DIGITALIATORS - Digital upskilling for senior citizens, focused on their everyday necessary online transactions, especially after the pandemic

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PHONE RESEARCH REPORT

NORTH-EAST REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT AGENCY

Co-funded by the European Union

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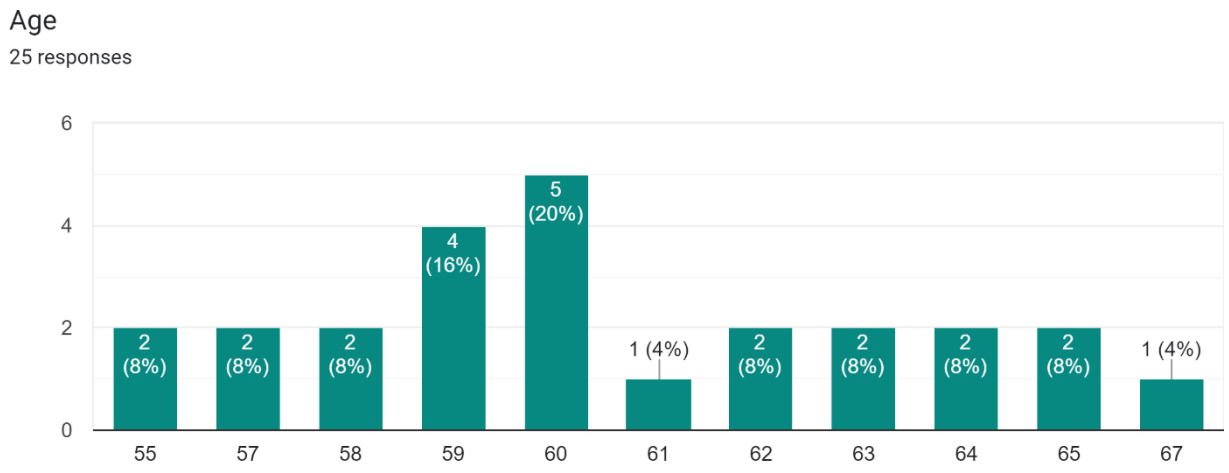
WAY OF CONDUCT

In this questionnaire, we included 25 seniors, people over 55 years old, with whom we discussed in several special and occasional meetings, between May and June 2023. The objective of the survey was to clearly find out, honestly and openly the main challenges, as well as the potential solutions seen from the perspective of seniors regarding the issue of digitization and digital literacy. This report presents the general vision of the main needs of seniors and aims to find the common points, the aspects where there is the most work and the simplest options to solve these problems.

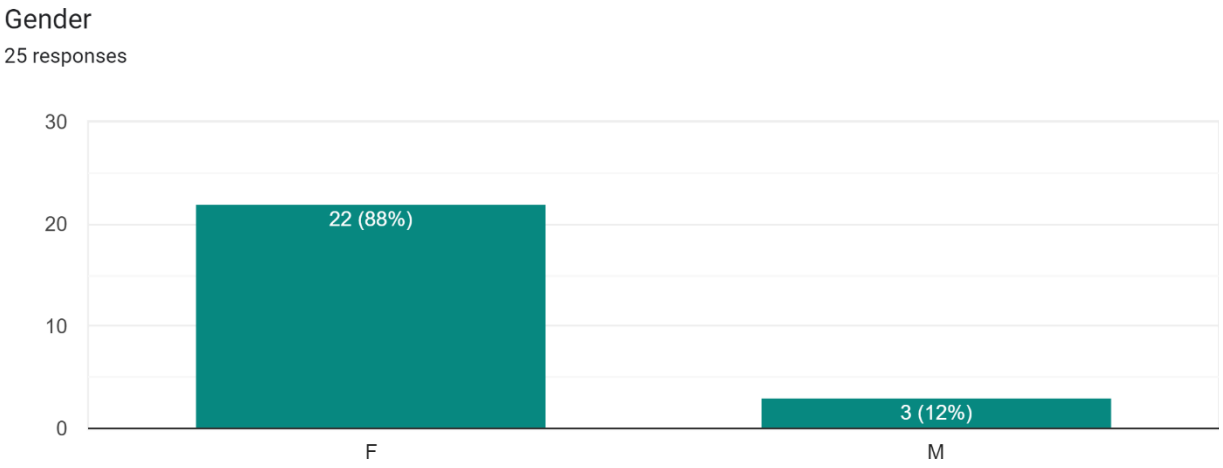
AGE

Most of the participants in the study are over 60 years old, the seniors surveyed being between 55 and 67 years old.



