

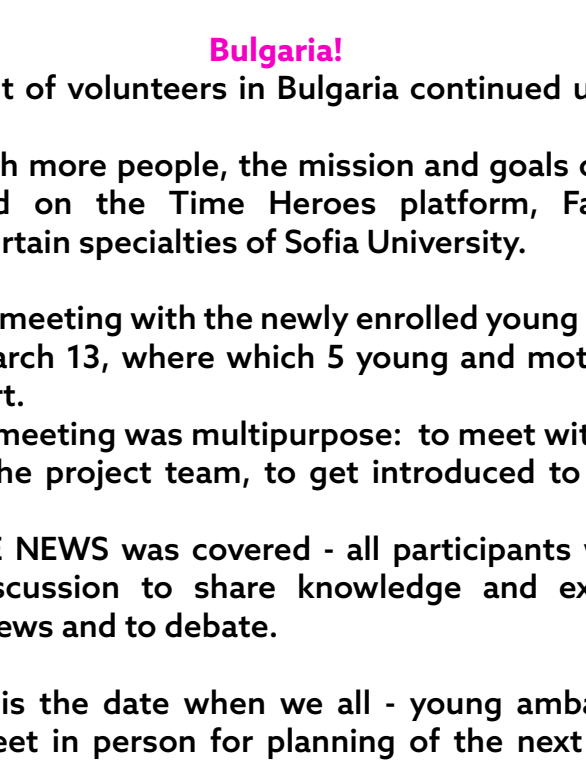


The DIGITOL project is searching for participants!

If you are over 55 years of age, you are interested in the issue of mis-, dis-, and mal-information online and understanding of the media, news, and journalism, if you would like to increase your digital and media skills and are willing to work with younger people in intercultural and intergenerational environments, this programme just might be for you!

To find out more about DIGITOL and apply, [click here!](#)

NEWS FROM OUR PARTNERS



Bulgaria!

The recruitment of volunteers in Bulgaria continued until February 25.

In order to reach more people, the mission and goals of the project were published on the Time Heroes platform, Facebook and presented to certain specialties of Sofia University.

The first online meeting with the newly enrolled young ambassadors was held on March 13, where which 5 young and motivated young people took part.

The aim of the meeting was multipurpose: to meet with each other, to meet with the project team, to get introduced to the DIGITOL project.

The topic FAKE NEWS was covered - all participants were actively involved in discussion to share knowledge and experience, to express their views and to debate.

26th of March is the date when we all - young ambassadors and trainers will meet in person for planning of the next steps of the training programme and discussing capacity building programme.

Module 5 will be focused on Intergenerational work and it is foreseen on 9 April 2021.

By the end of April (19 and 20 April 2021) trainers and YAs will meet for the last two-day sessions of the ToT Programme on Training & Facilitation Essentials, the design of the Capacity building programme for older adults and the development of Pilot Projects, which will be carried out by the YAs and the older adults together from September onwards.

Italy!

10 Italian Young Ambassadors have built up a solid group of peers who actively participate either on the Digital E-learning Academy by exchanging views in the Forum section and completing the assigned tasks, as well as in the scheduled Meet-ups with the DIGITOL trainers.

The 3rd live online Meet-Up took place on 26 February 2021. The topic was Hate Speech.

Young Ambassadors worked in small groups and shared personal experiences of hate speech, back in plenary for reporting their work they led to very interesting and stimulating discussions on hate speech cases and their classification.

Trainers taught that hate speech can be expressed by:

- the content and the tone of the expression;
- the intent of the person responsible for the expression;
- the targets or potential targets, the context and the impact or potential impact.

Young Ambassadors suggested that hate speech is also influenced by the historical moment in which we live, e.g. it has been suggested that it may be that verbal discrimination against vegan people will be classified hate speech for modern day specific feelings and beliefs.

The meeting was recorded and it has been uploaded on the Digital Academy so that the YAs who couldn't attend that day and those interested can watch it again.

For Module 4 on Media Literacy/Fake news and Disinformation a (virtual) movie night was organized. The DIGITOL trainers invited the YAs to watch a documentary movie called "Manufacturing Consent".

The movie is based on the notable book by Noam Chomsky and Edward S. Herman, Manufacturing Consent: The Political Economy of the Mass Media and we highly recommend it also to our readers.

[The movie can be found here](#) - in English language, and [here with Italian subtitles](#). It will be one of the topics of the 4th Meet-up scheduled for 19 March.

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Germany!

In Germany we have carried out regular trainings session for the ToT, since January, every Monday late afternoon for 1,5 hours each. The Young Ambassadors have learned about session-design and facilitation of online learning programmes.

