

BECID Intergenerational training to improve the digital competence of young people and the elderly

Deliverable 4.3 for the project with the ID 118471, coordinated by the University of Tartu (UTARTU).

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DELIVERABLE OF T4.3 "INTERGENERATIONAL TRAINING TO IMPROVE THE DIGITAL COMPETENCE OF YOUNG PEOPLE AND THE ELDERLY"

DESCRIPTION OF THE ACTIVITY IN LATVIA

Activity T4.3 was meant to implement a media literacy campaign focused on intergenerational learning in the social media environment by building upon the successful pilot project "Digimentor" that has been implemented in Estonia between UTARTU and Telia, the largest telecom company in Sweden, Finland and Estonia. Data and feedback collected during the initial program were used to improve the training program, which as pilot project was delivered in LV. Data collected from the delivery of the Digimentor model in LV enable us to make further adjustments to improve its applicability (possibly for other European countries as well).

We first recruited young 'Digimentors' via schools and youth networks. Over 50 applications were received from students, teachers, and librarians to participate in the project's, called "Digitally Together!", online classes on **24 and 25 November 2023**. They received training (3 two-hour sessions), aimed at how learning works, how mentoring should (therefore) work, how to self-reflect and ask for feedback as well as specifics of intergenerational mentoring such as stereotypes and biases, etc. Additionally, participants were able to develop joint projects in the field of social sciences to recognize seniors' media usage habits.

Then, older persons were recruited by the Digimentors (such as their older relatives or other contacts). Digimentors formed a group on a social media platform where their elderly mentee was also included. In addition to the MIL topics and digital skills the mentees wanted to acquire, Digimentors were prompted in order to keep challenging themselves and their mentees. 44 participants from over 30 educational institutions enrolled in the program, and many of them shared their own stories and photos, describing how they have helped seniors.

The initial findings highlight that physical presence in the same location is not the critical prerequisite for the success of the intergenerational learning process. This task could therefore be carried out in a fully digital format or be redesigned into workshops in the physical realm. The six-hour training program was provided online and through teaching materials and records.

The training program for young people consisted of media literacy and digital skills experts like Klinta Locmele ("Managing digital environments wisely"), Liva Kalnaca ("Bridging the digital divide: How to assist grandparents to use Google and send pictures"), and Girts Edvards Stepins ("Effective technologies for seniors – educational tips for working with non-tech experts").

According to anonymous feedback from the participants, the training was very useful and timely. Some of the guotes from the feedback include:



"I found it most helpful to learn how to explain program features to seniors, how to explain deep fakes, how to record a screen for seniors to view later, and the opportunity to create a digital term dictionary for seniors to navigate the internet jungle."

Another participant stated:

"I believe this event is crucial due to the increasing use of technology and the aging population. It is essential to ensure that seniors feel comfortable and safe using technology, and I am happy to be one of those who can help them."

Before the start of the training, an online event was held on **November 16**, **2023**. Experts and project managers informed the participants about upcoming activities and shared best practices for promoting media literacy and digital skills for seniors and young people across the Baltics.

On 14th December 2023, the "Digital Together!" forum marked the conclusion of a project. The forum focused on improving intergenerational cooperation, particularly in the areas of digital and media literacy. The event featured several speakers (project partners) from the Baltic region, including Anna Broka (Vidzeme University of Applied Sciences, Latvia), who talked about "How to Build a Generational Bridge: Communication, Participation, and Accountability." K. Locmele (Latvia) spoke on "How to Promote Senior Media Literacy," while Marcus Sirp and Stefan Allev (UTARU, Estonia) presented "Digimentors," a personalized assistance program for seniors. Rimgaile Kasparaite and Patricia Lenchiauskiene (Vytautas Magnus University, Lithuania) also spoke about "Intergenerational media literacy in project Digires" among other topics. The event brought together young people, seniors, and experts to discuss and share ideas on bridging the generational gap.

Additionally, a dedicated section was operated on the Delfi LV news portal between **November 1 and December 31**, **2023**. The section provided information on the project's progress and included articles on youth and seniors' cooperation, media literacy, and digital security. This helped to reach a wider audience, with a total of 25,375 visits to the eight publications that aimed to improve digital skills and intergenerational collaboration. The articles covered various topics such as seniors' priorities in digital skills, teenagers training their relatives in technology, barriers to seniors learning the internet, and tips for training seniors to use smart devices. In one of the articles, an 82-year-old woman was featured who successfully sent her first text message. Overall, the section aimed to promote digital literacy and awareness among different age groups while breaking down the barriers to technology.

