LINKING SENIORS TO DIGITAL MEDIA
LITERACY, DEMOCRACY AND DIVERSITY

PROGRAM IMPACT MEASUREMENT

Co-funded by
the European Union

Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA). Neither the European Union nor EACEA can be held responsible for them.

LINK PROJECT CONSORTIUM

Associação Animam Viventem
Project coordinator | Cascais, Portugal

Freguesia de Cascais e Estoril
Partner | Cascais, Portugal

Sinergia Società Cooperativa Sociale
Partner | Bitonto, Italy

Adi & Salus Sersoc SL
Partner | Almendralejo, Spain

Fundacja Pro Scientia Publica
Partner | Wrocław, Poland

Contact information Project Coordinator:
Associação Animam Viventem
Contact Person: Ms. Inês Gomes Calado
Email: animam.viventem@gmail.com

Legal Notice
This publication is a document prepared by the Consortium. It aims to provide practical support to the project implementation process. The output expressed does not imply scientific, pedagogical, or academic positions of the current consortium. Neither the partners nor any person acting on behalf of the Consortium is responsible for the use which might be made of this publication.

Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA). Neither the European Union nor EACEA can be held responsible for them.

Project Reference n. 2021-1-PT01-KA220-ADU-000026060

Document available through the Internet, free of charge and under open licenses.

2023 | Consortium of LINK Project

INDEX

04 | Global Impact Assessment Report

19 | Impact Measurement Toolkit

26 | Annex I - Pilot Implementation Reports - Portugal | Italy | Poland | Spain

GLOBAL IMPACT MEASUREMENT REPORT

INTRODUCTION

This document aims to present a Global Impact Report on the pilot implementation of the LINK Program in four countries: Portugal, Italy, Spain, and Poland. It serves as a comprehensive overview of the pilot phase, offering insights into its effects and impact. Additionally, it provides valuable guidelines and tools for multipliers, that can be easily adapted to be used in future implementations.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY: KEY FINDINGS AND HIGHLIGHTS

This impact measurement report evaluates the effectiveness of the LINK Program, an educational initiative tailored for the senior population. The Program was implemented as as a pilot project in Portugal (Associação Animam Viventem and Freguesia de Cascais e Estoril), Poland (Fundacja Pro Scientia Publica), Italy (Sinergia) and Spain (Adiper). The primary goal was to promote digital literacy and conscious participation in democratic life, with a specific focus on addressing the impact of online disinformation on democracy and the electoral process. Additionally, the program aimed to strengthen knowledge and foster the sharing of European Union values among older adults.

Quantitative and qualitative methodologies were employed to measure the impact of the LINK Program. Through pre- and post-program assessments, interviews, and focus groups, the analysis concentrated on key aspects such as "Digital Media Literacy" and "EU & Democracy."

The data analysis showcased significant positive changes in participant responses, demonstrating improvements in digital literacy, critical thinking, and active engagement. The program's impact extended beyond skill development, highlighting a transformative shift in attitudes towards digital media and a deeper understanding of democratic principles.

The program successfully achieved its goal of fostering a more digitally competent and conscious senior population. The impact assessment highlighted adaptability, flexibility, and the creation of safe learning environments as pivotal factors. Participants not only enhanced their digital literacy skills but also exhibited heightened awareness of the democratic process and European Union values.

Identified challenges included a technical knowledge gap and initial resistance, which were effectively addressed through tailored strategies. Key lessons emphasized the importance of adaptability, creating safe learning spaces, and the efficacy of a gamified approach to enhance engagement and motivation.

Derived from the LINK Program experiences, recommendations for future action include flexible delivery methods, gamified approaches, targeted awareness campaigns, fostering safe learning environments, ensuring basic technical understanding, real-case discussions, interactive learning, and scaling successful aspects.

In conclusion, the LINK Program successfully achieved its overarching goal of promoting digital literacy and conscious democratic participation among seniors. The impact assessment reinforces the transformative influence of the program, creating a digitally empowered senior population actively contributing to democratic processes and sharing European Union values.

METHODOLOGY

The Impact Measurement of the LINK Program pilot implementation was conducted with a diverse group of 51 participants, ranging in age from 56 to 85, representing four countries: Portugal (16), Poland (15), Italy (10), and Spain (10). To comprehensively assess the program's impact, we employed a mixed-methods approach.

For quantitative data, we employed a tailored questionnaire focusing on "Digital Media Literacy" and "EU & Democracy.", we conducted a baseline assessment before LINK Program implementation and collected comparable data after its completion. Participants rated questions on a scale from 1 (totally disagree) to 5 (completely agree). The questionnaire was administered digitally through Google Forms. However, recognizing potential challenges some participants might face with online platforms, and to ensure inclusivity, an alternative option of a paper questionnaire was also made available.

Qualitative data was gathered through short interviews to participants conducted both during and after the LINK Program. Additionally, follow-up focus groups were organized post-implementation to gain further insights into the qualitative aspects of the impact.

This mixed-methods approach allowed us to capture both the quantitative changes in participant responses and the qualitative nuances of their experiences, providing a comprehensive understanding of the impact of the LINK Program.

The LINK Program's implementation was flexible, with each country adapting the program to suit its local reality and the unique characteristics of its senior learner population. This adaptability allowed for a tailored approach, accommodating the specific needs and preferences of each participating country. Variations between countries were observed, particularly concerning the number of sessions and the selection of activities from those available in the LINK Program, which also resulted in variations in the impact observed.

DATA ANALYSIS

This comprehensive data analysis encompasses responses from participants across all participating countries, providing a holistic understanding of the impact of the LINK Program on Digital Media Literacy.

Participants initially showed a moderate level of trust in the news on Facebook (average score of 2.8), but this significantly decreased after the intervention of the LINK Program, indicating a notable shift in their perception towards greater scepticism.

Initially, participants found it somewhat challenging to find reliable information (average score of 2.6). However, after the LINK Program, there was an improvement in their confidence, with the average score increasing to 3.1, indicating increased efficacy in navigating and identifying trustworthy information.

Participants demonstrated a moderate level of confidence in their ability to verify the truthfulness of news initially (average score of 3.0). After the LINK Program, there was a positive shift, with the average score increasing to 3.5, suggesting an enhancement in participants' skills related to fact-checking.

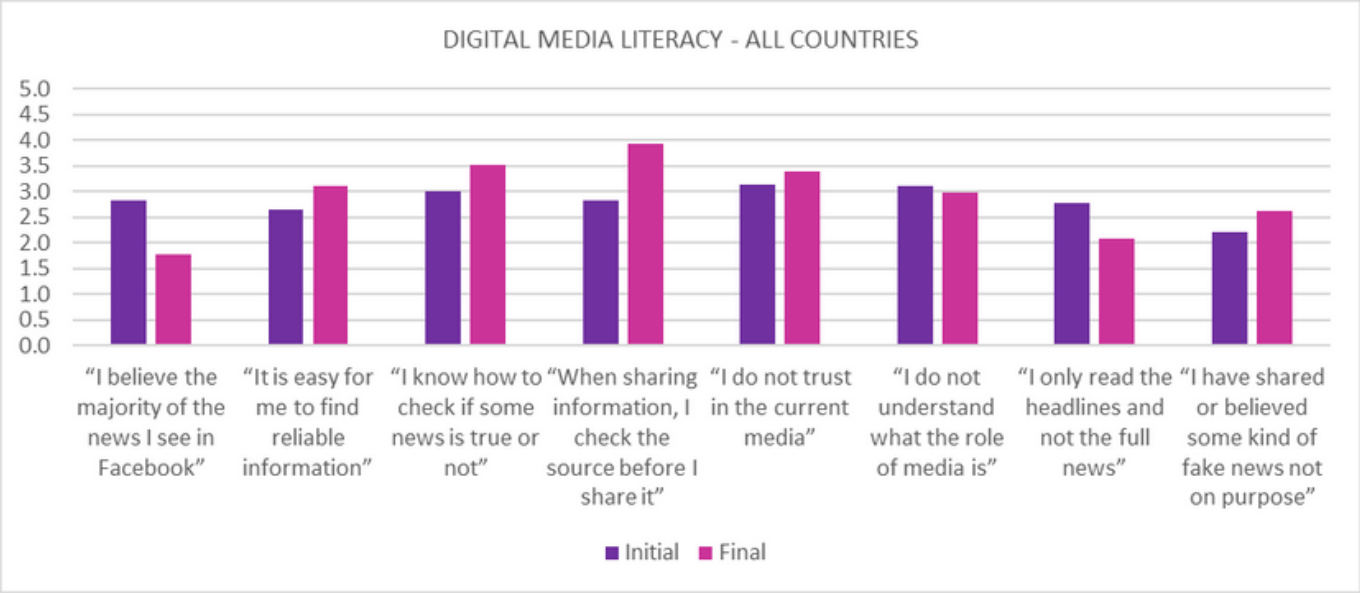
Participants exhibited a moderate inclination to check sources before sharing information initially (average score of 2.8). After the LINK Program, there was a significant increase in this behaviour, with the average score rising to 3.9, indicating a heightened awareness of source verification.

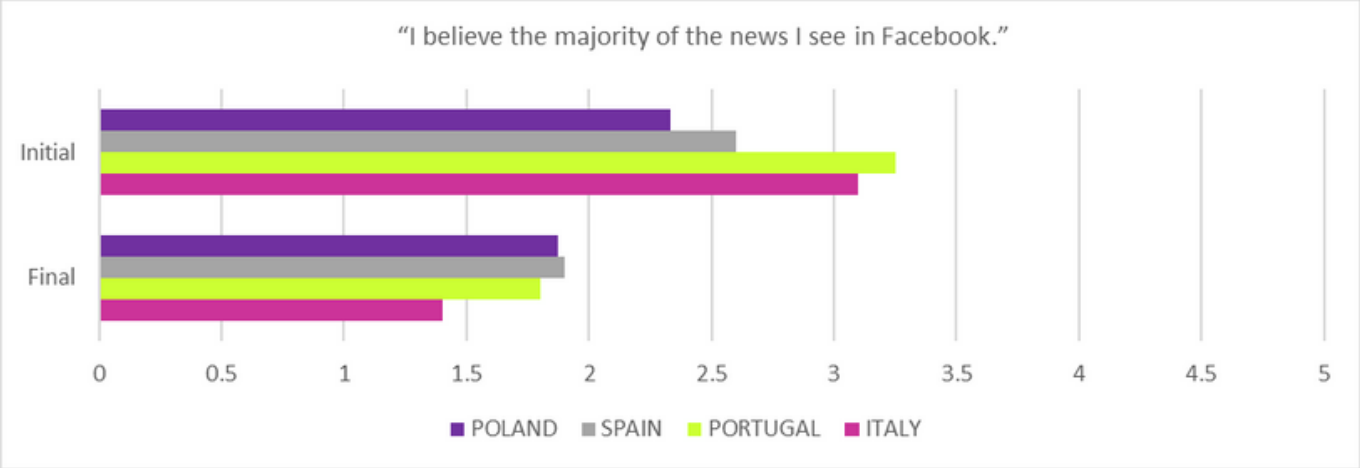
Initial trust in the current media was moderate (average score of 3.1). However, after the intervention, there was a slight increase in trust, with the average score reaching 3.4, suggesting a nuanced shift in participants' trust levels. Participants initially expressed some uncertainty about the role of the media (average score of 3.1). After the LINK Program, there was a slight improvement, with the average score decreasing to 3.0, indicating a modest gain in understanding.

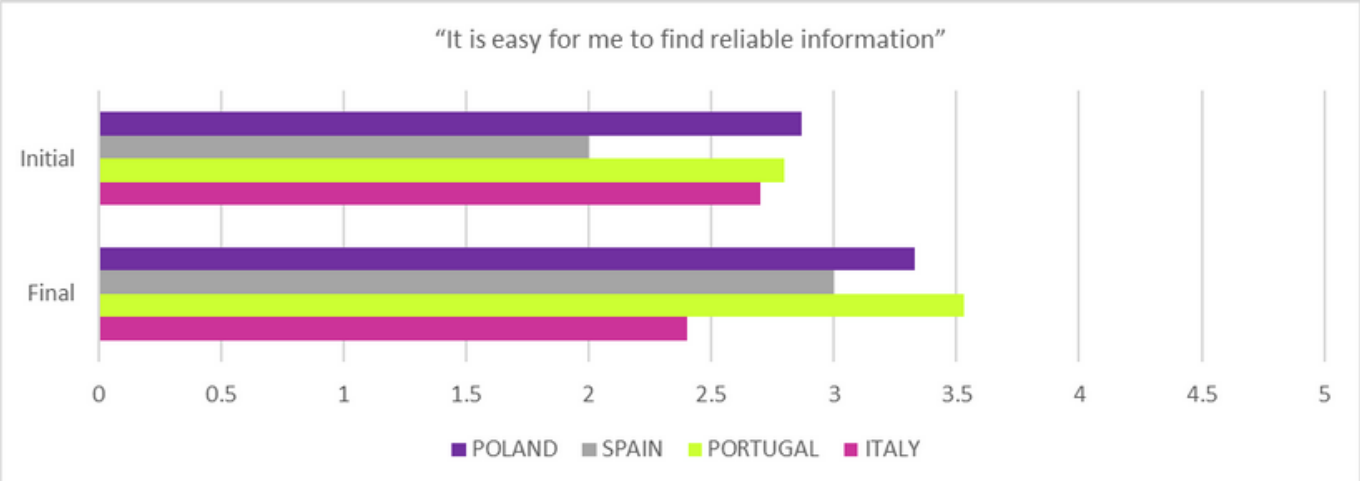
Initially, participants had a tendency to read only the headlines (average score of 2.8). After the LINK Program, there was a significant decrease in this behaviour, with the average score dropping to 2.1, highlighting an improvement in participants' engagement with full news content.

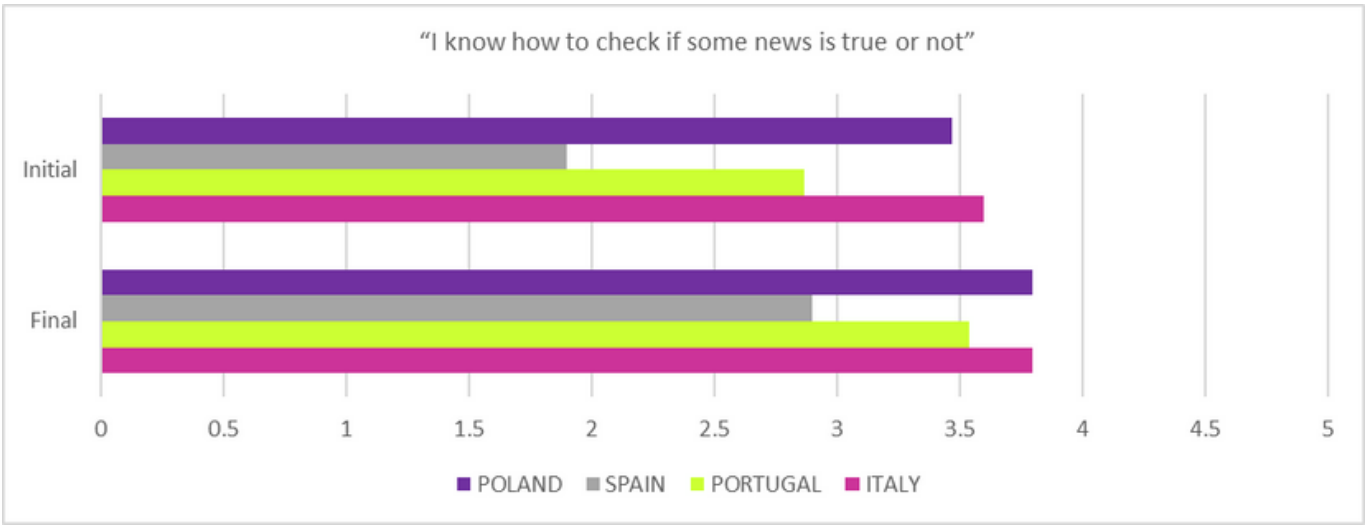
Initially, participants displayed a relatively low tendency to unintentionally share or believe fake news (average score of 2.2). However, after the LINK Program, there was a slight increase in this behaviour, with the average score reaching 2.6. It's important to note that this change could be attributed to the fact that participants, initially unaware of having shared or believed fake news, became more cognizant of their behaviours after the LINK implementation. This suggests an increased awareness and realization among participants regarding their engagement with misinformation. While the slight increase in the average score indicates a need for continued emphasis on discernment, the awareness gained through the program is a positive outcome, highlighting the importance of addressing participants' knowledge gaps and fostering critical thinking skills in the realm of digital media literacy.

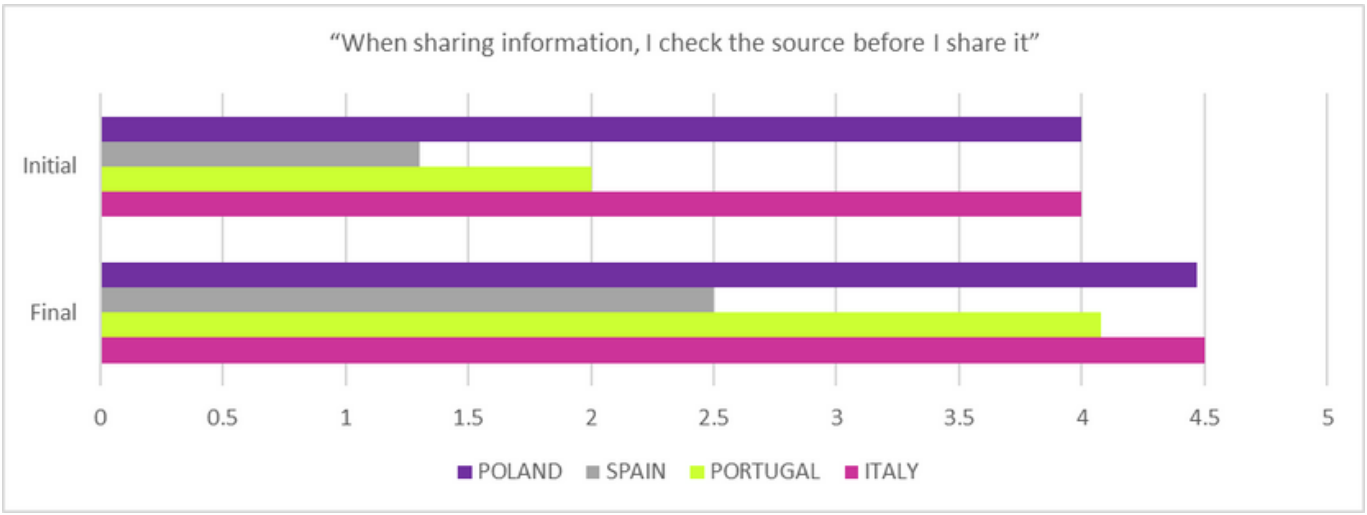
In summary, the LINK Program appears to have positively influenced participants' digital media literacy, with improvements observed in various aspects, including increased scepticism toward news on social media, enhanced skills in verifying information, a more critical approach to sharing information. However, there are nuances, and areas like understanding the role of media and unintentional sharing of fake news may require ongoing attention.