Notably YAs have prepared and held a "mock training session" on the topic of the "filter bubble" in which 6 older adults were present. The session took one and a half hours, of which 1 Hour was fully facilitated by our young ambassadors. They held a presentation, involved the older adults with questions on the topic and discussed with them at the end of their interactive presentation.

This session was a great success and helped the YA ambassadors to better understand the interests and learning needs of older adults and they were then able to refine their planning for further sessions.

Additionally, YA have now started working on the designing the full schedule of the capacity building programme and we hope to have a first comprehensive draft ready by the end of April.

Greece!

Ten highly engaged and motivated Young Ambassadors from Greece are continuing their Digital journey. They meet every Saturday with the senior trainers for three hours and have participated in four more sessions.

Through participatory and interactive approaches, they have covered the issues of fake news and misinformation, human rights and stereotypes in general and how they affect us, but also stereotypes related to ageism. Furthermore, they have worked on intergenerational issues and activities, as well as the very core subject of learning in later life, meaning how older people learn, what their educational needs are and how to address them.

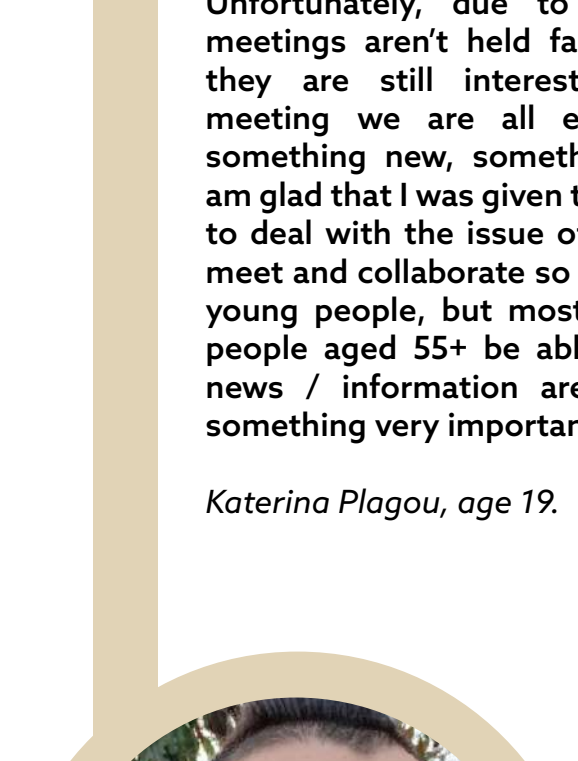
The Training of Trainers sessions are expected to be completed by the end of April, when the YA will be equipped and well prepared for the Capacity Building and the development of the Pilot Projects that will follow.

So far evaluation of the training program and of the senior trainers by the Young Ambassadors shows that they are very satisfied with the training, they find the interventions useful, interesting and well organized. The only impediment reported was the fact that everything is held online due to Covid-19 restrictions.

Through the eyes of our Young Ambassadors in Greece

The Young Ambassadors are the heart and soul of the DIGITOL project. By volunteering their time and sharing fresh ideas and perspectives, they are making everything possible!

Here are some thoughts about the DIGITOL intervention in their own words.

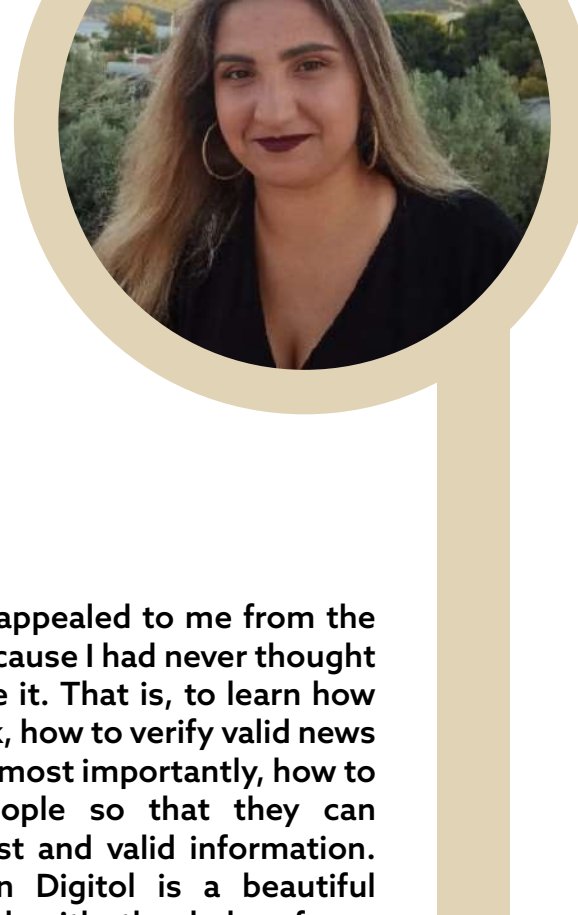


"I learned about the project from my best friend and I can say I was immediately interested. I like to help those around me as much as I can, particularly vulnerable groups. It is useful to learn to distinguish fake news and to use the Internet properly, to help as many people as I can through the program. It is important to me that the beneficiaries are older people who often have problems with fake news. I am glad that I took part because even from a distance, our instructors have found a way to make it enjoyable, fruitful and as interactive as possible!"