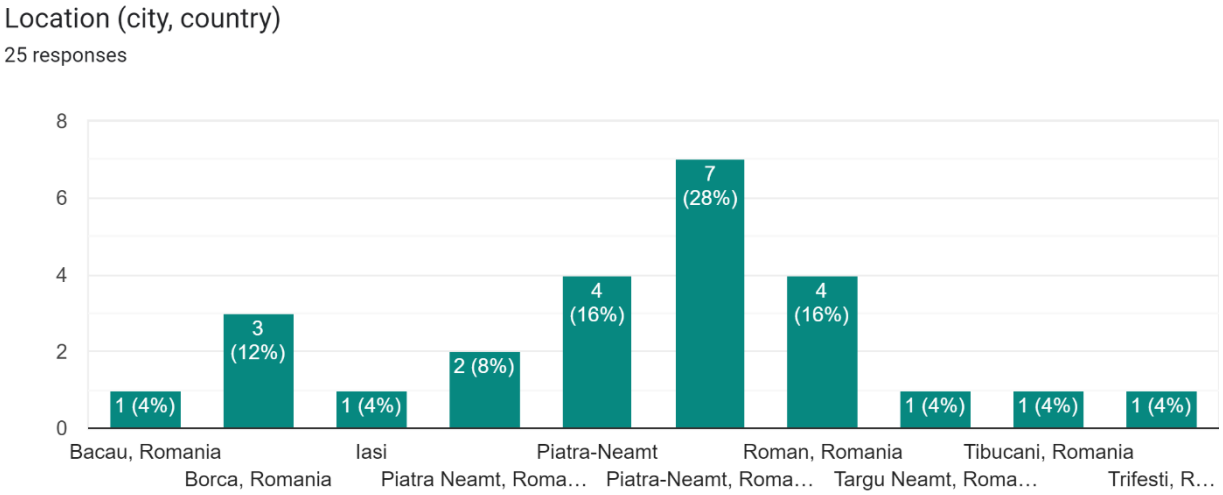
GENDER

Most of the participants who showed their willingness to participate in the study were women, in an overwhelming majority.



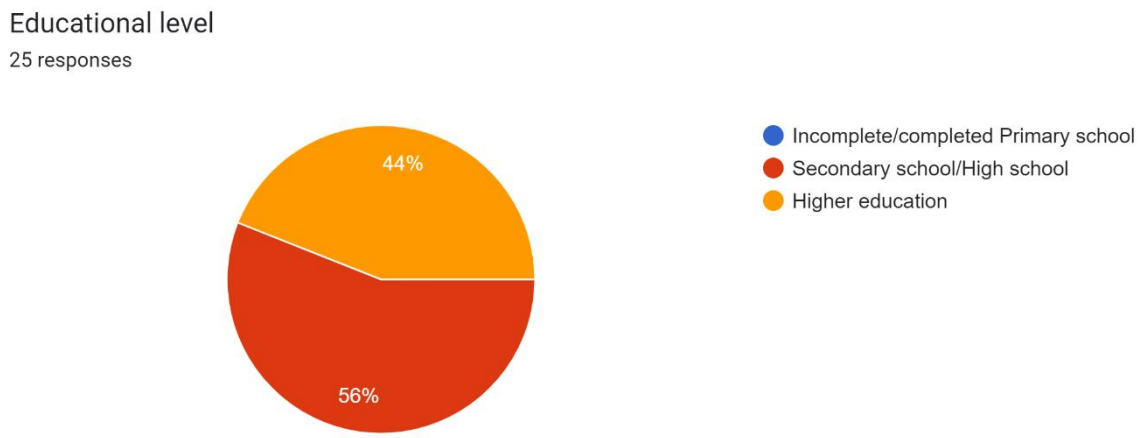
LOCATION

All the participants are from Romania, and the majority from the cities of Piatra-Neamt and Roman.



