Functional Digital Skills

UNIT 0: GENERAL DIGITAL LITERACY

1.Introduction

This UNIT builds the essential foundation for all online activities. Before tackling specific challenges like disinformation or online finance, it is crucial to build confidence, learn how to manage the flow of information, and understand our basic digital rights. This unit addresses the emotional barriers, feelings of being overwhelmed, and privacy concerns that can prevent safe and empowered digital engagement, providing strategies to navigate the online world with curiosity and control.

BUB

BEYOND LACK OF UNDERSTANDING . BEYOND DISINFORMATION

Learning Goals

After the training in Unit 0 the trainees will be able to

❖ **Build confidence and overcome common fears associated with using new technology.**

❖ **Develop strategies for managing online information to avoid feeling overwhelmed.**

❖ **Understand their fundamental digital rights regarding personal data and privacy.**

❖ **Practice safe, mindful habits for exploring websites, apps, and digital tools.**

❖ **Feel empowered to ask questions and learn from mistakes in a supportive way.**

❖ **Recognize the importance of privacy settings and informed consent online.**

Co-funded by
the European Union

BUBI
BEYOND LACK OF UNDERSTANDING ● BEYOND DISINFORMATION

Learning Outcome 1 – Building Digital Confidence and a Safe Mindset

(Skills for overcoming emotional barriers and establishing a positive learning approach)

Explain the concept of digital self-efficacy and why a "no stupid questions" mindset is important.

Identify at least two common fears about technology (e.g., fear of breaking something) and a strategy to address them.

Describe the "safe-to-fail" approach to practicing new digital skills.

Track a small success using a digital journaling exercise.

BUBB

BEYOND LACK OF UNDERSTANDING ∙ BEYOND DISINFORMATION

Learning Outcome 2 – Managing the Digital Environment and Protecting Privacy

(Practical digital actions and safe habits to support accessible and responsible internet use)

Use time-saving shortcuts like the "Find" function (Ctrl+F) to locate specific information on a dense webpage.

Explain the basic purpose of browser "cookies" and how to give or deny consent.

Demonstrate how to find a privacy setting on a smartphone or a familiar website.

Recognize when an app or website is asking for more personal information than it needs (overreach).

Co-funded by
the European Union

A. CONFIDENCE-BUILDING AND DIGITAL SELF-EFFICACY

Why Digital Confidence Is Important

Digital Confidence (or self-efficacy) is the belief in your own ability to learn and use new technologies. It's not about knowing everything; it's about trusting that you *can* figure things out.

This skill is important: Fear and anxiety block learning; confidence helps you explore, make mistakes, and keep going.

Real-world example: Avoiding online banking out of fear and queuing at the branch for every task.

Digital Tip: Start small—try one action, like sending a photo or checking a bus timetable.

Co-funded by
the European Union

Common Fears to Overcome

Fear of making irreversible mistakes.
Feeling of incompetence compared to others.
Anxiety from prior bad experiences (e.g., a scam).
Worry about "breaking" the device.

Confidence Boosters

Digital Journaling: Write down one small thing you learned or accomplished each day.
Testimonials: Hear stories from peers who also started with uncertainty and are now confident.
Celebrate Milestones: Acknowledge and feel good about every new skill you learn.

Safe Learning Strategies

Safe-to-fail challenges: Deliberately "make a mistake" in a safe context (like typing the wrong password) to see that it's recoverable.
Peer Mentorship: Learn alongside a friend or family member.
"No Stupid Questions": Remember that everyone was a beginner once.

Develop a Growth Mindset

Be **curious**, not fearful.
Focus on **progress**, not perfection.
Understand that **learning is a process**.
Ask for help when you need it—**there's no shame in learning**.

BUBI

BEYOND LACK OF UNDERSTANDING . BEYOND DISINFORMATION

Quote

"Courage starts with showing up and letting ourselves be seen."
— *Brené Brown*

BUB
BEYOND LACK OF UNDERSTANDING • BEYOND DISINFORMATION

Co-funded by
the European Union

B. MANAGING TIME PRESSURE & INFORMATION OVERLOAD

Co-funded by
the European Union

Why Managing Information is Important

Information Overload means facing more information than one can effectively process. The internet is fast-paced, dense, and full of distractions.

