



DIGITAL SKILLS FOR AN AGEING EUROPE (DISK)

2020-1-FR01-KA204-079823

GUIDELINES FOR FUTURE TRAINING





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DISK



1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

DISK Guidelines represents a manual for the Project DISK products use. This document is intended for the project target groups to help them to use the DISK learning resources both in an efficient and effective way.

The guidelines consist of several parts that are independent, offering an overview of the project in general, the project goals, partners and the project deliverables.

The DISK courses are the most important outcome from the DISK project – a two-year Erasmus + project. There is a brief description of each course.

There is a section which explains the online, face-to-face and blended way of learning model. Given that DISK e-resources can be used in different learning ways, the participants, educators and trainers will be able to decide which method is most appropriate in accordance with the characteristics of the target group, technical options and the level of language and ICT skills possessed by seniors. The ten courses developed within the DISK project are accessible through a DISK training platform. Training platform functionalities, access and how to navigate through the courses are presented in this document. There is a section with recommendations for the future training and final remarks.

Guidelines for future training are produced based on the activities during implementation of the project and findings from the DISK Pilot and Validation activities conducted by the DISK consortium. Guidelines are offered to the project target group as a tool on how to get the most of the DISK training along with OER functionalities and recommendations provided by the trainers, educators.

This document refers both to practical and organizational aspects and to purely pedagogical issues, such as guidelines for trainers, students, structure and content of the workshops, etc.



DISK



2. PROJECT DISK

Project DISK is an Erasmus+ project funded by the European Commission. The project is implemented in 6 countries France, Italy, Belgium, Spain, Greece, Macedonia, by eight project partners.

Loneliness, isolation and social exclusion are important risk factors that can lead to poor health in older people, especially in the absence of family networks or insufficient family support. The DISK project seeks to address the following issues, based on a general observation of the situation in Europe. The main goal of the project is addressing these problems through the promotion of active aging, encouraging seniors to adopt a range of good practices to preserve their mental health through digital technologies.

Digital Skills for an Ageing Europe (DISK) adopted an intersectoral and gender sensitive approach and capitalizes on the valuable experience of the project partners (eight organizations from six different countries) to provide the elderly with innovative and tailored training opportunities.

Project objectives are reached by carrying out the following activities:

1. Creation of dedicated OER Platform accessible to all, free of charge, in full Open Access mode and in multilingual versions (EN, FR, GR, IT, MK, ES) where all the content produced is published.
2. Highly interactive e-learning courses, developed to improve the memory and learning skills of the elderly, help them familiarize with practical services such as online shopping, and bookings, etc. with a view to improving their cognitive abilities and health, as well as preventing skill decline and dementia.
3. Guidelines to facilitate the uptake of Digital Skills for an Ageing Europe to sustain project results beyond Erasmus co-financing and widen its range of impact.

DISK OER and all training courses in the OER are available in six languages: English, French, Italian, Spanish, Greek and Macedonian language.



2.1 PROJECT PARTNERS



E-SENIORS: INITIATION DES SENIORS AUX NTIC ASSOCIATION, France

E-Seniors is a non-profit non-governmental organization, founded in 2005. E-Seniors aims at fighting e-exclusion by providing access to and training in ICT to seniors and/or disabled people. The organization also aims at raising awareness among seniors about the importance of ICT solutions for their social inclusion and for cognitive training. E-Seniors has organised workshops on cultural and artistic activities for their beneficiaries. E-Seniors proposes also interactive gaming activities in residences for the elderly, retirement homes and day-care centres.



□ Società Cooperativa Sociale Fuori dal Sottosomero, Italy

Cooperativa Fuori dal Sottosomero is a not for profit organization founded in Mesagne (in Puglia, South of Italy) in 2001; it is active in the field of adults, active aging, social and job integration of vulnerable target groups (in particular person with disability). Their mission is to enhance the quality of life of seniors by maintaining their independence and dignity. The supportive services help seniors meet their daily living needs at home, which greatly impacts their health and ability to remain living independently. With community-based assistance, seniors can thrive at home where they are happiest. SOMMERSO offers a vital support system for vulnerable elderly with limited options who would otherwise not have access to or be able to afford services. In particular our main services are: home help, meal distribution, and adult workshops. We may be able to refer disabled persons to wheelchair accessible housing or transportation or other services in our city. In addition, periodically we organize recreational events in order to provide the opportunity for further interaction and socialization among our target group.