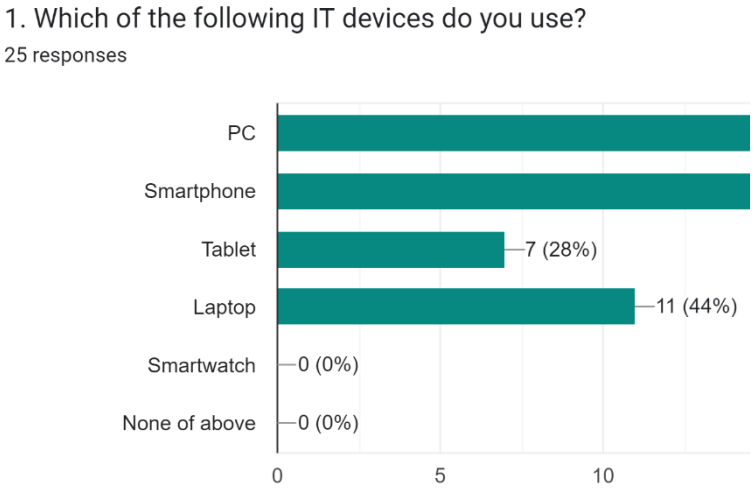
EDUCATION

All participants have at least finished high school, 44% of them also have higher education.

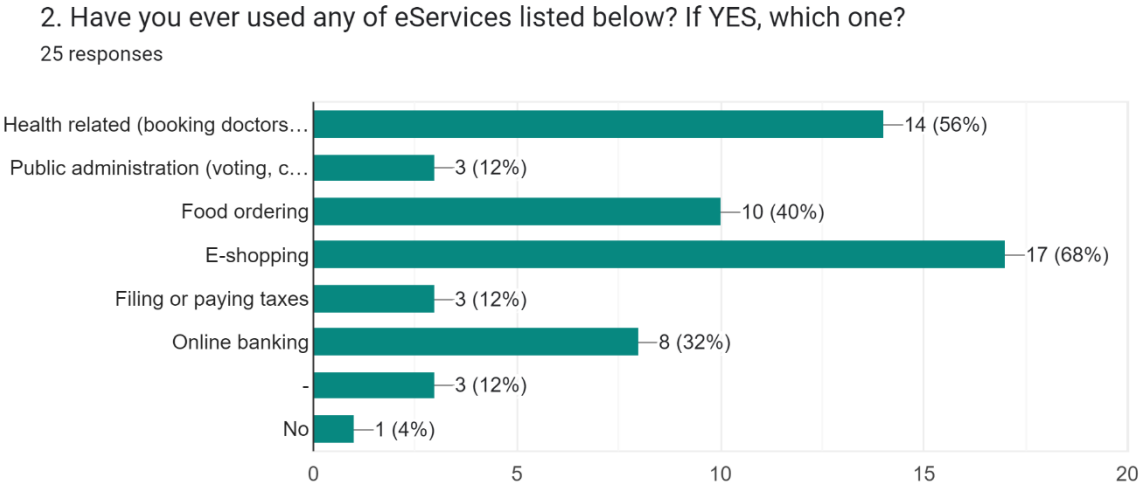


IT TOOLS KNOWLEDGE

The computer, smartphone and laptop are the most used devices by seniors in Romania, noting that none of them use a smartwatch and that there is no person who does not use at least one of the devices mentioned in the questionnaire.



In terms of the most frequent activities, online shopping, health-related websites and ordering food are at the top of the uses, even if at a basic level.



3. The main reasons why the surveyed seniors do not use online services are the following:

6 responses

-
She has no help
She has never worked, she is afraid
Fear of breaking something
She doesn't need it

4. The knowledge and skills that would make it easier to use online services would be the following:

25 responses

self-confidence and practice
Courage and determination
orientation on the Internet
Technical and software knowledge
Create account, enter passwords
Create account, enter strong passwords
patience, smartphone usage technique
Attention, multitasking
tenacity, perseverance, desire to learn
Basic principles of Internet operation and applications, general guidelines
permanent guidance, simple applications, large text
Strong need, suitable technical equipment, minimal knowledge of digitization
ability to search and filter information
repeated use of applications
uploading and downloading information from the Internet
Information about the benefits and practical examples of how to use the applications
Document scanning and photo editing
use of advanced smartphone applications
information about strong passwords and security
trust and practice on a high-performance phone
how to pay bills and do online transactions
using voice commands
practical information about new technologies
Knowledge benefits
Practical experience on a high-performance phone

