



**Project title: The Knowledge Volunteers - Project acronym: TKV**  
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*Fondazione Mondo Digitale*

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# **The Knowledge Volunteers (TKV)**

## **Curriculum**



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## **Section 1**

### **Objectives**

Europe is witnessing an important ageing of its population. The expectation of a longer life has brought about a deep change in the lifestyles and needs of seniors. By 1995, 70 million people over the age of 60 were living in the Union, almost 20% of the population. By 2020, this figure will rise to 25% and people of 80 years and older will more than double. This demographic evolution raises many challenges that ICT can help address, creating many benefits to older individuals, while also making the economy grow in more productive ways.

The TKV project aims to:

- a) promote digital competence among older people at risk of exclusion through intergenerational exchange and relations with young people;
- b) encourage the active participation of older people in society through voluntary activities, thus enhancing self-esteem, identity and social relations;
- c) improve the production, testing, and dissemination of innovative curricula, methodologies and modules for adult learners;
- d) create a network of "Knowledge volunteers" of all ages;
- e) contribute to the creation of a more volunteer-friendly environment, with more people participating in volunteering activities throughout Europe, while facilitating international mobility among older volunteers;
- f) develop alternative learning approaches based on a Phyrtual Environment (integration of virtual and physical activities), leading to the creation of a dynamic repository of interacting good practices in the field of formal, non-formal and informal adult learning education.

Within this framework, the teaching set up assumes strategic relevance for at least two reasons. First, it must ensure the learning process efficiency and effectiveness as well as the expected outcomes achievement. Secondly, it must ensure a general lifelong learning attitude establishment, crucial for all the participants, young and old, directly and indirectly.



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Let us see more specifically the objectives, the content and the learning objects of the proposed curricula.

Regarding the learning pathway, the four curricula described below correspond to four major steps leading the learner from acquisition of the basic notions and principles of ICTs use (e.g., switching on the PC) to more complex applications, such as the autonomous management of one's own profile on a social network.

More in detail:

1. the 1<sup>st</sup> curriculum is focused on basic competences required to become an autonomous PC user: creating and managing files, using a text editor, sending e-mails and attachments, making Internet researches. In addition, applications related to specific users' interests are also addressed, like data bases and photo and video editing.

This 1<sup>st</sup> curriculum has already been implemented and successfully tested in many courses by Fondazione Mondo Digitale (project coordinator) and is the starting point for the entire TKV project development. As the curriculum structure and contents have already been positively experimented, its adoption by other learning communities is easier, requiring only a slight customization phase – i.e., a translation plus a possible adaptation.

2. the 2<sup>nd</sup> curriculum is focused on social networking in order to provide older people with notions and competences to understand the social networking world and to become an interactive member of it. A particularly relevant learning object concerns an e-innovation environment available to the community of TKV project.

This level of competence has several positive implications. Firstly, it helps older people not to feel so old and left out when they hear others (media or their young grandchildren) saying "see you on Facebook". This is an important inclusion issue.

Secondly, it offers a powerful tool to get and keep in touch with relatives and friends living far away, creating and developing social relationships especially when physically reaching other people is difficult. Moreover, it may offer further opportunities in terms of information, tools etc. that can be shared through any social network platform and stimulates to use all the



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notions and competences learnt in the previous course (from writing texts to attaching photos, from sending e-mails to filling a form, from searching to chatting).

As the other curricula, this 2<sup>nd</sup> one requires a customization process considering both possible national, local and/or thematic networks and target groups special interests. The customization is lighter than in the 3<sup>rd</sup> curriculum, as all major social networks have the same structures. At the same time, the e-innovation environment will reflect the TKV project partner activities and participants.

3. the 3<sup>rd</sup> curriculum is focused on e-Government services to provide older people with the notions and the competences to benefit from the opportunities offered by local and national institutions.

This curriculum comprises both low and high complexity interactive services, from those exclusively based on information provision to those aiming at finalizing complete transactions. Thus, the content includes getting information about service availability, subscribing newsletters, RSS feed and SMS services, making offices virtual tours, chatting with e-officers, applying for certification requests, making an online transaction.

As the content selection has been based on a preliminary survey on the state-of-the-art of e-Gov services in each participating country, the lessons progression reflects the common features highlighted by the analysis and the indications given by e-Gov national plans. Obviously the application and the development of the 3<sup>rd</sup> curriculum in each local context need a strong link with local services, so a big effort of customization is required.