IDP SAS DI GIANCARLO COSTANTINO (ITALIAN DEVELOPMENT PARTNERS), Italy

IDP European Consultants (IDP) is a Small & Medium Enterprise, incorporated in Italy in 1995 by partners working in Brussels on EU affairs since 1991: this gives IDP 25 years of experience in international projects and partnerships of excellence. The mission of IDP is the promotion of



entrepreneurship, support of growth of European SMEs through integration in the EU Single Market.

IDP promotes innovation and competitiveness of the EU socio-economic ecosystem composed of SMEs, Academia/Research, civil society, and the public sector.

IDP specializes on European policies and programmes in support of growth, competitiveness and innovation in the fields of Education & Training, ICT, Research & Innovation.

In addition to providing advisory services, IDP is also a training and vocational education provider in formal and non-formal environments: IDP develops and implements specialized training courses on EU Affairs (EU Institutions and policies, EU funding programmes, etc), Project Management and Entrepreneurship, transversal competences and employability delivering more than 1.000 hours of training to more than 500 trainees per year.

INSTITUT DE HAUTE FORMATION AUX POLITIQUES COMMUNAUTAIRES (IHF),
Belgium



Institut de Haute Formation aux Politiques Communautaires asbl (IHF asbl) is a non profit organisation established and operating in Brussels (Belgium) since 2003 to promote awareness of European values and reinforce the capacity to use opportunities at European level of a diverse audience of young people, business community and academia, as well as social partners like associations and public administration.

The mission of IHF is to increase awareness about EU integration and offer capacity-building opportunities about EU opportunities for transnational collaboration to representatives of three key groups of stakeholders:

civil society, with a particular focus on the Third Sector and NGOs, especially those at grass root level (i.e. small associations operating outside of urban areas); public sector, in particular local and regional authorities business community, with emphasis on individual entrepreneurs, microenterprises and SMEs. IHF asbl serves as a platform of collaboration among international practitioners of EU affairs and EU integration coming from the international public service, academia and research community and the private sector. Such consolidated international network, empowers IHF asbl to carry out significant visibility and dissemination activities.

ASOCIACION IT SOLUTIONS FOR ALL, Spain





IT Solutions For All is a non-profit organization based in Malaga, Spain, that seeks promoting training on ICT technologies (Information and Communication Technologies) for low-skilled people in order to empower them and let them function comfortably in the technological world in which we live. IT Solutions For All wants to spread a genuine love towards new technologies and the

Internet, as a way to improve the quality and lifestyle of any person. IT Solutions For All 's mission is to provide free technological consulting services and integral solutions in the field of information,

communication and management tools to disadvantaged people in order to boost basic IT knowledge in modern technical environments. IT Solutions For All's vision is achieving short-term sustainable impacts in the fields of Digital Skills and IT solutions, with efficient management of resources, active community participation and the involvement of public institutions. In Malaga, IT Solutions For All carries out different activities to convey the idea of improving quality of lifestyle by using ICT resources.



MATHEMAGENESIS IDIOTIKI KEFALAIOUCHIKI ETAIREIA, Greece

Mathemagenesis is a Greek SME located in Thessaloniki. Its staff is formed by professionals in business administration, educational technologies, computer engineers and instructional design. Mathemagenesis is an eLearning provider with both national customers and European partners being involved in EU projects.

Mathemagenesis has taken massive strides in the field of technology-based learning since its inception by designing and delivering innovative e-learning services and solutions through a holistic approach to learning.

Mathemagenesis portfolio includes the development of over 50 self-paced online training courses in a variety of subjects co-created by instructional designers, trainers, content experts and professionals in their fields. We are also experts in providing Virtual Instructor-Led training (VILT) by designing and hosting online live training events (webinars) in order to maximize the quality of the provided knowledge. Beyond our role as eLearning content providers, the company has also extensive experience in developing eLearning platforms making learning simple and unusually innovative by bringing measurable results.

