



DigiSteps

— Stepping into the Digital Future —

València, February 2026

The DigiStep Methodology: A Step-by-Step Training Pathway



Content Development

UNIMEL (Spain) will lead the preparation of an 8-week offline training curriculum focusing on digital competences and employability skills.



Train-the-Trainer

Educators from each partner institution will receive intensive training to ensure effective local implementation.



Implementation in Prisons

The Turkish coordinating institution will deliver the developed training to at least 30 inmates in the open prison, ensuring direct impact.



Community Engagement

Workshops and exhibitions will link inmates with the community, employers, and civil society organizations, reducing stigma and opening pathways to employment.

The DigiStep Project: Purpose & Core Pillars



Addressing the Reintegration Challenge

Prepares inmates for successful society reintegration. Core focus on Digitalization and Green Skills, essential for modern life and employment.



Digital Competencies: Operating in a digital world.



Sustainability Awareness: Environmentally conscious living.



Project Approach & Partnership

Collaboration of institutions from Turkey, Spain, and Lithuania to design innovative, offline-compatible training programs.



Offline Training: Accessible within correctional facilities.



Holistic Empowerment: Digital skills, social skills, and environmental sustainability.

The DigiStep Project: Three Key Objectives



1. Digital Inclusion

To equip inmates with essential digital skills (ICT, online safety, e-commerce, remote work, CV preparation) using offline methods compatible with prison conditions.



2. Social Reintegration

To strengthen communication, teamwork, and conflict resolution skills through community-based rehabilitation workshops.



3. Environmental Awareness & Creativity

To promote sustainability and rehabilitation through art and recycling workshops, highlighting the link between creativity, self-expression, and eco-consciousness.



DigiSteps

Žmogaus Socialinės Integracijos
Centras (Lithuania)



DigiSteps

Afyonkarahisar Open
Penitentiary Institution, Turkey



DigiSteps

UNIMEL - Unión para la mejora de
la educación en libertad (SPAIN)

1. The Digital Divide

— Bridging the gap —

Digital Literacy and Employability: Bridging the Gap



In today's digital society, prisons remain highly **disconnected**.



Denying excluded groups access leaves individuals more **'skills-poor'**.



Most modern jobs require at least basic digital skills, yet prisoners are the **most digitally excluded** group.



21st-century rehabilitation must include **digital competences** to close this gap.

Why Digital Skills Matter for Reintegration

Rehabilitation Support



Digital tools support rehabilitation: Learning tool to gain competencies needed post-release.

Navigating the Digital World



Navigating a world where nearly every task -from banking to job applications -requires digital know-how.

Impact on Re-entry



Individuals who acquire digital skills inside have "a much more effective" social and labor reintegration.

**Digital literacy is an essential life skill
critical for re-entry into society**



Recidivism and Education



Participation in prison education programs reduces recidivism by up to 43%



Successful placement in employment –contingent on digital skills– is the strongest lever for preventing reoffending.

The Digital Blackout

2. The Adult Learner

in a prison context

Understanding Andragogy & Behavioral Aspects

Defining the Adult Learner

(Knowles, 1984, 1990)



Role:
Takes on adult
roles (parent,
worker)



Self-Concept:
Self-directed,
responsible for
own life

Pedagogy vs. Andragogy

Pedagogy ("Child-leading")



Teacher-directed, total
control, dependency.
(Knowles, 1984)



Andragogy ("Adult-learning")

Conner's (2004) 5 Issues:

- ? Show **why** learning is important
- ➔ Show **how** to self-direct
- 🏠 Relate to **experiences**
- 🔥 Learn when **ready & motivated**
- ✅ Help overcome **inhibitions**



The Prison Context

(McCormick, 1931)



Juveniles
(Act like Adults):
Due to years of
adult-like
experiences

Adults
(Act like Children):
Due to varying
maturity levels &
emotional behavior

Key Finding: Methods must adapt to
behavioral maturity, not just age.

Behavioral Aspects of Pedagogy versus Andragogy

PEDAGOGY: TEACHER-DIRECTED INSTRUCTION



- Defined as 'child leading', a Greek concept.
- Instructor has total control over learning process.
- Requires student obedience to instruction.
- Learner is dependent on the teacher.

(Source: Knowles, 1984)

ANDRAGOGY: LEARNER-CENTERED (ADULT LEARNING)



- Focuses on the adult learner's self-direction.
- Learning is problem-centered and relevant.
- Draws on learners' life experiences.
- Instructor acts as a facilitator or guide.