4. The 4<sup>th</sup> curriculum is focused on easy technology. It is an introductory guide to the use of "digital objects," the set of tools that have become commonplace in everyday life, but that still represent "strange unidentified objects" to some citizens. Beginning with an introduction to digital languages, the manual presents knowledge gradually, moving from individual "details" to the "system" as a whole. The reader is accompanied from languages to objects and from objects to the system, the full range of services provided by the digitalization of consumer and productive processes. Clearly, certain aspects of digitalization must be addressed critically in order to allow all citizens to truly enjoy universally recognised liberties and civil rights. This is



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why increasing awareness and knowledge on the practical use of these tools increases the social benefits produced by technology.

From a more general didactical perspective, the TKV project curricula aim at achieving objectives related to learning attitudes of the involved target group (i.e., not only older people but also young tutors and even teachers). For all of them, the curricula want to promote the awareness of the importance of learning as a lifelong learning process.

For the main target group – older people – this means that it is never too late to learn something new, especially if it is fun and entertaining as well as relevant for a better quality of life. For young students, it shows how lifelong learning can be shaped and conducted in practice. This happens also to teachers involved as courses coordinators.

Another major general didactical objective is the promotion of inter-generational dialogue. The training methodology (see below) “compels” elders to work side by side with youngsters, trusting them and letting them playing a leading role. The distance between older and young is thus bridged by means of a learning pathway based both on acquisition of digital skills and on the need to build up, day by day, the course together.

From the single target group viewpoint, the specific didactical objectives cover a range of aspects.

For older people, the objectives are:

- a) improving their communication skills with the young to explain difficulties and problems, to ask for support etc., avoiding conflicts and misunderstandings;
- b) taking up new role and point of view, accepting their own’s and tutors’ difficulties and limits and trying to cope with them;
- c) learning to trust their young tutors and thus to acknowledge their competences, overturning the usual relationship of “authority” (see also point b).

For youngsters, the didactical objective is learning the teaching process complexity, which is a very powerful and crucial issue. The youngsters tutoring role provides them with a unique



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opportunity to re-shape, in an absolutely informal and active way, their idea of teaching and of teachers' behaviour. It helps them to get out of stereotypes, understanding the difficulties their teachers experience with them in class daily and how teaching can be frustrating when goals cannot be achieved. In so doing, they become aware of their own possible learning difficulties.

Furthermore, they learn to assume responsibility, to work in teams with other tutors and teachers, to cooperate achieving a common goal.

There are also specific didactical objectives for teachers, corresponding mainly to get the chance to expand the curriculum to other learning objects, creating multidisciplinary curricula. This possibility refers in particular to 1<sup>st</sup> curriculum and concerns areas such as communication (e.g., making and explaining different type of texts, for instance regulative texts) and mathematics/informatics (e.g., creating and solving algorithms). In this way, a feasible and interesting objective could be the development of a cross-disciplinary curriculum, integrating further didactical transversal and disciplinary items into a modular and dynamic ICT-based pathway.



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## **Section 2**

### **Methodology**

In order to achieve the objectives described, the TKV project curricula use an innovative methodology, based on a particular organization of the key players in the teaching/learning process.

The main factor is the presence of young students, belonging to elementary, lower and upper secondary schools, acting as personal tutors of older people assigned to them as students. In the majority of the cases the tutor/older people ration is 1:1; sometimes, mostly with smaller children, this ratio raises up to 2:1.

Being a tutor means carrying out most of the teaching activity personally, as the adult "official" teacher plays only the role of coordinator and supervisor, taking part mostly when the tutors face problems they cannot solve.

#### ***Personalized teaching***

This methodological set up is driven by the need to reach the highest level of personalization within the teaching process. The entrance level of older people in a single class can be very different, due to factors such as educational level, previous trainings, ICT competence and personal attitudes. A training course that tries to take into account all these heterogeneous factors in order to split older people into similar learning groups would be very complicated and time consuming for the selection phase. It would also be difficult to gather enough older people for each level and type of course.

Instead, in the tutor-based set up, courses can be easily organized immediately after recruitment, since it is the methodology that ensures the homogeneous approach to the diverse students. This means that each tutor has to personalize the learning pathway of the assigned older-student, for instance, by adding further concepts, by making him/her do additional exercises, by expanding on a subject, or, conversely, by reducing it - according to his/her competence and interest. In this way, all older-students may achieve similar curricular outcomes, although they may be following different pathways.