Mathemagenesis R & D team has special expertise in the following areas: emerging technologies in education; informal learning; e-learning R&D; instructional design, virtual instructor – led learning;



mobile learning; social learning; game based learning; e-learning systems design & development; learning analytics and digital marketing in education.

pistes solidaires

PISTES SOLIDAIRES, France

Pistes-Solidaires, based in the southwest of France, is an association that develops its projects and actions according to the 4 pillars of education of UNESCO: learning to know, learning to be, learning to do, learning to live together and with others.

Education goes hand in hand with openness to the world and an understanding of local/global interdependencies. They work on intercultural learning and global education, bringing people from different backgrounds to accept those of others, regardless of their religion, sexual orientation, social class or age. The work of Pistes-Solidaires is based on the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG). Their work is developed through 3 departments:

1/ MOBILITY OF YOUNG PEOPLE AND STUDENTS: Work with young people is focused on the development of learning paths through educational mobility in Europe and in the world. These pathways are experiential learning through volunteering and internships abroad.

2/ SOCIAL AND EDUCATIONAL INNOVATIONS: Research and innovation in the social and education fields are at the heart of this area of work. They create educational, social or socio-cultural resources in order to better answer needs that emerge in a transition society.

3/ EUROPEAN CITIZENSHIP: Since 2013, they have been labelled Europe Direct by the European Commission. Their missions: to inform, advise, make the EU, its member states, its functioning, its importance and its impact on our daily life understood and known.



Community Development Institute – CDI, North Macedonia

The Community Development Institute is a non-governmental and non-profit organization that works on improving the living conditions and the standard of life of the citizens. CDI is also a registered legal entity with the Ministry of Culture of Republic of Macedonia in the register of



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UNESCO clubs accepted by UNESCO. They organize and perform events in the field of art and culture activities for their beneficiaries. The CDI's experience is based on more than 25 years work within the community, addressing citizens' problems and needs and helping in overcoming challenges. CDI provides a workplace for people from different ethnic and social backgrounds, and offers non-formal education in the fields of project management and employment skills.

2.2 PROJECT OBJECTIVES, AIMS



ICT has severely contributed to change our life and has turned letters to email, market shopping to on-line shopping, apps and automatic replies to human technical customer support, and in particular in the field of culture a great deal of contents are now available online, free to be used and enjoyed, yet the lack of skills and online awareness often impede adult users to benefit from online cultural offers.

The Internet has speeded our life conditions but it has also a dark side if we consider malware, hacking, phishing, denial of service attacks, click fraud, invasion of privacy, violation of digital property rights, etc.

In an increasingly IT-driven society with an ageing population who is plodding through it, Digital Skills for an Ageing Europe (DISK) adopted an intersectoral and gender sensitive approach and capitalize on the valuable experience of its partners (eight organizations from six different countries) to provide the elderly with innovative and tailored training opportunities.

The DISK project seeks to assist senior citizens by encouraging them to use new technologies to adopt a variety of good practices in order to preserve their health and have a flourishing old age.

To support these goals, a free online platform that brings together various training courses to improve senior citizens memory, attention, perception and executive skills, as well as to familiarize them with practical internet services, was implemented. DISK consortium developed cognitive training content uploaded to the online platform in order to train the mind and prevent skill decline and dementia. Concretely, project partners created games and quizzes for cognitive training that

are part of a complete package. These exercises can be practiced online on the project's platform and are designed to stimulate the cognitive abilities of the seniors.

DISK training is aimed to improve the cognitive capacity and health of seniors and slow the decline in memory and cognitive capacities. In addition, the great flexibility of the technological tool allows



the content of the training to be varied by adapting to individual learning needs (e.g. foreign language vs. daily services, etc.).

2.3 TARGET GROUPS



1. Primary target group: ICT low-skilled adults, seniors, organizations working with seniors, social services.
- “Young seniors” between 65 and 74 years old
2. Stakeholders and local/regional/international representatives, institutional stakeholders, journalists, organizations, companies, etc.
3. General public: the general public that is affected by and interested

in digital inclusion, digital skills and competences.

In accordance to the project application, created deliverables were tested with the project target groups in the 8 countries of the partnership.

This pilot phase allowed partners to test and validate the training courses created in the IO3 and to identify any deficiencies in the correctness, completeness and reliability of the IOs development.

The Test & Validation Phase answered the questions: Did the didactic modules created satisfy the needs identified by the Target Groups? Did the teaching modules respond perfectly to the project objectives?