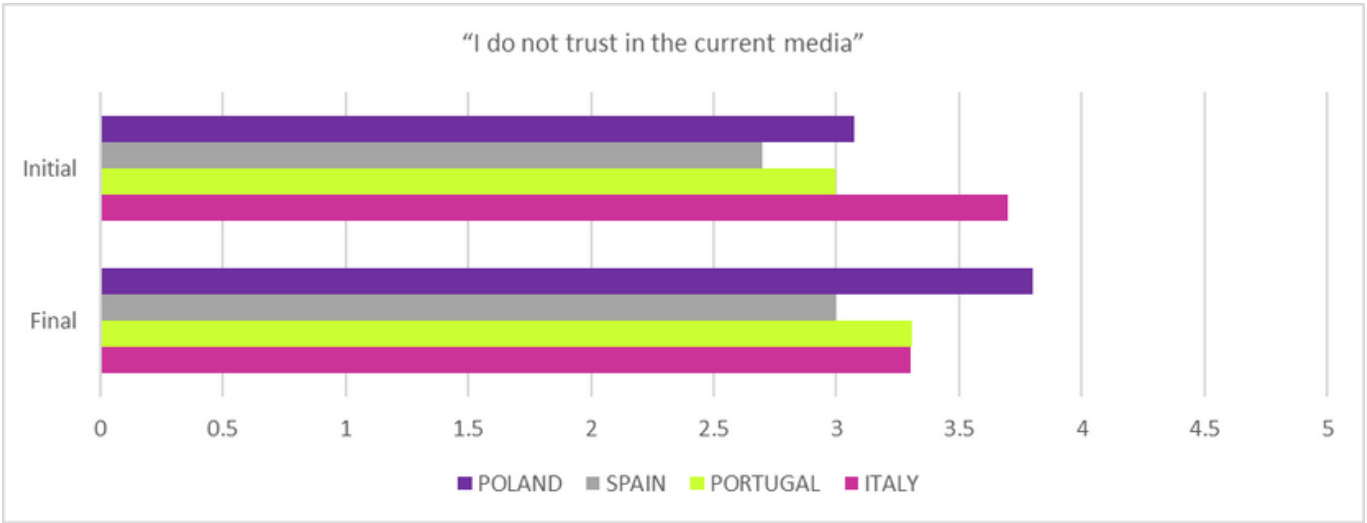

DIGITAL MEDIA LITERACY - ALL COUNTRIES
5.0
4.5
4.0
3.5
3.0
2.5
2.0
1.5
1.0
0.5
0.0
"I believe the majority of the news I see in Facebook"
"It is easy for me to find reliable information"
"I know how to check if some news is true or not"
"When sharing information, I check the source before I share it"
"I do not trust in the current media"
"I do not understand what the role of media is"
"I only read the headlines and not the full news"
"I have shared or believed some kind of fake news not on purpose"
Initial
Final

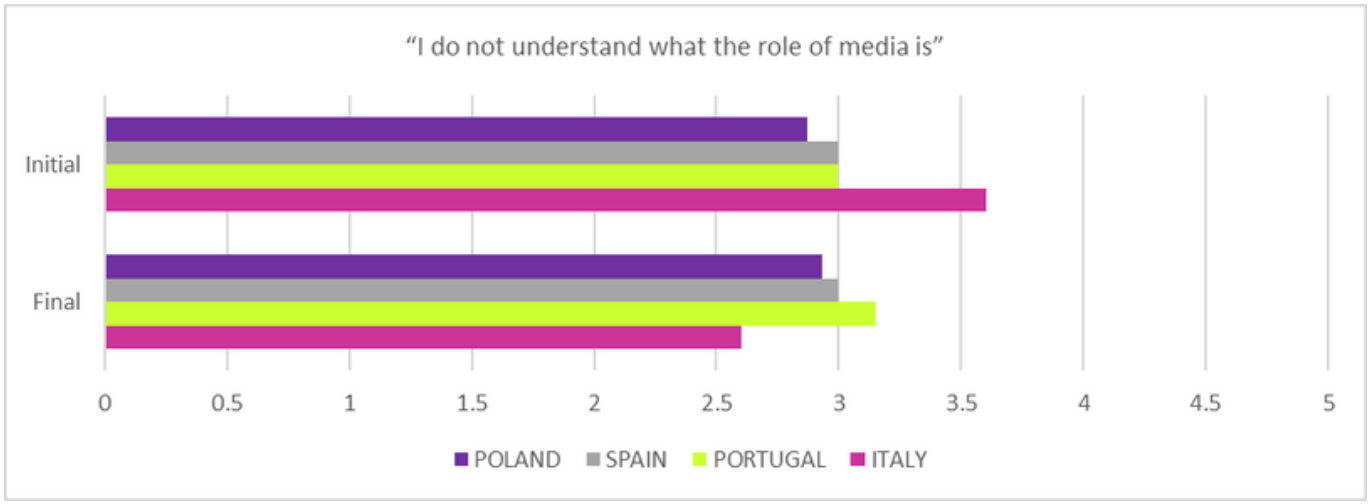

"I believe the majority of the news I see in Facebook."
Initial
Final
0
0.5
1
1.5
2
2.5
3
3.5
4
4.5
5
POLAND
SPAIN
PORTUGAL
ITALY

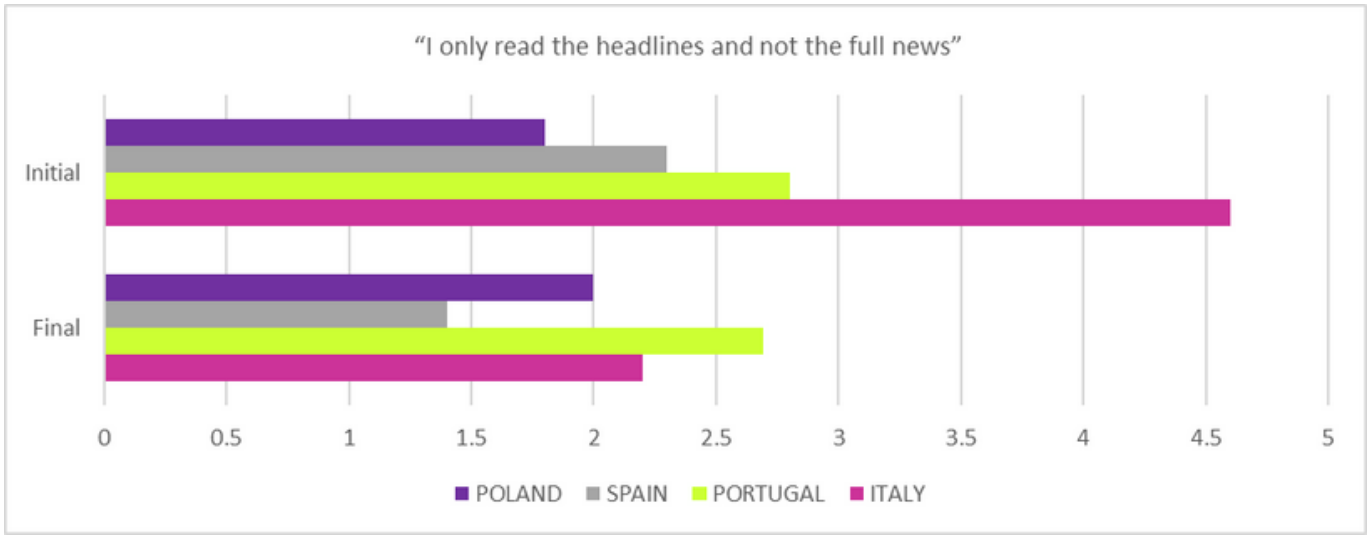

"It is easy for me to find reliable information"
Initial
Final
0
0.5
1
1.5
2
2.5
3
3.5
4
4.5
5
POLAND
SPAIN
PORTUGAL
ITALY

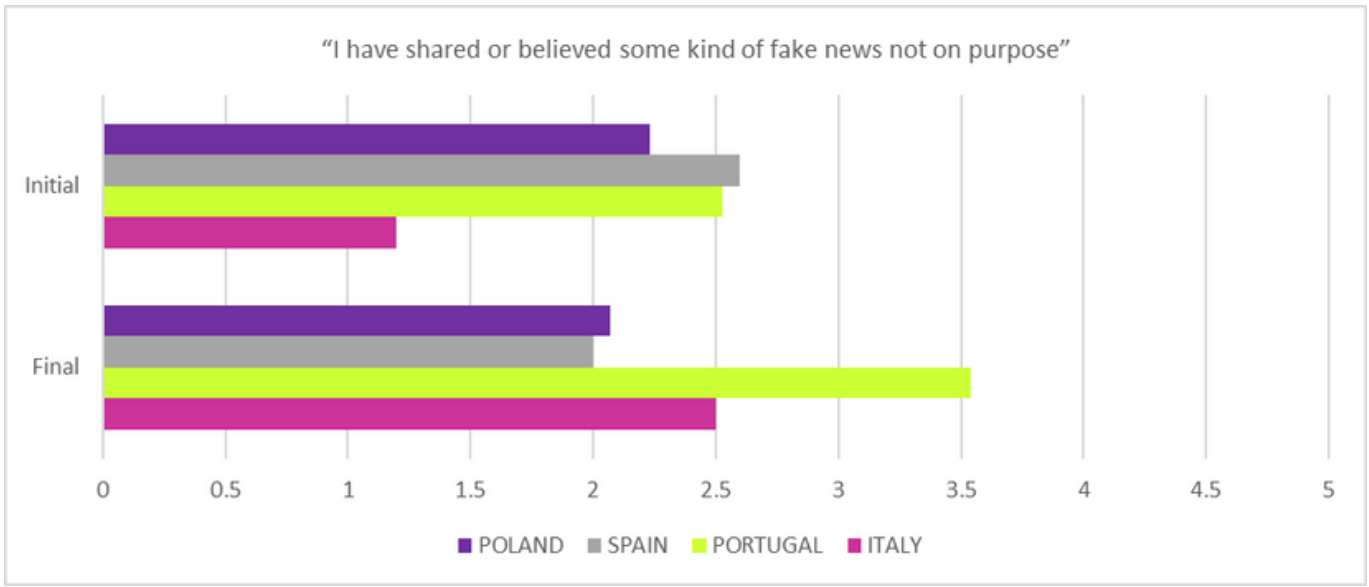

"I know how to check if some news is true or not"
Initial
Final
0
0.5
1
1.5
2
2.5
3
3.5
4
4.5
5
POLAND
SPAIN
PORTUGAL
ITALY


"When sharing information, I check the source before I share it"
Initial
Final
0
0.5
1
1.5
2
2.5
3
3.5
4
4.5
5
POLAND
SPAIN
PORTUGAL
ITALY


"I do not trust in the current media"
Initial
Final
0
0.5
1
1.5
2
2.5
3
3.5
4
4.5
5
POLAND
SPAIN
PORTUGAL
ITALY


"I do not understand what the role of media is"
Initial
Final
0
0.5
1
1.5
2
2.5
3
3.5
4
4.5
5
POLAND
SPAIN
PORTUGAL
ITALY


"I only read the headlines and not the full news"
Initial
Final
0
0.5
1
1.5
2
2.5
3
3.5
4
4.5
5
POLAND
SPAIN
PORTUGAL
ITALY


"I have shared or believed some kind of fake news not on purpose"
Initial
Final
0
0.5
1
1.5
2
2.5
3
3.5
4
4.5
5
POLAND
SPAIN
PORTUGAL
ITALY

This comprehensive data analysis encompasses responses from participants across all participating countries, providing a holistic understanding of the impact of the LINK Program on EU and Democracy.

Participants initially had a strong sense of European identity (average score of 4.7), and this slightly increased after the LINK Program to 4.9. This suggests that the program had a positive impact on participants' connection to a European identity, fostering a greater sense of belonging or identification with Europe.

Participants already strongly agreed with their country being part of the EU (average score of 4.7), and this agreement increased to a perfect score of 5.0 after the LINK Program. This indicates not only a high level of support for EU membership but also a potential reinforcement of this commitment through the program.

Participants demonstrated a moderate understanding of European institutional processes initially (average score of 3.4). After the LINK Program, there was a significant improvement to an average score of 4.0. This suggests that the program contributed to enhancing participants' awareness and knowledge of how European institutions operate.

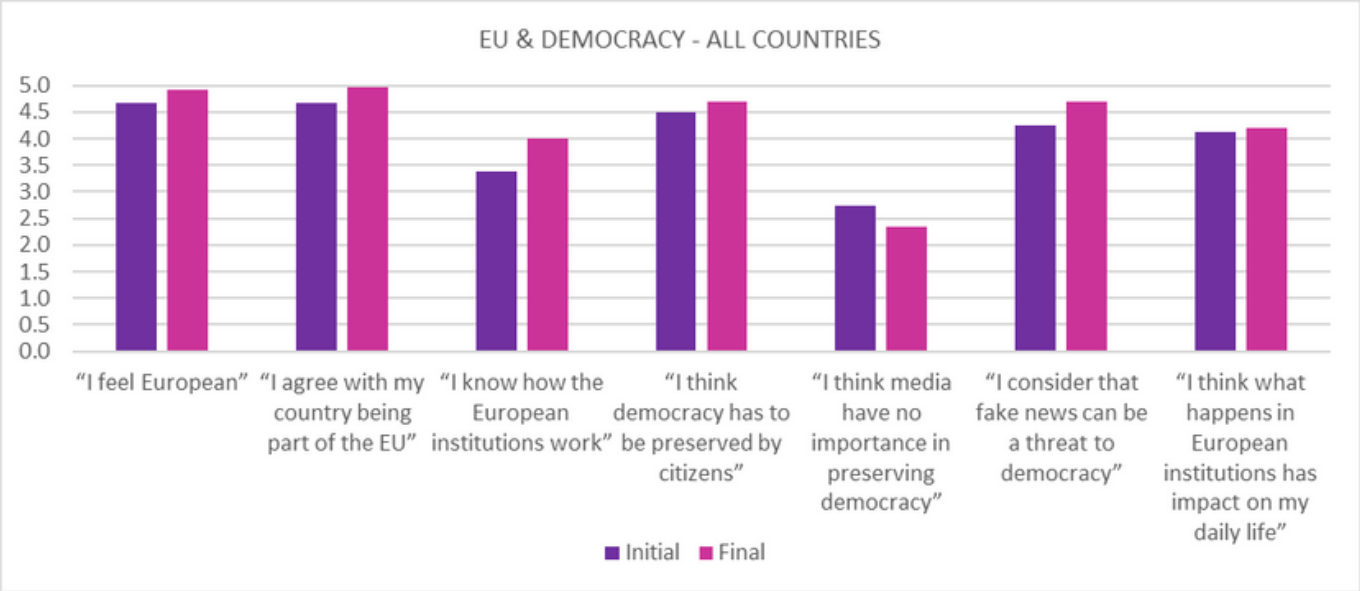
Participants strongly believed in citizens' responsibility to preserve democracy (average score of 4.5), and this commitment increased slightly to 4.7 after the LINK Program. This indicates that the program may have reinforced participants' conviction regarding the crucial role citizens play in preserving democratic values.

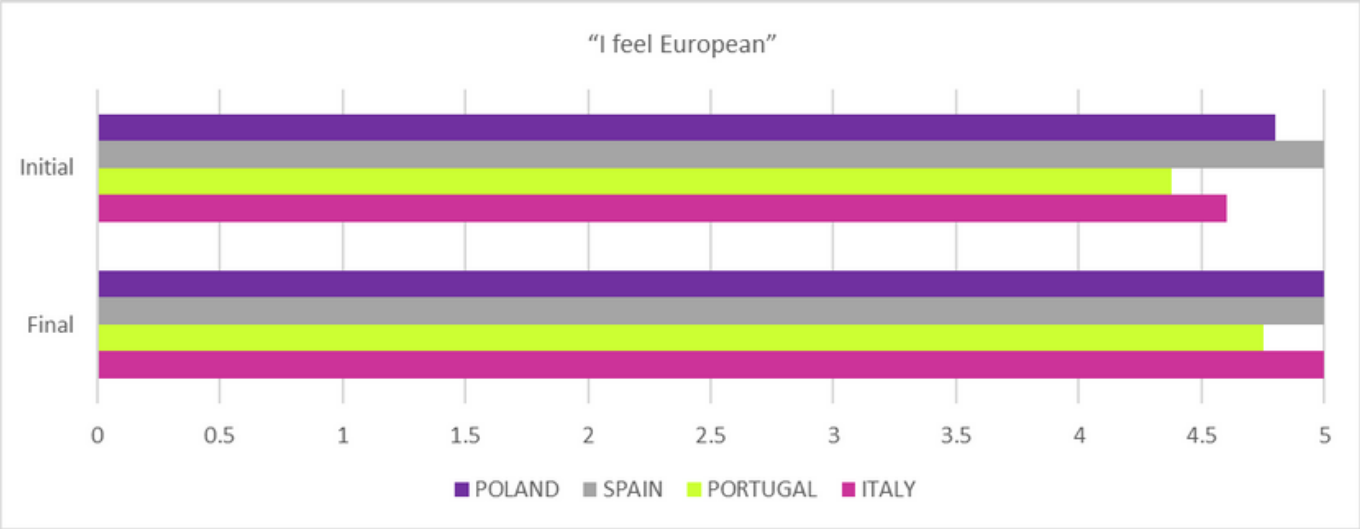
Initially, participants held a somewhat low opinion on the importance of media in preserving democracy (average score of 2.7). After the LINK Program, there was a decrease in this viewpoint to an average score of 2.4. This suggests a potential shift in perception, with participants recognizing the significance of media in democratic processes, possibly influenced by the program's content or discussions.

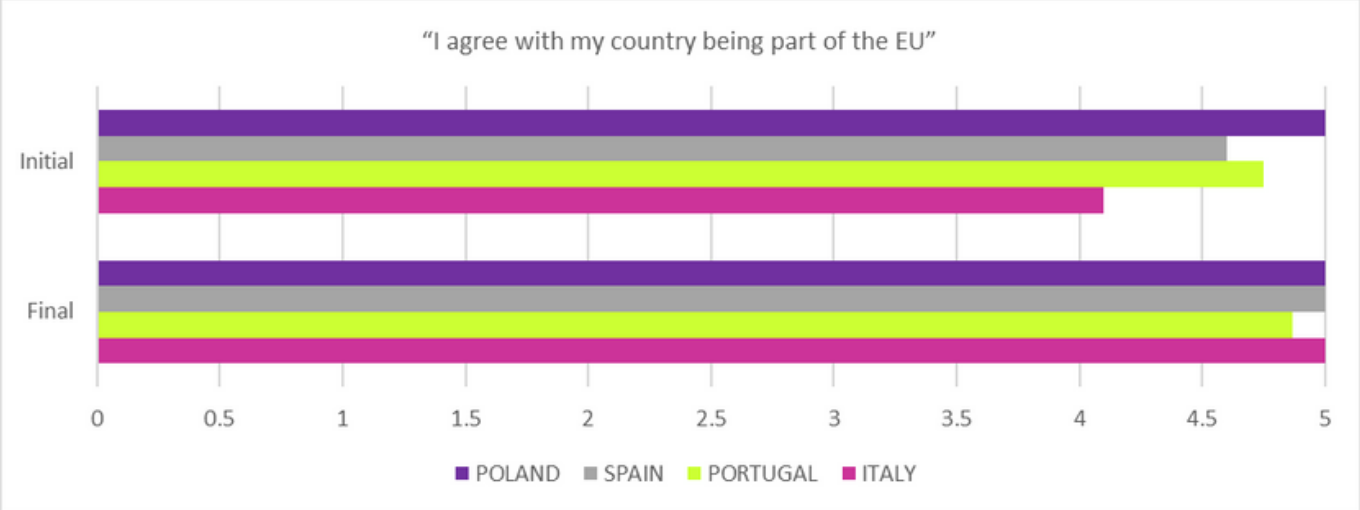
Participants acknowledged the threat of fake news to democracy (average score of 4.3), and this concern increased after the LINK Program to an average score of 4.7. This indicates an heightened awareness among participants about the potential negative impact of misinformation on democratic processes.

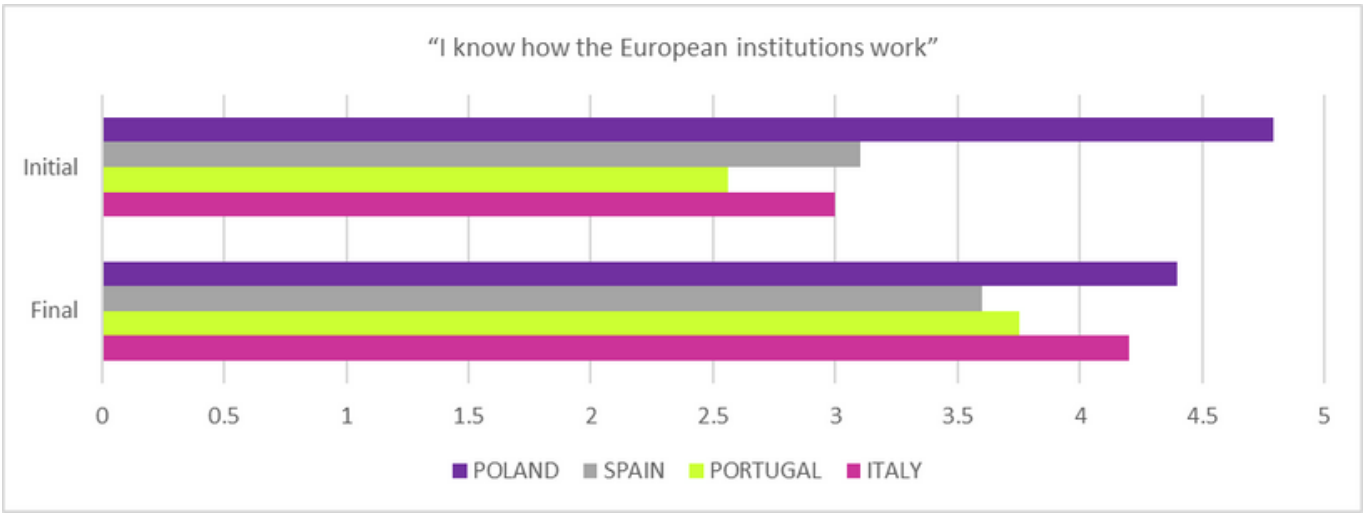
Participants initially recognized that events in European institutions have an impact on their daily lives (average score of 4.1), and this perception slightly increased to 4.2 after the LINK Program. This suggests a continued awareness among participants of the relevance of European institutions to their daily experiences, potentially influenced or reinforced by the program.

