



Lesson 1

Breaking the digital divide



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Agenda

1. Challenges during the Covid-19 pandemic
2. Digital divide
3. Characteristics of people in the digital divide
4. Digital societies and social learning opportunities
5. Empowerment

Learning objectives

After the lesson, learners will be able to:

- get to know the characteristics of people in the digital divide
- have access to different existing digital resources
- be able to select those that are most useful to them in their daily lives and learn how to use the resources that best suit and respond to their needs

1. Challenges during the Covid-19 pandemic

- sudden changes has particularly affected pupils and parents from economically disadvantaged neighbourhoods, with immigrant backgrounds and socially disadvantaged backgrounds; they tend to have weak digital skills, sparse hardware equipment etc.
- managing wellbeing was an important issue as an outcome of the Covid-19 pandemic condition, such as loneliness

1. Challenges during the Covid-19 pandemic

- The European Commission also points out that the Covid-19 crisis highlights one of the most important prerequisites for effective digital education and training:
 - connectivity and appropriate digital equipment for learners and teachers
 - confidence in using digital technologies to support learning processes
 - exchange of best practices and innovative teaching methods

2. Digital divide



looking for intermediaries and bridge builders ...

First published in The Charlotte Observer, U.S., September 1, 2020 | By Kevin Siers

3. Characteristics of people in the digital divide

- geographical location
- level of education
- economic class
- writing and language skills
- people with disabilities
- age
- gender

3. Characteristics of people in the digital divide: GEOGRAPHICAL LOCATION

There is also a digital divide between town and country. Even though the digital divide has narrowed considerably in Europe over the last decade, for example through access to basic broadband, there is a risk that rural areas have less access and less benefit less from digital progress than European cities (BBSR, 2017; Supercode, 2020; World Economic Forum, 2022).

3. Characteristics of people in the digital divide: LEVEL OF EDUCATION

The lower the level of education, the less digital competence is developed. Studies show that the number of years of education is strongly related to the level of digital skills. For example, people with no, low, or middle school qualifications have below-average digital skills. Particularly in the case of educationally disadvantaged population groups, there is a risk of being left behind in all areas of life due to increasing digitization (RWI, 2022).

3. Characteristics of people in the digital divide: ECONOMIC CLASS

The level of education often effects the economic class. And studies show that the income also has a major impact on how much one dares to do in the digital future. High-income people in particular use digital devices more frequently, also because they can afford the latest devices and internet connections and rate their digital skills higher. In other words, income determines access to the Internet (Supercode, 2020; bidt, 2022).

3. Characteristics of people in the digital divide: WRITTEN AND LANGUAGE SKILLS

Especially people with a refugee or migration background often have an educational disadvantage. Therefore, people with language barriers and illiteracy have a high probability of losing touch in a digital world.

Regarding language skills, there is a connection with a person's origin. There is a risk that people with a migration background are less involved in a social society (#FEMHealth, 2021; RWI, 2022; European Commission, 2020; European Commission, 2021).

3. Characteristics of people in the digital divide: PERSON WITH DISABILITIES

Even though digitalisation is a great opportunity for people with disabilities, access barriers must be removed, and investment must be made in digital skills training. Furthermore, it is important to raise society's awareness of the barriers online, especially those who develop digital media, hardware or IT programmes, so that no new barriers are created (AktionMensch, 2020; BaseCamp, 2021; BMBF, 2022).

3. Characteristics of people in the digital divide: AGE

Age also influences the level of digital skills. Studies show that the digital skills of children and young people (“digital natives”) are overestimated. At the same time, there is a public debate about the fact that the older population lacks of digital skills (“digital immigrants”) and has to learn how to use digital technologies as adults of their own accord (BFS-Trendinfo, 2019; DIVSI, 2018; Supercode, 2020; OECD, 2015; D80+, 2021).

3. Characteristics of people in the digital divide: GENDER

Although gender-specific differences in childhood and adolescence are still small, they widen by adulthood. Therefore, another vulnerable group are women. Studies show that women are less likely to have specific digital skills and work in ICT than men (digital gender gap) and only 18% of ICT professionals are women (European Commission, 2020; betterplace lab, 2017; Initiative D21, 2019; European Commission, 2021).

4. Digital Societies

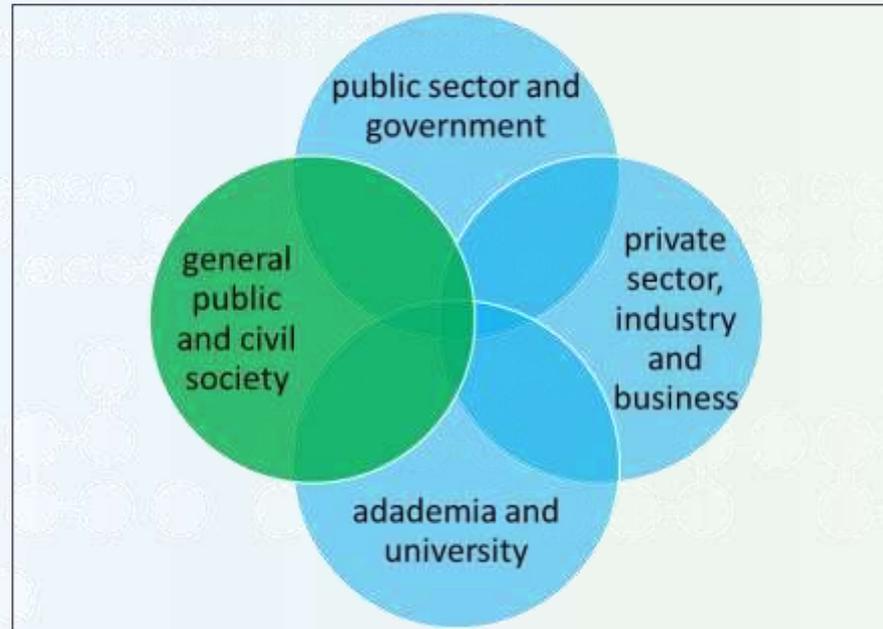
The aim of the European Union is to overcome and avoid a digital divide in the future and to develop into a "**digital society**" in which all citizens can participate in digital advantages and the digital world is in harmony with democratic rights and values (European Commission, 2022). In order to achieve this goal, the European Commission relies on the training of digital skills for all citizens, which go hand in hand with the digital transformation of everyday life, the world of work and learning systems and which are mutually dependent and beneficial.

4. Learning opportunity in social environments

Learning in a social environment also enables excluded and disadvantaged target groups to participate in social development and to acquire digital skills in a playful way and which relates to their daily life and digital practices.

- **formal learning:** classroom setting
- **non-formal learning:** learning on the job, sports and music courses
- **informal learning:** learning as a natural part of daily life

4. Learning opportunity in social environments



5. Empowerment

- resource-based intervention
- learning digital skills takes place at eye level
- focuses on the use cases of the individuum
- address self-empowerment with the help of social support
- expanding autonomy in the digitally shaped world
- help for self-help to overcome technical hurdles and mental barriers
- perceive and use their creative freedom and resources of the person
- build a trusting relationship
- make the latest knowledge accessible



>>Reflective questions<<

- What digital barriers do you perceive in the digital space? Which people are particularly affected and disadvantaged here?
- Which social initiatives are in contact with this target group? What learning opportunities does this provide?



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