After evaluating the project in Latvia, it was found that it had been successfully implemented within the given time frame and available funding. Experts have emphasized the need to view digital skills and media literacy together as a long-term process that requires expert work, studies, methodological materials, and other measures. Therefore, it is essential to continue the work by seeking funding and experts in cooperation with state institutions, schools, and libraries.

DESCRIPTION OF THE ACTIVITY IN ESTONIA

Under Activity T4.3 in Estonia, The Digimentor project, conducted from September 2023 to May 2024 by Estonian high school students Marcus and Stefan and supported by Telia, targeted enhancing media literacy among older adults through workshops on a variety of topics. From artificial intelligence to Facebook, internet safety, and practical skills like photography and managing mobile applications, these sessions provided seniors



with the tools to navigate the digital world safely and confidently. Altogether 36 workshops were done, receiving more than 150 participants from all over Estonia.

The following sections provide a **breakdown of the workshops'** topics, the number of participants, and the methods used to deliver the workshops. Finally, **recommendations** are shared for teaching digital and media literacy to older adults in communities, involving young people, and collaborating with day centers and libraries for older adults.

ACTIVITY
October 2, 2023: Tähtvere Day Center, 17 participants - Introductory session.
October 9, 2023: Tähtvere Day Center, 15 participants - Topic: Uses of Smartphones. The various functionalities of modern smartphones were discussed. The format was a mix of discussion and lecture.
October 16, 2023: Tähtvere Day Center, 15 participants - Topic: Artificial Intelligence. A slide presentation was used, and discussions were held with the attendees. Additionally, participants had the opportunity to experiment with ChatGPT.
October 23, 2023: Tähtvere Day Center, 13 participants - Topic: Facebook. A slide presentation was used, and practical tasks on Facebook were performed.
October 30, 2023: Tähtvere Day Center, 14 participants - Topic: Facebook. The material from the previous session was reviewed, and additional Facebook features were learned.
November 6, 2023: Tähtvere Day Center, 12 participants - Topic: Internet Safety and Scams. A slide presentation was used, followed by a discussion with the attendees.
November 13, 2023: Tähtvere Day Center, 6 participants - Topic: Social Media. A slide presentation was used, and demonstrations were conducted on the participants' own devices.
November 20, 2023: Tähtvere Day Center, 12 participants - Topic: Photography. Slides were used, and participants were encouraged to take photos with their own devices.
November 23, 2023: Võru Elderly Day Center, 12 participants - Topic: Internet Safety and Scams. A slide presentation was used, followed by a discussion with the attendees.
November 27, 2023: Tähtvere Day Center, 11 participants - Topic: Downloading Apps. Slides were shown, and participants practiced downloading apps on their own devices.
December 4, 2023: Tähtvere Day Center, 11 participants - Topic: Adding Payment Methods. Slides were shown, and discussions were held on why and how using these payment methods can be convenient and easy.