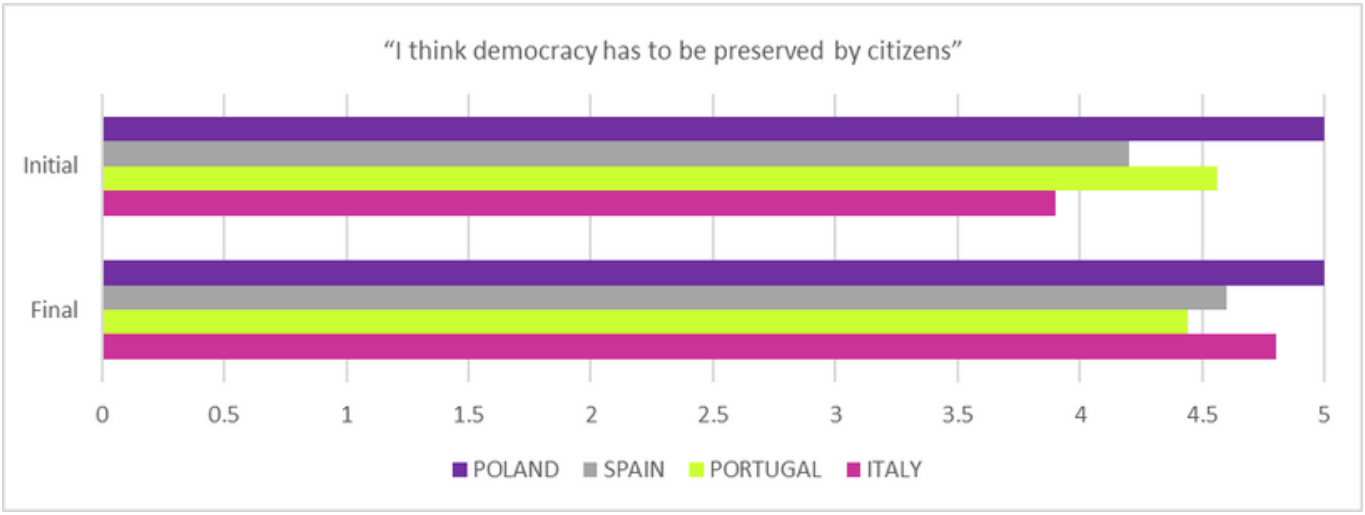
In summary, the data analysis reveals positive shifts in participants' perceptions related to "EU & Democracy" after the LINK Program. These shifts include strengthened European identity, increased understanding of European institutions, reinforced commitment to EU membership, and heightened awareness of the roles of citizens, media, and fake news in preserving democracy. The program appears to have positively influenced participants' attitudes and awareness regarding European matters and democratic processes.

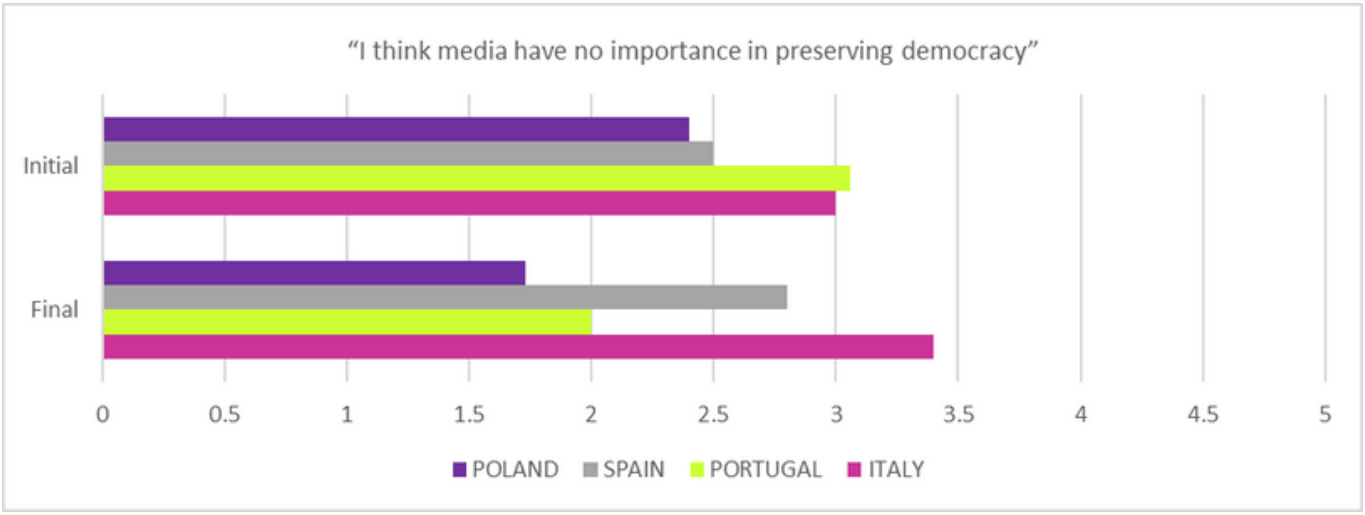

EU & DEMOCRACY - ALL COUNTRIES
5.0
4.5
4.0
3.5
3.0
2.5
2.0
1.5
1.0
0.5
0.0
"I feel European"
"I agree with my country being part of the EU"
"I know how the European institutions work"
"I think democracy has to be preserved by citizens"
"I think media have no importance in preserving democracy"
"I consider that fake news can be a threat to democracy"
"I think what happens in European institutions has impact on my daily life"
Initial
Final

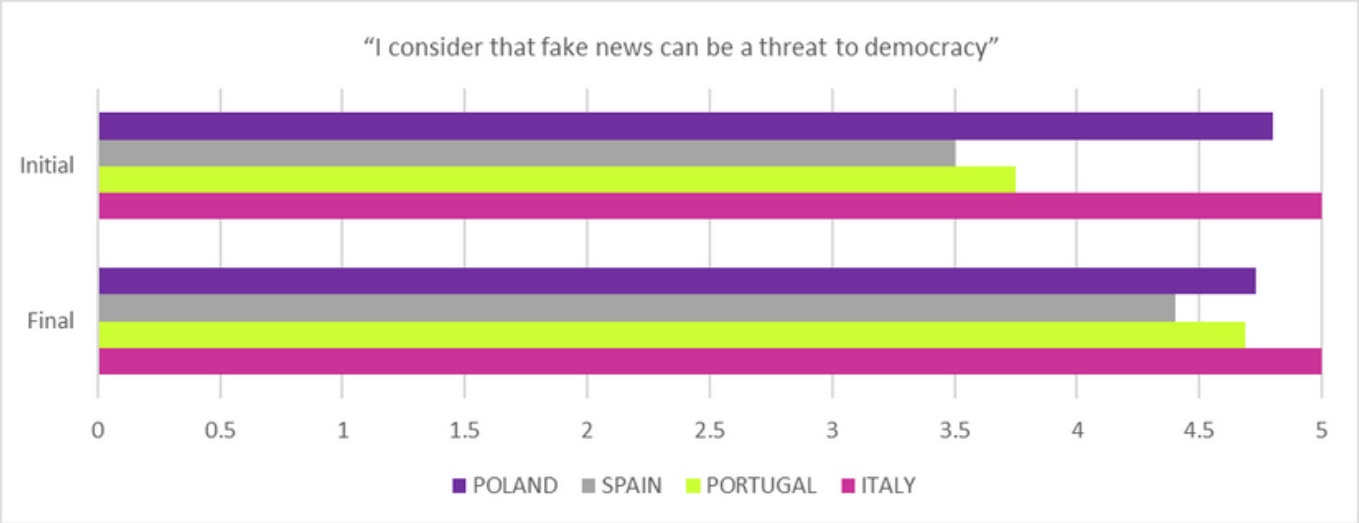

"I feel European"
Initial
Final
0
0.5
1
1.5
2
2.5
3
3.5
4
4.5
5
POLAND
SPAIN
PORTUGAL
ITALY

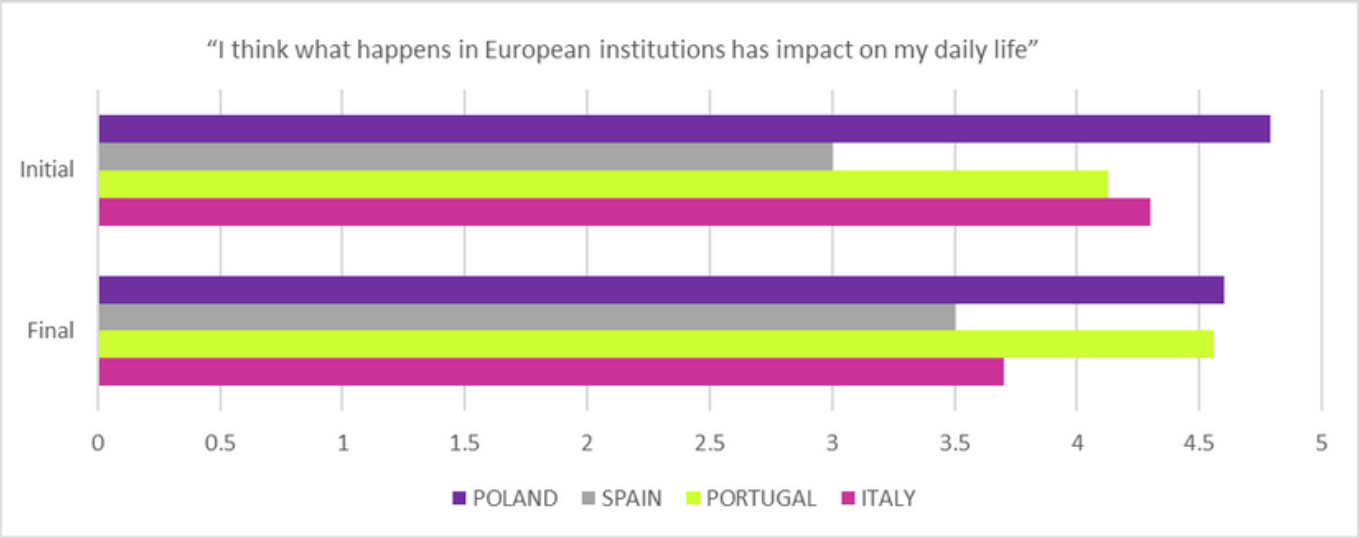

"I agree with my country being part of the EU"
Initial
Final
0
0.5
1
1.5
2
2.5
3
3.5
4
4.5
5
POLAND
SPAIN
PORTUGAL
ITALY


"I know how the European institutions work"
Initial
Final
0
0.5
1
1.5
2
2.5
3
3.5
4
4.5
5
POLAND
SPAIN
PORTUGAL
ITALY


"I think democracy has to be preserved by citizens"
Initial
Final
0
0.5
1
1.5
2
2.5
3
3.5
4
4.5
5
POLAND
SPAIN
PORTUGAL
ITALY


"I think media have no importance in preserving democracy"
Initial
Final
0
0.5
1
1.5
2
2.5
3
3.5
4
4.5
5
POLAND
SPAIN
PORTUGAL
ITALY


"I consider that fake news can be a threat to democracy"
Initial
Final
0
0.5
1
1.5
2
2.5
3
3.5
4
4.5
5
POLAND
SPAIN
PORTUGAL
ITALY


"I think what happens in European institutions has impact on my daily life"
Initial
Final
0
0.5
1
1.5
2
2.5
3
3.5
4
4.5
5
POLAND
SPAIN
PORTUGAL
ITALY

IMPACT ON TARGET GROUP

The data analysis of the LINK Program indicates a positive and transformative impact on the target group, senior learners. Across both "Digital Media Literacy" and "EU & Democracy" topics, the program has succeeded in achieving its objectives, fostering significant changes in the participants' attitudes, behaviours, and skills.

In terms of digital media literacy, participants have shown marked improvements in various aspects. The program has empowered seniors to navigate the digital landscape with increased confidence, evident in their improved ability to interact with online content and evaluate the credibility of information. The cultivation of critical thinking skills has become a cornerstone outcome, enabling participants to distinguish between fact and fiction, actively question information, and safeguard against cyber threats. This transformation is further reflected in the observed decrease in the tendency to unintentionally share or believe fake news, indicating a heightened awareness and discernment among participants.

Regarding the EU and democracy, the program has achieved notable success in fostering a connection to EU values and promoting active engagement in democratic processes. Participants have exhibited a strengthened European identity, an increased understanding of how European institutions work, and a reinforced commitment to their country's EU membership. The program has not only imparted knowledge but has also instilled a sense of responsibility among seniors, leading to active promotion and advocacy for EU values within their communities. The impact extends beyond awareness to active participation, with participants becoming influential contributors in the digital and democratic spheres.

In the short term, the program has resulted in increased digital awareness, enhanced confidence in using digital tools, and greater community involvement among seniors. These outcomes are indicative of the immediate positive changes in behaviour and mindset triggered by the LINK Program. As progresses to intermediate and long-term outcomes, the enduring impact is anticipated in informed voting behaviours, sustained active participation, and the lasting role of seniors as ambassadors of EU values.

In summary, the LINK Program has successfully achieved its goal of empowering older citizens to become digitally competent participants in democratic processes with a strong awareness of EU values. The impact is evident in the tangible improvements in digital literacy, critical thinking, and active engagement among the target group, contributing to a more robust and representative democratic society, actively promoting and defending the values of the European Union.

CHALLENGES AND LESSONS LEARNED

The lessons and recommendations outlined in this Impact Assessment Report are grounded in the experiences gained during the pilot implementation in Poland, Spain, Portugal, and Italy. These insights offer a comprehensive understanding of the challenges encountered throughout the LINK Project and present valuable opportunities to enhance the Program's effectiveness.

A crucial lesson derived from the implementation is the significance of adaptability and flexibility when working with older adults. It became evident that adjusting the program to align with the specific needs and abilities of the participants is essential for success.

Emphasizing the creation of a safe learning environment among participants emerged as another key aspect. This underscores the importance of incorporating activities that encourage interpersonal relations and social interaction, fostering a supportive atmosphere during sessions.

Addressing initial resistance from older participants about the perceived relevance of the program proved successful through the implementation of a "light" gamification-based approach. This approach substantially increased motivation and engagement among older participants. Additionally, the lack of awareness regarding the risks of social media and the impact of fake news underscored the need to raise awareness on these issues among participants.

Identifying the challenge posed by the gap in technical knowledge of social media emphasized the importance of ensuring a foundational understanding of technical functioning. This, in turn, enhances participation and comprehension among participants. Engaging in discussions and reflections on specific real cases, particularly those relevant to their local context, proved effective in addressing awareness gaps and enhancing understanding of critical issues, such as identifying fake news related to migrants and refugees.

Based on the lessons learned, the following recommendations are suggested: avoid traditional formal presentations, make sure participants have sufficient fundamental knowledge of social media usage, offer written support throughout the learning process, incorporate a gamified approach, and include activities that enhance personal and social competencies. Additionally, it is recommended to regularly review and summarize learning outcomes from previous learning sessions to strengthen retention. The arrangement of meetings with experts to provide additional information is very appreciated.

In conclusion, these lessons learned and recommendations have provided valuable insights for the continual improvement of the LINK Program. By ensuring its adaptability and effectiveness in diverse communities, these insights contribute to the program's ongoing relevance and success.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE ACTION

In light of the insights gained from the LINK project, a myriad of recommendations and opportunities for future actions emerge, shaping the landscape for enhanced digital literacy initiatives for older adults.

Tailored Localized Projects: Future efforts will need to take a differentiated approach and tailor content to the unique structure of each local community. Projects that recognize the diversity of concerns and experiences and resonate closely with participants' daily lives foster deeper connections. Incorporating digital skills content in the context of a specific location makes the learning journey not only educational, but also deeply relevant and relatable.

Diversifying learning approaches: As the adult education landscape evolves, there is a need to move away from traditional methods. Future projects will benefit greatly from diversifying learning approaches. By introducing elements of gamification, hands-on activities, and discussions about real-world scenarios, you can not only keep participants engaged but also accommodate different learning preferences. Incorporating a variety of strategies ensures that the learning experience is dynamic, adaptable and engaging.

Community-centered initiatives: Based on the clear sense of community and togetherness observed in the LINK project, future efforts should prioritize community-centered approaches. Creating a supportive environment that encourages social interaction, shared experiences, and collaborative learning increases the overall effectiveness of your digital literacy program. Recognizing the inherent strengths of the community creates a positive atmosphere where participants feel connected, supported, and motivated to learn.

Intergenerational Learning Platform: By exploring innovative avenues, future projects can benefit from the success of intergenerational learning platforms. Facilitating interaction between older and younger generations opens unique channels for knowledge exchange. These platforms not only focus on digital literacy, but also build bridges between generations, promote mutual understanding and contribute to strengthening social cohesion. The interaction of experiences, perspectives and technical knowledge enriches the learning journey of everyone involved.

Fundamentally, these general ideas pave the way for future efforts that emphasize relevance, engagement, and inclusion. By fostering connections, leveraging diverse learning modalities, and recognizing the diverse dynamics within local communities, digital literacy programs for older adults can be transformative and sustainable initiatives.

CONCLUSIONS

In light of the insights gained from the LINK project, a myriad of recommendations and opportunities for future actions emerge, shaping the landscape for enhanced digital literacy initiatives for older adults.

Tailored Localized Projects: Future efforts will need to take a differentiated approach and tailor content to the unique structure of each local community. Projects that recognize the diversity of concerns and experiences and resonate closely with participants' daily lives foster deeper connections. Incorporating digital skills content in the context of a specific location makes the learning journey not only educational, but also deeply relevant and relatable.

Diversifying learning approaches: As the adult education landscape evolves, there is a need to move away from traditional methods. Future projects will benefit greatly from diversifying learning approaches. By introducing elements of gamification, hands-on activities, and discussions about real-world scenarios, you can not only keep participants engaged but also accommodate different learning preferences. Incorporating a variety of strategies ensures that the learning experience is dynamic, adaptable and engaging.

Community-centered initiatives: Based on the clear sense of community and togetherness observed in the LINK project, future efforts should prioritize community-centered approaches. Creating a supportive environment that encourages social interaction, shared experiences, and collaborative learning increases the overall effectiveness of your digital literacy program. Recognizing the inherent strengths of the community creates a positive atmosphere where participants feel connected, supported, and motivated to learn.

Intergenerational Learning Platform: By exploring innovative avenues, future projects can benefit from the success of intergenerational learning platforms. Facilitating interaction between older and younger generations opens unique channels for knowledge exchange. These platforms not only focus on digital literacy, but also build bridges between generations, promote mutual understanding and contribute to strengthening social cohesion. The interaction of experiences, perspectives and technical knowledge enriches the learning journey of everyone involved.

Fundamentally, these general ideas pave the way for future efforts that emphasize relevance, engagement, and inclusion. By fostering connections, leveraging diverse learning modalities, and recognizing the diverse dynamics within local communities, digital literacy programs for older adults can be transformative and sustainable initiatives.

IMPACT MEASUREMENT TOOLKIT

INTRODUCTION

The LINK Program Impact Measurement Toolkit serves as a strategic framework designed to systematically assess and evaluate the effectiveness of our educational initiative tailored for the senior population.