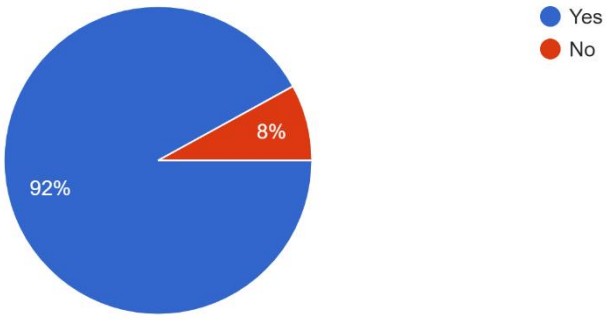
General notions of orientation on the Internet, safe search for information and other notions about security, along with perseverance and courage, represent, according to the answers, the most important aspects that can bring success in the use of online technologies.

COMMUNICATION AREA

More than 90% of respondents have an email address, and more than 70% of seniors can send an email without assistance.

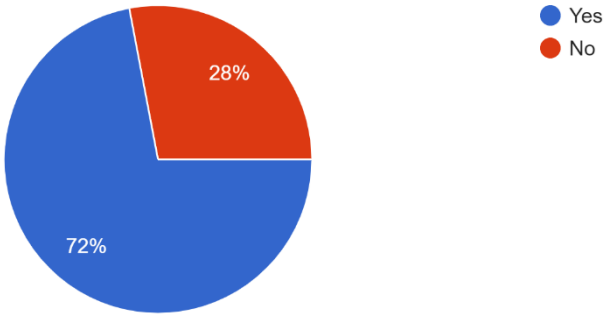
1. Do you have an email address?

25 responses

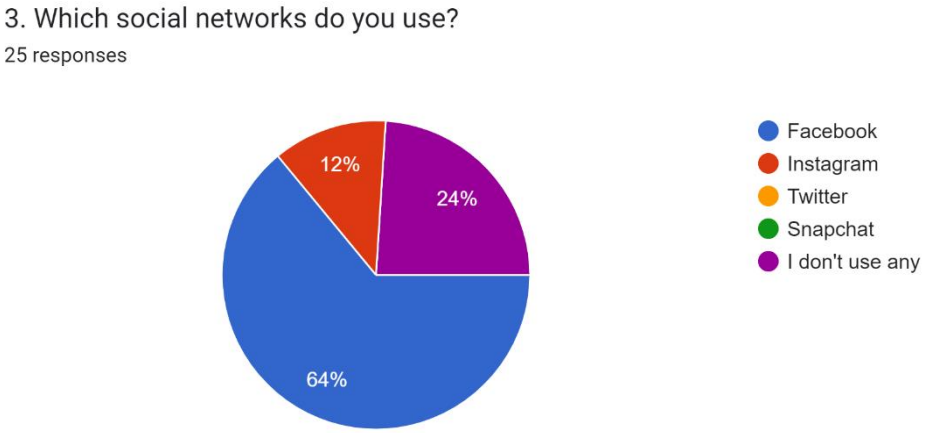


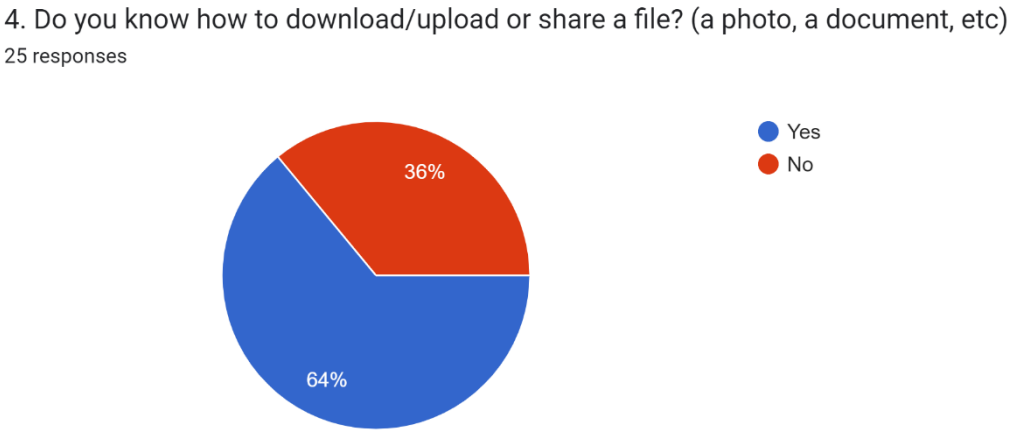
2. Can you send and receive an email without assistance?

