



GenerationInfinity

**Enhancing digital skills,
competencies & safety in European
older adults & seniors!**

Generation Infinity WP2 Module 4



**Co-funded by
the European Union**

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Project Partners



Municipality of Gotse Delchev
(Bulgaria)



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Anziani (Italy)



Bluechain
(Greece)



Social Nebula
(Greece)



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Smartphone Use by Older Adults

Manos Apostolidis
(Social Nebula)
[Place]

[Date]



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Session scope

- **Audience:**

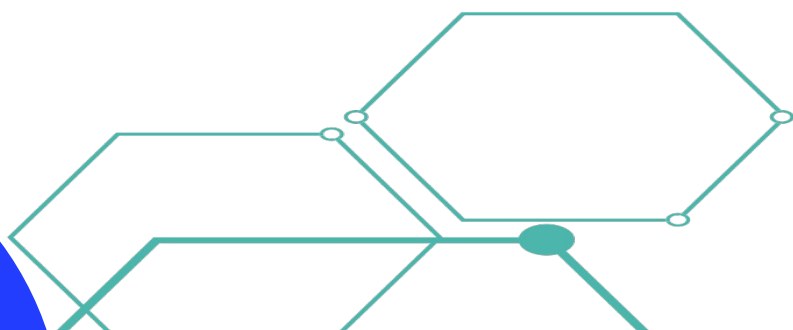
adult educators, trainers, facilitators, volunteers and community-learning professionals.

- **Focus:**

how to teach smartphone use to older adults in a clear, practical and confidence-building way.

- **Aim of presentation:**

highlight the key trainer messages from the full module (WP2-M4)



Why smartphone skills matter in real life

- For many older adults, the smartphone is the main doorway into the digital world.
- One device can support communication, information, navigation, reminders, photos and access to services.
- Teaching should start from meaningful daily goals, not from technical jargon.



What the Feasibility Report shows

- Across the partner countries, smartphones are the most common digital device in the senior samples.
- This makes smartphone learning one of the most realistic entry points into digital participation.
- Ownership, however, does not automatically mean confident or autonomous use.

What seniors mainly use smartphones for

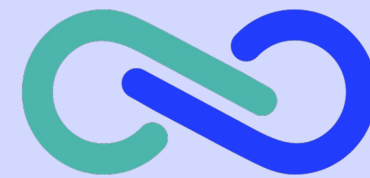
- Communication comes first: calls, messaging, video calls and social media.
- Information search and selected everyday services also matter.
- More demanding tasks remain less secure and less autonomous.



Where difficulties usually appear

- Installing apps, remembering passwords, handling pop-ups and permissions, and resolving technical problems.
- Using banking or health-related apps often creates extra insecurity.
- Small screens, English terminology and changing interfaces reduce confidence.





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What this means for trainers

- Do not confuse access with competence: many learners own a phone but use only a narrow set of functions.
- Older adults are not a homogeneous group; age, prior exposure, residence and support networks matter.
- Small groups, slow pacing, repetition and practical tasks linked to everyday life are especially important.



The trainer's role

- Facilitator of safe practice.
- Translator of device language into everyday language.
- Demonstrator who knows when to show, when to pause and when to step back.
- Source of reassurance when the learner feels overwhelmed.



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Prepare for real-world variation

- Some participants will use Android, others iPhone.
- Some will forget passwords or worry about updates, charges or permissions.
- Good preparation includes charging, connectivity, seating, screenshots, fallback options and respect for privacy.

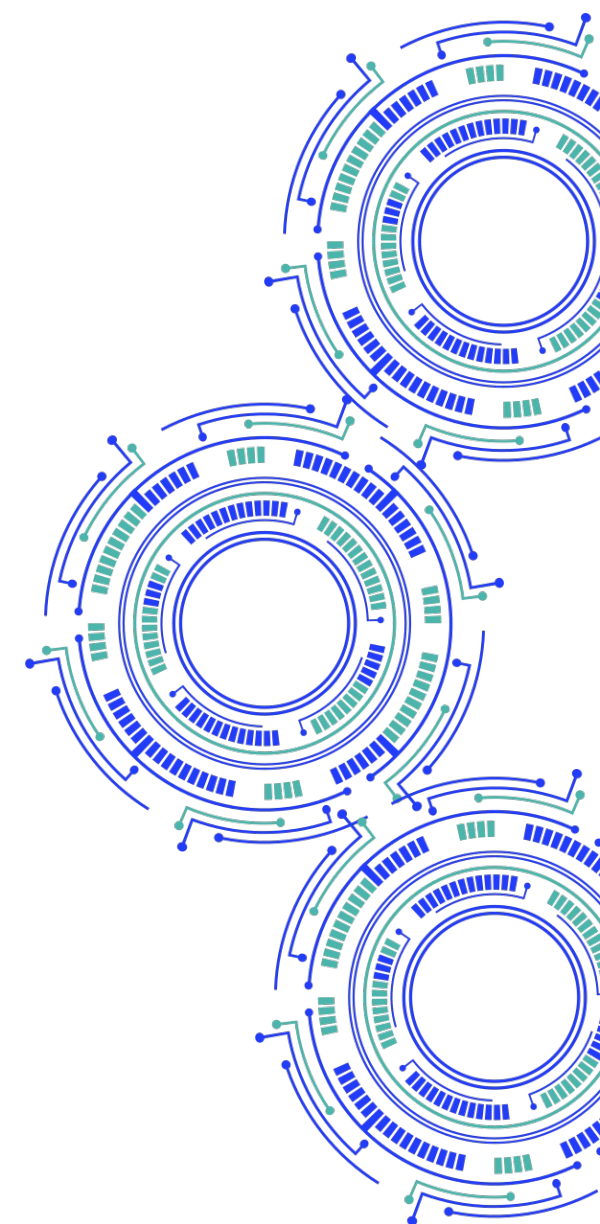




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Communication principles

- Use plain language and give one step at a time.
- Slow pacing is not a weakness; it is part of effective teaching.
- Avoid unexplained jargon, rushing or taking over the device too quickly.