Project partners delivered the DISK Training in the IO3 activity to a total of 91 participants. The training sessions were held online and face to face.

The Pilot phase with target group representatives provided input, feedbacks and comments on the contents, the structure, the versatility, etc. of teaching materials. The majority of feedback was positive, indicating that participants rated the content of the training and modules as very good or excellent, the educational content informative, educational, stimulating, motivating. The platform was indicated as user-friendly, easy to navigate, welcoming, explanatory and detailed as possible in order to be used by all types of users.

Thanks to the results obtained in the piloting (T&V) activities, a series of lessons learnt have been collected allowing the partners to further fine-tune and improve contents and materials of the DISK project in its final version.



2.4 PROJECT RESULTS

=> IO1: Platform Free Educational Resource: providing free access to all teaching and training materials that are uploaded to the online platform (including e-learning courses for all the different key players, the community engagement guide, etc.). Open Educational Resources is a valuable tool that allows flexibility and adaptability to individuals, regardless of their age, gender or socio-economic status. In addition to the affordances of the OER, diskproject.eu has additional accessibility features that will create a better visual experience for site visitors with different needs. DISK OER and all training courses in the OER are available in six languages: English, French, Italian, Spanish, Greek and Macedonian language.

=> IO3: Content Development & Training: IO3 consists of the creation of cognitive training content uploaded to the online platform in order to train the mind and prevent skill decline and dementia. Concretely, the consortium created games and quizzes for cognitive training that are part of a complete package. These exercises can be practiced online on the project's platform and are designed to stimulate the cognitive abilities and brain plasticity of seniors.

Following the capacity gap analysis, and following the models, tools, and defined means all partners developed in detail the contents of 10 training courses and game instructions in the four main areas of cognitive abilities: Memory, Executive functions, Perception, Attention.

=> IO4: Guide and Advocacy (Recommendations): IO4 represents the final version of the project and includes a policy recommendation and the Guidelines on the future use of the paths created for the Seniors. Guidelines refer more to the target group and represents a tool on how to get the most of the DISK training along with OER functionalities and recommendations provided by the trainers, educators.

A policy recommendation represents policy advice for the stakeholders: government (depending on the political structure of the country) and ministries, organisations responsible for social and adult education, social services, NGOs, associations. The recommendations are based on the feedback collected in the test and validation phase and partners' inputs on the relevant questions included in the policy recommendation document.

3. WHY DISK?



Digital skills nowadays are seen as a key factor in the digital transition of countries, necessary for its success. Strengthening digital skills has therefore become an integral part of national digital transformation strategies. Digital skills allow people to generate and share digital content, connect and cooperate, and address challenges for effective and creative realization in private and professional life. Technological advances lead to significant changes in the skills needed in the labor market. The future requires a certain set of digital skills, indispensable for economic development and prosperity of society in any country. Hence, any gaps and deficits in these skills can be seen as a challenge to further progress.

Since the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic, digital development through digital transformation has become ever more important. Enhancing the availability of products and services and empowering citizens, workers, and students in their daily affairs and needs during the lockdown has become a clear priority for all countries, and the ability to take advantage of the progress made in the digital sphere has become an important factor in determining sustainability.

According to UNESCO, digital skills are defined as a range of abilities to use digital devices, communication applications and networks to access and manage information. They enable people to create and share digital content, communicate and collaborate, and solve problems for effective and creative fulfillment in life, learning, work and social activities in general.

These skills are increasingly seen as necessary, both in personal and professional life, as the society sees its services, both public and private, to become more and more digitized and dematerialised. Romance, information, entertainment, shopping, travelling, political participation, public services and civil affairs – there is hardly any aspect of our everyday lives that is not permeated by digital technologies. Computers and smartphones open doors to new worlds, connect people all over the globe, and facilitate many daily activities.

Although the share of older people who use the internet has increased steadily, older people are still among the largest group affected by digital inequalities. We cannot ignore the fact there is (still) a vast amount of older people who involuntarily lack sufficient skills and confidence for adopting the digital technologies necessary to participate in society. Digital inclusion of older people has been recognized as a pressing issue on many fronts, and has to go beyond merely providing the technological infrastructure.



DISK



DISK project assists senior citizens by encouraging them to use new technologies to adopt a variety of good practices in order to preserve their health and have a flourishing old age.

