**Training fiche**

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| **Title** | | Digitalization & Online Learning |
| **Keywords (meta tag)** | | Digitalization, Online Learning, Online Communication, Online Collaboration |
| **Provided by** | | UNIBA |
| **Language** | | English |
| **Training area (X where applicable)** | | |
|  | Innovation & Servitization | |
| **X** | Digital Transformation | |
|  | Localization | |
|  | Sustainability | |
| **ESCO competencies and skills** | | |
| * Transversal skills and competences   + Social and emotional skills   + Critical thinking   + Analytical thinking   + Problem-solving   + Self-management   + Business management   + Adaptability   + Resilience   + Creativity   + Networking   + Initiative   + Flexibility   + Openness   + Understanding complexity   + Cooperation   + Empathy   + Innovation   + Leadership      * Skills   + Technological skills   + Product marketing   + Digital marketing   + Digital skills   + Communication   + Cooperation   + Emotional intelligence      * Knowledge   + Business management   + Online learning and training   + Advertising   + Cloud computing   + Big data   + E-commerce   + Artificial intelligence   + IoT   + Digital literacy   + Cybersecurity   + Data mining and analysis   + Sustainability   + Well-being   + Climate change   + Social media management | | |
| **Teaser** | | |
| Did you know that digitalization changes the way how business is conducted and has many benefits for MSMEs? Digitalization transforms new entrepreneurial opportunities and how these opportunities are best realized. Besides, there are many efficient external and internal online communication channels and tools for remote working and collaboration if MSMEs want to keep up with recent trends. Online learning is a great way to tackle challenges and seize opportunities in the ever-changing entrepreneurial environment. | | |
| **Objectives / goals / learning outcomes** | | |
| At the end of this module, you will:   * understand what digitalization is, its advantages, and operational implications for MSMEs, * have at your disposal a set of tools for external and internal online communication, * be able to choose tools to enhance collaboration and project management, * be able to seize opportunities presented by online learning. | | |
| **Description** | | |
| In this module, you will learn what digitalization is, how it reshapes entrepreneurial opportunities, its drivers, benefits and operational implications for MSMEs. A separate section focuses on digital communication channels that can be implemented within internal and external communications. Collaboration, project management, document storage and sharing tools that are presented afterwards will undoubtedly help you increase work efficiency. The second unit focuses on online learning, where you will get to know the most widespread online learning platforms and get tips on specific training courses that are related to the RESTART curriculum. | | |
| **Checklist of benefits for entrepreneurs** | | |
| ✓ overview of digitalization, its benefits and operational implications  ✓ digital maturity models and resources for their implementation  ✓ available tools for online communication  ✓ tools for Remote Working and Virtual Collaboration  ✓ platforms for online learning and tips for online learning courses | | |
| **Contents arranged in 3 levels** | | |
| **Module: Digitalization & Online Learning**  In this module, we will introduce two interrelated topics: Digitalization in MSMEs and Online learning, emphasizing the current post-pandemic context.  **Unit 1: Digitalization in MSMEs**  Digitalization is one of the key recent trends in business organizations (including MSMEs and large companies), entire business sectors, and whole economies.  Digitalization means *leveraging digital technology to replace former social (i.e., human interactions, relationships, norms) and/or technical (i.e., technology, tasks, routines) aspects of structures, e.g., products, services, user experiences, processes, etc.* (Osmundsen et al., 2018).  In simple words, digitalization is about integrating digital technologies into the everyday life of entrepreneurs and all activities and operations of a business enterprise.  Digitalization transforms entrepreneurship in two ways. First, it is the emergence of new entrepreneurial opportunities in the economy. Secondly, it is about transforming business practices and how these opportunities are best realized. Consequently, key entrepreneurship skills are influenced by digitalization.  The main drivers for the digitalization of MSMEs are:   * Internal:   + awareness of digitalization,   + digital capabilities. * External:   + availability of digital technologies,   + changes in behaviour and expectations of customers,   + industry changes and trends related to digital technologies,   + changing situation in competition,   + and changes in regulations.   If an MSME wants to implement digitalization, it is important in the first place to be aware of what benefits it can bring and what are the operational implications for the company. On the other hand, the company should establish digitalization capabilities through institutional conditions, strategy, human capital and skills. Other factors come from the external environment and must be mapped and analyzed by the company.  The tools that can help you in this process and enable digitalization are the so-called Digital Maturity Models. Digital Maturity Model is a framework used to assess and understand a company's current level of digital maturity. Several digital maturity models exist with varying scopes, points of view, and metrics for measuring success. They can help identify gaps, establish key areas to focus on, and determine where to start. To find out more about Digital Maturity Models, see the reference links.  **Section 1.1: Advantages of Digitalization for MSMEs**  This section presents the most significant advantages and benefits of digitalization and the operational implications for MSMEs.  