This skill is important: Without strategies to manage information, it's easy to feel overwhelmed, get distracted, and miss the important details you were looking for in the first place.

Real-world example: Searching for health information online, ending up with 20 open tabs, and feeling more confused and anxious than when you started.

Digital Tip: Before you start searching, ask yourself: "What is the one piece of information I need right now?" This helps you stay focused.

„Slow Down and Scan"

Don't try to read every word. First, scan the page for key information:
Headlines and subheadings
Source or author name
Publication date
This gives you the main idea quickly.

Time-Saving Shortcuts

❖ Use "Find" on page (Ctrl+F on Windows, Cmd+F on Mac) to instantly search for a specific word or phrase.
❖ Skim-read articles to decide if they are relevant before reading them deeply.

Tab and Task Management

❖ Use browser bookmarks to save important pages for later instead of leaving them open.
❖ Try to focus on one task at a time.
❖ Close tabs that are not related to your current goal to reduce distraction.

"Digital Break" Practices

It's okay to step away. If you feel overwhelmed, take a break from the screen.
Encourage controlled screen time.
Pause and reflect before clicking or sharing, especially if something makes you feel strong emotions.

STAYING IN CONTROL

Co-funded by the European Union

BUBI

BEYOND LACK OF UNDERSTANDING ● BEYOND DISINFORMATION

Why Digital Privacy Is Important

Digital Privacy is your right to control who collects and uses your personal information online. This includes your name, location, browsing habits, and more.

This skill is important: Many online services are "free„ because they make money from your data. Understanding your rights helps you make informed choices, avoid manipulation, and protect yourself from fraud.

Real-world example: A simple flashlight app on your phone asking for permission to access your contacts and location. This is overreach"—it needs more data than necessary for its function.

Digital Tip: Always pause before clicking "Accept All„ on cookie or privacy pop-ups. Take a moment to see if you can reject unnecessary data collection.

What is Personal Data?

Any piece of information that relates to an identifiable person:

Name, address, telephone number, email adress, ID number, picture, IP Adress location data from your phone, cookie ID, your browsing history, likes,...

But sometimes it depends on the context.

Your Basic GDPR Rights

Right of Access: You can ask a company what data they have on you.
Right to be Forgotten: You can ask for your personal data to be deleted.
Right to Data Portability: You can request a copy of your data to move elsewhere.

YOUR DATA, YOUR RULES

Cookie Consent

Cookies are small files websites place on your device to remember you. Some are necessary for the site to work, but many are for tracking and advertising.

You have the right to accept or reject non-essential cookies.

Spotting Overreach

Be suspicious when a site or app asks for more information than it needs. Ask yourself:

❖ "**Why** does this app need my **location**?"
❖ "**Why** does this website need **my phone number** just to read an article?„

You can say no.

BUBI
BEYOND LACK OF UNDERSTANDING ▪ BEYOND DISINFORMATION

Beyond the title

Headlines are not always the full story – read the article or search for the same information in other sources

What do you feel?

Emotional words = warning sign that the post or article wants to engage you, not necessarily to inform you