To support these goals, a free online platform that brings together 10 training courses to improve senior citizens memory, attention, perception and executive skills, as well as to familiarize them with practical internet services, was implemented. Open Educational Resources is a valuable tool that allows flexibility and adaptability to individuals, regardless of their age, gender or socio-economic status. In addition to the affordances of the OER, diskproject.eu has additional accessibility features that will create a better visual experience for site visitors with different needs.

5. DISK TRAINING – COURSES OVERVIEW



DISK courses are the most important outcome from the DISK project. The outcomes and content are carefully selected based on the key needs for the project target groups. DISK OER and all training courses in the OER are available in six languages: English, French, Italian, Spanish, Greek and Macedonian language. IO3 consists of the creation of cognitive training content uploaded to the online platform in order to train the mind and prevent skill decline and dementia. Concretely, the consortium created games and quizzes for cognitive training that are part of a complete package. These exercises can be practiced online on the project's platform and are designed to stimulate the cognitive abilities and brain plasticity of seniors. Following the capacity gap analysis, and following the models, tools, and defined means all partners developed in detail the contents of 10 training courses and game instructions in the four main areas of cognitive abilities: Memory, Executive functions, Perception, Attention. Games accompanying each DISK training course are very important for the assimilation of knowledge. They are an excellent method and need to be encouraged for its value in terms of education, as it is an enjoyable way to learn new skills.

DISK – Available Training Modules:

	Training Module Title	Category
1	Presentation of the different types of memory	MEMORY
2	Train your brain	MEMORY
3	Preview – Question – Reread – Study – Test: the PQRST exercise	MEMORY
4	Scenario making and problem solving: a safeguard for your cognitive abilities	Executive functions
5	How to improve your deductive reasoning skills?	Executive functions
6	The different types of perceptions and ways to improve your interaction skills	Perception
7	Presentation of cognitive stimuli	Perception
8	Working on your mental fitness: focus and attention for seniors	Attention
9	How art and meditation improves attention	Attention
10	Finding Waldo: Remaining sharp in your older age	Attention

1. Presentation of the different types of memory

Have you ever found yourself walking into a room only to realise that you cannot remember why you went in there in the first place? Or you can't remember where you put your keys? Or why does this person look so familiar? All these situations have in common one cognitive skill: memory. There are different types of memory that can explain why sometimes we are forgetful about certain things and not others. In this

training module, you will learn everything about the different types of memory. At the end of this module, you will be able to:

- Know about the different types of memory
- Understand how each types of memory works and its characteristics
- Know some tips to boost your memory



2. Train your brain

We often do something intentional and conscious to help us remember. In other words, we make use of some memory strategies, also called “mnemotechniques”. Mnemonics are memorization techniques that facilitate the storage and retrieval of information. The systematic use of these strategies allows obtaining improvements in memory performance in a short time.

This module includes a series of exercises that use different **mnemonics** based on the type and quantity of information to be processed. The aim is to strengthen short-term memory and the ability to hold more information at the same time. By the end of this module:

- you will learn a technique to strengthen your ability to memorize and retain more information through associations and links between them;
- you will be able to use this technique to complete some daily tasks more easily, such as remembering what to buy at the supermarket, memorizing a phone number, etc.
- you will have a better understanding of how memory works and how it is possible to keep it trained like a muscle;

The following skills will also be enhanced:

- creating meaningful associations between more information in order to remember them more easily;
- remembering things and objects that are seen and locate them in the space;

3. Preview – Question – Reread – Study – Test: the PQRST exercise

In this module, targets will be introduced to the **PQRST Model** (Preview, Question, Read, Summary, Test). The PQRST Method is among the most reliable way to learn new material and retain knowledge in your memory. Originally based on an experimental work conducted by a group of psychologists, this technique is recommended by professional across all domains of education and training and it found great echo among high-school and college students. Even though the model is designed to be applied in studying, it can be virtually readapted in all settings: there are no formal boundaries for its application.

Learners will be guided through all five steps of the method with clear examples that they can refer to have a better grasp on the matter.

Firstly and foremost, targets will have the opportunity to acquire a new studying method that is perfectly suitable to their specific needs. Through practice, targets will be able to transfer their new skills in all domains.



The ultimate goal is to equip them with a practical method to strengthen and exercise their mnemonic functions, their efficiency in absorb new information and retain knowledge, and most importantly, their perception of **self-efficacy** and **self-awareness**.

