

MELISE

MEdia Literacy for
SEnior European
citizens



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1. Digital Landscape and Media Literacy Challenges for Seniors

Unit 1: Challenges of Seniors

Unit 2: Digital and Media Literacy and
Motivation

Unit 3: Tailoring Training for Seniors

Unit 4: Digital Citizenship

Ediciones Octaedro S.L
IDYL Lernen

Unit 1: Challenges of Seniors

Exploring the barriers and solutions to bridge the digital divide for older adults

The unit in brief

- Online consumer trends of senior citizens
- Challenges and solutions

Introduction

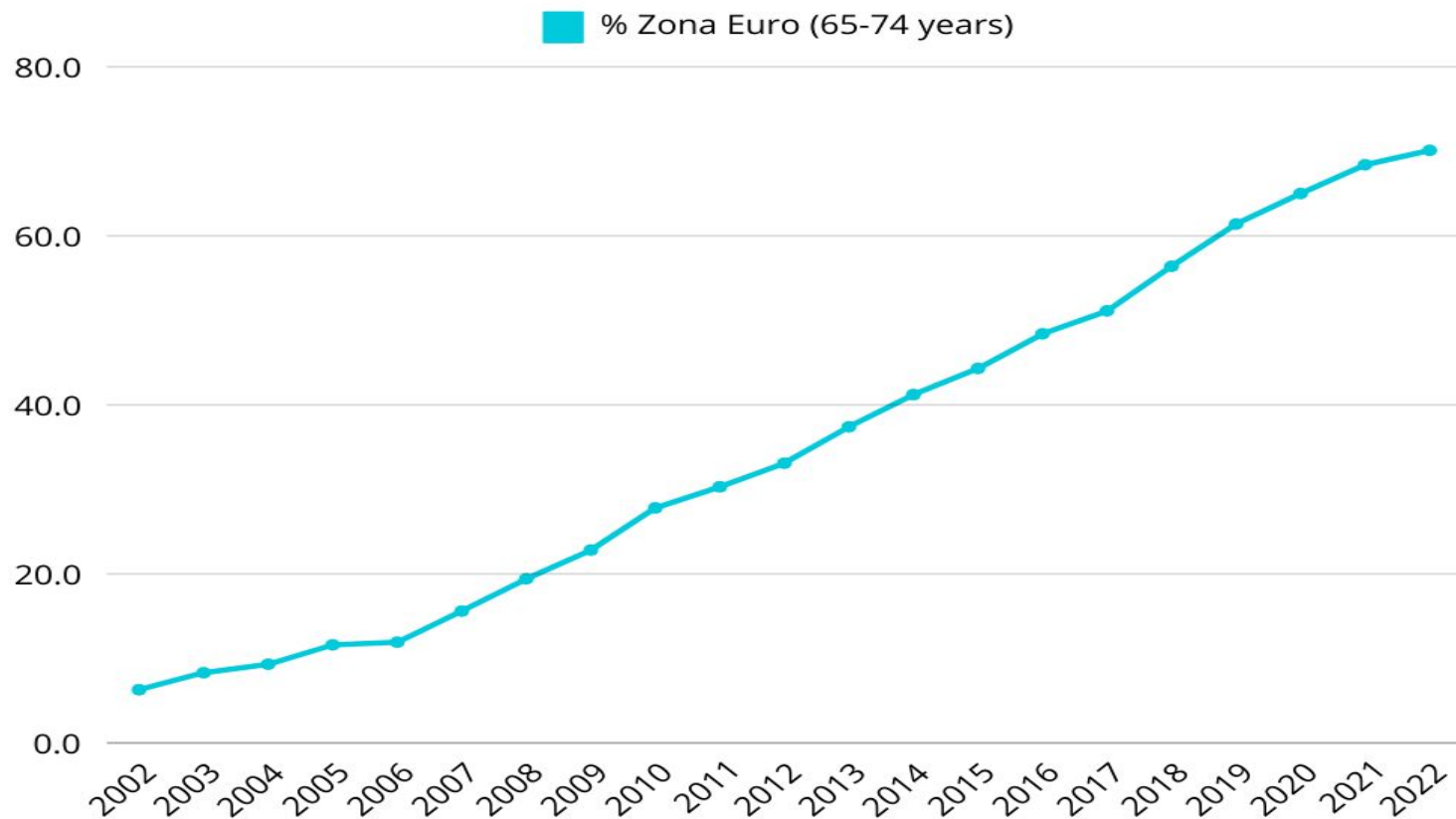
In this unit, we explore the challenges that older adults face as they navigate the digital world, and the strategies that can help bridge this divide.