This comprehensive toolkit comprises a set of purposeful instruments carefully crafted to measure both quantitative and qualitative aspects of the program's impact.

In alignment with the program's primary goal of promoting digital literacy and fostering conscious participation in democratic life among older adults, these tools aim to capture valuable insights into changes in knowledge, attitudes, and behaviours. From pre and post-program questionnaires gauging immediate impacts to long-term surveys tracking sustained changes, each tool contributes to a holistic understanding of the LINK Program's influence. Additionally, tools such as focus group discussion guides and observation checklists provide avenues for qualitative exploration, enriching our comprehension of participants' experiences. By utilizing this toolkit, we not only seek to quantify the success of the LINK Program but also strive to continually refine and enhance our educational strategies for the benefit of our senior learners.

We recognize the diverse landscapes and unique characteristics of the communities in which the LINK Program can be implemented, as well as the distinct needs and preferences of senior learners. With this understanding, we emphasize the flexibility of the toolkit, empowering each facilitator, educator, or trainer to tailor and optimize the tools to better align with their local reality and the specific dynamics of their group of learners.

THEORY OF CHANGE

FACTS

European societies are ageing.
68% of Europeans admit coming across to fake news at least once a week.
Disinformation campaigns are interfering with democratic processes.
People over 65 share more fake news in social media.

GOAL

To empower senior citizens to become digitally literate, informed, and conscious participants in democratic processes, with a strong awareness of the European Union values.

EDUCATIONAL STRATEGY – 'LINK Program'

- Introduction to Digital Media Literacy
- Fake News and Cyber Threats
- The EU and its values

Connecting the Dots

OUTPUTS

Seniors have improved digital literacy skills.
Seniors understand the importance of critical thinking in the digital age.
Seniors are aware of European Union values and their significance.

SHORT-TERM OUTCOMES

Increased Awareness: Seniors recognize online disinformation and its potential impact on democracy.
Confidence: Seniors feel confident using digital tools for information gathering.
Community Involvement: Seniors actively participate in local community and democratic activities.

INTERMEDIATE OUTCOMES

Critical Thinking: Seniors apply critical thinking skills to evaluate online information.
Digital Engagement: Seniors engage with digital platforms to stay informed and express their views.
European Union Values: Seniors can articulate European Union values and their relevance.

LONG-TERM OUTCOMES

Informed Voting: Seniors make well-informed decisions during elections, reducing the impact of disinformation.
Active Participation: Seniors actively engage in democratic processes, contributing to a healthier democracy.
Promotion of EU Values: Seniors become advocates for European Union values within their communities..

IMPACT

A more digitally literate, conscious and engaged senior population that contributes to a strong democratic society, while promoting European Union values.

IMPACT MEASUREMENT TOOLS

I. PRE AND POST-PROGRAM QUESTIONNAIRE

Objective: Using a Likert Scale, assess changes in participants' knowledge, attitudes, and behaviours before and after the program.

PRE AND POST PROGRAM QUESTIONNAIRE
Participant name
Participant Age
Please rate de following statements using the following scale: 1 Totally disagree | 2 Disagree | 3 neither disagree nor agree | 4 Agree | 5 Totally Agree
“I know how to check if some news is true or not”
“When sharing information, I check the source before I share it.”
“I believe the majority of the news I see in Facebook.”
“I understand what the role of media is”
“I only read the headlines instead of the full news”
"I usually get my news consistently from the same provider, whether it is on TV, in newspapers, etc., without checking alternative sources"
“In the past, I may have shared or believed in some kind of fake news without being aware of it”
“If news is broadcast on national TV, radio, or published in newspapers, I believe it's reliable”
"If a friend or multiple people share the news on Social Media, I believe it's reliable"
“If news make sense to me, it is reliable.”
“I use digital tools like Google Fact checker or other, to check if news are reliable or not”
“I try to search news in other sources like google or newspapers to check if news are reliable or not”

“I feel European”
“I agree with (my country) being part of the EU”
“I know how the European institutions work, namely the European Parliament, European Council, Council of the EU and the European Commission”
"I believe it is the duty of citizens to actively protect and preserve democracy"
“I think media have much importance in preserving democracy”
“I consider that fake news can be a threat to democracy”
“I think what happens in European institutions has impact on my daily life”
"I know exactly what the values of the EU are"
"I believe that ordinary citizens don’t have many benefits being in a country that is part of the EU"
"I know the means by which EU citizens can participate in the development of EU policies."
“I use digital tools like Google Fact checker or other, to check if news are reliable or not”
“I try to search news in other sources like google or newspapers to check if news are reliable or not”

II. PARTICIPANT FEEDBACK SURVEY

Objective: Gather participants' perceptions of the program, its content, and their overall experience.

Expanding on the Participant Feedback Survey can provide more detailed insights into participants' experiences and perceptions.

Questions:

- How would you rate the relevance of the LINK Program content to your needs? (1-5)
- What aspect of the LINK Program did you find most beneficial, and why?
- Have you applied the knowledge and skills gained from the LINK Program in your daily life? (Yes/No)
- Do you feel more empowered to critically engage with digital media after completing the Program? (Yes/No)
- Do you intend to share the information and skills acquired with others in your community? (Yes/No)
- What aspects of the LINK Program, if any, do you think could be improved?

III. FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION GUIDE

Objective: Explore participants' experiences in-depth, allowing for richer qualitative insights.

A Focus Group Discussion Guide is designed to facilitate in-depth conversations among participants, providing qualitative insights into their experiences with the LINK Program. Here are some topics, from which the facilitator can choose the most appropriate for each group of learners:

- Memorable Learning Moments:
  - Encourage participants to reflect on specific instances during the program that stood out to them.
  - Ask them to describe what made those moments memorable and how they contributed to their learning.

- Awareness of Fake News Impact:
  - How has your awareness of the impact of fake news on democracy changed throughout the program?
  - Can you provide examples of how fake news might influence public opinion and democratic processes?

- Critical Thinking and Information Evaluation:
  - In what ways has the program enhanced your ability to critically evaluate information, particularly in distinguishing between reliable and unreliable sources?
  - Have you developed specific strategies for identifying and combating the spread of fake news?

- Influence on Online Behaviour and Interactions:
  - Explore the ways in which the program has impacted participants' online behaviour and interactions.
  - Ask participants to share any changes they've noticed in how they engage with digital media, fact-check information, or participate in online discussions.

- Suggestions for Improvement:
  - Open a discussion on potential areas for improvement in the program.
  - Allow participants to express their thoughts on what could enhance the overall program experience.
  - Seek specific recommendations for changes or additions to better meet their needs.

- Personal Transformations:
  - Inquire about any personal transformations or shifts in perspective that participants have experienced.
  - Encourage them to share how the program has influenced their attitudes, beliefs, or actions in the context of digital media literacy and democratic engagement.

- Challenges and Overcoming Obstacles:
  - Discuss any challenges participants faced during the program.
  - Explore how these challenges were overcome during the program.

- Application of Learning:
  - Ask participants to provide examples of how they have applied what they learned in real-life situations.
  - Explore whether the program has empowered them to navigate digital media more critically and actively participate in democratic processes.

- Community Impact:
  - Discuss the potential impact of participants sharing their knowledge with their communities.
  - Explore whether there are observed ripple effects in terms of increased awareness or changed behaviours among their peers.

IV. OBSERVATION CHECKLIST

Objective: Allow facilitators and observers to note participant engagement, interactions, and challenges during sessions.

The Observation Checklist is designed to provide a structured approach for facilitators and observers to document various aspects of participant behaviour and interactions during sessions of the LINK Program. Here are some ideas:

- Active Participation in Group Discussions:
  - Facilitators and observers will actively monitor and note the extent to which participants engage in group discussions.
  - Look for verbal contributions, sharing of perspectives, and the overall level of involvement in collaborative dialogue.

- Active Participation in Topic Discussions:
  - Facilitators and observers will assess the degree of participant involvement in discussions related to Media Literacy, Fake News, and EU values.
  - Look for contributions that reflect an understanding of the topics, critical thinking, and willingness to share perspectives.

- Application of Media Literacy Principles:
  - Note instances where participants demonstrate the application of Media Literacy principles in their discussions.
  - Observe how well participants critically analyse information, question sources, and identify potential instances of Fake News.

- Engagement with EU Values:
  - Assess participant engagement in discussions concerning EU values, evaluating their understanding and resonance with these principles.
  - Look for reflections on how EU values relate to personal beliefs and actions.

- Collaboration and Exchange of Insights:
  - Document instances of collaboration or mutual assistance among participants during discussions.
  - Observe whether participants actively share insights, ask questions, and contribute to a cooperative learning environment.

Additional Considerations for the Observation Checklist:

- Depth of Understanding: Assess the depth of participants' understanding of Media Literacy, Fake News, and EU values by observing the quality of their contributions.

- Application of Learnings: Note examples of participants applying program learnings in their discussions and reflections on real-world scenarios.

ANNEX I - PILOT IMPLEMENTATION REPORTS

ERASMUS+ KA2 COOPERATION PARTNERSHIP IN ADULT EDUCATION

2021-1-PT01-KA220-ADU-000026060

“LINK - LINKing Seniors to Digital Media Literacy, Democracy and Diversity”

PILOT IMPLEMENTATION REPORT

PORTUGAL

Co-funded by
the European Union

The European Commission's support for the production of this publication does not constitute an endorsement of the contents, which reflect the views only of the authors, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein.

1. PARTICIPANTS

a) Provide information about the demographics of the participants, including age, gender, background, number of participants facing vulnerable situations (and list in which categories, but not providing sensible information about participants).

Participants in the pilot implementation were seniors from the county of Cascais. There were 16 participants who attended the whole programme, and 87,5% where already frequent beneficiaries of the social senior centre where the programme was implemented.

The participants age range vary from 65 to 80 years old, 12 women and 4 men.

From the 16 participants, 8 are facing vulnerable situations, mainly related to social obstacles, economic obstacles and health problems.

b) Explain how participants were recruited and any criteria for selection.

The procedures for the recruitment and selection of candidates for the activities respected the general principles of legality, equality, transparency, fairness and impartiality.

The selection of participants for the local activities was done according to the following procedures:

1. A call for participants was created, to inform all the participants regarding the possibility of being involved in the activity. The selection criteria was available for all potential participants. The call was spread mainly among organization members, local partner organizations and target group.
2. Each candidate showed his/her interest and filled in an application form.
3. The selection commission evaluated all the participants applications and conducted selection interviews.
4. An agreement was signed between each selected participant and the organization.

We received a total of 31 applications from candidates, 16 were selected to take part in the project.

2. IMPLEMENTATION

a) Describe how the educational strategy was implemented in your country (include number of sessions, duration, periodicity, beginning and ending date, etc).

The LINK Programme was implemented in a total of 17 sessions of 1h30m, starting on the 6th March and ending on the 2nd October 2023. The sessions were held in 'Espaço Sénior do Bairro do Rosário', on Mondays from 14h30 to 16h00. There were some pauses due to summer vacations or national holidays.

b) Provide an overview of the training materials and resources used.

The activities were selected among the educational strategy, and we used some additional supporting resources, such as examples of posts from social media, newspapers, short videos, power point presentations, printed handouts, among others. We paid special attention to team building, and in each session we started with activities for personal and social competences development.

c) Explain any challenges or issues encountered during implementation.

One relevant challenge was the selection procedure, because we would like to include all the interested candidates. In this case it was not possible, by one side 16 senior participants is already a big group to manage in the sessions so we could not increase this number, and it was not possible to open a second group due to lack of joint availability of training room and implementation team. Nevertheless, we will continue implementing the LINK activities at local level after the project end.

When implementing the impact surveys there were significant difficulties from participants in understanding the survey, namely due to sentences written in a negative way and replies in positive way (level of accordance). Also the question where they needed to put by order of preference the media channels, was very confusing for them.

Furthermore, we felt the need to simplify some of the activities, some contents were a bit advanced for some of the seniors.

It was important for participants the possibility to enjoy social interaction within the group, so we started every session with energizer, ice-breaker or teambuilding activity.

We also felt a constant need to review and summarize learning from previous sessions, so we always made wrap-ups of previous learning outcomes.

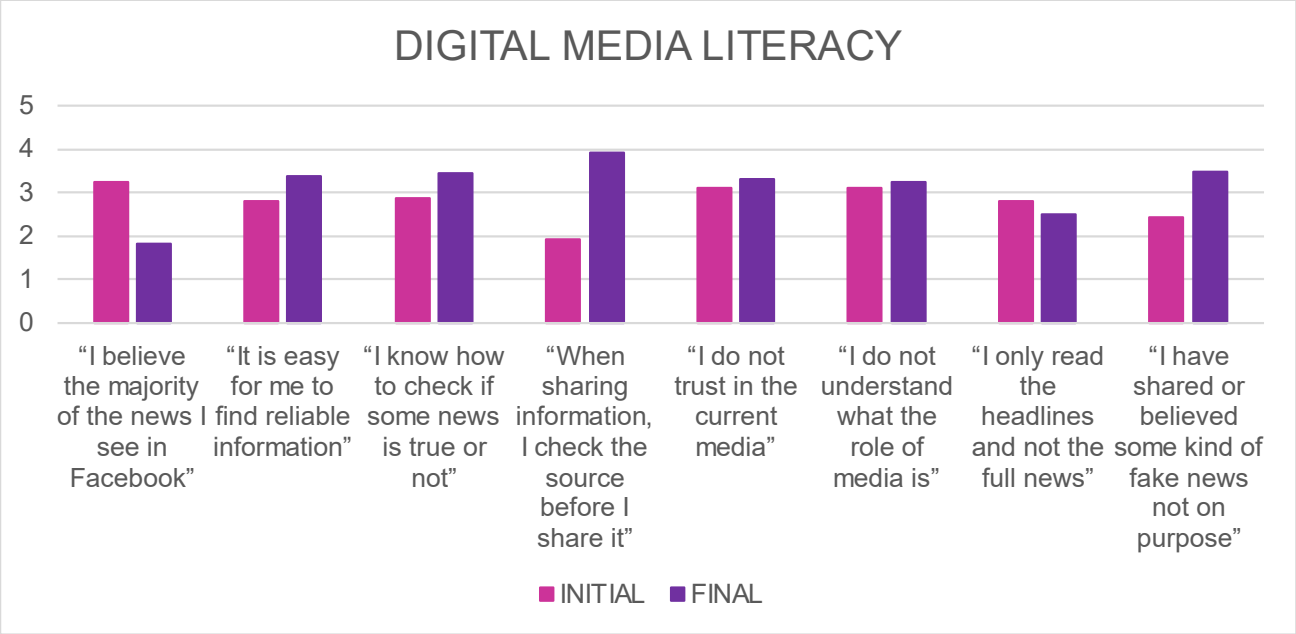
3. DATA COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS (this section is linked to the Impact Measurement activities defined previously in LINK Capacity Building)

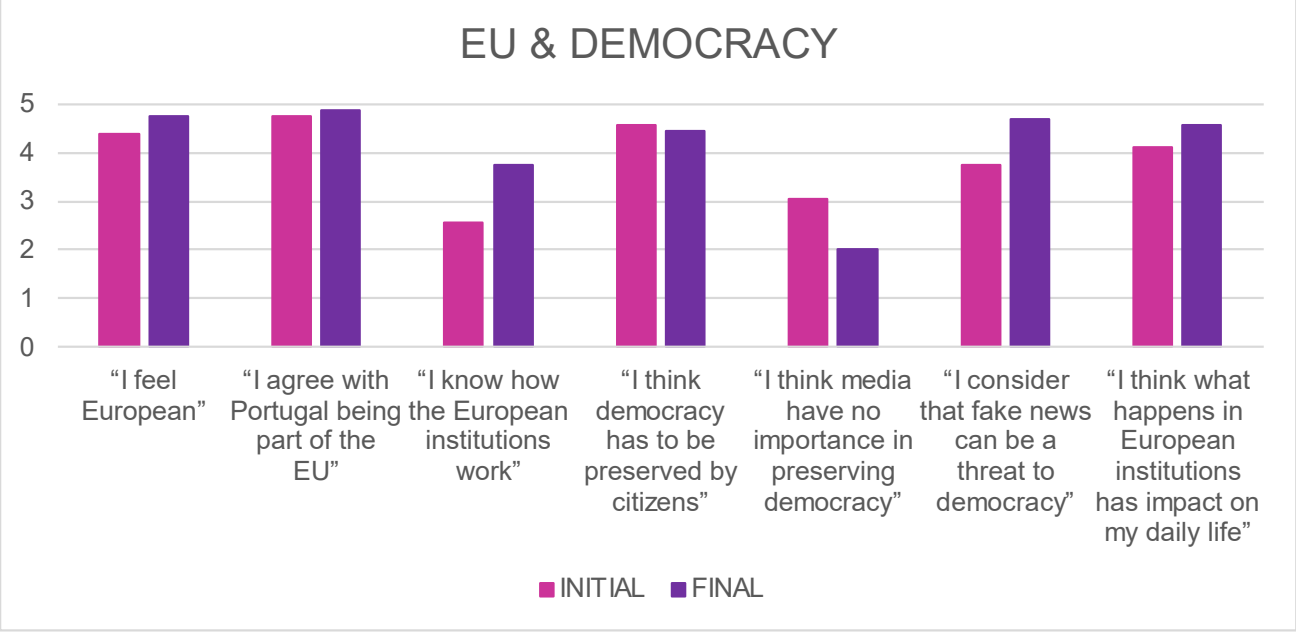
a) Present the data collected during the pilot tests, including surveys, feedback, and assessment results.

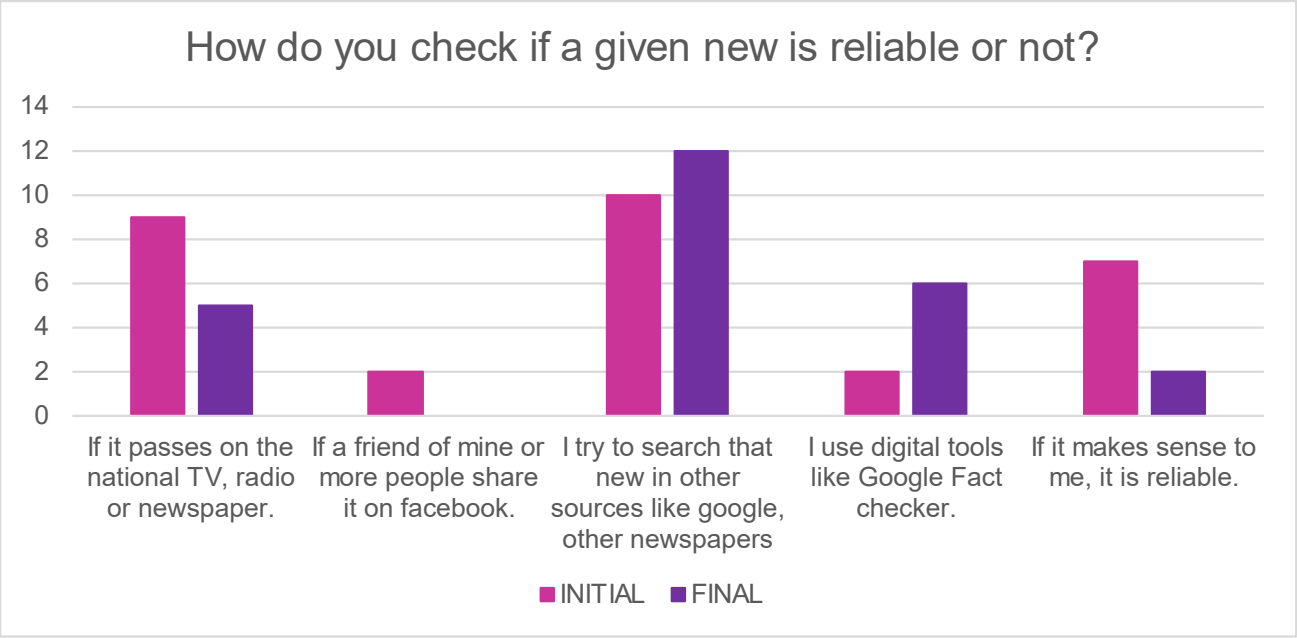
We have implemented:

- Survey to set the baseline with seniors – 6th March 2023
- Survey for final self-assessment with seniors – 2nd October 2023
- Qualitative Data Collection – We collected regular feedback during the sessions and we recorded an individual final video with feedback about project participation.
- Initial self-assessment for the trainer

b) Analyze the data to assess the impact of the educational strategy on digital literacy, awareness of disinformation and EU knowledge. (Please include graphics)







There have been notable advancements in indicators related to Digital Media Literacy. Specifically, participants demonstrated increased confidence in discerning news credibility on Facebook, with a greater inclination to verify sources before sharing information. Moreover, there was a modest improvement in Digital Media-related indicators, such as ease in finding reliable information and the ability to differentiate between true and false news.