Andragogy vs Pedagogy

Knowles defined andragogy as *"the art and science of helping adults learn"*
(Knowles, Holton, & Swanson, 2005, p. 60).



Pedagogy
(Child-leading)



Andragogy
(Adult-learning)



Self-directed and intrinsically motivated learners



Bridge life experiences with old knowledge with new learning



Goals-driven learners



Expect experiences to be relevant to them



Practical learners



Want respect

McCormick (1931) on Pedagogy & Andragogy in Prison

Juveniles in Correctional Facilities



- Act like adults due to years of traumatic experiences.
- Pedagogical principles often do not fit their needs.
- Think and behave with adult-like maturity.

Adult Prisoners' Behavioral Issues



- Can behave emotionally like children.
- Andragogy is not always suitable due to varying maturity levels.
- Varying levels of emotional development.

Conclusion: A body of literature on criminal personalities discusses these behavioral issues in-depth, highlighting the complexity of applying standard educational models in prison environments.

What do you think?



3. The Adult Educator

— in a prison context —

Characteristics of an Adult Educator



Adult Educator Principles



Understands & uses andragogy principles



Recognizes adult learners are self-directed



Creates a safe learning environment



Knows *why* and *how* adults learn for success



Teaching Roles & Evolution



Role of teacher or trainer



Diverse roles: basic education, vocational, company trainer



Evolving profession; continuous development & training



KEY STRATEGIES FOR ADULT LEARNERS



LEARNER CHARACTERISTICS



Leverage Experience & Knowledge



Respect Established Values & Beliefs



Expect Respectful Treatment

TEACHING STRATEGIES



Use students as resources; encourage open dialogue.



Clarify expectations; permit constructive debate; protect minority opinions.



Acknowledge contributions; respect all viewpoints.

ADULT LEARNING PRINCIPLES:

Strategies for Engagement



SELF-DIRECTED LEARNING

Adults need control. Engage them in designing the process, offer choices in media and pacing.



PROBLEM-CENTERED APPROACH

Focus on immediate application to real problems. Use case studies and problem-solving groups.



PRACTICAL APPLI-- ATION FOCUS

Prioritize direct 'how-to' skills and application over theoretical concepts.



DIVERSE LEARNING STYLES

Accommodate individual differences by using varied teaching materials and methods.

4. Educating in prisons

— Mindsets and approaches —

The Digital Divide Behind Bars

Limited & Unequal Access



Access to computers and internet in prisons is often "limited and unequal", with outdated or insufficient equipment.

Pre-Internet State



Many facilities still operate in a pre-internet state, offering only a few tightly controlled offline PCs.

Key Constraints



Security concerns, infrastructure deficits, and policy restrictions all constrain digital access in detention.

Basic ICT needs and Training Initiatives (Spain Example)

The Challenge & The Solution



Many enter custody with low IT backgrounds. NGOs in Spain, like the Reconectate program in Madrid, teach essential digital skills.

Positive Outcomes



Workshops improve digital autonomy, confidence, and provide practical skills for daily life and employment upon release.

Building a Foundation



Foundational ICT skills (like typing and using word processors) can be successfully built in custody, laying the groundwork for further learning.

Innovative Practices in Digital Learning

Secure Digital Learning: Some European systems are pioneering ways to integrate ICT safely:

UK



Pilot programs to use secure tablets and a closed intranet.

Finland



'Smart prison' models: inmates have a laptop linked to a white-listed Moodle platform.

Norway



Controlled prison intranets so that inmates can pursue studies with nearly the same resources as outside.

Contextualization and Real-World Tasks



The Isolated Skill
(e.g., “how to use
a mouse”)

Contextualization →



Digital Literacy is most effectively learned when contextualized within workforce or academic content. Rather than teaching “how to use a mouse”, it’s about “how to use a mouse to navigate a job application” or “how to use Excel to manage a small business”.

Peer Mentoring and Collaborative Learning



Tech-savvy inmates (often younger or digital natives) can serve as classroom assistants, helping their peer with basic tasks while building their own leadership and communication skills.



Reduces burden on staff and fosters a community of learning.