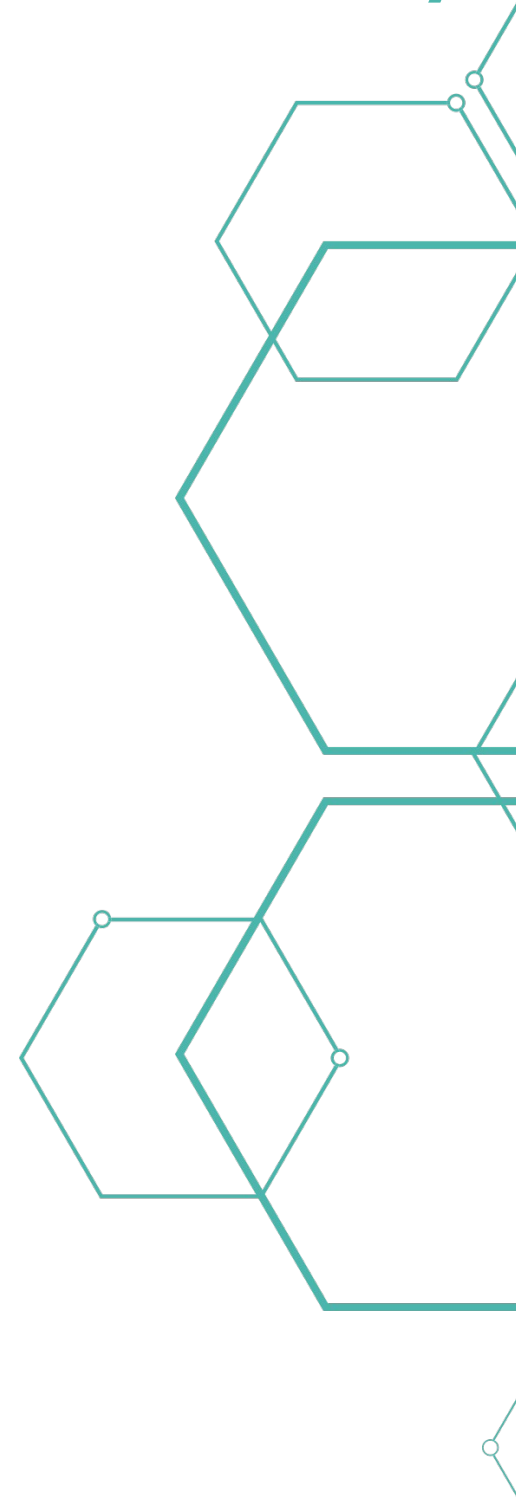




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Accessibility as ordinary smart use

- Teach accessibility settings as normal personalisation, not as something exceptional.
- Useful examples include larger text, stronger volume, higher contrast, brighter screens and simpler home screens.
- These changes reduce friction quickly and build confidence early.



Start with orientation before app use

- Many difficulties begin before any app is opened.
- Learners may need help with: where they are, how to go back, how to return home, what app is open, and what the main controls do.
- Orientation gives learners a mental map of the phone.



Task-based session design

- Build each short session around one meaningful outcome.
- Choose only the essential supporting steps.
- Leave enough time for actual practice and keep a fallback option ready.



Demonstration and supported practice

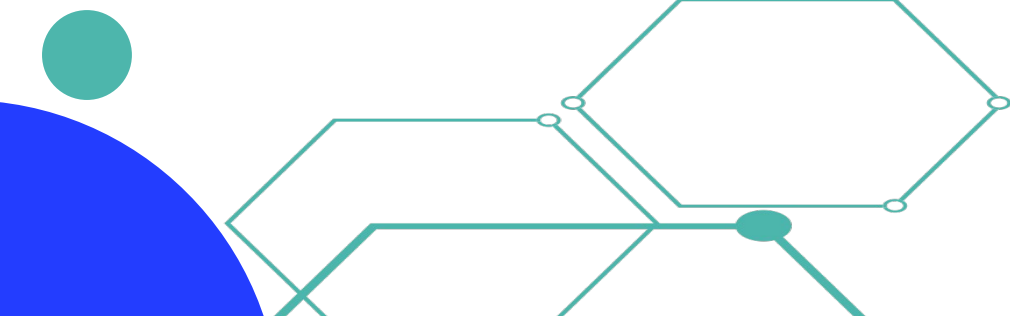
- Demonstrate by thinking aloud: say what you are doing and why.
- Keep the phone in the learner's hands as much as possible.
- Pointing, prompting, waiting and asking short questions usually teach more than doing the task for the learner.



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Evaluation should stay supportive

- The most useful question is: what can the learner now do with growing independence?
- Low-pressure methods work best: observation during practice, short repetition, or a brief reflective question at the end.
- Focus on functional autonomy, not on formal testing.





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Troubleshooting common problems

- Typical issues include forgotten passwords, inconsistent menus, low battery, missing internet, accidental taps and confusing warnings.
- Model a calm recovery process: go back one step, restate the goal, reduce the task, or switch to a simpler example.
- Intervene proportionally: enough to protect learning, but not so quickly that the learner loses agency.



Closing takeaways

- Start from real need, not abstract features.
- Teach one meaningful task at a time.
- Use plain language, slow pacing and practical repetition.
- Protect learner autonomy, confidence and psychological safety.





Thank You!





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