In relation to the indicator "I have shared or believed some kind of fake news not on purpose," there was a higher level of agreement compared to the initial assessment. This shift is attributed to heightened participant awareness rather than an increase in the sharing of fake news. Participants now recognize instances where they have unintentionally shared misinformation in the past.

Turning to indicators associated with EU & Democracy, significant progress was observed in certain aspects. Participants displayed enhanced knowledge of how European institutions function and a notable shift away from the perception that media holds no significance in preserving democracy.

While some indicators did not exhibit substantial differences, it is presumed that this is due to the already high baseline levels at the beginning of the program.

Regarding how participants assess news reliability, prior to LINK Program 2, responses often relied on the number of Facebook shares by friends or personal judgment of coherence. By the program's conclusion, these numbers decreased to zero and two, respectively. There was a considerable rise in participants utilizing Digital Tools, such as Fact checkers, to verify the credibility of news.

c) Identify any trends or patterns in the data.

- Participants acknowledge the habit of sharing content without verifying its accuracy.
- Participants recognized a tendency to perceive everything they read on Facebook as "true."
- Through the training program, participants acquired additional tools to confirm the authenticity of news and contents.
- Participants now have a better understanding of the media's role and the influence they use.
- Participants are now more aware of how European Institutions work.

4. RESULTS AND FINDINGS

a) Summarize the key findings from the pilot test.

Participants discovered that obtaining accurate information is more challenging than they initially believed. They are now more aware, but also more frightened because they understand the difficulties.

It was very important to use examples close to seniors reality.

During the implementation of LINK Program, we felt there is still a strong unconscious tendency of seniors to justify fake news as true based on their own experiences with similar contexts, for example, viral fake news about Portuguese women with a newborn sleeping on the streets of Lisbon (that was used to criticise support for migrants), we explained the news was manipulated and the picture was not even taken in Lisbon, but because seniors already saw in some circumstances similar situations, they use that to justify that the news can be true, and they tend to be influenced to criticize the support to migrants (the objective of the fake news).

We believe having a continuous program (or at least more extended), bringing to discussion the topics of the project and connecting them to the daily life could be beneficial for seniors.

b) Discuss the effectiveness of the educational strategy in achieving its goals.

In the beginning of the pilot test there was some lack of confidence from some participants regarding their ability to learn about the project topic. For that reason, we paid special attention to create a safe learning environment, implementing 2 initial sessions focusing on team building, and developing personal and social competences.

The educational strategy proved effective in fostering a critical perspective on social media and raising awareness among seniors about the potential risks associated with disinformation and misinformation, mainly concerning democracy and EU values.

There was the need to make some adjustments to activities, which is normal, considering that every group is different, and we felt it was really important that seniors could connect the examples to their real life.

It was also important for participants the possibility to enjoy social interaction within the group, so we started every session with energizer, ice-breaker or teambuilding activity.

We also felt a constant need to review and summarize learning from previous sessions, so we always made wrap-ups of previous learning outcomes.

c) Highlight any notable successes and areas for improvement.

There was a lot of content to learn in each of the project modules, sometimes it was challenging to decide which contents were more relevant for the group, and some of them were complementary to the main project topics. In our opinion there are two possibilities:

1) Educators can focus particularly on Fake News, Misinformation and Disinformation, connecting the topic with the risks for democracy.

2) a) Educators can add useful tools for safe use of digital tools, although, we consider this part is not mandatory to approach part number 1.

2) b) Educators can add useful learning contents about how the EU institutions work, but we consider this part is not mandatory to approach part number 1.

5. LESSONS LEARNED

a) Share insights gained from the pilot test experience.

- Add activities to develop personal and social competencies;
- Use examples that seniors can relate to their local reality and their life;
- Make regular reviews and summaries of previous learning outcomes;
- Study Visit to European Commission had a very strong impact on participants;
- Be aware that majority of seniors are not able to keep attention to new learning contents for long periods, so we suggest sessions no longer than 1h30/2h.

b) Provide recommendations for refining the educational strategy.

- Some concrete adjustments were suggested in LINK Session Plans/Feedback;
- Written contents must be delivered to seniors to support their learning;
- Impact Measurement Assessment needs to be improved.

6. CONCLUSION

a) Summarize the overall outcomes and significance of the pilot tests.

The pilot test proved incredibly valuable in understanding the details of implementing the LINK Program. It revealed that, overall, the program is effective in achieving our goals, but minor adjustments could improve its quality. Additionally, it provided us with valuable experience and insights into the specific aspects of working with seniors and strategies to support their learning process.

During the pilot test, it became apparent that seniors have a keen interest in the project's topic. Despite initially lacking confidence in their ability to learn about it, their enthusiasm grew over time. Participants not only found the LINK program highly relevant but also expressed great satisfaction with it. When asked if they would recommend LINK to their friends, the response was unanimous: absolutely!

b) Reiterate the project's objectives and their alignment with the pilot test results.

The pilot test results are aligned with the following projects objectives:

- The pilot test contributed to the project's aim of empowering facilitators and educators by providing insights into effective strategies for promoting active and mindful citizenship among seniors.
- It supported the goal of encouraging the exchange of experiences and methodologies among project partners. This exchange not only strengthens the network but also enhances the capacity of organizations and the competencies of educators involved.
- The results of the pilot test contributed to reflections on the pillars of democracy and the fundamental role seniors play as European citizens in preserving democracy. This involves promoting their social and digital inclusion.
- The pilot test focused in creating awareness about how disinformation and propaganda events can interfere with democracy. It emphasizes the importance of promoting critical thinking, media literacy, and digital literacy among seniors.
- The pilot test allowed for experimentation and analysis of various digital tools to harness the potential of European citizenship in improving civic engagement and social inclusion among seniors.
- The pilot test contributed to raising awareness among seniors about the significance of common EU values, unity in diversity, and the principles that underpin a shared European space. This helps create connections and foster a sense of unity among participants.
- The pilot test provided seniors with the opportunity to participate in two transnational educational exchanges. This initiative reinforced a European identity and promoted intercultural learning among seniors from different countries.

ERASMUS+ KA2 COOPERATION PARTNERSHIP IN ADULT EDUCATION

2021-1-PT01-KA220-ADU-000026060

“LINK - LINKing Seniors to Digital Media Literacy, Democracy and Diversity”

PILOT IMPLEMENTATION REPORT

ITALY

Co-funded by
the European Union

The European Commission's support for the production of this publication does not constitute an endorsement of the contents, which reflect the views only of the authors, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein.

1. PARTICIPANTS

a) **Provide information about the demographics of the participants, including age, gender, background, number of participants facing vulnerable situations (and list in which categories, but not providing sensible information about participants).**

Participants in the pilot implementation were the seniors who attend regularly training activities for seniors organized by Sinergia within local and European projects.

There were 10 participants who attended the whole programme, plus 2 participants who participated in single sessions.

They were: 11 women and 1 man. All of them have a high school diploma, 4 had a degree.

4 of them didn't have a job.

4 of the are vulnerable people, due to health reasons.

b) **Explain how participants were recruited and any criteria for selection.**

All the participants were informed at the beginning of the project about this opportunity and attended a presentation session where we introduce the project and the aims of the local piloting.

We checked their interest in participating in the piloting and their motivation.

Considering that they are learners of Sinergia on regular basis we didn't make a selection.

2. IMPLEMENTATION

a) Describe how the educational strategy was implemented in your country (include number of sessions, duration, periodicity, beginning and ending date, etc).

the local piloting was implemented in 7 sessions, 2 hours per session, from 20th February to 14th June.

The calendar of the sessions was organized considering the availability of trainers and learners, the official holidays and planning no more than one session in a week.

An additional session was organized on 12th September for the focus group of impacts assessment.

After the first activity focused on the project presentation and the initial impacts assessment, the implementation was organized mainly through gamification and a meeting with an expert, mixed the activities selected by the 3 modules in a balanced way, stimulating a critical reflection about the digital media and the European identity.

c) **Provide an overview of the training materials and resources used.**

All the activities were selected by the educational strategy, organizing small supporting resources, like:

- Examples of posts from social media
- Short videos
- Short power point presentations
- Printed materials (words, sentences, etc) to facilitate some workshops.

Considering the game-based approach, we introduces also quizzes and challenges for the teams.

c) Explain any challenges or issues encountered during implementation.

The interest and participation were good, even if there are 2 seniors who are not familiar with digital media and don't use them, so they were not so interested in specific contents. For this reason we referred also to other media (like TV and newspapers) when we worked on misinformation and disinformation.

The main barrier for most of the participants was the lack of confidence in their digital skills and the ability to learn to use digital tools (in one case also for physical issues).

3. DATA COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS (this section is linked to the Impact Measurement activities defined previously in LINK Capacity Building)

a) Present the data collected during the pilot tests, including surveys, feedback, and assessment results.

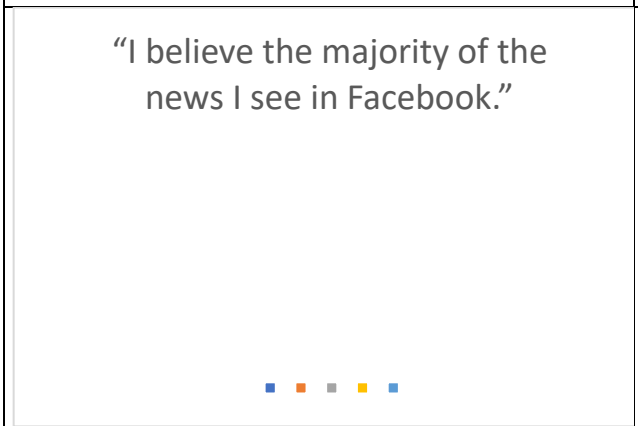
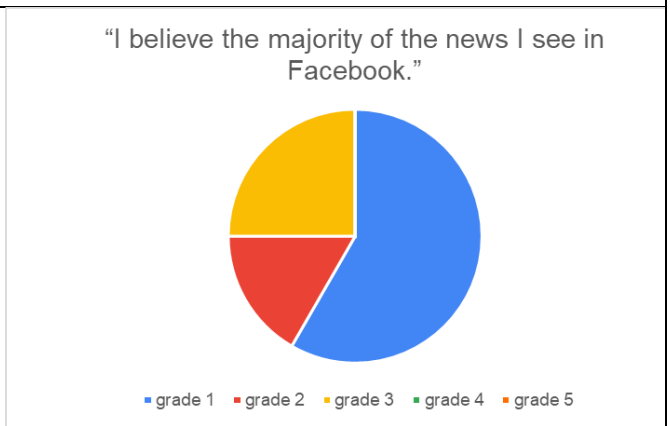
The interest and participation were good, even if there are 2 seniors who are not familiar with digital media and don't use them. Some of them showed, at the beginning, lack of self confidence because they haven't high level of digital skills, but the proposed topics were relevant for all of them and they had the opportunity to be aware of many things that they face daily. Also the reflection about European Union and European values was very engaging, and they had the opportunity to reflect on some prejudices that are created in an uncontrolled manner, also due to misinformation.

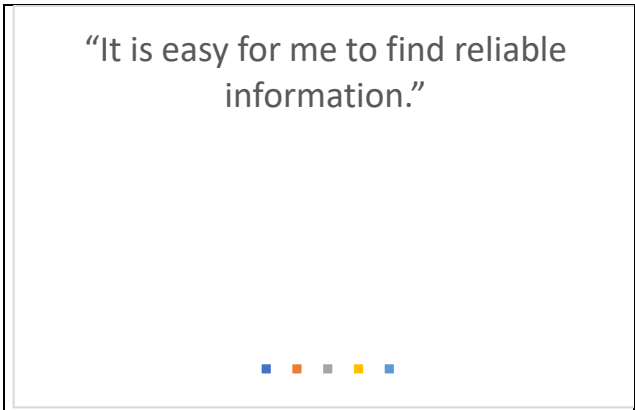
Referring to the results in terms of knowledges and competences, the provision of quizzes demonstrated that they developed the expected level of knowledge.

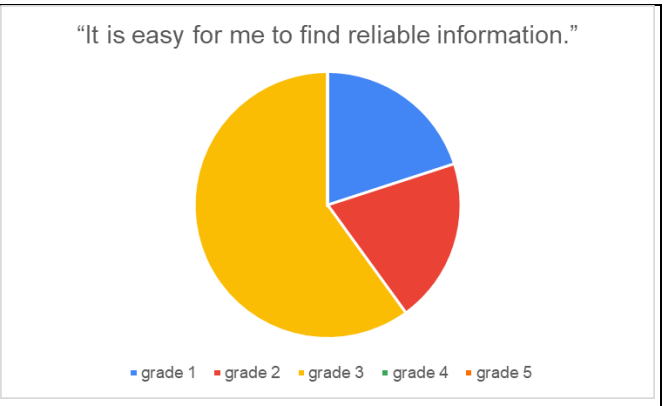
About the feedback, the trainers have always received positive feedback. One of the most appreciated moments was the meeting with the journalist who offered a series of concrete examples of how information can manipulate public opinion.

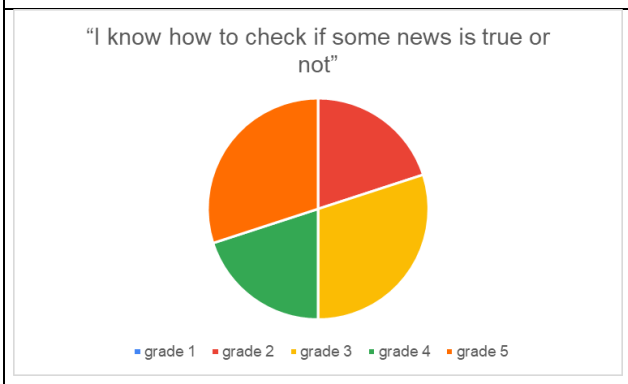
For the assessment, we submitted the questionnaire at the beginning and at the end of the piloting, and we organized a focus group after the mobility to Brussels.

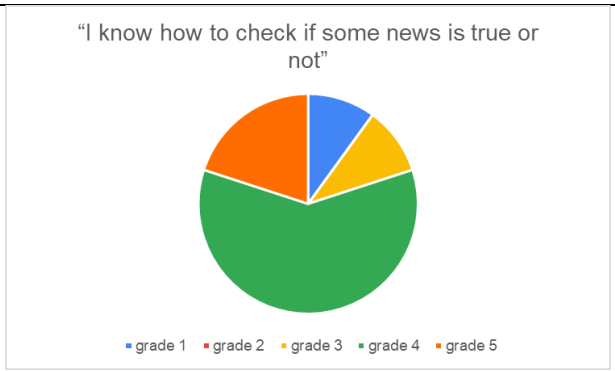
b) Analyze the data to assess the impact of the educational strategy on digital literacy, awareness of disinformation and EU knowledge. (Please include graphics)