The “Blended Learning” Model

The “Blended Learning” Model

In the absence of internet, it combines:

Face-to-face Instruction



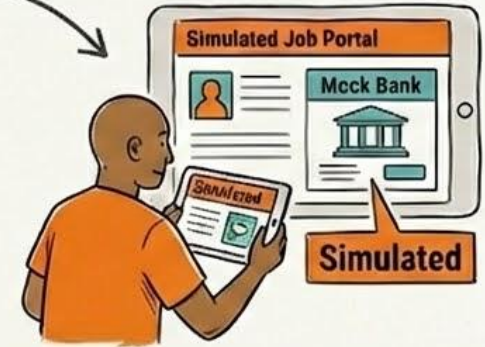
Direct interaction and guidance from instructors.

Offline E-learning



Utilizing LMS platforms on secure prison servers for drills and technical exercises.

Hands-on Practice



Using simulated web environments in a safe, offline setting.

What else?



5. DigiSteps Digital Modules

— Building Great Foundations —

The DigiStep Strategic Framework



Offline-compatible Innovation: The project focuses on offline-compatible methods (e.g. simulators, local servers, pre-loaded content) that replicate the online experience without compromising safety.



Human-centric Approach: In line with Council of Europe recommendations, technology is a tool to support -not replace- human professional judgment and interaction.

UNIT 1 – Using the Computer and the Internet

(Foundational Digital Literacy & Confidence Building)

This unit is **not** about “learning Word or Excel”. It is about **reconstructing basic digital functioning** after long periods of exclusion.



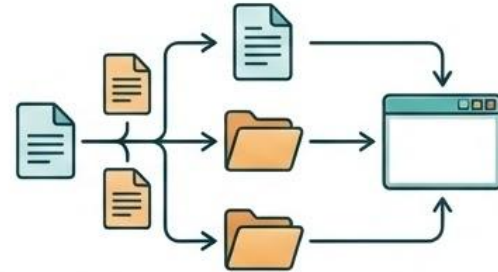
UNIT 1 – Using the Computer and the Internet



1. Physical interaction with technology

- Keyboard familiarity and muscle memory
- Mouse / trackpad coordination
- Window management, saving, switching tasks

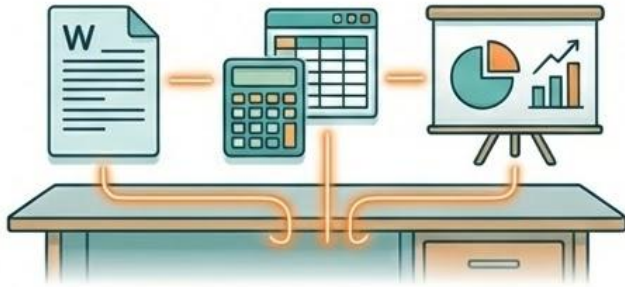
→ This addresses *hardware atrophy* in long-term incarceration.



2. Cognitive logic of software

- Understanding files vs folders
- Knowing what a program does and when to use it
- Learning that digital actions follow rules (cause-effect)

UNIT 1 – Using the Computer and the Internet



3. Office tools as life instruments

- Word → formal communication, contracts, letters
- Excel → budgeting, expense control, basic calculations
- PowerPoint → structuring ideas and presenting oneself



4. Digital communication basics & 5. Digital safety habits

- Email anatomy (subject, body, attachment logic)
- Netiquette and tone as part of professional identity
- Password logic
- USB risks, malware awareness



6. Backups as continuity of life and work

UNIT 1 – Using the Computer and the Internet

Pedagogical depth



Repetitive, **low-stakes practice** to reduce fear



Immediate usefulness to avoid abstract learning



Errors normalized to rebuild learner self-concept

Expected transformation

“Technology is not hostile or alien; I can operate independently and safely.”



UNIT 2 – Online Education & Self-Learning Skills

(Autonomy, Critical Thinking, Lifelong Learning)



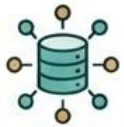
This unit **changes the learner's relationship with knowledge.**

UNIT 2 – Online Education & Self-Learning Skills



Mental model of online learning

- What an LMS is
- How courses are structured (modules, tasks, forums)
- Difference between guided courses and self-paced MOOCs



Information architecture

- Where reliable knowledge lives online
- Difference between open access, commercial, and dubious sources
- Using repositories, libraries, academic platforms



Critical filtering

- 3C Method: Context, Credentials, Concordance
- Detecting fake news, outdated content, clickbait
- Understanding that "Google ≠ truth"



UNIT 2 – Online Education & Self-Learning Skills

Core layers

Self-organization for learning



Time-blocking



Learning goals

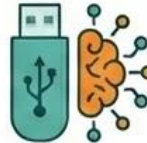


Personal learning plans
("My roadmap")

Offline continuity



Using downloaded
libraries (Kiwix)



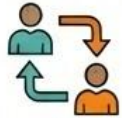
Carrying a personal
learning ecosystem on
USB

UNIT 2 – Online Education & Self-Learning Skills

Pedagogical depth



Learner becomes **architect of their own development**



Instructor role shifts to **guide** and **validator**



Learning is connected to personal projects, not grades

Expected transformation

“I don’t need permission or institutions to keep learning.”