25 responses



Most people use social networks, and Facebook is clearly at the top. Only 24% do not use any social network. It should be noted that Romanian seniors do not use Twitter and Snapchat at all.

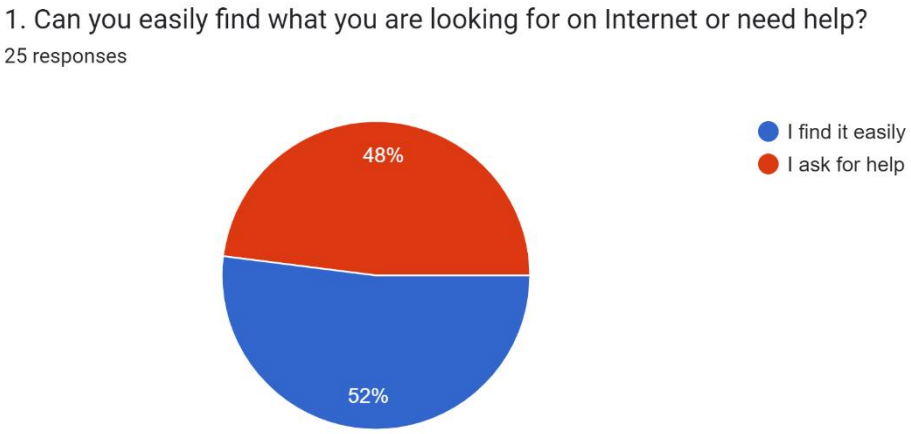




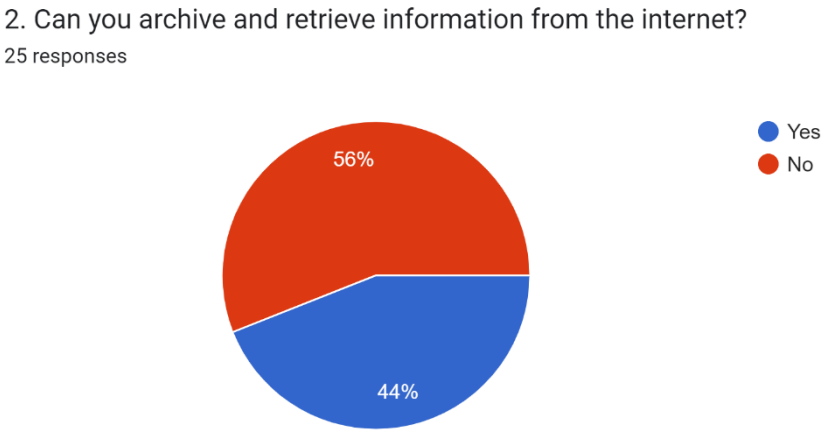
More than half of the respondents (64%) have minimal knowledge and skills regarding uploading, downloading and sharing documents and information, but there is a clear need to detail and diversify this information.

INFORMATION SEARCH AREA

However, when it comes to searching efficiently and without problems on the Internet, only 52% say they can easily find what they want.



Regarding archiving and retrieving information from the Internet, 44% of people say yes, showing that they understand the basic principles of these functions, according to their answers.



If yes, how do you do it?

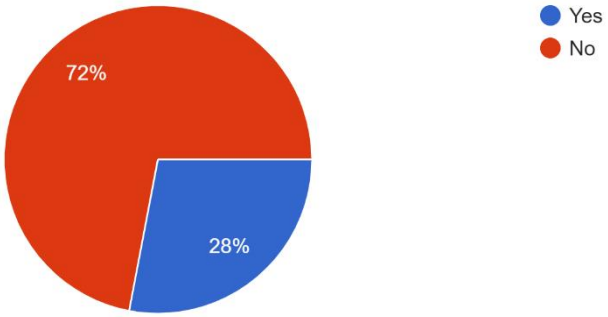
11 responses

With search engine and browser
Download in a folder
Save documents in folders
search, right click, download
press download/upload button, choose location
click the download icon, place it on your computer
using upload/download buttons and specific folders on the computer
download in the desired place with the mouse
click with the mouse on the special section and put documents
Drag and drop
Save on computer and download in folder

Regarding keeping up to date with the latest information related to online services, only 28% of the respondents claim that they are actively interested in this subject, the main sources being news and specialized articles on the Internet.