4. Scenario making and problem solving: a safeguard for your cognitive abilities

Scenario making (aka scenario thinking and scenario analysis) is a method deriving from military intelligence. Businesses and organisation began to rely on it to define and brainstorm on long-term strategic plans. In the context of this training module, learners will be faced with simple daily-life challenges (i.e you are stuck in the traffic and your car's engine stops working, what do you do now?). For each scenario, they will be required to: Evaluate and assess possible (re)actions; evaluate and assess the effects that such (re)actions might trigger; evaluate and assess further outcomes.

There will not be correct or wrong answers, this is not a test nor a “behavioural quiz”; learners are required to develop themselves the outcomes that their decision might generate in order to better assess the following cause-effect implications. This is conceived as an exercise for them to train their cognitive flexibility regardless of the accuracy and adequacy of their decisions.

Objective of this module is to stimulate targets’: critical thinking, creativity, analytical thinking and reasoning, imaging and reactivity and responsiveness.

5. How to improve your deductive reasoning skills?

This course will introduce the concept of deductive reasoning skills, and some useful actions to boost them.

Besides, it will help beneficiaries to set the basis and improve their skills in decision making through practical approaches in an easy way.

By the end of this module, you will be able to...

- Incorporate the concept of deductive reasoning;
- Visualise some practical examples of deductive reasoning;
- Differentiate between inductive and deductive reasoning;
- Know some tips on how to improve deductive reasoning;
- Incorporate the concept of decision-making skills;
- Learn some ways to improve decision-making skills;
- Know some tips to improve and enhance your decision-making skills.



6. The different types of perceptions and ways to improve your interaction skills

The perception affects the way we view everything around us, but how does it actually work? What makes us see things differently from others? How does perception affect our behavioral processes? Relating perception to our everyday life is more important than one might think, the way we view the world and everything around us has a direct effect on our thoughts, actions, and behavior. It helps us relate things to one another, and be able to recognize situations, objects, and patterns.

By the end of this module, you will be able to understand:

What is perception?

How does perception actually work?

Types of perception;

The importance of perception;

How to improve your perceptual skills?

7. Presentation of cognitive stimuli

This training module will immerse you in the world of perception of the 5 senses of the human body, explaining the different forms of stimuli that exist, and presenting concrete cases where your perception is put to the test.

Learning Outcomes / objectives

At the end of this module, you will be able to:

- Know about the different types of cognitive stimuli;
- Understand how each types of cognitive stimuli works with your perception;
- Discover the artificial stimuli and their effect on your perception;
- Know some tips to train and boost your perception of cognitive stimuli.

8. Working on your mental fitness: focus and attention for seniors

The primary purpose of this module is to contribute to the European Union's aim to expand the role of seniors in today's society by improving their digital competencies. This module aims to provide students with a basic understanding of mental fitness and attention as a cognitive process, to show real life usage of digital technologies that utilize attention, and to introduce simple mental fitness exercises to demonstrate the elasticity of the human brain.



By the end of this module, you will be able to:

- Understand mental fitness and define how mental fitness exercises can help increase your attention skills;
- Compare your conventional ways of thinking about attention with new information provided;
- Use your attention skills to increase your digital competencies in two real world examples;
- Experiment with a set of mental exercises;
- Articulate your own ideas about attention in the digital age;
- Source and repurpose your learning in order to support/guide others in the society.

9. How art and meditation improves attention

The human capacity to sustain attention over time is limited and effortful, and is prone to fatigue, lapses, and fluctuations with prolonged engagement. These limitations are exacerbated by age-related cognitive decline and there is now considerable interest in identifying training interventions that can offer effective remediation in aging populations and promote cognitive improvements in healthy individuals at large. In this module, you will learn about the relationship between cognitive Skills and Art Therapy and Meditation. Specifically, you will learn easy, funny and stimulating exercises to improve your Attention Skill. By the end of this module, you will be able to:

- Acquire artistic ability;
- Boost creativity;
- Acquire active listening;
- Acquire ability to inspire trust and provide an open atmosphere;
- Reduce anxiety, depression and other mental/emotional problems;
- Prevent mental illness;
- Prevent social/emotional difficulties related to disability or illness.