December 11, 2023: Tähtvere Day Center, 13 participants - Topic: Downloading Apps from Google Play. Slides were shown, and participants practiced downloading apps on their own devices. December 18, 2023: Tähtvere Day Center, 14 participants - Topic: Moving App Icons. Participants were taught how to locate downloaded app icons on their devices and how to move them to preferred locations. December 21, 2023: Viljandi Day Center, 5 participants - Topic: Internet Safety and Scams. A slide presentation was used, followed by discussions with the attendees. Assistance was provided to help participants solve their digital issues. January January 15, 2024: Tähtvere Day Center, 13 participants - Topic: Taking Photos and 2024 Uploading Them to Google Drive. Telia-provided phones were used for photography, and participants were taught how to upload their photos to Google Drive. January 22, 2024: Tähtvere Day Center, 12 participants - Topic: Google Account Features, such as Google Docs and YouTube. Telia-provided laptops were used, with participants working in groups of four, each group using one laptop to practice the demonstrated features. January 29, 2024: Tähtvere Day Center, 14 participants - Topic: Review and Reinforcement of Previous Session's Learnings. Participants practiced the tips learned in the previous session without initial demonstrations. January 27, 2024: Puhja Day Center, 86 participants - Topic: Internet Safety and Scams. This session was organized by our partner, Estkeer OÜ. February February 5, 2024: Tähtvere Day Center, 12 participants - Topic: Principles of Google 2024 Docs. Telia-provided devices were used for learning Google Docs in groups. February 12, 2024: Tähtvere Day Center, 16 participants - Topic: Sending Emails. Telia-provided devices were used for sending emails. February 19, 2024: Tähtvere Day Center, 13 participants - Topic: Sending Emails. Participants practiced sending emails to each other in groups using Telia-provided devices. February 23, 2024: Kuremaa Day Center, 21 participants - Topic: Internet Safety and Scams. A slide presentation was used, followed by discussions with the attendees. February 26, 2024: Tähtvere Day Center, 15 participants - Topic: Digital Signing of Documents. Telia-provided devices were used to introduce and explain the functions of digital signing. March March 4, 2024: Tähtvere Day Center, 16 participants - Topic: Review of Digital Signing. 2024 The previous session's material on digital signing was reviewed using Telia-provided devices. March 8, 2024: Imavere Day Center, 15 participants - Topic: Internet Safety and Scams. This session was a repeat of the October lecture.



March 11, 2024: Tähtvere Day Center, 10 participants - Topic: Downloading and Forwarding Pictures from Email. Telia devices and a slide presentation were used to teach participants, through group work, how to download and forward pictures from emails.

March 18, 2024: Tähtvere Day Center, 14 participants - Topic: Review of the Previous Session. The material from the previous session was reviewed.

March 25, 2024: Tähtvere Day Center, 15 participants - Topic: Transferring Pictures from Phone to Computer. Telia devices were used for group work to teach participants how to transfer pictures from their phones to computers.

April 2024

April 1, 2024: Tähtvere Day Center, 13 participants - Topic: Updating Apps. Participants were taught where and how to update mobile applications on their own devices. Explanations were provided on the importance of updates and whether updating apps could introduce viruses.

April 8, 2024: Tähtvere Day Center, 14 participants - Topic: Using Various Digital Identification Methods. Slides were used to discuss different methods such as Smart - ID, Mobile-ID, and ID cards. While most participants were already using one of these methods, none were familiar with setting up Smart-ID.

April 9, 2024: Põlva Day Center, 23 participants - Topic: Internet Safety and Scams. This session, initially planned for the end of March, was rescheduled to early April at the day center's request. The feedback for this lecture was very positive.

April 15, 2024: Tähtvere Day Center, 13 participants - Topic: Setting Up Smart-ID. The session began with an overview of the requirements for setting up Smart-ID. The Smart-ID website was used to show participants where to find necessary instructions, and all steps were reviewed together.

April 29, 2024: Tähtvere Day Center, 13 participants - Session to Address Common Issues. Participants were asked about their common digital problems. Two main issues were selected for the session: managing Gmail storage and removing friends on Facebook.

May 2024

May 6, 2024: Tähtvere Day Center, 10 participants - Topic: Using a USB Flash Drive with a Laptop. Participants sat in groups of five at two tables. Each group had a USB flash drive and, under guidance, downloaded a document from an email and saved it to the flash drive.

May 13, 2024: Tähtvere Day Center, 14 participants - Topic: Google Features Review. Various Google-related functions were reviewed. Participants used Telia-provided laptops for this session.

May 20, 2024: Tähtvere Day Center, 9 participants - Summary Session. A discussion was held to review what participants had learned in the workshops and to identify what had been most helpful to them.



INSIGHTS AND PRACTICAL ADVICE FROM ESTONIAN DIGIMENTORS

The Digimentors have found that **practical sessions** outperform traditional lectures, promoting better engagement and understanding. Also, **patience and clear communication** are vital when addressing challenges such as the elderly's lack of proficiency in English and cognitive decline. "For example, they don't understand how digital functions correlate with each other. For instance, they don't grasp the Google Account system very well," explained Stefan.

Marcus added, "Also, creating connections between icons and functions – icons may not seem obvious to older adults, leading to questions about their purpose. For example, Google Docs has numerous icons, requiring extensive trial and error to ensure proper usage."