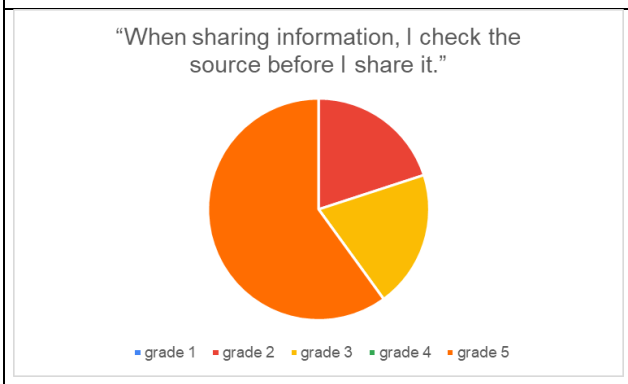
INITIAL SUBMISSION	FINAL SUBMISSION
	

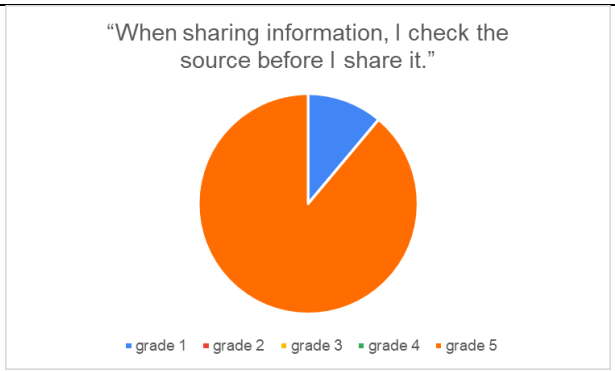


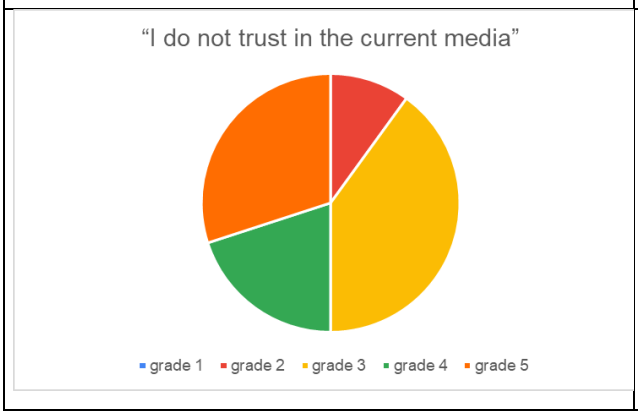


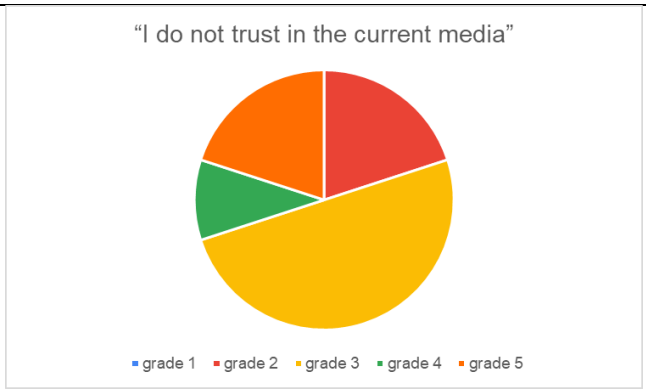




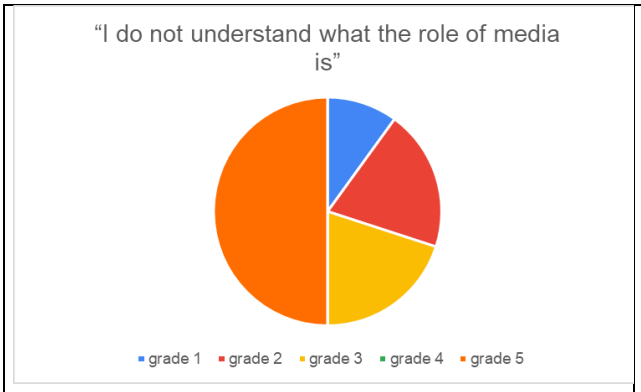


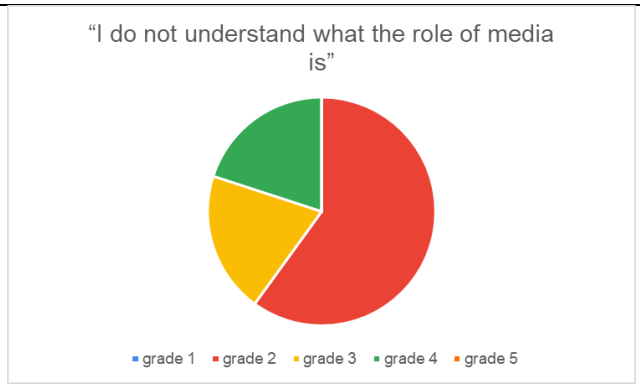


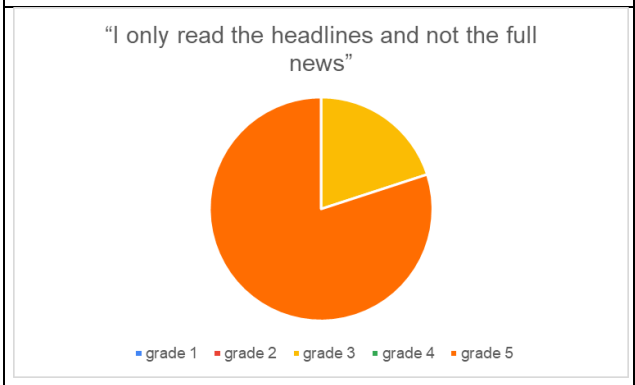


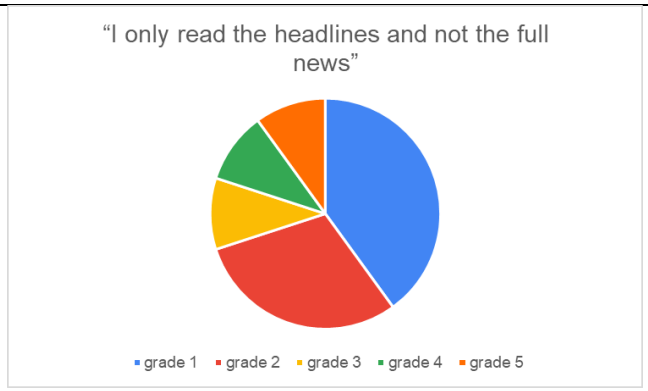


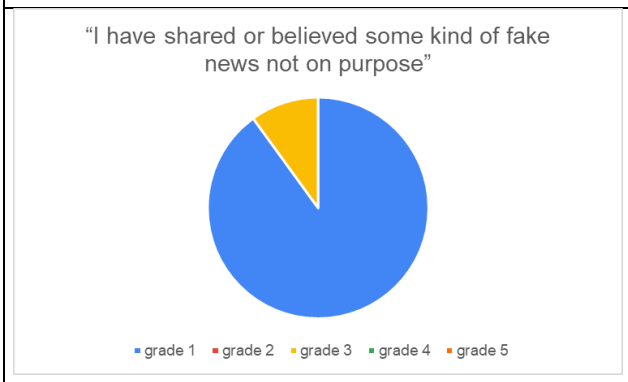
Co-funded by
the European Union

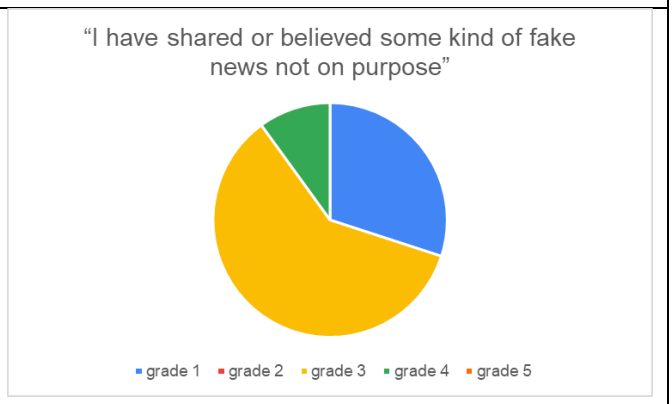




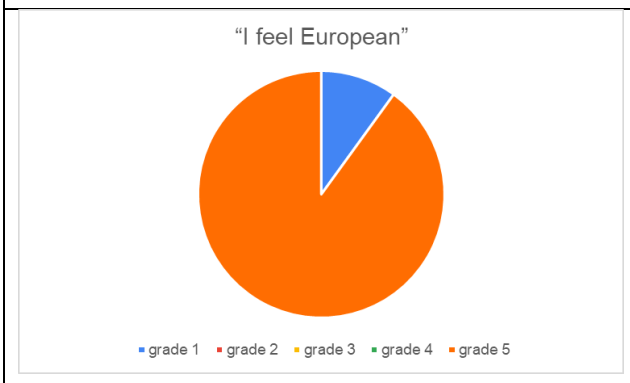


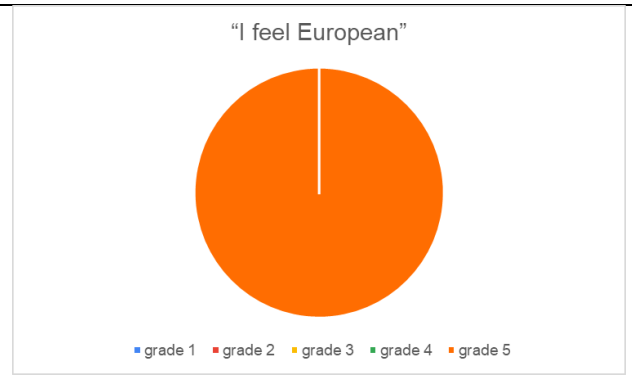


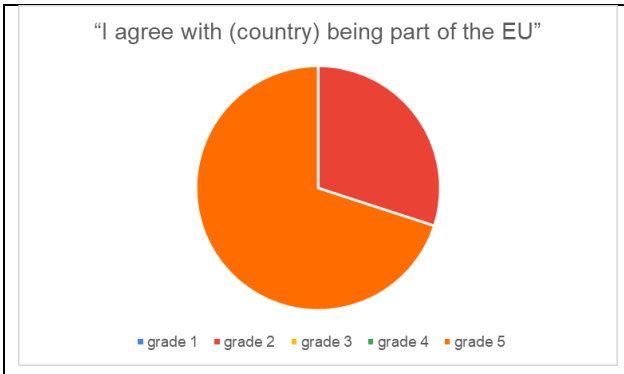


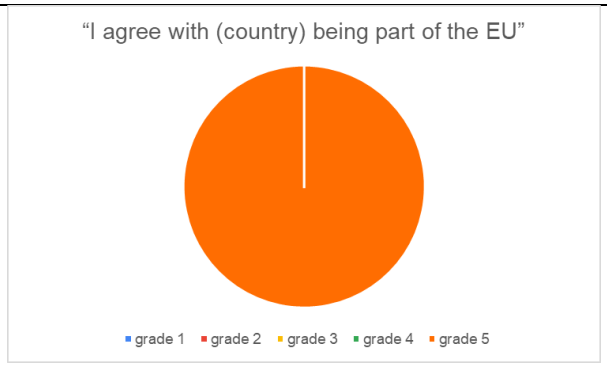


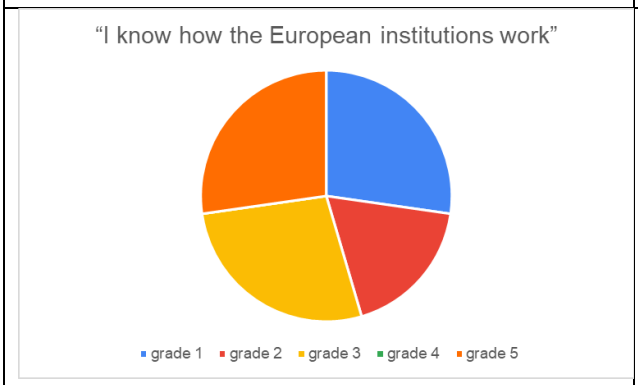
Google (70%) and the national TV are the media that they use to check if a given new is reliable or not	Google (60%) and the national TV are the media that they use to check if a given new is reliable or not
TV is for most of them the preferred channel for information	

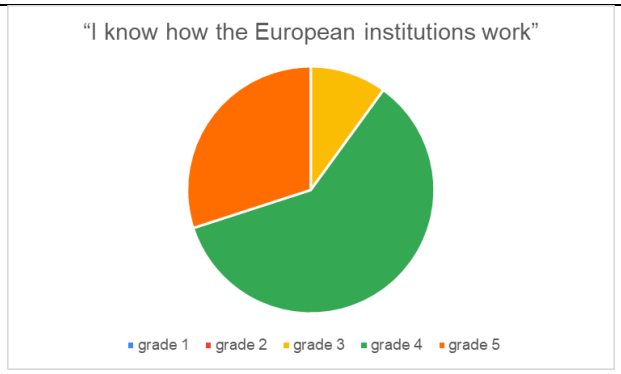


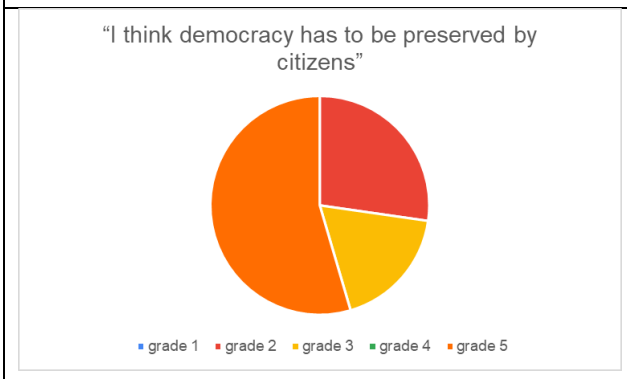


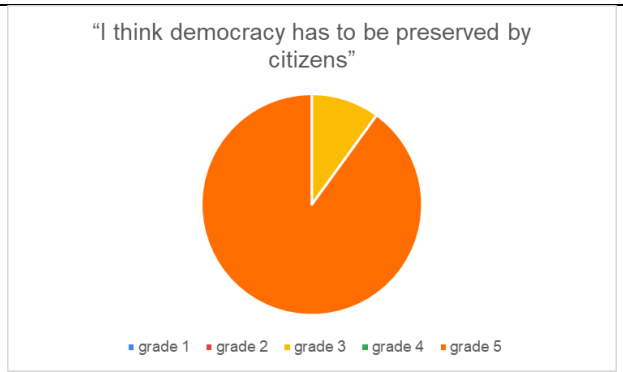


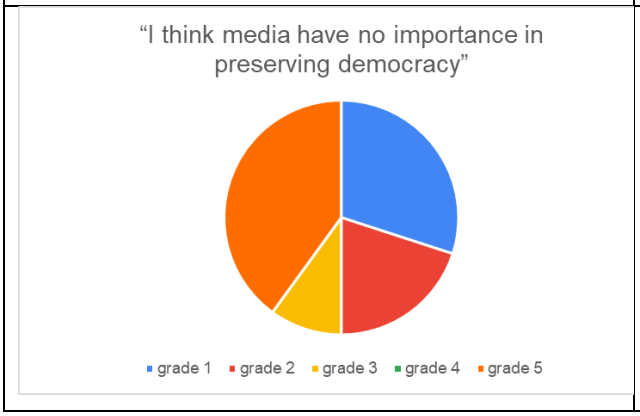


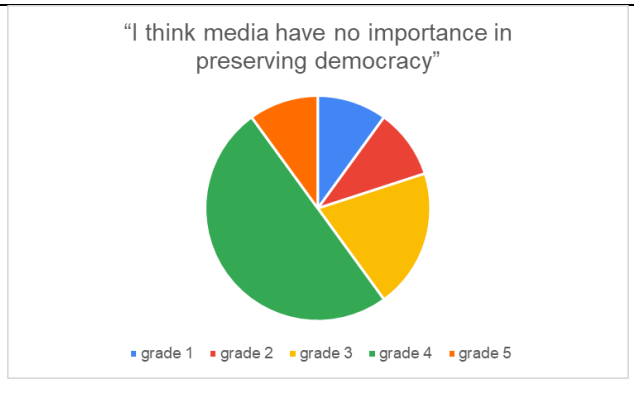




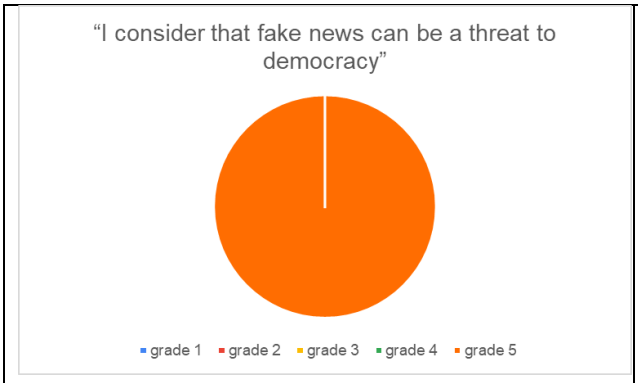
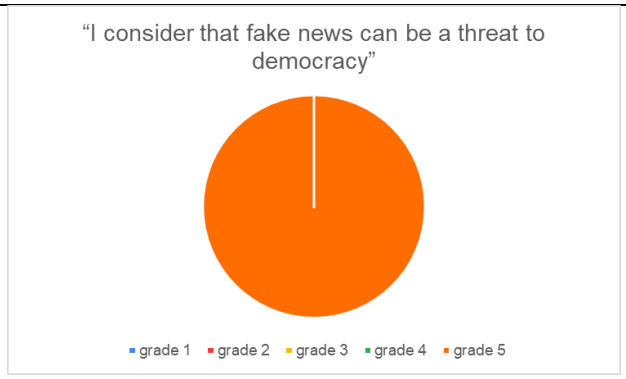
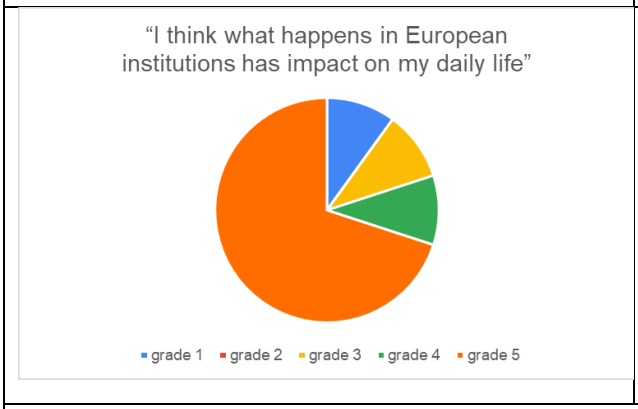
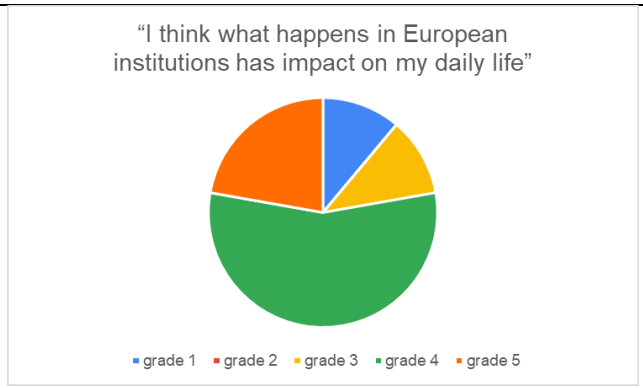








Co-funded by
the European Union

<table>
<tr>
<td> 
</td>
<td> 
</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td> 
</td>
<td> 
</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td colspan="2">Most of the participants use to vote to all elections (local, national, European)</td>
</tr>
</table>

About EUROPEAN CITIZENSHIP:

- Our participants feel close to the European Union and they can understand the relevance to be part of the Union and they are able to identify which are the finding values of European identity.
- The activities related to the knowledge of EU bodies and functions let them to understand better how it function and which are the main institutions and their role.

c) Identify any trends or patterns in the data.

The results of the questionnaire before and after the implementation show interesting findings:

About DIGITAL MEDIA LITERACY:

- Seniors understood that it is not as easy to have access to correct information than they initially thought;
- They realized that they tend to consider everything they read as "true" even on Facebook;
- Thanks to the training program they now have more tools to verify whether content is true;
- They are aware that they usually share content without verifying its veracity;
- they are now more critical in believing the media and the information they receive;
- they now understand better the role of the media and the "power" they have;
- they no longer limit themselves to just reading the headlines but try to get to the bottom of the news;
- they are aware that it sometimes happens that false content is shared without being careful;

- after the piloting the official national information channels are considered more useful for information than Google;
- there is still a sort of resistance to using forms of information other than TV.

About EUROPEAN CITIZENSHIP:

- the programme offered the opportunity to reflect on the sense of belonging to the Union, and the benefits that we have as Eu citizens.
- The activities about EU values connected with the once related to disinformation and misinformation let them to understand how strong is the power that social media have in changing the relevance of EU values in specific topics (like immigration, economy or other "critical situations" that EU countries can face).

In the final focus group, we had also the opportunity to collect some additional reflections:

About DIGITAL MEDIA LITERACY:

The participants understood during the project how to fight fake news, namely by:

- Reading accurately the facts and the authors
- Paying attention to sources, language, style and images (if they are verifiable and correct).
- Checking whether images are authentic, comparing the facts with other sources and whether it's a joke or parody.
- Using a fact-checking site to understand if the facts are true or false.

Their final opinions about social media show that they give them the possibility of expanding their knowledge and to build new relations, but they have to pay attention to fake news, misinformation and disinformation, and to the fact that not always the online messages are educational, and there is the risk of addiction.

About EU IDENTITY, they feel to be part of a big community and to have protection and same rights of all the other citizens protected. They appreciate the freedom of movement, the exchange of ideas and the mutual support. They recognized the relevance of democracy to guarantee the equal opportunities and rights for all, the freedom of expression and the prevention of fundamentalism, nationalism, inequalities and coercion.

The most relevant learning results that they identified are referred to the glossary of digital media, the contents about digital safety and security, and to the new attitude to critical access to the information online.

4. RESULTS AND FINDINGS

a) Summarize the key findings from the pilot test.

The pilot test confirmed some initial ideas:

- many seniors are not confident in using digital media due to lack of ICT skills.

- Many seniors are now aware that the general approach to the information is passive.
- The awareness about risks and misinformation of social media stimulated a more critical approach to them, but, on the other side, produced a bigger need of basic knowledge and skills that could made them more confident in approaching these media.
- They were aware that misinformation has a great power on democratic life in Europe, since seniors were conscious that fake news have real effects on the EU values related to freedom of expression and rights for every citizen, as also the effects in terms of prejudices and stereotypes.

b) Discuss the effectiveness of the educational strategy in achieving its goals.

DIGITAL MEDIA LITERACY

The educational strategy demonstrated its effectiveness in providing a critical approach to social media and in making seniors aware of the risks connected with a passive use of social media.

The adjustment made by our trainers suggest that, considering that some technical topics could be a barrier to the intention to learn, due to seniors' lack of confidence in their digital abilities, it is strongly recommended a game-based approach.

In this way, even if they are faced with new contents that are difficult to understand, the sense of inability does not prevail on the opportunity to learn by doing.

Guided reflection starting from practical examples or meetings with experts is very effective for verifying in reality the importance of a critical approach to information and a democratic approach to reading current events.

Referring to digital security, the possibility of providing basic digital training for seniors with low skills is strongly recommended.

EUROPEAN CITIENSHIP

The activities connected with fake news, disinformation and misinformation gave a real example of risks that social media can represent for democracy if the EU citizens haven’t a critical approach to the information online.

The sense of belonging to the EU community was already good for most of them, but now they have more specific knowledge about how Eu institutions work and which are the effects at national level and in their daily life.

c) Highlight any notable successes and areas for improvement.

Considering the initial expectation and grade of interest of our group, the biggest result was the final level of awareness about social media. Initially most of them declared to have moderate interest in the project topic because they don’t use so much social media. But the piloting gave them the opportunity to learn a lot, to be more confident in the potential use of social media and they reflected most of the contents also referring to other media.

In order to overcome initial barriers to this kind of learning, especially for those seniors that don’t use social media frequently, we recommend to provide a short technical training at the beginning.

5. LESSONS LEARNED

a) Share insights gained from the pilot test experience.

Both topics are very relevant for this target group (but also for EU citizens in general).

Most of seniors are not aware of the risks of social media and the effects that face news and misinformation have on their opinion.

Most of seniors in our group were resistant, at the beginning, in having this kind of learning experience because they felt it was not relevant and close to their interests. A "light" approach the gamification contributed to increase their motivation and interest in the training sessions.

The discussion and reflection related to real cases close to their daily life and local situations were most effective: for example, for our group, the fake news and misinformation discovered about migrants and refugees (an hot topic for Apulian context) or about health (like news during pandemic) were very useful.

b) Provide recommendations for refining the educational strategy.