Available research suggests that the benefits of digitalization are manifold but mainly revolve around four key areas:   * ***Efficiency***   Efficiency typically relates to cutting costs in various ways, process improvements beyond cost-cutting resulting in improved quality, design, speed, environmental benefits, protection at work, etc., and growth of value-added which creates space for higher margin.   * ***Customers***   This area of benefits includes a better understanding of customer preferences through the collection of big data, use of data analysis, immediate feedback, and easier and faster access to a large amount of information. A better understanding of customer preferences and the easy ways to communicate what customers want, lead to higher customization of companies' products and services.   * ***Flexibility***   The flexibility of MSMEs is manifested in the wider use of remote working, the ease and versatility of marketing, and easier acquisition or involvement of customers and different stakeholders.   * ***General management Improvements***   It represents the broadest area of digitalization benefits such as higher availability of information and documents, adjustments to management of the business itself as well as related processes, better awareness of current and future trends in business development, improved risk management, professionalism, acceleration of decision-making processes, and higher production flexibility. It is also possible to enhance different aspects of a company based on big data analysis. Digitalization hence improves the general competitiveness of the company.  Operational implications for MSMEs in order to pursue digitalization are:   * To develop the required digital skills and capabilities within a company, * to build and foster digital awareness among both owner/managers and employees, * to acquire innovation assets to introduce different aspects of digitalization, * to build a favourable organizational culture to change, learning, and gaining new capabilities, * to utilize existing digital infrastructure, * to maintain an overview of market conditions and competition, * to keep up with digital technologies, * to follow digital shifts in the industry.   **Section 1.2: Digital Communication Channels for MSMEs**  A digital communication channel is *a form of media that enables interaction with another person or many people using the internet* at the same time.  The use of digital communication channels was widespread among MSMEs during the pandemic as far as their operational focus allowed it. This trend persists as it is very effective and time efficient. In this section, we present useful tools for effective digital communication.  Before we present the tools for digital communication, it is noteworthy that there are external and internal digital communication channels.  **External digital communication tools**  External digital communication channels are used to communicate with customers and external stakeholders.  The most widely used are ***websites***.  Great intuitive, easy-to-use and free websites builders are, for example:  [www.hubspot.com](http://www.hubspot.com)  Free Drag-and-Drop Website Builder. The unique advantage of using Hubspot is creating, managing, modifying, and publishing content in a user-friendly interface. You can customize the design and functionality of your site as well as have multiple users working in the back end.  [www.wordpress.org](http://www.wordpress.org/)  WordPress is a free and open-source tool for creating websites. It allows you to customize the websites. There is a wide range of templates to choose from, and you can easily customize them.  [www.wix.com](http://www.wix.com)  Wix offers attractive and well-designed templates to choose from. It's beginner-friendly and can practically design itself. The Wix app market allows you to add more features and functionality.  Another excellent tools for digital communication with existing/potential customers and stakeholders are ***social media***. Consumers have come to rely even more heavily on social media to make decisions and shop. These are often the deciding factor for success or failure for an MSME.  [www.facebook.com](http://www.facebook.com)  Facebook has the most extensive user base of any social media platform. Depending on your audience and budget, this platform has the potential to be the best way for your business to reach the most significant number of people online. You can create a company page on it, set opening hours, add various links, etc.  [www.instagram.com](http://www.instagram.com)  Instagram has fewer features than Facebook, making it easier for MSMEs to learn how to use it fairly quickly. Plus, its interface is sleek and straightforward. Instagram is becoming an increasingly powerful tool for small businesses. Instagram is best for sharing visual content and engaging images.  [www.youtube.com](http://www.youtube.com)  It is used for global video sharing. As the world's second most visited website after Google, it has vast potential to reach your audience. You can share short and long videos on YouTube.  **Internal digital communication channels**  Internal digital communication channels facilitate communication primarily within the company and outside of it. Most commonly used are emails, but also other tools, such as:  [www.skype.com](http://www.skype.com)  Skype is a simple communication platform embracing cloud-based technologies. The videoconferencing platform includes online calls (audio or video), chats, conferences of up to 50 people, scheduling meetings and others.  [www.zoom.us](http://www.zoom.us)  It is a video conferencing service suitable for teams. It includes a virtual workspace, video or audio calls, live chats and the possibility to record sessions. Zoom has a better user interface and is very user-friendly.  [Microsoft Teams](http://www.microsoft.com/sk-sk/microsoft-teams/group-chat-software/)  It is a workspace that allows organizing meetings (video or calls) and storing documents, but you can also use different apps to organize work. It is a holistic tool for managing your workspace.  **Section 1.3: Tools for Remote Working and Virtual Collaboration**  With the proliferation of working from home and the inability to travel, remote working and collaboration tools have become even more popular. The tools we introduce help you work faster and more efficiently from anywhere.  ***Collaboration and project management tools***  [www.slack.com](http://www.slack.com)  Slack is a messaging app for businesses that connects people to the information they need by forming project teams. Slack organizes conversations into channels where everyone can share ideas, make decisions and move work forward. There is a range of functions that enable feature optimization and app integrations.  [www.trello.com](http://www.trello.com)  Trello is a visual management tool for managing any project, workflow, or task tracking. It is possible to add files and checklists or even customize the interface.  [www.miro.com](http://www.miro.com)  Miro is a digital whiteboard for easy collaboration with others. Miro allows you to create notes and designs, move things around, and communicate through embedded video calls or online chats. It is suitable for a wide variety of tasks that require collaboration: workshopping, strategy mapping, Agile ceremonies, UX research and design, product development, customer discovery and process visualization.  ***Storing and sharing documents***  [www.wetransfer.com](http://www.wetransfer.com)  WeTransfer is a cloud-based online platform that allows the uploading and sharing different types of files to other users on the internet. It is free, effortless and increasingly frequent as it enables sending very large or heavy files conveniently and easily.  [www.dropbox.com](http://www.dropbox.com)  Dropbox is a personal cloud storage service that is frequently used for file backup, sharing and collaboration. All the files are backed up to the cloud and available online from anywhere.  WeTransfer is better suited for the one-off sharing of large volumes of data, and Dropbox is more suited for sharing documents with a team in the cloud.  **Unit 2: Online Learning**  Online learning is an educational process that uses information and communication technologies to create courses, distribute learning content, communicate between students and teachers, and manage learning.  Online learning refers to training on any digital device, e.g., taking an online course, watching an educational video, reading an article, or taking a quiz.  Online learning represents the opportunity to take courses at the world's top-ranked institutions. Advantages are:   * wide range of available courses in most subjects, * flexible schedules, * free or lower costs, * studying abroad remotely.   Disadvantages are:   * require a greater degree of self-motivation, * technology dependant, * minimal physical interactions between students and teachers.   In this unit, we present helpful online learning platforms where you can find a wealth of useful information and educational material on topics of interest to you. In section 2, we recommend specific training courses in line with the training topics of the RESTART project.  **Section 2.1: Platforms for Online Learning**  There is a wide range of platforms for online learning. In the following part, we present four, the first two of which are the most used and two available for free. However, MSMEs seeking specific knowledge and skills should research which online learning platform is most appropriate for them.  [www.business.udemy.com](http://www.business.udemy.com)  Udemy Business is a top online learning platform for business teams seeking more general skills, which offers 14000+ courses. It is easy to use, there are options to monitor your progress, and after completing a course, the trainee receives a certificate. Disadvantages are that the platform only supports video-based courses and lacks interactivity.  [www.linkedin.com/learning](http://www.linkedin.com/learning)  It is designed for individuals or businesses looking to upskill their teams in the business, tech & creative industries. It offers 16,000+ courses. High-quality control ensures that instructors have excellent training skills. Courses are interactive via quizzes and practice exercise files. After the completion of the course, a certificate is issued.  [www.learndigital.withgoogle.com](http://www.learndigital.withgoogle.com)  Google Digital Garage is a programme that provides free training and tools to help grow your career or business. It offers a range of short courses to gain today's most in-demand skills. Filter to select different categories of courses, lengths, providers, etc.  [www.w3schools.com](http://www.w3schools.com)  On this platform, you can learn how to create your website using different programming languages, work with big data using various programs and much more. There are tutorials, references and exercises available for you to explore.  **Section 2.2: Online Courses' Recommendations for MSMEs' uptake**  There are many quality courses, but also videos and educational materials. It is essential to consider whether the education budget is available. Based on this and the specific topic you are interested in, you need to look for a suitable alternative among the suggested platforms above or many other existing ones. This section proposes three free courses related to the RESTART training curriculum.  [**Managing Innovation and Entrepreneurship**](https://ocw.mit.edu/courses/15-351-managing-innovation-and-entrepreneurship-spring-2008/)  Consider taking the Sloan School of Management's course on Managing Innovation and Entrepreneurship. The course provides basics for managers that need to organize successful technology-driven innovation. Innovation-based strategies as a source of competitive advantage are examined, how to excel at identifying, building and commercializing technological innovations. There are also examples of how established firms can become more entrepreneurial in their approach to innovation. All the content is free to download and study. You can also check other free or paid courses.  [**Remote Work Revolution for Everyone**](https://pll.harvard.edu/course/remote-work-revolution-everyone?delta=1)  It is offered by Harvard University. You can learn how to build trust, increase productivity, use digital tools intelligently, and remain fully aligned with your remote team. You will also understand the key elements of remote work, developing strategies to improve productivity, communication, and collaboration, selecting the right digital tools, and others.  [**Improve your online business security with Google Digital Garage**](https://learndigital.withgoogle.com/digitalgarage/course/improve-online-security?enroll_confirmation=1)  Learn the basics of online security and how it applies to you and your business. The videos in this course introduce the basics of online security and how to apply them to your employees, your company, your users and your customers. | | |
| **Contents in bullet points** | | |
| * Digitalization is the integration of digital technologies into the everyday life of entrepreneurs and all activities and operations of a business enterprise. * Digitalization causes the emergence of new entrepreneurial opportunities and transforms business practices to realize these opportunities best. * The key entrepreneurship skills are also influenced by digitalization. * To implement digitalization, MSMEs should be aware of what benefits it brings and what the operational implications for the company are. * MSMEs should establish digitalization capabilities and analyze the external environment. * The tools to assist in this process are Digital Maturity Models - frameworks used to assess and understand a company's current level of digital maturity. * Digital communication channels are commonly used among MSMEs and are effective tools for internal and external digital communication. * Tools for remote working and collaboration can help you work faster and more efficiently from anywhere. * A wide range of platforms for online learning can be helpful for MSMEs seeking specific knowledge and skills. | | |
| **5 glossary entries** | | |
| [5 glossary entries with a brief description]  **Digitalization** is leveraging digital technology to replace former social (i.e., human interactions, relationships, norms) and/or technical (i.e., technology, tasks, routines) aspects of structures, e.g., products, services, user experiences, processes, etc.  **Digital Maturity Model** is a framework used to assess and understand a company's current level of digital maturity.  **A digital communication channel** is a form of media that enables interaction with another person or many people using the internet at the same time.  **Online learning** is an educational process that uses information and communication technologies to create courses, distribute learning content, communicate between students and teachers, and manage learning.  **Project collaboration tools** are tools with features that facilitate open communication between the project manager, team members and all other stakeholders involved in the project. | | |
| **Bibliography and further references** | | |
| <https://www.igi-global.com/chapter/drivers-of-sme-digital-transformation-in-the-context-of-intergenerational-cooperation-in-slovakia/298439>  <https://www2.deloitte.com/content/dam/Deloitte/global/Documents/Technology-Media-Telecommunications/deloitte-digital-maturity-model.pdf>  <https://digitalleadership.com/blog/digital-maturity/>  <https://gettalkative.com/info/communication-channels>  <https://www.ispringsolutions.com/blog/best-online-learning-platforms> | | |
| **Five multiple-choice self-assessment questions**  Upon completion of the validation mechanism with 75% of correct answers, users will be able to generate customized Certificate of Attendance and Certificate of Completion. | | **Question 1. What is digitalization?**  Option a: Avoiding analogue solutions in a business enterprise.  Option b: Equipping all employees with computers and digital devices.  Option c: The integration of digital technologies in the activities and operations of a business enterprise.  Option d: The evolution of competition towards digital marketing.  **Correct option: C**  **Question 2. How does digitalization transform entrepreneurship?**  Option a: Entrepreneurship becomes faster and more unpredictable.  Option b: Emergence of opportunities and transforming practices to realize them.  Option c: Customers are more demanding.  Option d: Entrepreneurs use direct digital marketing.  **Correct option: B**  **Question 3. What is not an advantage of digitalization?**  Option a: Efficiency  Option b: Flexibility  Option c: Management improvements  Option d: Security  **Correct option: D**  **Question 4. What are the types of digital communication tools?**  Option a: Internal and external.  Option b: Direct and indirect.  Option c: Creative and traditional.  Option d: Wide and narrow.  **Correct option: A**  **Question 5. What is not the benefit of Online Learning?**  Option a: Flexible schedule.  Option b: Lower cost.  Option c: Wide range of available courses.  Option d: Minimal physical interaction.  **Correct option: D** |
| **Related material** | | RESTART\_PR3\_Digitalization and Online Learning \_EN.pptx |
| **Reference link** | | Digital Maturity Models (DMM):  [Deloitte DMM](https://www2.deloitte.com/content/dam/Deloitte/global/Documents/Technology-Media-Telecommunications/deloitte-digital-maturity-model.pdf)  [OECD DMM](https://www.oecd.org/tax/forum-on-tax-administration/publications-and-products/digital-transformation-maturity-model.pdf)  [Digital Maturity Framework](https://digitalmaturity.org/digital-maturity-framework/) |
| **Video in YouTube format (if any)** | |  |