonizing them to draw a reliable picture of the digital literacies needs and gaps. The online questionnaire as the main quantitative method gathered data from 705 students and 199 lecturers where they self-reported their competencies in digital literacies, their habitual use of digital resources, their preferences for certain technologies and their perceived needs for further support and development.</p>				





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The qualitative approach was accomplished through structured focus groups discussions, where they revealed the personal experiences, contextual factors that shape individuals engagement with digital tools and resources. The qualitative approach conducted by all 4 partner universities had in focus students, lecturers and stakeholders with a total of 12 focus groups and 146 participants.

Some of the key findings from the online survey and the 12 focus group conducted during two month period November-December 2023 as shown below encompass the needs of the target groups in 4 partner universities.

Students : Students are most interested in improving Digital Creation (16 %) and Basic Computer Skills (15%). Findings indicate a lack of awareness regarding accessible training opportunities, which constitutes the primary obstacle hindering student participation in Digital Literacies Training. The preferred format of training is Online Video Tutorials (48%), and In-Person Workshops (37%). Findings from Focus Groups show that face-to-face training is preferred over online training, but they show a preference for Online Video Tutorials.

Lecturers: More than half of lecturers (56%) mention that the main barrier to attending to attending Digital Literacy training the Insufficient training opportunities, while 30% lack time. Lecturers are open to all kinds of Digital Literacy Training (52% prefer Interactive Group Sessions, 43% Online Video Tutorials, 42% In-Person Workshops, 41% Live Online Classes/Courses) – multiple choice. Digital tools are used always in teaching by 18% of lecturers, 39% often, 33% sometimes, and so on.

Stakeholders: During the focus group discussions the stakeholders emphasize the Significant discrepancy between digital skills learnt from university and the ones required in the professional realm. There is a Disparity in digital skills across different academic levels. Stakeholders overall claim a lack of continued application leads to skills attrition over time.

Based on the key findings from the report, SCiDEV team of experts compiled some of the below recommendations, where they emphasize the need of a comprehensive and extensive intervention in the digital literacies university programs in the Western Balkans.

Enhancement of University Infrastructure – requirement to invest in technology infrastructure are important to the improvement of digital literacies of students.

Optimization of Online Library Access – enhancement of online library access and support to the students to increase their outputs relying on the wealth of information available to them.





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Strengthening of Digital Literacies Training – enhancement of academic performance, employability, and lifelong learning through comprehensive Digital Literacies Training through skills and competencies required to use technology effectively, critically, and ethically.

Curricular Adaption for the Digital Future – development of new curricula to provide education fit for the needs of the labor market and the ever-evolving digital landscape.

Continuous Engagement and Development – foster continuous engagement and regularly review and enhance collaborative programs with students – lecturers – stakeholders.

The Final Report for the Pre-Evaluation and Need Assessment of Digital Literacies gives valuable insight in the current landscape of digital literacies in the four partner universities in Albania and Montenegro. The emerging consensus points towards a need for enhanced IT and digital infrastructure, face-to-face digital literacies training, and collaborative efforts across various sectors. The published report will be pivotal in shaping the strategies and initiatives of the Digital Literacies Accelerator Programme and the Digital Transformation Challenge.

Evidence (social media links, websites, press reports, photo/video links)





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Students - Key Findings (II)

- Students are most interested in improving **Digital Creation (16%)** and **Basic Computer Skills (15%)**.
- The preferred format of training is **Online Video Tutorials (48%)**, and **In-Person Workshops (37%)**. Findings from Focus Groups show that face-to-face training is preferred over online training, but they show a preference for Online Video Tutorials.
- The findings indicate that a **lack of awareness regarding accessible training opportunities** constitutes the primary obstacle hindering student participation in Digital Literacy Training.
- About **15%** of students would like training to be at the **expert level**, **32% Comprehensive**, **35% Intermediate level**, and **18%** just to have a **basic understanding**.
- About **45%** of students would prefer training to be **at least once a week**.

Conclusion and Recommendations

Students

- Formalization of Communication
- Enhancement of University Infrastructure
- Optimization of Online Library Access
- Adoption of modern teaching methods
- Strengthening of Digital Literacies Training
- 6. Curricular Adaptation for the Digital Future: Integrate digital tools into the curriculum to align educational programs with the demands of the evolving digital landscape.

Lecturers

- Improved technology infrastructure (new computers, improved network, Access to WiFi, etc.)
- Enhancement of University Infrastructure
- Access to Online Libraries
- Institutional strategic framework on digital literacies
- Curricula and trainings on digital literacies
- Standardized tools and platforms at the university level.
- Erasmus+ knowledge sharing.
- Ensuring a flexible legal framework.
- Privacy and Security Training