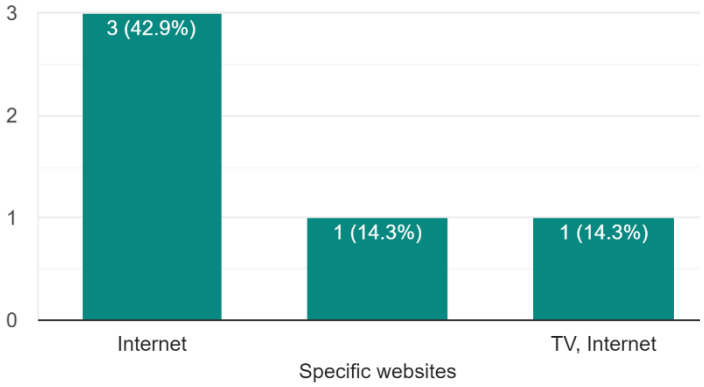
3. Do you keep yourself updated on the latest e services?

25 responses



If yes, how do you do it?

7 responses

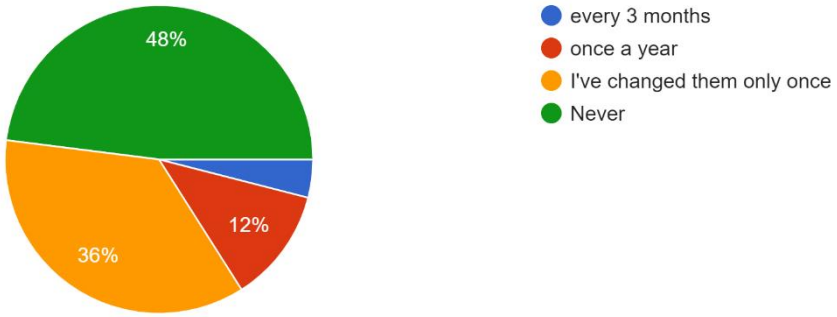


SECURITY AREA

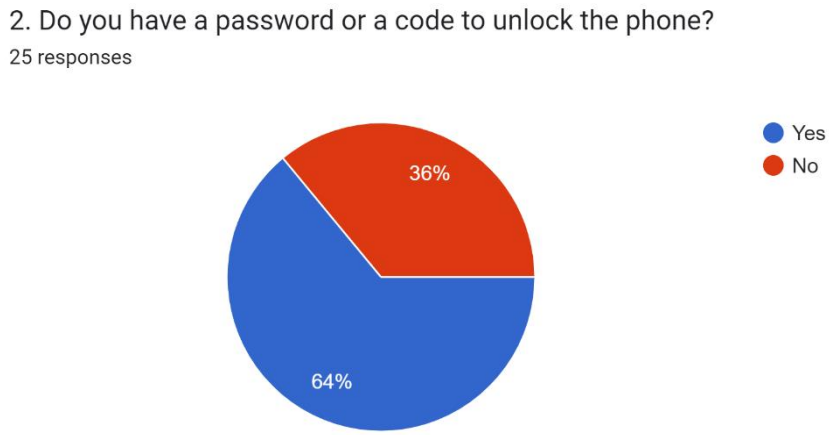
Regarding the security area, 48% of seniors never change their password, 36% changed it only once and only 12% change it annually.

1. How often do you change the passwords you use?

25 responses



It is interesting that 64% of seniors have a code or password (numbers or drawing) for locking and unlocking their smartphone.



CONCLUSIONS

The conclusions of the research in Romania show that there is interest in digitalization among seniors, there is certain knowledge and skills, but there is still a lot of work. Most people use electronic devices and take into account the principles of digital literacy, but they are willing and need to explore more in certain areas such as digital security, complex specific operations or diversifying activities and services. Also, the smartphone and mobile applications area seems like it should be explored more. It is true that our research does not include data on people over 70 years old, but the needs, worries and desires seem to be about the same. Seniors need clarity and general information, as well as specialized assistance from people who have the patience to help them.