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### ***Collaborative learning***

The methodological basis of personalization is strictly linked to collaborative learning. Even though tutors have the main responsibility of the learning process, this does not mean that there is a top-down teaching relationship reproducing the traditional asymmetry between (adult) teachers and students. On the contrary, the learning process happens in an informal, nice and entertaining environment, where tutors, teachers and older people collaborate to find the right way to understand and assimilate concepts and the functioning of applications. There is also collaboration between the teacher and the student-tutor to realize the purpose of providing personalized teaching to the older people.

### ***Enquiry-based learning***

The traditional teaching approach is the deductive one, in which the teacher presents concepts and gives examples of applications. In contrast, following a bottom-up approach, an inductive approach gives more space to observation, experimentations and the teacher-guided construction by the student of his knowledge. This latter framework can also be defined as inquiry-based, inquiry being the process of diagnosing problems, criticizing experiments and distinguishing alternatives, planning investigations, researching conjectures, searching for information, debating with peers and forming coherent argumentations. The overall TKV project curriculum exhibits important aspects of such an inductive, inquiry-based approach, as it contains continuous research by older people and tutor together of the right teaching and learning solutions to practical, personal problems and interests.

These three main methodological principles promote also the development of a large range of complementary skills such as working in groups, written and oral expression, experience of open-ended problem solving and other cross-disciplinary abilities.



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### **Proposed curricula: ICT basics, Social networking, e-Gov and Easy technology**

The four proposed curricula follow a similar structure composed of three aspects:

1. all curricula are defined as lists of contents and activities with brief explanations;
2. the contents are theoretical and practical concepts and definitions (e.g., what is a software, switch on and off the PC). Sometimes contents also contains a website reference to provide the direct link to the main source (this is especially relevant in the case of official and political definitions, for example the definition of e-Government by the Council of Europe);
3. the activities are suggestions for practical experimentations of concepts previously introduced (e.g., importing an image from Internet and editing it with a photo editor). Sometimes there are additional activities, i.e. suggestions for other kind of activities, interesting but not as important as the first ones. Curricula may also include group lab activity, i.e., activities that are better to perform in groups. They comprise discussions about the application relevance for older people's interests and needs, the comparison between different functionalities, the team research on how to improve existing tools. A recurrent group lab activity is deciding together which applications and functionalities are the most useful and important for older people, in order to make a list of "the most wanted". The drafting of this list has double relevance. On the one hand, it stimulates debate among the group members to reinforce the assimilation of important competences, while promoting the exchange of ideas and the proposal of new solutions. On the other hand, it represents another project outcome, since it can be considered as the synthesis of the end-users evaluation process of all the proposed items and issues.



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## Section 3: TKV curricula

### 3.1 The ABC of ICT

#### Module 1 - The computer basics

Module content:

- Getting started
- Switch on, shutting down the computer
- Components: hardware and devices

*LEARNING OBJECTIVES: knowing the most important parts of a computer and the function of each component and device; how to start and turn off the computer*

#### Module 2 – Creating a document

Module content:

- Creating a folder
- Opening Word/programs
- Opening a new document
- Using the keyboard to type a letter
- Saving your document

*LEARNING OBJECTIVES: creating a folder; creating a document; saving the work*



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## **Module 3 – Creating a document**

Module content:

- creating a letterhead
- changing the font/font size
- formatting a text
- move a text (copy, cut and paste)
- spellcheck
- printing a document

*LEARNING OBJECTIVES: how to work on a document, using letterheads, choosing fonts, bold/italics/underline, using bullets and numbering, page numbering, etc. (formatting).*

## **Module 4 - Searching the web**

Module content:

- search engine navigation
- Internet security issues
- saving to favourites
- understanding hyperlinks

*LEARNING OBJECTIVES: introducing internet, internet browsers and how to use a search engine; understanding hyperlink; saving to favourites; knowing internet security issues.*

## **Module 5 – Email**

Module content:

- Email services
- Creating an address book
- Sending an email
- Adding and receiving attachments
- Security

*LEARNING OBJECTIVES: how to set up an email account, create a contact list, open, reply and forward mails, adding and receiving attachments through email.*



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## **Module 6 - Shopping online**

Module content:

- Identify useful web sites
- Register
- Safety
- Payment methods
- Shopping sites

