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# IO1 Summary Report: Comprehensive framework of digital skill gaps of under-represented population groups in digital entrepreneurship

## ABOUT THE PROJECT

The Missing Entrepreneurs Project aims to build a more inclusive culture towards digital start-ups and support the development of digital and entrepreneurship skills among vulnerable and still under-represented population groups in digital entrepreneurship such as women, immigrants, youth and seniors.



## Main Issues:

Research Results:  
Questionnaires

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Conclusions and  
Recommendations

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## Research Results

A questionnaire was provided to be given out in all partner countries. The target was to be at least 40 questionnaires collected from each partner country for a total of 240 but we achieved to reach the total of 267 questionnaires. Specifically, in each partner country at least 5 questionnaires were to be collected from each of the social groups addressed by the project (women, youth, seniors, immigrants).

### FRANCE

78% of the participants were between 18-34 years old, 6% 35/44, 16% the rest age ranges 45-54 and 55-64 years old. Respondents were 67% French, while the rest came from EU and non-EU countries. Also, 97% of all of them had superior level of studies (university and above). More than 79% of the participants considers itself very familiar with the term of the entrepreneurship and more that 83% are familiar with the setting up a business. However, the majority of respondents still prefer to stay out of digital entrepreneurship, the inability to afford starting a business and the lack of knowledge being the main reasons preventing them from taking the initiative.



## Research Results

### PORTUGAL

The respondents were as below: Women – 28 responses; Youth – 25 responses; Seniors – 7 responses and Immigrants – 8 responses. Regarding their entrepreneurial background, the results showed a balance. As far as it concerns the term “Digital Entrepreneurship” the majority of the participants feel quite familiar with it. Among them, participants stated that the field of Digital Entrepreneurship is particularly fruitful in business and financial opportunities, has a greater proximity to customer’s needs, being a low-cost growing sector with better reach and practicality. It was given high importance to the skills regarding Communication, Finance, Operations Management and in addition, the highest chosen option were regarding Project Management. From the last data, it is concluded that the willingness to learn, based on a face-to-face method, has nothing to do with the lack of technological resources.

### SPAIN

Participants were almost 70% between 18 and 34 years old, 11% over 65 and 7% each of the rest age ranges 35-44, 45-54 and 55-64. Regarding the gender 70% of the participants were female and 30% male and 60% of all of them had superior level of studies. Of those who were entrepreneurs in the past 9% closed it down and 36% sold it. The majority reasons given for not having a running business in the moment of answering the questionnaire are of financial nature (50%) or related to the lack of other resources like energy (29%), time (18%) and other operational issues (24%). 17% claims the lack of knowledge about business creation and management. The minority (14%) of the participants considers itself familiar with the digital entrepreneurship although the almost the half of the participants has considered these options as an interesting one to start a business. The complete analysis of the perceived existing skills and relevance give us quite a clear idea of the needed skills. We can observe that the participant rate their level of skills related to communication, design and project and product management higher than those related to finances, data analysis, digital marketing or web development. . At the same time, they show clear needs to close the gap of knowledge they perceive that they have in those area they rate themselves as less skilled as well as understand their relevance as for instance finances, data analysis, digital marketing or web development.

### ITALY

53 persons were interviewed, 29 women and 23 men and they are mainly of Italian nationality. About 70% of the respondents belong to the young age group (18-34 years), the rest belong to the age group 35-64 and only one respondent declared an age higher than 65 years. 25% (those who voted 8,9,10) of the respondents claim to have high knowledge related to business creation, 47% (4,5,6,7) claim to have medium knowledge and 28% (1,2,3) claim to have low knowledge. About 30% of the respondents claim to be well familiar with the term entrepreneurship, 59% medium familiarity and 11% low familiarity. 15% of respondents claim to be familiar with the term digital entrepreneurship, 60% claim medium familiarity and 25% low familiarity. This suggests that respondents are less familiar with the world of digital entrepreneurship than with the wider world of entrepreneurship: around 15% of respondents who said they were familiar with the term entrepreneurship moved into the group of those who said they were unfamiliar with the term digital entrepreneurship. Some other skills related to digital entrepreneurship suggested by respondents such as 1) Problem Solving in emergency situations; 2) Content creation, soft skills, empathy; 3) Language skills; 4) Teamwork; 5) Innovation.

### CYPRUS

40% of the participants were under the age of 25-34 while only 5% was 18-24. Regarding the gender, 67% of respondents were female and 33% male. Some of the main reasons that our target group does not own a business today are financial and operational but people that still owned a business has a duration of 2 years. Nevertheless, only 12 out of 40 participants have never considered of getting into Digital Entrepreneurship. The rest of them are considering of going into digital, because it will be offered to them some business and financial opportunities, while they will expand their knowledges into starting a digital enterprise. When people were asked to rate their knowledge and practical familiarity with some skills, most people noted that they are very familiar with communication and project management term. Many participants though were not very familiar on web development, data analytics and product service development skills.



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# Research Results

## AUSTRIA

The respondents were nearly perfectly divided by gender. As far as age is concerned, all age groups were represented, with the ones 35-44 years old being the most active, while respondents aged over 65 were the least represented. 29 (62%) of respondents were born in Austria. The vast majority of them (83%) did not possess a university degree. The main reasons for closing down of companies have been related to the market and the ability to meet financial obligations. That said, a number of companies were closed for personal reasons – their owners couldn't keep up with the demanding lifestyle of an entrepreneur and were not prepared to make further sacrifices. 70% rate their knowledge of entrepreneurship as significant, and half of that number – as the highest possible. More than half of respondents rated their competences in digital entrepreneurship as insufficient and only 13% gave it a maximum result. The existing business and financial opportunities, as well as the relative ease of starting an online business, are the main pull factors. However, the majority of respondents still prefer to stay out of digital entrepreneurship, the inability to afford starting a business and the lack of knowledge being the main reasons preventing them from taking the initiative. On the negative side, respondents mentioned: a lack of interest in digital entrepreneurship in general – either because of the job security of employment or of retirement plans; a lack of concrete business ideas; a lack of opportunities; a lack of know-how.

## Conclusions

One of the recommendations of the report is that more government initiatives should be made in order to become more suitable to the needs of prospective entrepreneurs. Furthermore, the fact that some of the stakeholders often have low skills regarding entrepreneurship and more specific the digital entrepreneurship, creates the challenge that potential entrepreneurs are more vulnerable to start something by themselves. In most cases, this issue is linked with not having adequate systems and opportunities for validating qualifications, which has led entrepreneurs not to be able to secure and create a start-up that are qualified or not for. Thus, another recommendation of the report was that employees, unemployed, potential entrepreneurs, and local stakeholders too should receive the required knowledge and skills about digital marketing, social media management, data analysis and web-development. This kind of approach can help create a labour market that is more adaptive to the digital world of its workforce.

**The most important skills that respondents are not familiar with are:**

- Data analytics
- Web development
- Finance
- Digital Marketing
- Product service development