10. Finding Waldo: Remaining sharp in your older age

In this module, you will learn about visual attention and visual search skills, more precisely about the visual search game “Where’s Waldo?” Visual attention is a cognitive skill that declines with ageing but can be trained and improved like all other cognitive skills. By the end of this module, you will be able to:

- Understand the different types of visual attention
- Know about how science explains outstanding visual search skills
- Know about how to become beware and improve your visual attention
- Learn about the benefits of Where’s Waldo games for visual attention



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5. DISK OER PLATFORM & VIRTUAL COMMUNITY



The DISK project assists senior citizens by encouraging them to use new technologies to adopt a variety of good practices in order to preserve their health and have a flourishing old age. To support these goals, a free online platform that brings together various training courses to improve senior citizens memory, attention, perception and executive skills, as well as to familiarize them with practical internet services, was implemented.

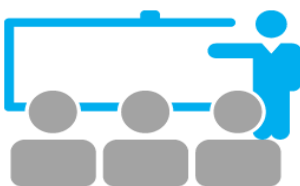
DISK Training resources are accessible through a DISK Training platform. This platform includes all the materials developed by the different partners within DISK project, organized in section and subsection, which are structured by modules and units, from which you access to content, downloadable material, links to electronic resources, questionnaires, multimedia content and other relevant material for the purpose of the DISK project.

Open Educational Resources is a valuable tool that allows flexibility and adaptability to individuals, regardless of their age, gender or socio-economic status. In addition to the affordances of the OER, diskproject.eu has additional accessibility features that will create a better visual experience for site visitors with different needs. Through this training, adults and seniors will improve the cognitive capacity and the mental aging process will be slowed down.

All content on the DISK Platform exists in 6 languages: English, French, Italian, Spanish, Greek and Macedonian language.

5.2 ONLINE, FACE TO FACE, AND BLENDED LEARNING MODE

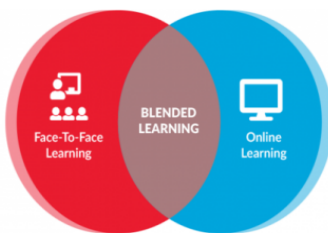
DISK Courses can be taken in Face to Face, online and blended mode – according to the participant/group preferences and possibilities / limitations.



Face to face learning model means that the training is held in a classroom with a trainer presenting the module, use of modules ppt, DISK Platform resources, using examples, role plays and using materials which provide efficient presentation of the created modules.



Online learning model – means that participant visits the platform and enrolls in the wanted DISK course/s. It means is when you take courses online instead of in a physical classroom. It saves time as a senior does not need to travel to the training venue. Participants navigate themselves into the content of the available DISK e-learning resources.



Blended learning model

Blended learning combines classroom learning with online learning, in which seniors can, in part, control the time, and place of their learning. Blended learning encourages collaboration through one-on-one and small-group interventions. Blended learning is effective because it allows students to learn at their own pace and their own ability level. By including a virtual environment, learning is not limited to a physical classroom.

5.3 DISK TRAINING PLATFORM FUNCTIONALITIES

DISK PLATFORM is a self-standing repository of knowledge and Training specifically dedicated to seniors to assist them in improvement of their cognitive skills and active aging. DISK OER represents an easily accessible doorway into a new world of opportunity for fruitful active aging and seniors' wellness.

User experience, needs and expectations have been to the fore in the design and development of the Platform and training courses to produce a unique practically grounded learning resource. DISK OER Platform is available in six languages: English, French, Italian, Spanish, Greek and Macedonian language.



Access to online training platform – DISK Training Site:
DISK courses can be accessed through the DISK project website
by selecting the following link: <https://diskproject.eu/>

A visitor can reach the learning materials and OER of the DISK project through entering diskproject.eu to their web browsers address bar. Diskproject.eu is accessible through desktop and mobile devices. An experience of a desktop user is selected for this explanation.



