

Digital Communities of the Elderly

The project "Digital Elderly Communities" is implemented within the framework of the Active citizens fund program, with implementing body the Union of Working Consumers of Greece. The € 12m Active citizens fund program is funded by Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway and is part of the European Economic Area (EEA) funding mechanism for the period 2014 - 2021, known as EEA Grants. The program aims to strengthen and enhance the sustainability of civil society and to highlight its role in promoting democratic processes, enhancing citizen participation in the community and defending human rights. The management of the Active citizens fund program for Greece has been jointly undertaken by the Bodosakis Foundation and SolidarityNow.

The **scope** of the **Digital Communities of the Elderly** project is to directly improve the quality of life of the beneficiaries and to contribute to the protection of their income and property.

Aim of the project is the training of 200 beneficiaries (60+) in the safe use of financial products, services and procedures.

The actions of the project were designed in order to:

- Enhance the participation of older people in advocacy for their needs and the needs of their communities.
- To support the elderly who are unfamiliar with digital technologies, to understand the way technology operates in a safe manner regarding their financial services management.
- Provide the opportunity to those who wish to participate voluntarily in a community service, that will improve the social inclusion of beneficiaries, which is the ultimate strategic goal of the project.

The 4 phases of the project are:

- 1st Phase: Needs of beneficiaries' investigation study
- 2nd Phase: Training in the safe use of financial products & services
- 3rd Phase: Formation of a 5 members governing body of Local Volunteers Groups (ETO) in 10 Greek cities
- 4th Phase: Operation of a Voluntary Network of 50 people in 10 cities of Greece



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Project materialization through collaboration of 2 networks:

- Local Branches of E.E.K.E.
- Centers for Open Protection of the Elderly (K.A.P.I.), in the local Municipalities in 10 Greek cities:
 1. Nafpaktos
 2. Chania
 3. Veria
 4. Kastoria
 5. Lamia
 6. Syros Ermoupolis
 7. Katerini
 8. Rhodes
 9. Volos
 10. Messologi

The financial products, services and processes that the training program focuses are:

- Secure use of credit / debit cards
- Internet banking and purchases of products and services online
- Avoiding internet fraud - protection of bank accounts
- Service of consumer and mortgage loans and credits
- Special benefits for the elderly by public utility companies

Beneficiary Needs Investigation Study

EEKE performed a nationwide research via a digital questionnaire in Greece in order to determine the needs of people of third age regarding their digital skills, their financial payments patterns and internet buying habits. Key Points of the survey are listed in this memo while a copy of the survey results are available in the project's website, www.eeke-seniors.gr

In the following pages see the survey's key points in English language.



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The nationwide geographical distribution of the participants in Greece



EEKE Study: Electronic Transactions and Elderly-The Key Points

The **Union of Working Consumers of Greece**, for the needs of the project " **Digital Communities of the Elderly** " under the Active Citizens Fund program, conducted a survey, entitled " **Electronic Transactions and the Elderly** ".

The internet web research took place from 01/05/2020 to 20/05/2020 at the address www.eeke-seniors.gr using a sample of 366 participants aged 60 years and older in which were sampled on one hand on the level of familiarity of the participants with the internet, electronic devices, digital transactions and services and on the other hand the trends and common practices of people of this age around of these issues.

The purpose of the research is to investigate the needs of the target group of the project and to prepare a study based on the creation of educational material for the training of 200 people in 10 cities in Greece in the secure usage of electronic transactions.

The following are the main points of the study:

A. The profile of the Participants

- About half of the participants are men (49.73%) and half women (50.27%).
- The majority of them they are married and they are 60-65 years (83.61%).
- The largest percentage are retirees (63.66%).
- 2/10 have a monthly income of 0-500 € while 4/10 have a monthly income of 500€-1000€ euros.



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B. Level of knowledge in digital reality issues

- The majority (73.5%) are not aware of their respected rights and obligations as consumers in Electronic Transactions.
- About 2 in 10 consumers stated that they have absolutely no familiarity with the Internet while only 3/10 are quite familiar.
- 9 out of 10 consumers use one or more electronic devices, most commonly smartphones (40%).

C. Preferences of participants regarding their transactions

- The majority prefer the service from a bank branch (52.46%), however a large percentage (56.83%) exhibits positive predisposition to conduct their banking transactions electronically in order to save time and effort.
- The participants raise the issue of electronic transactions security mainly due to general lack of familiarity with digital reality.
- Almost half make electronic transactions once a week, mainly for bills payment (86.67%), monitoring their bank accounts (70.91%), money transfers (67.88%) and online shopping. The same transactions were stated by those who do not electronic transactions.
- Only 2 out of 10 consumers use a prepaid card of any kind.
- 7 out of 10 consumers mentioned they do not trade digitally because they are not familiar or generally unable to understand the banking transaction process.
- If in case of emergency bank branches have to be closed, more than half of the consumers mentioned that they will not be able to complete their transactions digitally.

D. Experiences and usual practices of the respondents

- Almost (91.49%) has not suffered any financial loss after an unsafe online shopping experience.
- 3 out of 10 participants do not know the difference between a credit and a debit card
- 8 out of 10 maintain up to three bank accounts in use.
- Most consumers are quite sensitive in personal data theft issues and consequently they do not keep PIN and IBAN along with their credit or debit cards.
- They are aware at all times of their account balance and their financial transactions (75%).

E. Special information about Loans and Repayments

- The large majority have taken only one bank loan, while more than half still have ongoing financial obligations.
- The vast majority (7/10) have somehow difficulties repaying their loan obligations.
- A 70.59% are informed that they are entitled to settle their debt with the banking institutions.



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F. Electronic- Digital banking and services

- Most consumers have insufficient knowledge about electronic / digital banking products while (44.54%) seem to have greater knowledge about ATM functions in contrast to other forms of electronic and digital banking such as: mobile banking, telephone banking.
- Only 1 in 10 would trust a fully digital bank with no branches at all.
- The 66.12% of respondents consider technology an important factor for better service of the customer from the bank.
- The majority of consumers, 7 out of 10 consider the risk of loss to be the most important disadvantage of digital services jobs.

G. Special benefits from Utility Companies (DEKO)

- Lack of information is reflected in the special benefits provided for the elderly from Utility Companies at a rate of 75.14%.
- The vast majority, 8 out of 10, said they had never used these benefits.

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