Furthermore, tailoring workshops to accommodate diverse participant groups is essential. This involves providing necessary equipment, ensuring a spacious and comfortable environment, and managing group sizes effectively. Interactive teaching approaches, including visual demonstrations and simplified explanations, help reinforce learning and engagement.



Stefan emphasized the importance of keeping the group size manageable, stating, "**The group should not be too large, over 20 people**, because then it is simply not possible to help everyone. For example, if we currently have 3 computers and more than 15 people show up, it can be difficult for some to understand, as they cannot see what is happening on the device."

Marcus agreed, adding, "The group size should be between 10–20 people; beyond that, the discussion may become scattered, and participants may start side conversations, which can be difficult to manage."

In situations where creating small groups isn't possible, an alternative for larger audiences is to **demonstrate on a big screen what needs to be done**. This method allows participants to grasp



the process effectively by visually seeing where to click, etc. For instance, when introducing computer skills, this approach proved highly effective as individuals could quickly comprehend the steps by observing clear visual instructions.

The Estonian digimentors recognize the challenge of adapting teaching materials and workshops to work with **varying numbers of participants and skill levels**. They specifically point out the difficulty faced when someone with little experience and a weak skill level joins the group unexpectedly, making it challenging to conduct the session effectively.



Effective Learning Strategies for Elderly Participants

To enhance interactivity and educational value in workshops, both Stefan and Marcus suggest a lot of practical experimentation to ensure seniors remember the material best. Marcus emphasizes the significance of selecting topics that spark interest among the elderly participants. He states, "Certainly, the topic must interest the seniors. Practical activities, whether on their devices or those provided by us, help to reinforce what was covered in the session."He added that the topics covered in the workshops are relevant and useful, leading many elderly participants to integrate digital tools into their daily lives.

So far, seniors have gained practical skills and knowledge that they can apply in real-life situations. For example, the participants have learned to search for videos on YouTube. Marcus added, "We have covered various Google services with the elderly, such as Google Docs, Slides, etc. Additionally, they have learned about photography, and photo editing, as well as downloading and using applications, understanding their main functions."

Reflecting on the achievements observed in the workshops, Stefan mentioned Leili, an elderly participant who has attended from the beginning and acquired numerous skills applicable to daily life.



Marcus shared another success story, mentioning elderly participants who, after initially learning about a specific topic, returned to the workshop to teach their peers. For instance, **an elderly individual** who had practiced using Google Docs **came back to demonstrate specific functions to fellow participants.**

Regarding the application of digital skills, Stefan mentioned an elderly participant who has started using Facebook more frequently, showing their increased engagement with social media platforms for communication and overall connectivity.



Using Digimentors' Experience for Project Expansion

Both Marcus and Stefan are on the same page about using past examples and experiences to grow and expand the project. Reflecting on the experiences gained from the Estonian project, Stefan suggested starting with the use of day centers because most active elderly individuals gather there. Workshops should be scheduled to conclude by early May as older adults often leave for their summer cottages then.

In the conversation about how to engage youth in Latvia and Lithuania, Stefan proposed the idea of involving schools through hands-on projects for young people. Meanwhile, Marcus suggested the concept of workshops resembling summer camps, where participants could not only gain marks on their CVs but also potentially earn financial benefits.

When considering the challenges and opportunities of extending the project to other Baltic countries, Stefan pointed out the difficulty of motivating youth to participate. Meanwhile, Marcus highlighted the significance of building interest and trust among the elderly, crucial for them to feel comfortable granting strangers access to their devices and data. In terms of challenges and opportunities in expanding the project to other Baltic countries, Stefan highlighted the challenge of motivating youth



to join the project. Marcus emphasized the importance of generating interest and trust among the elderly to allow strangers access to their devices and data. Also, marketing efforts need to be considered, as they noticed that while the same participants attended from the beginning, new participants did not join, likely due to a lack of advertising. They also suggested participation fee of 2/5€ could help deter casual attendees, encouraging more serious and focused participation.



Engaging and Motivating Youth for Digital Inclusion

Involving young individuals in projects like BECID Digimentor has been crucial for sustaining motivation and enthusiasm. Stefan highlighted **personal fulfillment as a significant motivator**, stating, "I feel motivated by the need to achieve something. When I see other young people not engaging in anything meaningful, it reinforces my commitment to making a positive impact."