You are in control

Don't forward or share unless you're sure
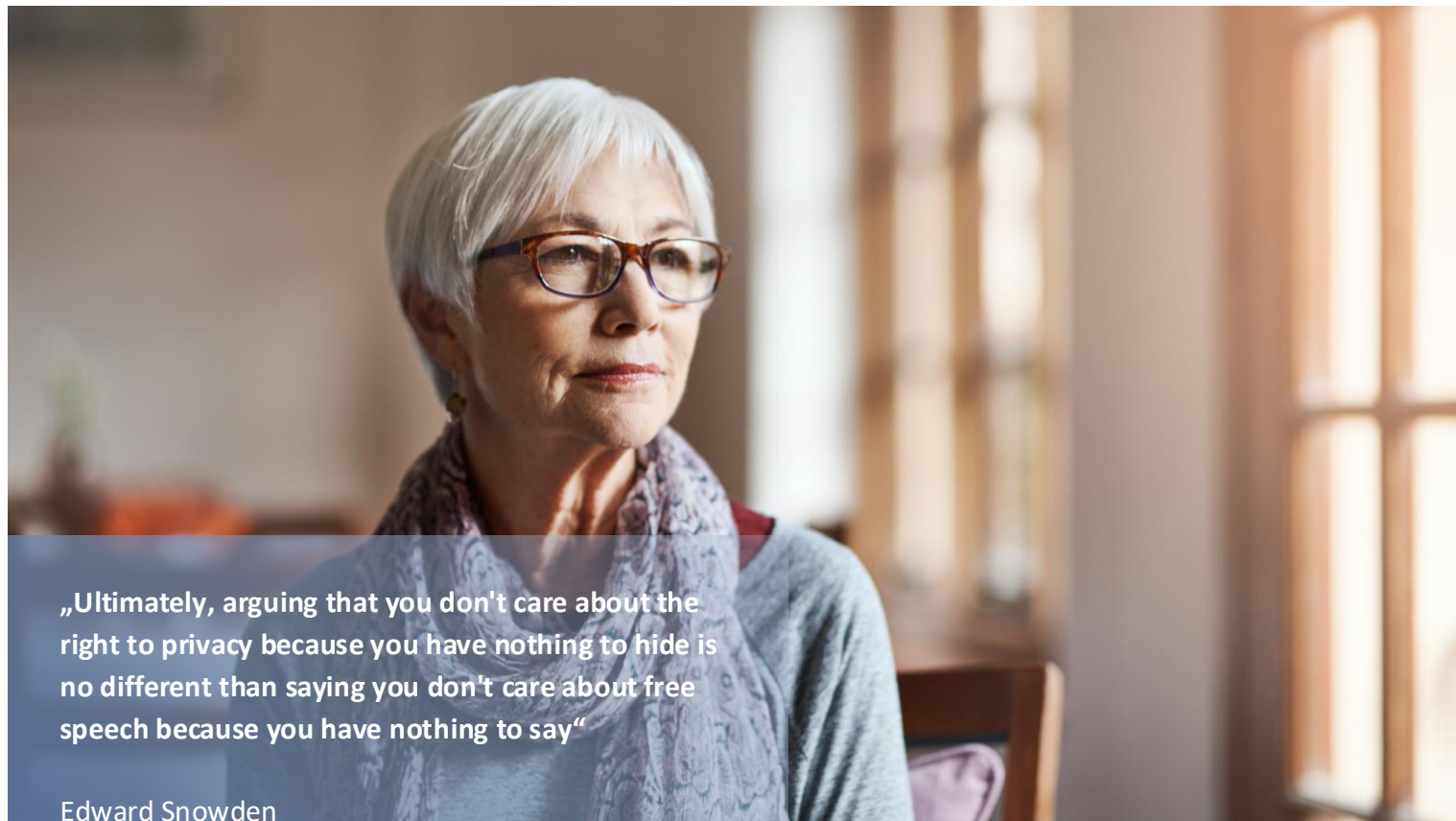You have the power to choose what to trust

Co-funded by
the European Union

BUBI

BEYOND LACK OF UNDERSTANDING . BEYOND DISINFORMATION

Quote

„Ultimately, arguing that you don't care about the right to privacy because you have nothing to hide is no different than saying you don't care about free speech because you have nothing to say"

Edward Snowden

BUB
BEYOND LACK OF UNDERSTANDING • BEYOND DISINFORMATION

Co-funded by
the European Union

❖ Bandura, A., 1997. *Self-Efficacy: The Exercise of Control*. W.H. Freeman.
❖ The European Parliament and the Council of the European Union., 2016. *Regulation (EU) 2016/679 of the European Parliament and of the Council (General Data Protection Regulation)*. The European Union. Available at: https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:32016R0679

BIBLIOGRAPHY

THANK YOU

Does anyone have any questions?
Follow the project updates

Rok Vukcevic (Aforisma) Tel. : (+39) 050
2201288 Fax : (+39) 050 2209491
info@aforismatoscana.net

BUBI
BEYOND LACK OF UNDERSTANDING • BEYOND DISINFORMATION