Marthia Toulida, age 20.

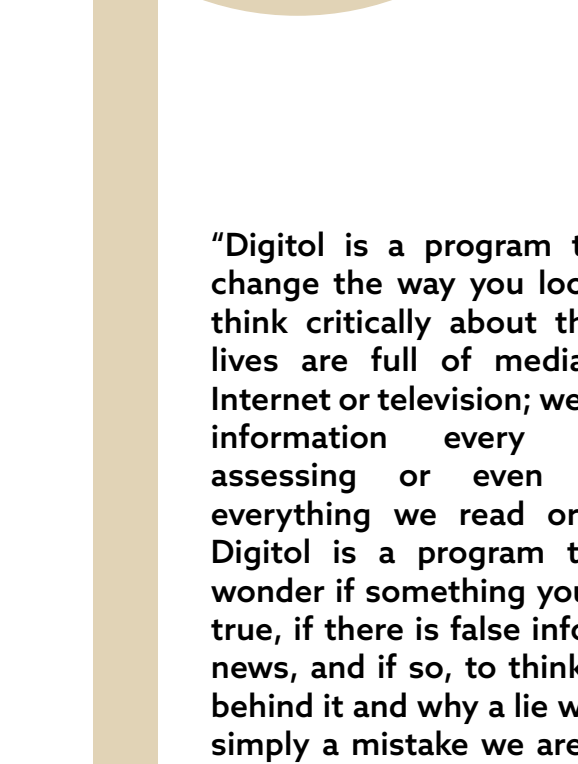
"I heard about the program from one of the five instructors. I liked the subject, it seemed very interesting and I liked the fact that it would be interactive. Unfortunately, due to covid-19, the meetings aren't held face-to-face, but they are still interesting! In every meeting we are all eager to learn something new, something creative! I am glad that I was given the opportunity to deal with the issue of fake news, to meet and collaborate so well with other young people, but most of all to help people aged 55+ be able to discern if news / information are true or not, something very important nowadays."

Katerina Plagou, age 19.



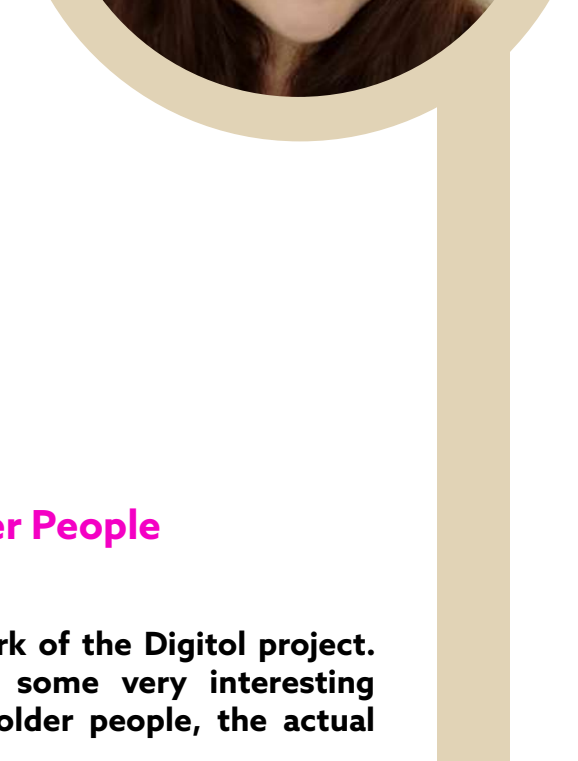
"The program appealed to me from the first instant because I had never thought of anything like it. That is, to learn how fake news work, how to verify valid news and finally and most importantly, how to help older people so that they can receive the best and valid information. Participating in Digitol is a beautiful experience and with the help of our teachers we learn to work methodically and accurately in order to achieve our goal, i.e. the right information. I believe the purpose of the program is very important because unfortunately we live in an era where misinformation is "transmitted" at a rapid pace. As a result, even accurate news and information get lost in the chaos of fake news."