- The digital divide and its impact on social inclusion.
- The importance of digital literacy for active participation in modern society.
- The digital era has brought transformative changes to society.
- Senior citizens face unique challenges in adapting to technology.



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The case of Spain illustrates one of the most pronounced changes in digital adoption at European level

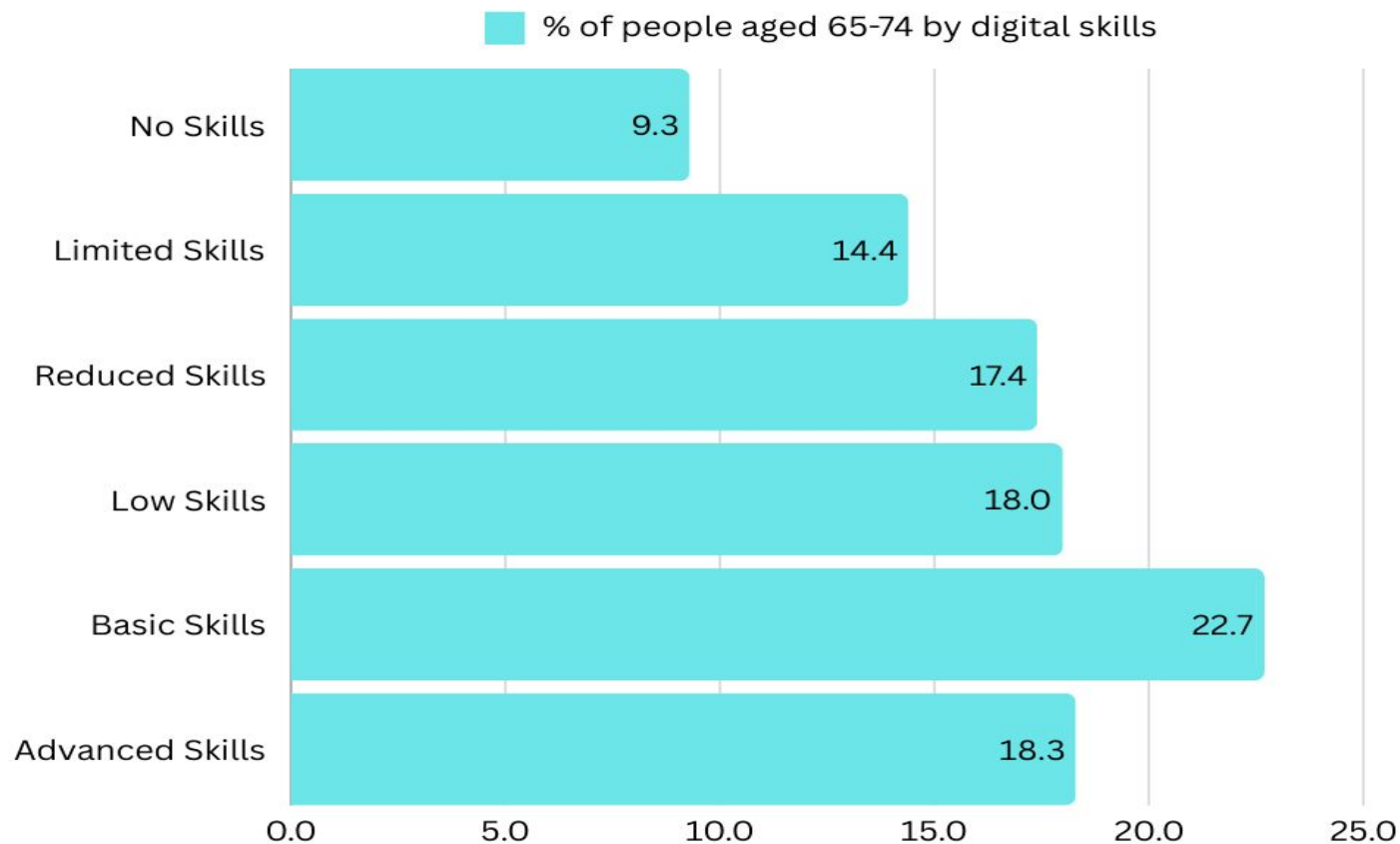
In 2002: Only 1.5% of people aged 65-74 used the internet in Spain, far below the Eurozone average.