Similarly, Marcus emphasized the importance of **public recognition and future career prospects as motivating factors**, stating, "Being recognized publicly and achieving success for the company is my primary motivator. Engaging in projects like this can pave the way for future career opportunities."

Offering advice to aspiring youth participants, Stefan emphasized the value of **gaining experience and building connections**, adding, "They should try something like this because it provides fantastic experience and contacts that will undoubtedly be beneficial in the future. For example, I've learned valuable planning skills."

Marcus recommended that young individuals develop confidence in public speaking and gain a comprehensive understanding of the various aspects of the relevant topic.

Describing their experiences to other young individuals considering joining the project, Stefan expressed enthusiasm, saying, "It's been awesome ." Marcus described the experience as both challenging and exciting, highlighting the wealth of knowledge and skills gained.





In conclusion, establishing media literacy initiatives for older adults requires careful planning, adaptability, and community engagement. By leveraging existing experiences and best practices, organizations can empower older learners to navigate the digital landscape with confidence and skill. Through continued collaboration and innovation, the journey toward digital inclusion for all generations remains promising and rewarding.

OTHER INITIATIVES IN ESTONIA

In addition to the training sessions and workshops, the BECID team in Estonia created and distributed informational materials; participated in events targeted at seniors, answered media literacy questions, introduced the opportunities and risks of artificial intelligence, and provided students from the University of Tartu's journalism and communication program with opportunities to conduct educational activities for seniors in Tartu, the European Capital of Culture.

Here are some examples of our efforts to encourage the elderly to participate in the European Parliament elections and make informed decisions:

On May 7, 2024 Inger Klesment, a media literacy specialist at BECID, conducted an online training session for seniors. The main topics were traditional and social media, artificial intelligence, and internet fraud.

On May 17, 2024 students from the University of Tartu's "Media Education" course conducted various activities introducing artificial intelligence as part of the Prejudice Festival in Tartu, Estonia. <u>Discover the ideas</u> developed during the course to help improve media literacy among the elderly.





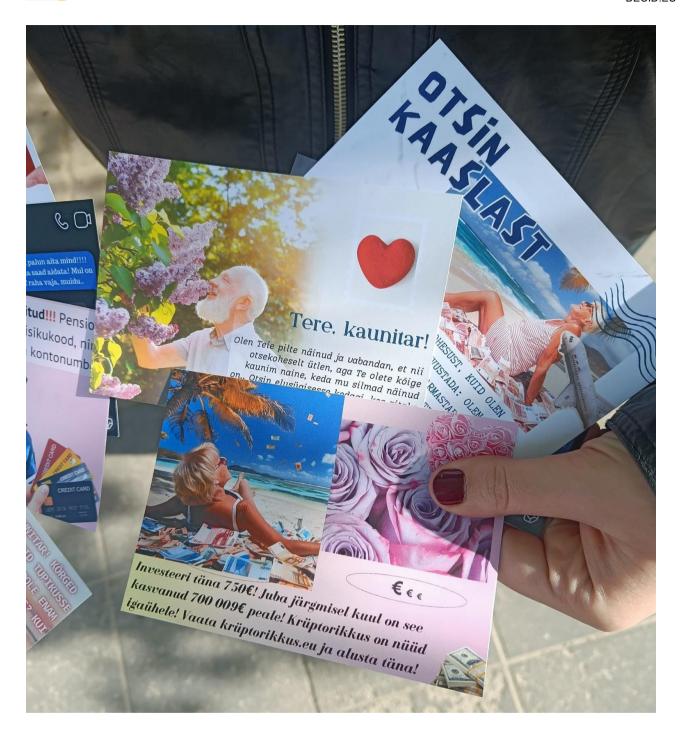




On May 9, 2024 Maria Murumaa-Mengel, Associate Professor of Media Studies at the University of Tartu, and Inger Klesment, a media literacy specialist at BECID, spoke about the opportunities and risks of artificial intelligence at the Elderly Festival organized by Maaleht.

Additionally, **postcards** designed by Gretel Juhansoo, Maria Murumaa-Mengel, and Inger Klesment were distributed, **introducing common internet fraud schemes and providing guidelines for dealing with them**.