Manos Nikitakis, age 23



"Digitol is a program that helps you change the way you look at news and think critically about them. Our daily lives are full of media such as the Internet or television; we receive a lot of information every day without assessing or even wondering if everything we read or hear is true. Digitol is a program that helps you wonder if something you read or see is true, if there is false information in the news, and if so, to think about what is behind it and why a lie was written: is it simply a mistake we are talking about, just incorrect information or is it a deliberate publication of fake news? Finally, DIGITOL is a program that presents and informs about the news and the way we should have a critical attitude towards them, something that every informed citizen should know, that should have been taught during our school years."

Artemis Polimeropoulou, age 21



Human Rights for Older People

The issue of Human Rights is a benchmark of the Digitol project. Our partner AGE Platform Europe has some very interesting remarks regarding the human rights of older people, the actual target group of the program.

Older people have been hit hard by COVID-19. But their challenges are not unique or exclusive to the ongoing crisis. As the UN High Commissioner for [Human Rights put it in May 2020](#):

"This crisis has laid bare, and often amplified, many challenges that older people have been facing for years, such as discrimination based on older age, lack of social protection and access to health services, lack of autonomy and participation in decision-making, and risk of violence, neglect and abuse."

Although older persons are a very heterogeneous group, they face distinct human rights challenges on the basis of their old age. Old age disadvantage is not only the result of pre-existing inequalities that when carried into old age are amplified. Ageism is an additional layer of inequality that crosscuts the categories of class, gender, race and disability.

As explained in the first [UN Global report](#) on ageism that was launched on 18 March 2021, ageism is a combination of how we think about age (stereotypes), how we feel about age (prejudice) and how we behave in relation to age (discrimination).

In Europe, one in three report having been a target of ageism. Over 40 % of Europeans perceive discrimination due to old age (being over 55 years old) as "very" or "fairly" widespread in their country. Ageism is culturally engrained in society, in a similar way to sexism, ableism, racism and other forms of oppressions. But it is particularly difficult to tackle ageism because it is insidious, often indirect and more societally acceptable than discrimination on other grounds.

COVID-19 exposed in sharp ways how ageism can lead to segregation, neglect, abuse, and even death. But ageism has serious consequences both for older people and society at large beyond the current context of the pandemic. [Research](#) shows that older people with negative attitudes about ageing may live 7.5 years less than those with positive attitudes. Ageism has also been shown to cause cardiovascular stress, lowered levels of self-efficacy and decreased productivity. Ageism makes older people vulnerable to neglect and abuse. Studies also show that due to ageism, maltreatment and other human rights violations against older people, in particular older women, are underreported.

Ageism is a major barrier to developing good policies. Problematising older people as 'vulnerable' or equalizing ill-health with old age does not permit the enactment of policies that tap on older people's potential. Arbitrary age-based limitations can be seen in areas such as work, education, health and care, mortgages, insurance, marriage, and inheritance, to name only a few. These restrictions frequently have deeply exclusionary effects. For example, lack of access to insurance can block possibilities for even voluntary work. Mandatory retirement ages and exclusion from education and training feed into a vicious circle of long-term unemployment, low pension income and poverty. Seeing older people as a burden also devalues the work of people who care for them. Ageism therefore makes it difficult to invest in care and improve the status and working conditions of caregivers.

A recent study by the UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights has shown that due to ageism, older people's rights are systematically undermined and there is insufficient legal protection to address such violations. International human rights law (meaning UN conventions, declarations and other instruments) perpetuates biases and prejudice on the basis of older age. It talks about the 'problem of ageing' and depicts older people as 'frail' and 'dependent'. Existing norms use extensively the term 'elderly' and are overly focused on needs as opposed to older people's potential. Compared to other grounds of discrimination, human rights standards allow a much wider margin of discretion to accept discrimination, restrictions and segregation on the basis of old age. Existing norms refer to the enjoyment of human rights 'for as long as possible' as opposed to 'on an equal basis with others'. The current international framework has gaps and limitations and failed to extend to older persons the same human rights safeguards that everyone else in society has.

As long as discrimination and inequalities on the basis of old age remain so commonplace, as long as older people are valued less, excluded from necessary health treatment, abandoned, left to die, subjected to violence and abuse, human rights cannot be equally realised in old age. Against this background, AGE Platform Europe has launched the [#EULeadsTheRally](#) campaign which calls on the EU and its Member States to actively support the development of a UN convention that will guarantee the equal enjoyment of human rights for people of all ages.

A new UN convention has a transformative potential that can guide future action. It would provide a richer, clearer and more accessible interpretation of universal rights. It would trigger a dynamic of change that might otherwise not happen or not at the needed pace. A convention would enhance opportunities for individuals and civil society to hold governments to account and access remedy. It would also resolve the extant dispersed and inconsistent engagement with older people's issues by promoting a systematic mainstreaming of human rights in older age.

To find out more about how to support the global movement for an equal protection of our human rights when we are older, [click here](#) or contact [Nena Georgantzi](#).