By 2022: This figure rose to **76.4%**, surpassing the Eurozone average and highlighting a significant digital transformation.

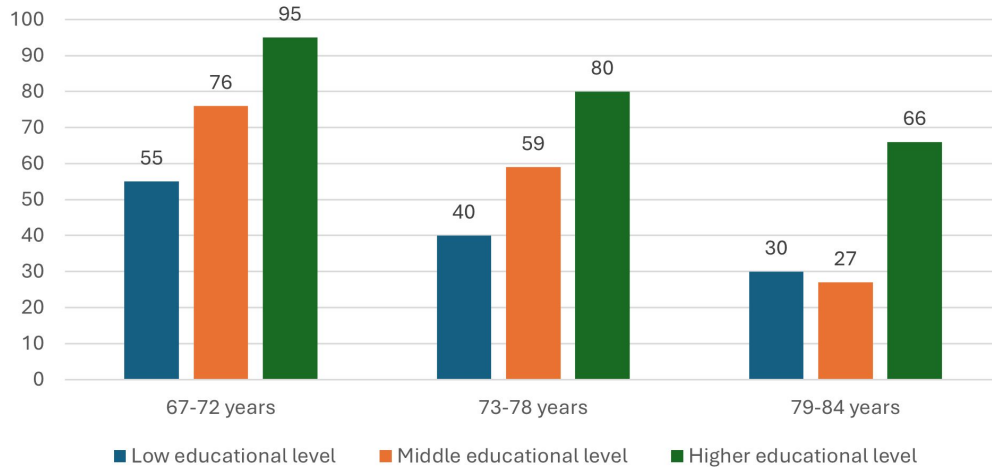


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Proportion of people in Germany with access to the internet by age group and education



Data from '[Older people and digitisation](#)' of the Federal Ministry for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth

2021: 48.9% of Germans have basic digital skills (Eurostat)

Older adults face significant barriers, especially those with lower education levels

2018 Gender Gap: Less than 40% of women aged 80+ used the internet.

Historical factors: Women were often in non-technical roles, leading to fewer digital skills and financial limitations in old age.

Significant growth in smartphone usage:

- **2019:** 37.7%
- **2022:** 54%

Laptops and tablets remain underutilized (18.5% and 8.3% in 2022).
Persistent digital divide between generations, as older adults lag behind younger, tech-savvy groups.

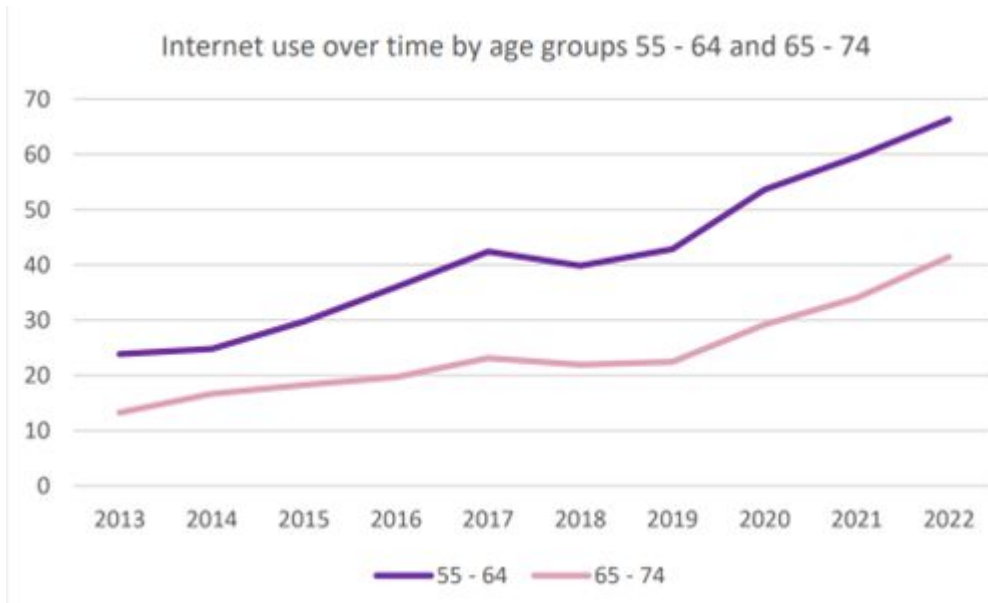
Device	2019 (%)	2022 (%)	Difference (%)
Smartphone	37,7	54	+16,3
Internet Usage	33,2	45	+11,8
Desktop Computer	10,3	16,8	+6,5
Laptop	10,3	18,5	+8,2
Tablet	8,3	13,8	+5,5

Data from [*Elderly People and the Barriers to Digital Education*](#)



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Data from [The National Report for Portugal: Digital Participation of People 60+](#)

Internet usage trends (2013–2022):

- Ages 55–64: From 24% to 66%.
- Ages 65–74: From 13% to 41%.