On the top of the webpage, right under the address bar, visitors can change accessibility parameters. For mobile users, visitors should click on the wheelchair icon to access different selections. The selections include: **Contrast** (night contrast, black and white contrast, black background yellow type font and yellow background and black type font); **Layout** (Fixed - where the width of the webpage stays the same independent of the screen size the viewer has. **Wide** - where it adapts to the viewers' screen size) and **Font** (smaller, larger fonts, more readable font vs. default font)

Under the **Accessibility bar**, visitors can see the navigation bar of the website with the project's logo. There are eight main sections in diskproject.eu that is supported in all languages:

Homepage: Start page of the diskproject.eu

Project: An introduction to the project and explanation of the project's intellectual outputs

Toolkit: Open Educational Resources on four main themes that are memory, attention, perception and executive skills.

Partners: Small info about each project partner.

Community: Small info about each associated partner.

Glossary: The list of terms that accompanies the courses in the toolkit section.

News: Dissemination activities and general news related to the project.

Contact: Contact form

Detailed description of the Toolkit:

The toolkit main page is categorized into four main mental skills i.e Memory, Executive Functions, Perception and Attention. The course list is as follows:

Memory:

- 1) The different types of memory
- 2) Mnemonics: strategies to improve memory
- 3) The PQRST Method: how to learn faster and better Executive Functions:
- 4) Working on Your Analytical Skills: Scenario Making for Executive Cognitive Functions
- 5) How to Improve Your Deductive Reasoning Skills and Ways to Boost Your Decision-Making Skills
Perceptions:
- 6) The Different Types of Perceptions and Ways to Improve your Interaction Skills
- 7) The Cognitive Stimuli Attention:
- 8) Working on Your Mental Fitness: Focus and Attention for Seniors
- 9) How Art And Meditation Improves Attention Finding Waldo: Remaining Sharp in Your Older Age



After the visitors select a course and click “read more”, they are directed to the relevant page of that course. In every course page there is a language switcher, an image banner, a direction of “download content” where visitors can download the summary of the course and study them offline, and the tab menu that consists of the content, description, data, references and game.

The content of a course can differ from course to course. A visitor can click on the plus signs for each heading and start training. The content of the course might include third-party links, videos etc.

- On the **Description tab**, visitors can find a short description of the course, learning outcomes/objectives, evaluative criteria and assessment methods.
- On the **Data tab**, you can see the name of the partner that prepared that course, the language of the course and the glossary entries that are important for that course.
- On the **References tab** you can see the sources that the makers of the course benefited from.
- On the **Game tab**, a visitor can see the links that complement the teaching materials of the course.

7. FINAL REMARKS AND RECOMMENDATION FOR FUTURE TRAINING

Education provides a foundation for development, the groundwork on which much of our economic and social well-being is built. It is the key to increasing economic efficiency and social consistency. A good education makes an individual develop personally, socially as well as economically. Education helps us to acquire new skills and knowledge that will affect our development in life.

Lifelong learning can enhance our understanding of the world around us, provide us with more and better opportunities and improve our quality of life. There are two main reasons for learning throughout life: for personal development and for professional development.

Project partners produced learning resources with good quality, interesting, useful for the target groups as they hold the audience's attention, the courses themes are relevant regarding the acquiring the knowledge and participants can easily navigate through the DISK Platform.

Recommendations:



DISK



The courses can be taken fully online, face to face or in blended mode – combination of online and face-to-face activities (with support of educators). The participant’s previous knowledge and adequate language or ICT skills are important while choosing the right model of learning.

The participants can go through the course online self – enrolment or with support of educator.

Choose the section you are most interested in, instead of completing activity by activity from the beginning. The course can be taken by jumping between sections because they are independent between them.

The combination of text, examples and videos is effective way of gaining knowledge. You are invited to learn more about the subjects by following the links that are provided into the courses.

Following the course structure, as proposed – is advised, because it gives a complete overview of the information most relevant.

Each course has a description, which is useful for assessment of the gained knowledge throughout the course. It helps to optimize the use of the course and to take the most of it.

Games accompanying each DISK training course are very significant for the assimilation of knowledge. They are an excellent method and need to be encouraged for its value in terms of education, as it is an enjoyable way to learn new skills.

The courses can be downloaded and printed. Print, download or write down the most useful material in order to have it at your fingertips when you need it in real-life situations.

To assist the users, there is a section “Glossary” to increase understanding of the meaning of the words. You can find a list with words or explained concepts, which have been used during the courses.

Motivation in the learning process is essential. Participants should be self-motivated while they self –enrol in the courses, and be supported and motivated by the educators and trainers while using the blended learning model.

More about project DISK
www.disk.eu