- Checking the adaptations made by each partner, we suggest to add, if relevant for specific activities, some tips for trainers:

  "You should perform this activity also….."
- We recommend to make a short memorandum for trainers, referring to some relevant considerations for the training approach:
  - Avoid formal presentations of the activities topics
  - Be sure that there is an adequate basic level of knowledge about social media and technical functioning.
  - Provide the activities according to the non formal education approach: first the "practical" experience, than the reflection to extract the learning outcomes
  - If possible and appreciated, provide the activities through a game-based approach, especially for those participants who don't show great interest in the topics at the beginning
  - If possible, organize meetings with experts (both for information topics, both for EU institutions and representatives).

6. CONCLUSION

a) Summarize the overall outcomes and significance of the pilot tests.

- Senior participants became more active users of social media because they knew the strategies to identify fake news, check sources, and recognize misinformation elements.
- Senior participants understood the relevance of a critical thinking in accessing to contents on social media, being aware of the power that they have in supporting phenomena like fundamentalism, nationalism, inequalities, and coercion.
- Senior participants felt closer to the European Union as Institution because they recognized the relevance of democratic values and the rights and benefits of being EU citizens.

- Senior participants recognized that they have also the responsibility to transfer real information, not sharing contents that they didn't verify, reflecting also on the effects that also their actions can have on public opinion.

b) Reiterate the project's objectives and their alignment with the pilot test results.

- Trainers and facilitators had the opportunity to test effective methodologies and tools to introduce digital media literacy and EU democratic identity in a training programme for seniors.
- The piloting contributed to develop digital media literacy among senior learners.
- The piloting contributed to reflect on the power of social media in democratic communities.
- The piloting contributed to develop in the senior learners the critical thinking and a critical approach to the information online.
- The piloting contributed to make learners conscious that they are responsible for the information and contents that they share with others.
- The piloting contributed to the reflection of relevance of democratic values for people freedom and rights and of importance to be part of a transnational community that takes the responsibility to guarantee this freedom and these rights to every citizen in Europe.

ERASMUS+ KA2 COOPERATION PARTNERSHIP IN ADULT EDUCATION

2021-1-PT01-KA220-ADU-000026060

“LINK - LINKing Seniors to Digital Media Literacy, Democracy and Diversity”

PILOT IMPLEMENTATION REPORT

Poland

Co-funded by
the European Union

The European Commission's support for the production of this publication does not constitute an endorsement of the contents, which reflect the views only of the authors, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein.

1. PARTICIPANTS

a) Provide information about the demographics of the participants, including age, gender, background, number of participants facing vulnerable situations (and list in which categories, but not providing sensible information about participants).

In the implementation took part 15 seniors (3 men). Tha age gap of the seniors was between 65 to 85 years old. None of the seniors mentioned a difficult situation in their lives apart from any health problems or operations they have undergone so far. The backgrounds of the participants were very varied, they grew up in different places but all currently reside in Wrocław.

b) Explain how participants were recruited and any criteria for selection.

Participants were made aware of the project through an announcement as well as via the snail mail. A prerequisite for participation was availability and at least a basic ability to use technology, as well as a desire to broaden their knowledge. The age of the participants also was taken into account

2. IMPLEMENTATION

a) Describe how the educational strategy was implemented in your country (include number of sessions, duration, periodicity, beginning and ending date, etc).

There were implemented 11 sessions each per 1 hour. They were provided: 5.05 (2 sessions), 31.05 (1 session), 25.07 (2 sessions), 29.08 (2 sessions), 4.09 (3 sessions), 14.09 (1 session). The dates and hours of the sessions were discussed with the participants and chosen with regard to their preferences and accessibility. Due to the high temperatures during the period of the sessions, there was a bet on the morning hours, but with more sessions.

b) Provide an overview of the training materials and resources used.

Exercises and materials prepared in Capacity Building were used to conduct the session. The content was expanded to include, among other things, emoticons and internet language because of the events taking place at the time, but this served to clarify the political events of the time and the controversy surrounding them.

c) Explain any challenges or issues encountered during implementation.

The challenge was to adapt the dates of the workshops to the capacity of the seniors due to their involvement in various activities as well as membership of different groups and private matters.

3. DATA COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS (this section is linked to the Impact Measurement activities defined previously in LINK Capacity Building)

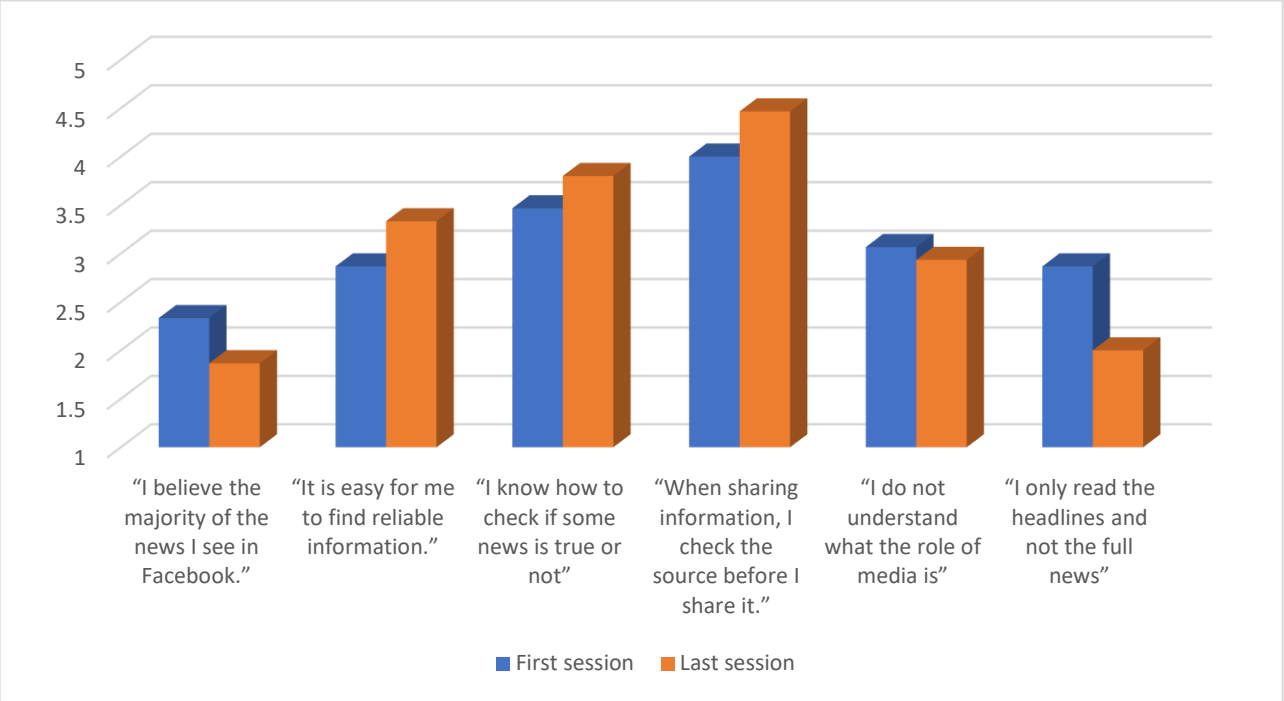
a) Present the data collected during the pilot tests, including surveys, feedback, and assessment results.

Participants in the surveys conducted at the beginning and at the end mostly chose extreme values. The majority of respondents showed a low level of belief in the news seen on Facebook, with ratings dropping in the last survey. Seniors indicated a variety of responses regarding the ease of finding reliable information - some found it easier, some more difficult. In the final survey, these values changed both ways. Seniors tended to agree that they knew how to check the veracity of information, values increased at the final survey, a similar relationship can be seen when asked if they check

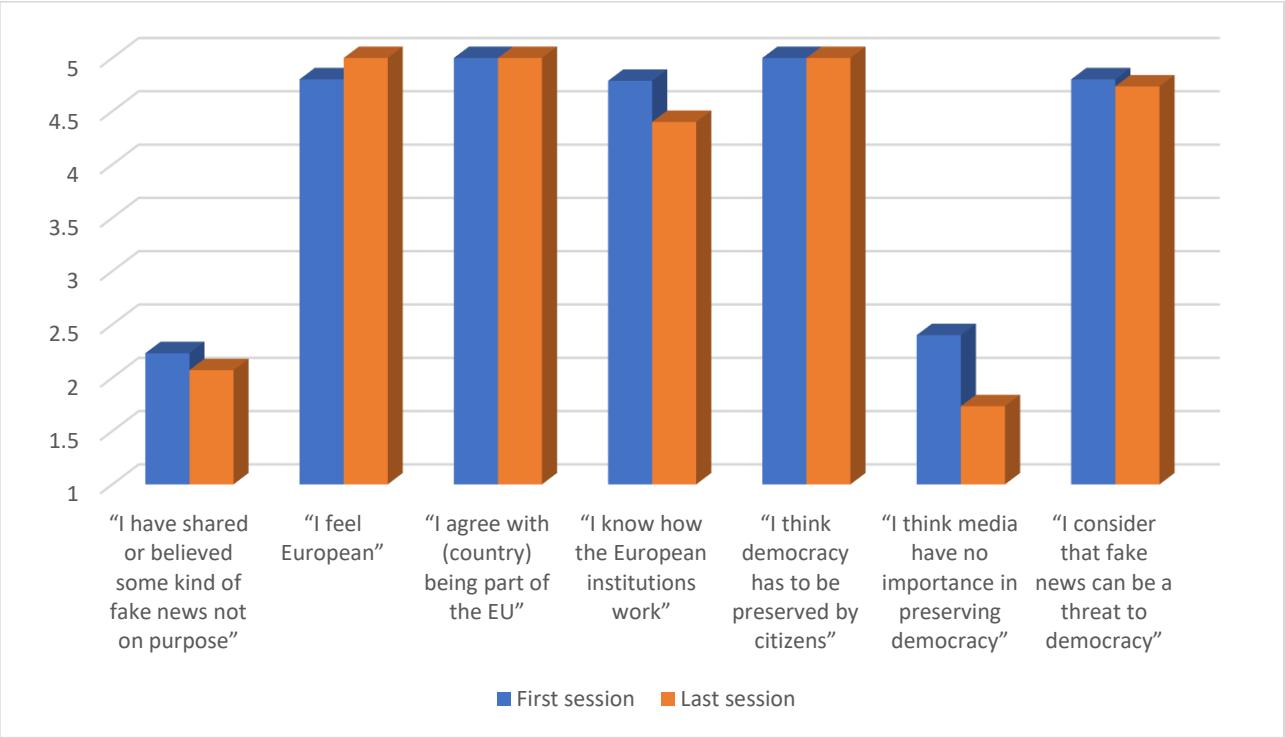
information before disseminating it. Participants had an average understanding of the role of the media, at the exit survey most indicated that they were more aware of this role. Two participants in the final survey admitted that they only read the headlines, which is in complete contrast to their answers in the first survey, during which they denied this. In the last survey, more seniors than in the first survey admitted that they happened to unintentionally share false information. In the first survey, when asked how participants verify information, only one answer was most often selected; in the last survey, the vast majority of participants indicated several of the answers given. Preferred information channels varied among respondents, and in the final survey the order of their choice changed. When asked about feeling European and agreeing with our country's membership of the EU, seniors were unanimous in both surveys, as they were in the question about citizens' protection of democracy. When asked in the last survey about awareness of how the European institutions work, the value of the answers both decreased and increased in relation to the first survey. In the first survey, there were some who said that the media were irrelevant to democracy and that they could not pose a threat to it, while in the last survey it can be seen that this figure decreased. There was no particular change in the question and voting in the elections, with the majority of respondents voting in all three options, less frequently in those concerning only the local and national spheres. When asked about the values the EU stands for, seniors often responded intuitively, listing multiple options. In the latest survey, their answers turn out to be more precise about the EU's core values. When asked what capacity building helped with, they most often mentioned the possibility to verify the reliability of information and increased knowledge about the EU. In the discussion, participants mentioned that they liked the freshness and uncommonness of the topic dealt with in this project, especially as it was undertaken before the elections, which will help to arouse their own vigilance. Participants appreciated the opportunity to broaden their knowledge of the European Union, how it works and what we owe it. They mentioned that this is not a common topic on a daily basis.

b) Analyze the data to assess the impact of the educational strategy on digital literacy, awareness of disinformation and EU knowledge. (Please include graphics)

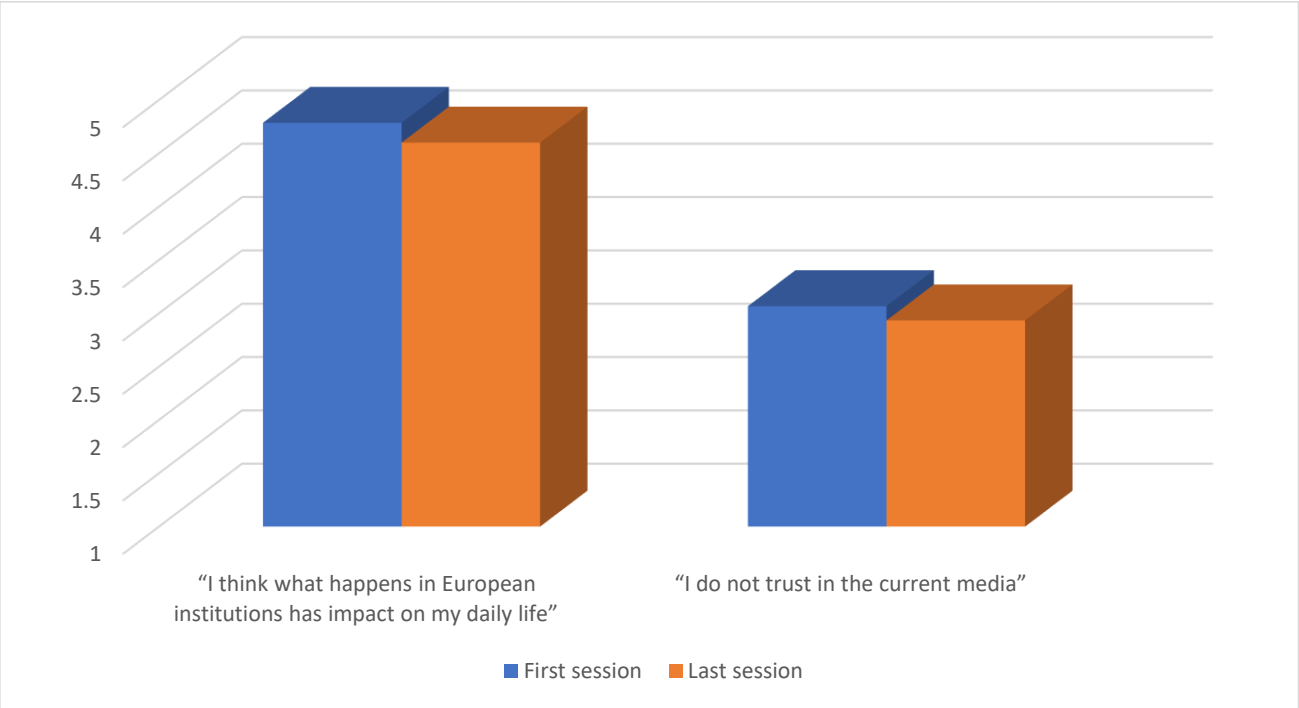
Average



In case one it can be noticed that the belief in news seen on Facebook dropped. The second case shows a similar increase in ease of finding reliable information. The third case shows that the learners have deepened their knowledge in checking the credibility of the source but are aware that they are not experts in this area. In the fourth case, an increase of half a mark can be seen in the fact that the source is checked before it is disseminated. In the fifth case, a slight decrease can be observed. It is possible that this is due to confusion as to which specific media are involved, as some, e.g. TV channels or websites, may be for propaganda, others for entertainment, and still others remain neutral. The question itself could have been interpreted in this respect. However, it is possible that such a result is an advantage, as people who are unsure of the role of the media may become more attentive to the content they view. In case six, a significant drop can be seen showing that participants have realised how damaging it can be to read the headlines alone without knowing the content of the material.



For the seventh, there was a slight decrease in the issue of not intentionally sharing fake news. However, it should be recalled that it can happen to anyone to share something they believed to be true and it is almost impossible to completely eliminate this. Case eight - despite the fact that most of the participants already agreed that they felt European, there was an alignment of the group to the highest level here, so by the end the whole group felt fully European. In case nine, all participants and before and after the pilot implementation had a unanimous attitude towards our country's membership of the European Union. A phenomenon could be observed in the case ten of the question on knowledge of the workings of the European institutions - seniors, however, indicated in open questions that they had learned a lot about them. A private acquaintance with the participants may help in interpreting such results. Many of the participants are educated people and retired people from high positions, so one might be tempted to conclude that the lowering of this score might be due to the fact that they realised while expanding their knowledge, how much knowledge they still lack and that there might be more false content than they expected. Case eleven shows us that the participants have changed their minds about the media not having an impact on democracy - the participants have noticed how big this impact can be. In case twelve, we can see doubt on the subject of whether fake news is a real threat to democracy. Perhaps the participants were responding with an eye to ongoing education on the subject, and therefore felt that education would combat the threat. However, these are only conjectures, this topic would need to be explored further with the participants.



In the last case, it can be seen that trust in the media has decreased slightly, or at least dropped to a level of neutrality on the subject, which shows that participants are aware that, however, not all the information they obtain is false

A definite plus remains that in the final survey (compared to the first survey), seniors mentioned more often the values that guide the European Union.

Exceptions

The participants' responses appear to be surprising. On the one hand, it can be seen that belief in Facebook content has decreased among the participants, their awareness that the media can be a threat to democracy has increased, and their belief in the content seen in the media is at an average level (presumably they have in mind that much depends on the channel from which the information comes). On the other hand, a part of the participants after the exit survey indicated that it was easier for them to find reliable information, while another part showed that it was more difficult for them. Thus, this result can be interpreted in two ways, taking into account the predisposition and individual approach of each participant. Mentioned are just single cases, not trends (2-3 participants in the whole group).

c) Identify any trends or patterns in the data.

Changes in the variables studied were mainly minor, but positive.

4. RESULTS AND FINDINGS

a) Summarize the key findings from the pilot test.

It helps to see our own weaknesses and how little we know about something we seem to know a lot about, and makes us realise how complicated the world around us can be. Participants appreciated that an important topic was raised, but one that is not often discussed on a daily basis. It seems that the most interesting topic for the group was the European Union, followed by fake news in the second place. The most engaging seemed to be exercises that spoke to the personal experiences of participants and allowed them to share them.

b) Discuss the effectiveness of the educational strategy in achieving its goals.

As can be seen in the compilation of the averages from the surveys conducted at the first and last meeting, the activities proved to be beneficial, especially on the topics of media influence on democracy and headlines. Nevertheless, the results obtained are satisfactory and show that the prepared programme can be used to educate older people. Due to the specific learning characteristics of older people, the content of the implementation pilot should be refreshed in a modified form after time, but should cover the same topics.

c) Highlight any notable successes and areas for improvement.

It seems that the questions, especially the word 'no/not' appearing, may have been unclear to the participants or tricky, required reading comprehension or the form made it difficult for this age group. The role of the media should definitely be clarified to avoid consternation among the participants.

5. LESSONS LEARNED

a) Share insights gained from the pilot test experience.

Despite the prevalence of topics related to fake news, including its various forms, there are still weaknesses among seniors that need to be worked on. The seniors appreciated the tasks and the unconventional topics, which, as they saw themselves, are important for our lives as well as for our functioning as citizens. The exercises allowed them to see how strong propaganda and manipulation were in their youth and that some topics remain controversial even now because of this. The pilot was also refreshing for the instructor, as it also allowed for intergenerational education through the exchange of experiences. It was very motivating to see how actively the participants took part in the exercises and how willingly they shared their experiences and how many questions they asked.

b) Provide recommendations for refining the educational strategy.

It is a good idea to introduce the topics to the participants beforehand and ask them which seem the most difficult, which seem the easiest and which seem the most interesting. Their choices may surprise you and help you plan future sessions. In the case of a highly committed group, it may be worthwhile to plan for more sessions or allow more time for each meeting. The most engaging seemed to be exercises that spoke to the personal experiences of participants and allowed them to share them.

6. CONCLUSION

a) Summarize the overall outcomes and significance of the pilot tests.