The Gap:

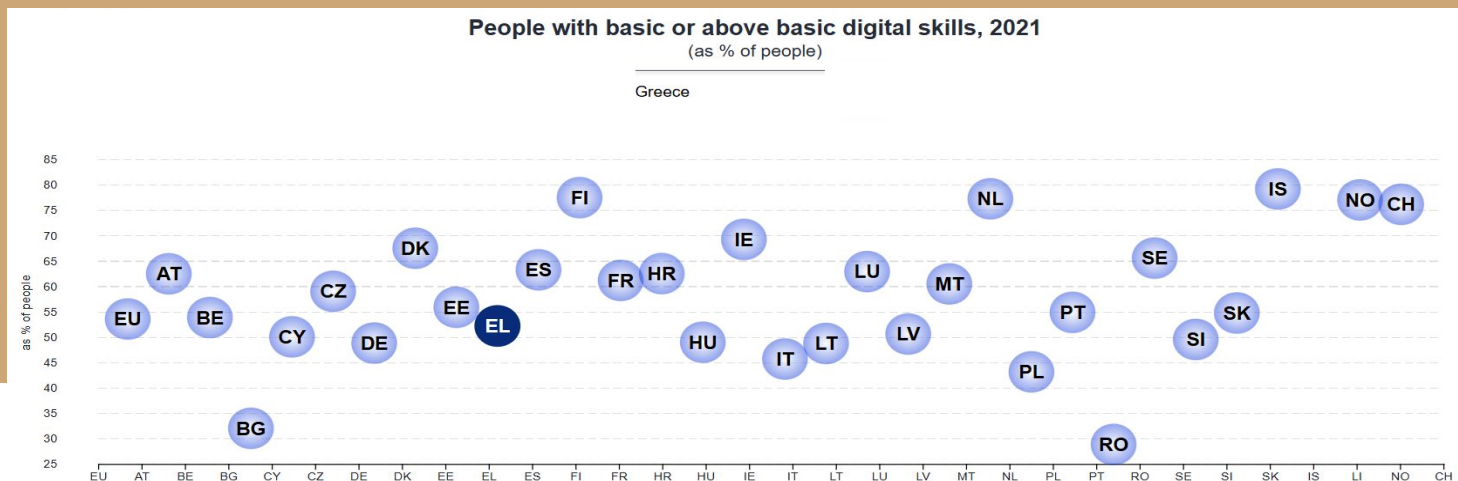
- In 2013: 11 percentage points.
- In 2022: 25 percentage points.

Younger seniors adopt technology faster than older seniors.

2023: 52.4% of Greeks had basic digital skills (below EU average of 55.6%).

Older Adults (65–74 years):

- Greece: 72% lack digital skills.
- EU-28 average: 41% lack digital skills.