UNIT 3 – Digital Entrepreneurship & E-Commerce

(Economic Agency and Value Creation)

This unit reframes the internet as a

MEANS OF PRODUCTION

, not consumption.



UNIT 3 – Digital Entrepreneurship & E-Commerce



1. Entrepreneurial mindset



Seeing skills as services



Seeing products as value propositions



Understanding trust and reputation as currency



2. Freelancing logic



Platforms as marketplaces, not employers



Profiles as sales pages



Reviews as economic capital



3. E-commerce fundamentals



Choosing platforms strategically (Etsy, eBay, Shopify)



Product descriptions, images, keywords



Logistics without physical infrastructure

UNIT 3 – Digital Entrepreneurship & E-Commerce

Core layers



1. Marketing as storytelling



Problem-solution framing



Content calendars



Sales funnel logic
(attention → interest → action)



2. Financial literacy



Payment gateways



Fees and commissions



Net profit vs gross income



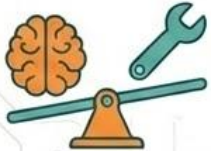
Basic cash-flow awareness

UNIT 3 – Digital Entrepreneurship & E-Commerce

Pedagogical depth



Simulations replace live internet access



Strong emphasis on decision-making, not tools



Learners experiment with failure in a safe space



Expected transformation

“I can generate income using my skills, not just seek jobs.”

UNIT 4 — Remote Work & the Digital Labour Market

(Employability, Professional Identity, Self-Management)



“

This unit teaches how the labour market actually works today.

UNIT 4 – Remote Work & the Digital Labour Market

Core layers



1. Digital recruitment reality



Job portals, filters, alerts



Keywords and ATS logic



Why mass applications fail



2. Professional self-representation



Digital CV as marketing document



Functional CV logic
(skills > chronology)