*LEARNING OBJECTIVES: how to identify useful buying web sites, register/sign up as a customer, shop safely and paying online.*

## **Module 7 - File management**

Module content:

- Creating folder
- Creating sub-folders
- Desktop icons
- Creating shortcuts
- Managing folders
- Locating folders

*LEARNING OBJECTIVES: knowing the importance of file management (creating and storing documents in folders and locations, creating shortcuts, etc.).*

## **Module 8 - Log on, find it, use it**

Module content: a review of the previous modules

*LEARNING OBJECTIVES: going through the main learning objectives of all the course modules.*



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## 3.2 Social networking

### Module 1 – Introduction to social networking

Module content: what is a social network

*LEARNING OBJECTIVES: definition of social networking; learning something about the most popular social networks.*

### Module 2 – Facebook 1

Module content:

- registering to Facebook
- profile settings
- settings, privacy and security

*LEARNING OBJECTIVES: how to create and set one's own Facebook profile.*

### Module 3 – Facebook 2

Module content:

- requesting and accepting friends
- joining a group
- becoming a fan
- sharing a video

*LEARNING OBJECTIVES: how to use and improve one's own Facebook profile.*

### Module 4 – Facebook 3

Module content:

- sharing photographs
- Facebook chat
- notifications
- publishing a link
- gifts

*LEARNING OBJECTIVES: how to use and improve one's own Facebook profile.*



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## **Module 5 – YouTube: sharing videos**

Module content:

- registering to Youtube
- uploading videos
- managing videos

*LEARNING OBJECTIVES: how to create and set one's own Youtube profile and how to manage and promote one's own channel.*

## **Module 6 – Flickr: a community for sharing photographs**

Module content:

- registering to Flickr
- publishing photographs
- organizing the album

*LEARNING OBJECTIVES: how to create and set one's own Flickr profile.*



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## 3.3 E-gov services

### Module 1 – Introduction to E-gov

Module content:

- Types and levels of E-gov
- Basic information services
- Advanced information services
- Fully interactive services
- Managing folders
- Locating folders

*LEARNING OBJECTIVES: knowing the concept of E-gov; understanding the importance of e-public services; knowing national institutional websites, with particular attention to online services.*

### Module 2 – Exploring E-gov services

Module content:

- Basic information services
- A typical institutional website

*LEARNING OBJECTIVES: exploring an institutional website and its e-services; comparing it with other official and unofficial websites on similar information; how to find and use e-services; how to find and use thematic channels and newsletters.*

### Module 3 – Sites with advanced information services

Module content:

- Video news
- Online questions
- Newsletters
- RSS feeds
- Social networks

*LEARNING OBJECTIVES: introduction to advanced information and tools; knowing social networks and how to get updated without checking regularly institutional websites.*



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## **Module 4 – Fully interactive sites**

Module content:

- Registration – log in
- Safety
- Phishing
- Privacy
- Smart card
- Personalised information services

*LEARNING OBJECTIVES: how to customize outcome; smart card, privacy policy and security issues in detail; avoiding phishing; checking the status of files and papers in the offices.*

## **Module 5 – E-banking: managing money on-line**

Module content:

- E-banking
- Rechargeable cards

*LEARNING OBJECTIVES: making payments on-line.*

## **Module 6 – E-commerce: making on-line purchases**

Module content:

- E-commerce
- Purchasing a train ticket
- Purchasing an aeroplane ticket

*LEARNING OBJECTIVES: accessing to a shop window and to a basket; knowing anti-fraud safety systems; buying something.*



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## 3.4 Easy technology

### Module 1 – Introduction to digital language

Module content:

- From analogical to digital languages
- Sensors, processors and interactivity
- Texts, images, videos and sounds
- Magnetic memories and data analysis

*LEARNING OBJECTIVES: understanding the digitalization process.*

### Module 2 – Daily devices

Module content:

- Computers
- A new ways of reading, listening and viewing the world
- Signals – Data transmission networks

*LEARNING OBJECTIVES: understanding the digitalization process through the digital instruments and devices: from computer to tablet, from digital TV and radio to domotics, from digital cameras to new storage devices, etc.*

### Module 3 – Digital services

Module content:

- Digital convergence
- E-commerce and home banking
- E-government and e-health

*LEARNING OBJECTIVES: how to use the different digital devices in convergence and create exchangeable objects to do the same action; introduction to cloud computing; new private and public services on line.*