The pilot implementation proved the effectiveness of the materials collected and developed by the project partners. The participants not only showed increased attention to issues related to fake news, online safety, awareness of false information, manipulation appearing in the media and the ability to verify the credibility of the sources they use, but also deepened their conviction about how important it is for them to be European. They showed that they cared about our country being part of the European Union and deepened their knowledge of the EU institutions and how they function. Based on the feedback collected, it can also be seen that it was important for them to exchange experiences on this topic, to meet seniors from other EU countries and to be able to return to their biographies, which allowed them to draw more from the present and from the information provided by the project.

b) Reiterate the project's objectives and their alignment with the pilot test results.

1) To create a capacity-building programme to develop digital media literacy and a mindful democratic participation among senior citizens - the objective has been achieved

2) To empower facilitators and educators on how to promote an active and mindful citizenship among seniors - the objective has been achieved

3) To encourage the exchange of experience and methodology among partners, reinforcing the network, and increasing organizations' capacity and educators' competences - the objective has been achieved

4) To reflect on democracy pillars and seniors' fundamental role as European Citizens towards democracy preservation, promoting their social and digital inclusion - the objective has been achieved

5) To create awareness on how disinformation and propaganda events interfere with democracy, promote critical thinking, media, and digital literacy - the objective has been achieved

6) To experiment and analyze different digital tools to promote the potential of European Citizenship as a mean to improve civic engagement and social inclusion among seniors - the objective has been achieved

7) To raise awareness among seniors to the importance of the common EU values, the principles of unity and diversity, reinforcing a sense of belonging to a common European space, creating connections, and providing sense of unity - the objective has been achieved

8) To provide an opportunity to participate in two transnational educational exchanges among seniors from different countries, reinforcing a European identity and Intercultural learning - the objective has been achieved

ERASMUS+ KA2 COOPERATION PARTNERSHIP IN ADULT EDUCATION

2021-1-PT01-KA220-ADU-000026060

“LINK - LINKing Seniors to Digital Media Literacy, Democracy and Diversity”

WP2

PILOT IMPLEMENTATION REPORT

(SPAIN)

Co-funded by
the European Union

The European Commission's support for the production of this publication does not constitute an endorsement of the contents, which reflect the views only of the authors, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein.

1. PARTICIPANTS

Those participating in the pilot implementation are connected to ADIPER, participating in the program and training organized by the company or having a close relationship with the organization. The training program was developed specifically for older people and is offered as part of regular training and support organized by ADIPER, as part of regional projects in Europe. Participation in these training programs is open to those who have previously participated in ADIPER-related programs.

A total of 10 seniors participated in the full training program, attending all scheduled sessions. In addition, we had the participation of 2 more seniors who participated in individual sessions of the program.

Team members include adults from diverse backgrounds and experiences, all focused on improving their skills and knowledge in areas relevant to their interests and contributing to society. The program sessions have been adapted to meet the needs and expectations of older people, taking into account their previous experiences and interactions with ADIPER.

2. IMPLEMENTATION

Our sessions at Adiper were methodically structured. The program included a total of 10 sessions, each lasting approximately 2 hours. These sessions have been held every week, from April to September 2023.
This weekly frequency gives followers the opportunity to gradually join the message and actively participate in each session without much feeling.
This time period allowed participants sufficient time to acquire and apply the knowledge and skills acquired through the program, thus ensuring the effectiveness of the learning process.

During the implementation of the program, various materials and resources were used to enrich the learning experience. Each session was supported by the use of a projector, supporting documents and digital tools to present information in a visual and accessible way.

In addition, printed documents and worksheets related to the topic of each session were provided, allowing participants to review and consolidate the concepts presented. Additional resources, such as concrete examples and case studies, were also used to illustrate the topics covered in the sessions. To reinforce understanding and active participation, questionnaires, discussion guides and practical exercises were used in certain sessions. Additionally, active participation of participants was encouraged through group discussions and collaborative activities.

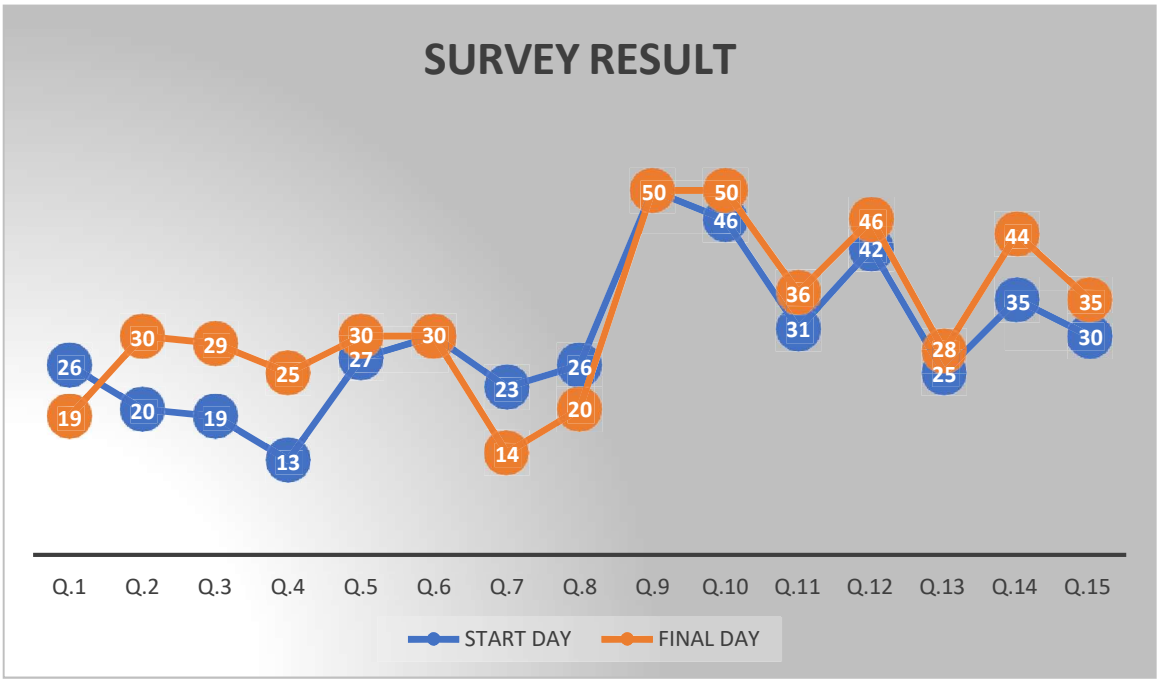
In the implementation of this program there were many challenges and incidents recorded that deserve to be mentioned. As participants have different levels of knowledge and skills, it is important to adapt the session to ensure that both new and experienced people can benefit from the programme. The adaptation of time was done by correctly presenting basic and advanced ideas, ensuring that the needs of all participants were met.

Another challenge is availability and familiarity with digital tools. Although support and guidance was provided, some participants found some digital tools unfamiliar. This made it necessary to provide more training and resources to ensure that all participants could participate effectively and overcome technical barriers. It was also found that having two participants in individual sessions presented a challenge in maintaining consistency in the program and ensuring that participants in individual sessions could get the most out of each other.

Despite these challenges, the program was well developed and participants showed a high level of engagement and interest in the content presented. Learning objectives were achieved and participants showed significant improvement in their skills and knowledge in relevant areas, demonstrating successful implementation of the program.

3. DATA COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS

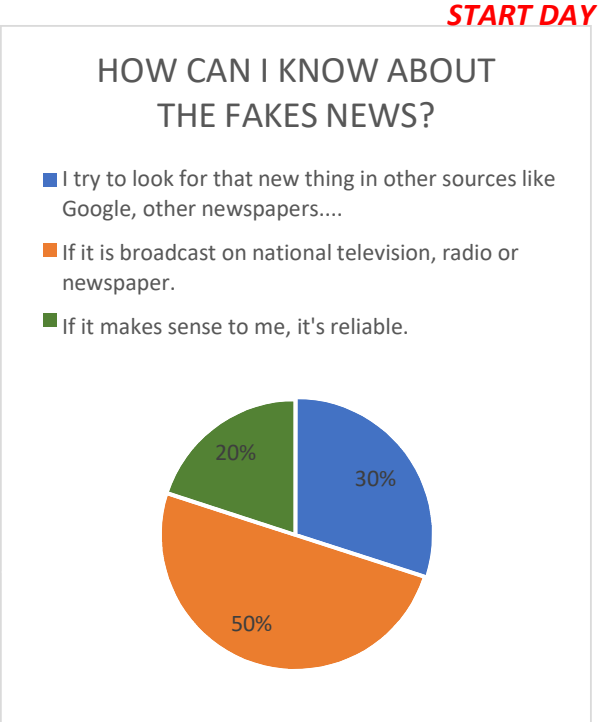
a) Present the data collected during the pilot tests, including surveys, feedback, and assessment results.



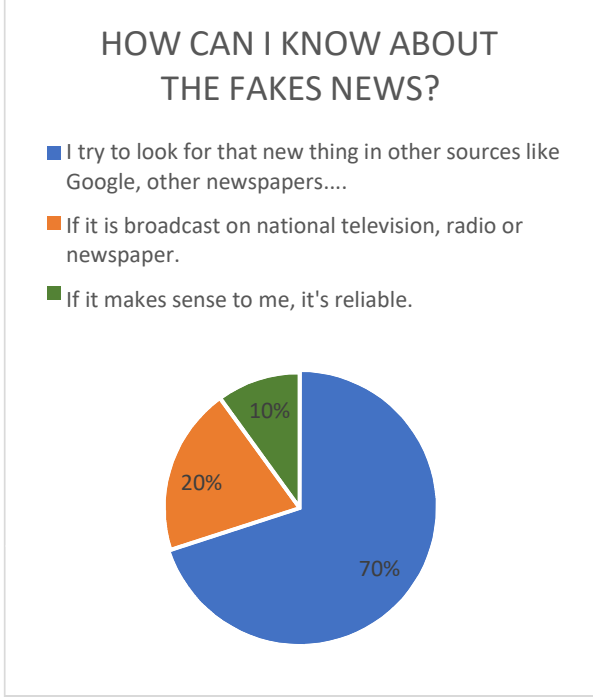
Q.1	I believe most of the news I see on Facebook.
Q.2	It is easy for me to find reliable information.
Q.3	I know how to check if some news is true or not.
Q.4	When I share information, I verify the source before sharing it.
Q.5	I don't trust the current media.
Q.6	I don't understand what the role of the media is.
Q.7	I only read the headlines and not the whole news.
Q.8	I have shared or believed some kind of fake news not on purpose.
Q.9	I feel European.
Q.10	I agree with Spain being part of the EU.
Q.11	I know how the European institutions work.
Q.12	I believe that democracy has to be preserved by citizens.
Q.13	I believe that the media is not important to preserve democracy.
Q.14	I believe that fake news can be a threat to democracy.
Q.15	I believe that what happens in the European institutions has an impact on my daily life.

Other outcomes:

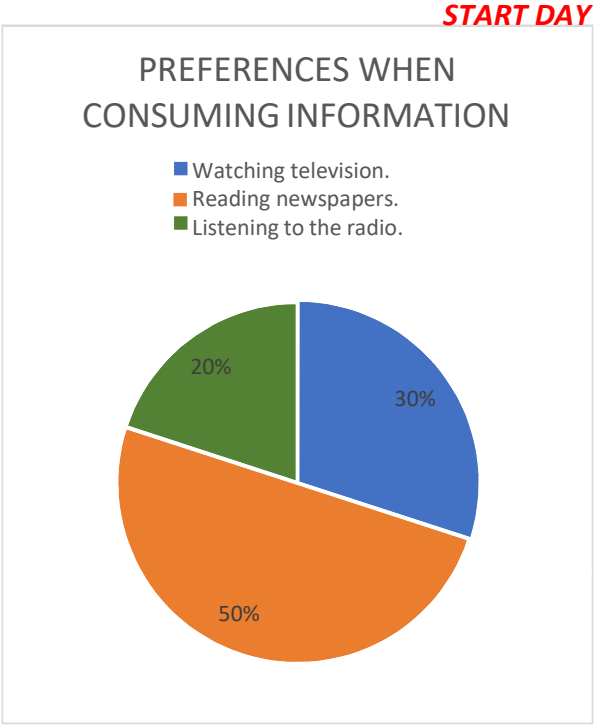
START DAY



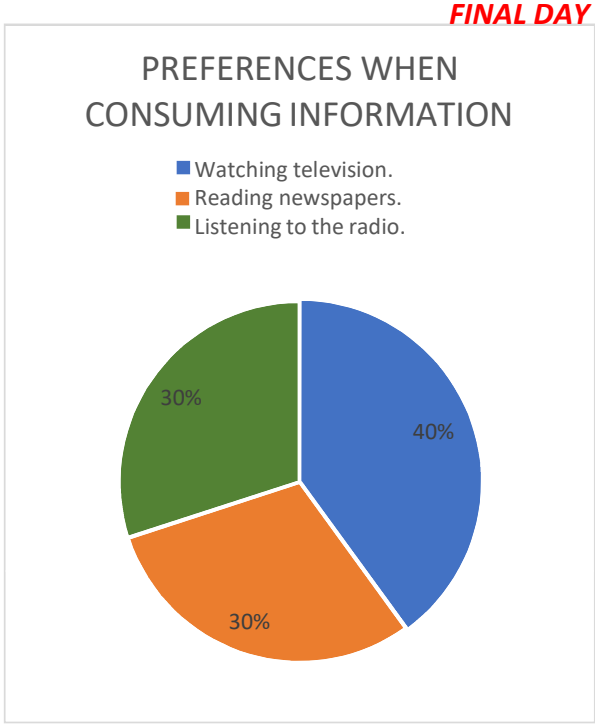
FINAL DAY



START DAY



FINAL DAY



b) Analyze the data to assess the impact of the educational strategy on digital literacy, awareness of disinformation and EU knowledge.

As we have been able to observe throughout the piloting of the digital literacy training activity, society is created to follow guided steps and with an implicit follow-up in social networks, new technologies and peer groups.

As our students have transmitted to us, it is necessary to have training in digital competence throughout a person's life because life is advancing a lot and we should be all people at the same level of knowledge as society is, and how is that achieved? training and teaching all population groups, in different lines, to be in contact and updated in all those advances that can improve a person's life.

After analyzing the survey conducted at the beginning and end of this training, there are several contents on which our students have been trained, such as fake news, and in which we have seen an initial lack of knowledge and they themselves have finally been able to change their thinking after these concepts learned and applied in real life.
Most of them have told us that they believed everything they saw advertised on social networks, in terms of news, because they did not know how to distinguish a fake news from a real one. Therefore, when they saw the source of information they did not know how to analyze how reliable it was. After practical applications in the classroom, they have been able to verify and verify that fake news exist and that they are within the reach of anyone and in our daily lives more than we can imagine.

As a result of this, sharing this information, which you do not know if it is real or not, makes society enter into a loop of information that is not real and everyone believes everything that is published. Why does this happen? Because there is no basis of digital competence or analysis of information in social networks.

In the same line and regarding the media (television, radio, newspapers...) they assume that these media are more credible than social networks, although they specify that "each specific communication channel speaks and explains things in its own way". It is true that the same news is not told in the same way in various channels, although the basis of the information is the same. The opposite is true of fake news, whose information base is not true at all.

As for our European institutions, everyone was familiar with them and even shared the same sentiment. They agree that there are different institutions at the European level that represent us and that you have a different figure in terms of issues and relationships.

They make use of the local, national and European vote, but for them the local or national vote is more important because they convey that it is what is closest to them and what they feel.

They do not feel that what happens in Europe has a direct impact on them, they see them as problems far away from us. They do feel, as citizens, necessary in all types of support they need at the local level.

c) Identify any trends or patterns in the data.

Doing a more focused analysis on the data pattern we see how, having a group of 10 people, representing the population, they all follow the same model of thought regarding fake news, truthfulness in publications and certain European news and topics.

They feel that certain media, such as radio or newspapers, are much more reliable than social networks. It may be that this group of people, aged between 50 and 70 years, not being up to date with the digital world, do not feel so direct and close to the daily news that they can also read to be informed. Ignorance leads directly to misinformation.

4. RESULTS AND FINDINGS

During the pilot test, several key results were obtained that demonstrated the impact and effectiveness of the educational plan. These results can be summarized as follows:

- Improved digital literacy: Participants saw significant improvements in their digital literacy skills. They can navigate better technologies and use digital tools with more confidence.
- Increased awareness of misinformation: Participants showed awareness of online misinformation and the dangers of the digital age. They can clearly spot signs of false or misleading content.
- Critical evaluation skills: Participants developed critical evaluation skills by analyzing online information. They learned to apply the principles of fact-checking and verifying the credibility of Internet sources.
- Greater confidence in online participation: Participants showed greater confidence in participating in online activities, such as communicating through social networks, doing business online, and participating in discussion forums.
- Social and community relations: The program supports social relations and creates a supportive community among participants. This leads to a greater sense of belonging and connection.

The educational strategy was effective in achieving its objectives. The results reflect a substantial increase in digital literacy skills, awareness of misinformation, and the ability to critically evaluate online information. Participants were able to apply these skills in their daily lives, demonstrating the effectiveness of the educational strategy to improve the digital competence of older adults.

- Notable successes: Notable successes include significant improvement in participants' skills, their ability to detect misinformation, and their increasing confidence in the digital environment. Additionally, the formation of a supportive community and social interaction were highlights of the program.

- Areas for improvement: While the program was successful as a whole, some areas for improvement include continued adaptation to the changing needs of participants, especially in an ever-evolving digital environment. You could also consider extending the duration of the program or including additional modules to address more advanced topics.

Overall, the pilot program was a success in terms of achieving its educational goals, empowering older adults in the digital age, and fostering a rich learning community. The positive results support the effectiveness of the educational strategy and point to the importance of continuing to adapt it to meet the changing needs of participants.

5. LESSONS LEARNED

The pilot implementation provided us with valuable lessons that improved our understanding and focus on promoting digital literacy among adults. Some key lessons include:

- Adaptability and flexibility: Flexibility and adaptability are important when working with adults. It is important to adjust the program based on the needs and skill level of the participants, which requires ongoing evaluation and the ability to modify sessions as necessary.
- Community importance: Solidarity community formation among the participants was evident. This highlights the importance of encouraging social interaction and creating a supportive environment during the session.
- Stay Motivated: Keeping followers motivated during the event is important. Variety in sessions, such as practical exercises and discussions, can help maintain interest and participation.
- Continuous evaluation of digital tools: As technology is constantly changing, it is important to evaluate and update the digital tools used in the program to ensure that they are useful and useful.

Based on our lessons learned, we offer the following recommendations to improve the planning:

- More customization: Discover personalized shapes that meet the individual needs of participants. This may include providing optional sessions for specific skill levels or adapting examples and exercises to real-world participant situations.

- Different modules: Consider introducing specific modules that address advanced digital literacy topics, such as cybersecurity, online privacy, and password management.

- Continuity and long-term support: Provide opportunities for continuous learning and long-term support to support and strengthen acquired skills. This may include a follow-up session or online support group.

- Evaluation of results: Create clear evaluation metrics to measure the long-term impact of the program on the lives of participants, which will allow for continuous improvement and adaptation of the educational plan.

In summary, the lessons learned from the pilot show the importance of change, community and motivation in promoting digital literacy among adults. Recommendations to improve learning strategies focus on self-regulation, subject expansion, and long-term support. These strategies can contribute to a more effective and flexible approach to empowering adults in the digital age.

6. CONCLUSION

The pilot of our digital literacy program for older adults has generated significant results and has proven to be a highly relevant initiative. In summary, the general results and their meaning are as follows:

Participants experienced notable improvement in their digital literacy skills, gaining the ability to navigate technology and use digital tools with greater confidence. This is especially relevant in an increasingly digitalized world, where digital competence is essential for active participation in society and everyday life.

Increased awareness of online misinformation and the ability to critically evaluate information represents an important achievement. Participants are now better equipped to identify and resist the spread of false and misleading information, contributing to greater resilience in the information age.

The creation of a supportive community among participants is a significant outcome that reinforces the importance of social interaction and mutual support in the learning process. This not only improves the quality of life of participants, but also contributes to a more robust and effective approach to higher education.

The pilot results reflect strong alignment with the objectives of the original project. The project aimed to empower older adults by improving their digital literacy skills and promoting active participation in the digital society.

The results demonstrate that the program has successfully achieved these goals by improving participants' digital literacy skills and encouraging their active participation online. Creating a supportive community further strengthens this achievement by providing an environment conducive to continued learning and participation.