LinkedIn as living
professional identity



3. Remote professionalism



Video interview
etiquette



Digital body language



Technical preparedness

UNIT 4 – Remote Work & the Digital Labour Market

Core layers



4. Workplace tools



Video conferencing platforms



Collaboration norms



Digital presence as credibility



5. Self-discipline and productivity



Time blocking



Pomodoro technique



Task prioritization

UNIT 4 – Remote Work & the Digital Labour Market

Pedagogical depth



Role-playing and simulations dominate



Feedback focuses on clarity and credibility



Learners practice being seen as professionals

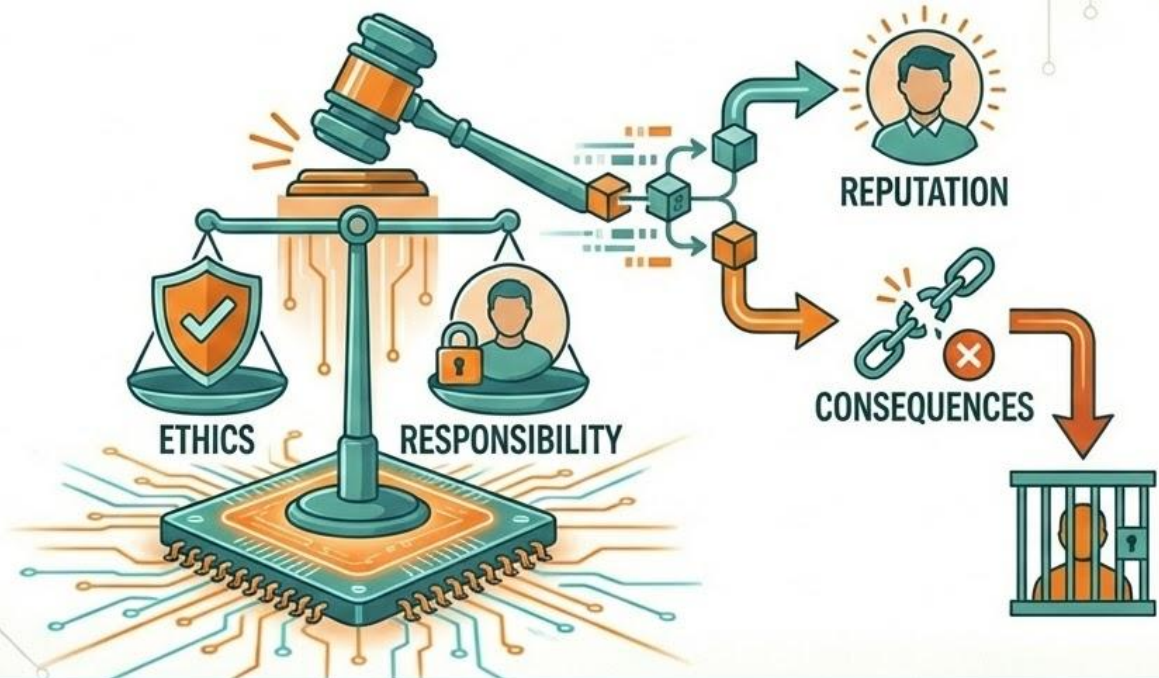


Expected transformation

“I understand how to enter and survive the digital labour market.”

UNIT 5 – Digital Legal Awareness (Responsibility, Ethics, Reputation)

This unit teaches that digital life has consequences.



UNIT 5 – Digital Legal Awareness

Core layers

Digital rights



-  Data protection
-  Right to be forgotten
-  Intellectual property basics

Digital obligations



-  Consent and minimization
-  Protecting others' data
-  Legal consequences of misuse

Cybercrime awareness



-  Phishing
-  Identity theft
-  Social engineering

UNIT 5 – Digital Legal Awareness

Core layers

4. Ethical digital behavior



Netiquette



Respect for privacy



Verification before sharing



Digital footprint



Responding to criticism



Building positive visibility

5. Reputation management



Digital footprint



Responding to criticism



Building positive visibility

UNIT 5 – Digital Legal Awareness

Pedagogical depth



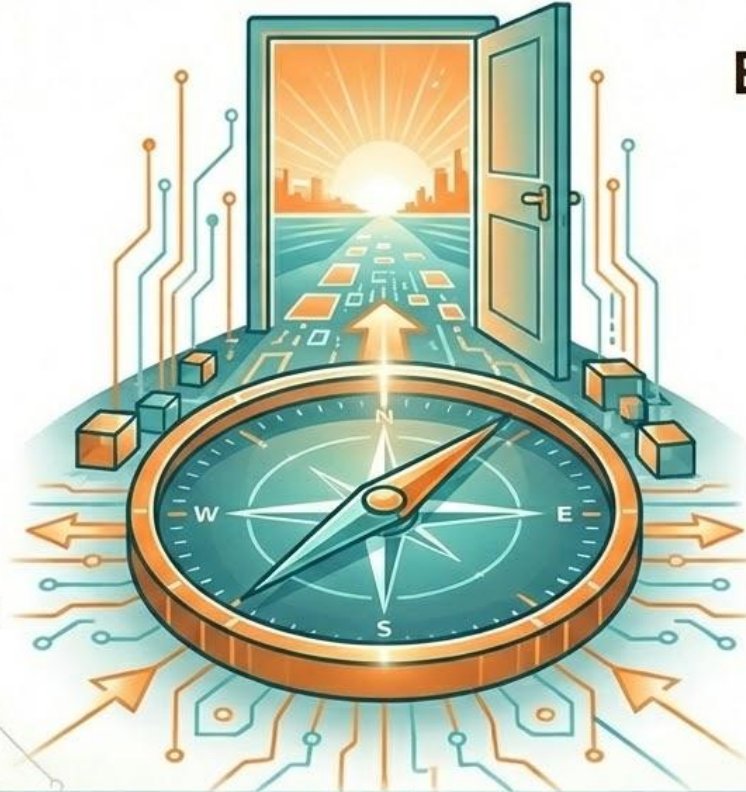
Case-based learning



Moral reasoning, not fear



Emphasis on long-term identity



Expected transformation

“

“My digital actions shape my future opportunities.”

”

What DigiStep demonstrates

Adult education in prison must be different by design

- Modular progression mirrors reintegration stages



- Skills → autonomy → agency → dignity

“Digital skills are not about technology. They are about restoring the capacity to function in society.”



Enjoy your stay in Valencia!