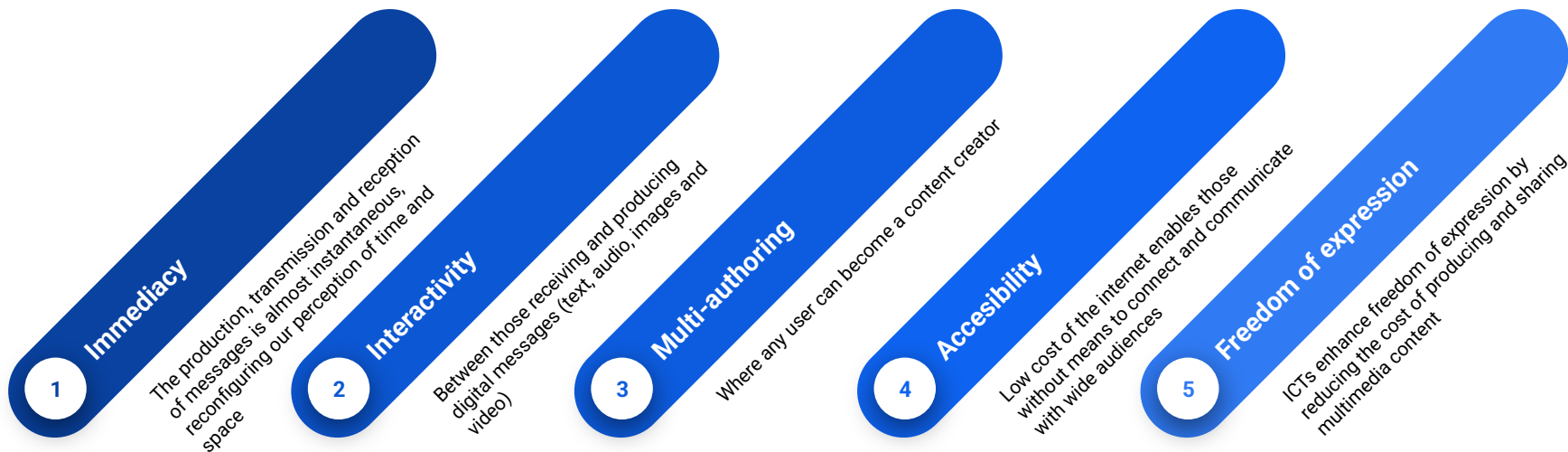
Data from [Eurostat](#)



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The internet differs fundamentally from other media, such as radio, cinema or television, in five ways





- **ICTs have accelerated and diversified social interaction**, especially through social media.
- **Social media is now a key tool** for information dissemination and collective action, no longer just a trend.
- **Creates a “communicative ecosystem”** (Martín Barbero, 2002), transforming interactions, narratives, and communication in society.

We live in an increasingly digitized world where technology transforms our daily activities and the way we connect.

ICTs redefine citizen participation and spaces for collective decision-making.

New forums of expression for historically marginalized groups (youth, women, indigenous communities, and minorities) enable greater socio-political action.

The digital transformation brings new opportunities, but also requires skills to navigate and participate fully in the online world.

For the older population, these changes can be overwhelming and may increase gaps in access and understanding (Arroyo, 2021).



Will digital media serve as tools only for those who are already activists, or will they also promote collective participation in the physical world?

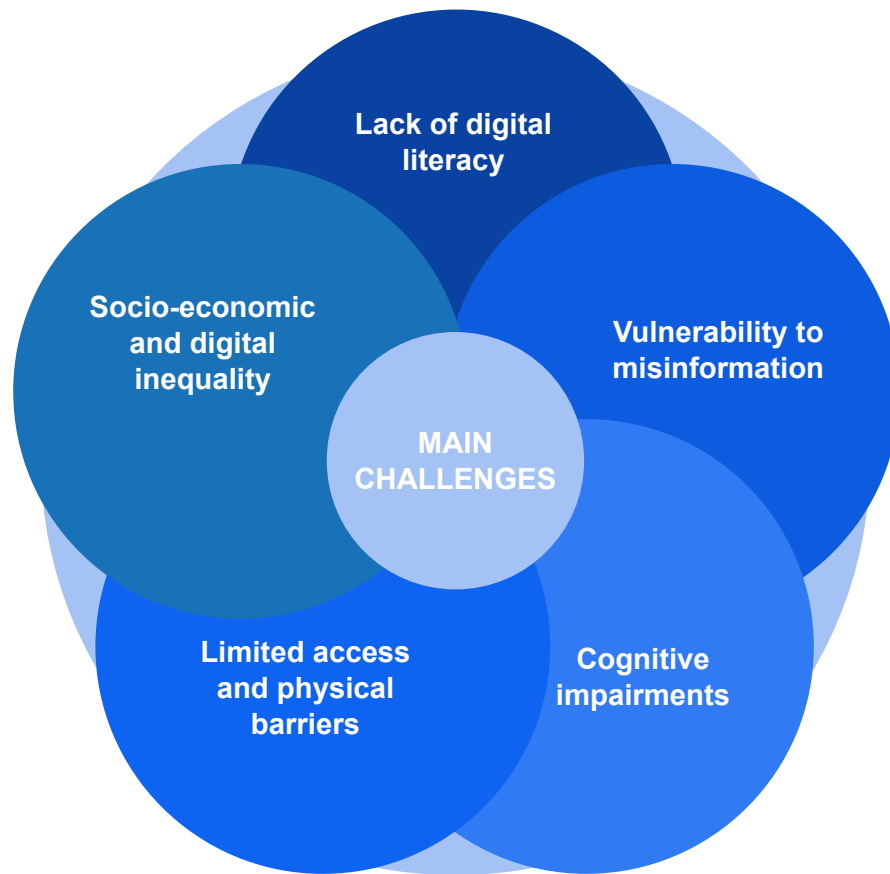
Will they create new opportunities for more citizens to engage in public affairs?