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There are many types of online scams, but for all of them it helps to do the following:

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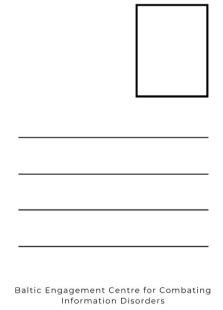
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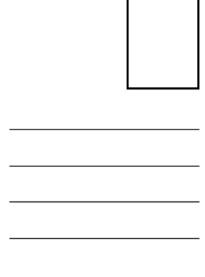
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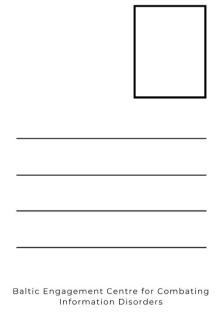
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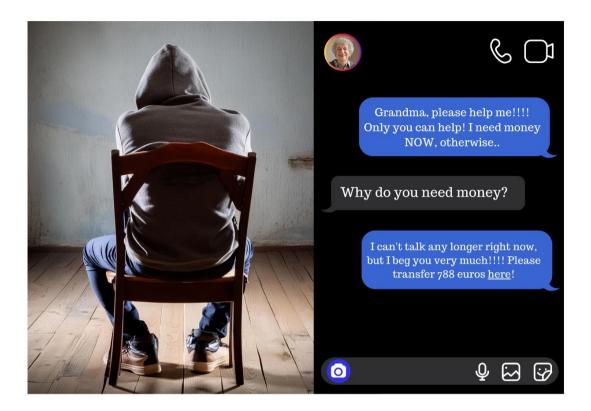
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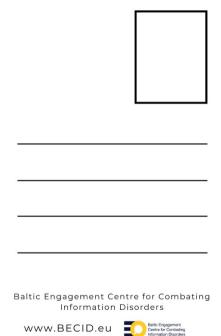
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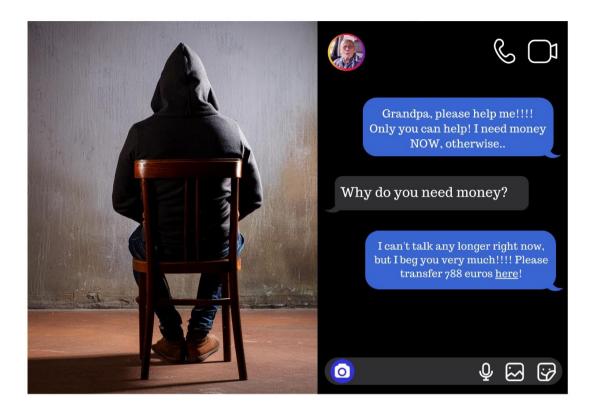
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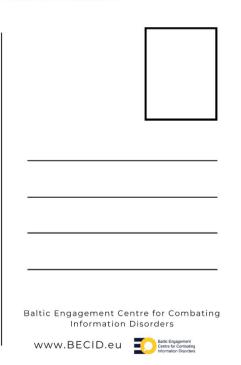
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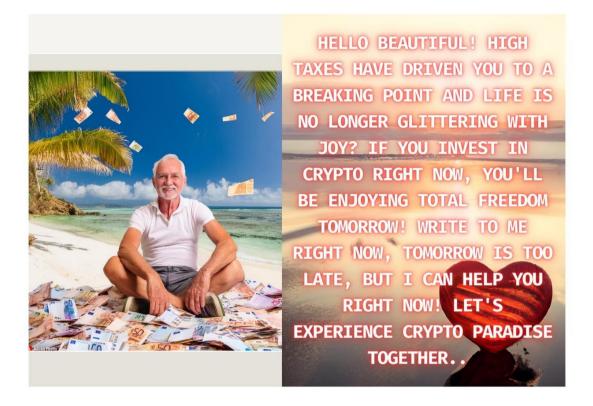
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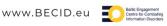
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LINKS TO DELIVERABLES

All of the updated slides, written materials, handouts, and guidelines mentioned in the report for trainers of Digimentors are made online via the BECID platform and are in 5 languages (EN, EE, LT, LV, RU).

- EN https://becid.eu/training-courses/
- EE https://becid.eu/et/training-courses/
- LT https://becid.eu/lt/mokymai-mokytojams/
- LV https://becid.eu/lv/training-courses/
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