Is participation in the digital realm just a fad, or a lasting transformation in the way we relate to the public?

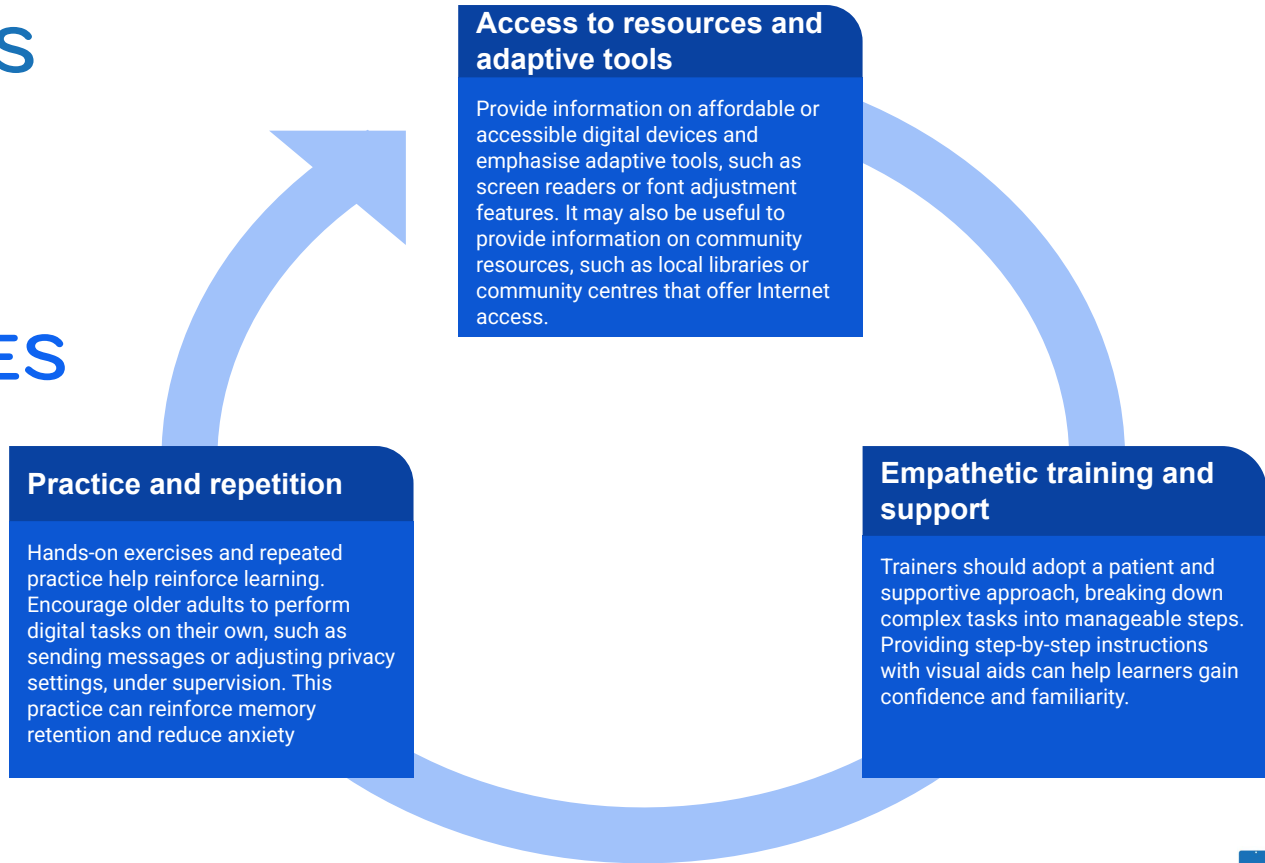


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STRATEGIES TO ADDRESS THE CHALLENGES



Understanding challenges is the first step toward creating an **inclusive and supportive learning environment** for older adults.

By addressing their specific needs, trainers can foster a **positive and engaging digital experience**, encouraging greater use of digital tools



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THANK YOU!

lauracasamitjana@periodismeplural.cat

paulaestalayo@octaedro.com

