



Good practice

Punti di Facilitazione Digitale: Regional network of digital facilitation services

Working Group: Digital

Member State, Region: Italy, Apulia

Thematic areas: Digital and Physical Connectivity, Jobs and Skills, Quality of Life and Equal Access to Services

Basic project details

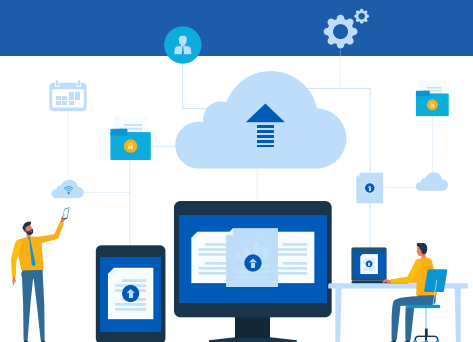
Lead organisation:

Regione Puglia (Regional Council of Apulia) - Italy

Partner organisations:

- National Association of Italian Municipalities (ANCI)
- Economic Development Department of the Regional Council of Apulia
- 45 Social Territorial Areas in which the 257 Apulian Municipalities are aggregated
- Strategic regional agency for health and social care - AReSS Puglia
- Regional Agency for Active Labor Policies - ARPAL Puglia
- InnovaPuglia (operational management)

Initiative duration: 2024 – Ongoing (Until December 2025)



Overview and objectives

The initiative aims to encourage the use of online services by private individuals and public administrations, thus simplifying the relationship between citizens and the Public Administration. The initiative aims to promote digital skills and reduce the digital divide by providing digital facilitation services across the Apulia region. It focuses on creating “Punti di Facilitazione Digitale” (Digital Facilitation Points) where citizens can receive guidance and training on using digital services, thus allowing them to have equal access to services and improve their quality of life.

The initiative also aims to enhance digital literacy and ensure all citizens can access and use digital services. Digital facilitation services are individual and on-demand support activities for citizens in using the Internet and digital devices for operations that allow them to participate in social life (e.g. the Sistema Pubblico di identità Digitale - SPID, the digital payments platform - pagoPA) and training for an effective and pervasive national digital literacy.

Context

The initiative addresses the digital divide by providing accessible training and support to people with limited digital skills. In 2023, the share of citizens in Italy with at least basic digital skills was 45.7%, compared to 55.5% in Europe. Among 20-24-year-olds in Italy, 61.7% had basic digital skills, while this percentage dropped to 42.2% among 55-59-year-olds and 19.3% among those aged 65-74. At the regional level, a strong disparity emerges between the Centre-North and the South.

Target groups

All citizens, particularly those with limited digital skills, in particular adult citizens with no or low digital skills or who have not used the internet in the last 3 months, in particular the weakest sections of the population, at risk of digital exclusion.

Actions

The initiative is enhancing social inclusion through the establishment of digital facilitation points, training programs, one-on-one guidance, and support for using digital services. This support includes:

- Individual personalised training/assistance (so-called facilitation), by reservation or at the counter;
- Online training, also in self-learning and asynchronous mode, through independent access to materials already available in the catalogue of training resources on the website *Repubblica Digitale* or created ad hoc by promoting personalised paths;
- Training in groups (in person and with online channels) through micro-courses of applications/exercises, resolution of practical problems, any in-depth analysis, self-assessment tests.

Financial allocation

Total budget: EUR 10 200 000

EU co-funding: Yes

Sources of funding: NextGenerationEU (100%)



Working Group Insights

“This initiative resonates with me because it directly addresses the challenge of digital inclusion in Apulia, helping to bridge the region’s lower performance in relation to the Digital Economy and Society Index (DESI) parameters. The success of the initiative demonstrates the strong willingness of Apulian people to become digital citizens. This has been achieved through a widespread training effort across the territory, increasing digital inclusion among citizens and optimising digital services provided by public administration. Additionally, it has strengthened connections with other innovation ecosystems and aligns with the approach our Regional Administration has tested over the past 10 years, fostering a growing open innovation model.

A comprehensive digital inclusion initiative could strengthen opportunities for talent attraction and retention, opening new market perspectives for digital Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) and startups. This could be achieved both by bridging the digital divide in Apulia and by increasing demand for innovative public services among citizens. Digital Facilitation Points thus become the starting point of an information hyperspace, characterised by integration, interconnection and interactivity between multiple social, institutional and economic spaces, in line with a Data Economy model, as defined in the Mare a Sinistra Strategy”.

GAETANO GRASSO

Responsible of Technology Monitoring Office/InnovaPuglia SpA in house ICT company of the Regional Council of Apulia,

thanks to the insights provided by

VITO BAVARO

Manager of Digital Growth of People, Territory and Business Section of the Regional Council of Apulia
- Department of Economic Development

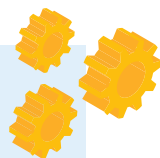
Results

Until February 2025, 121 856 citizens have been registered and involved in the 231 Facilitation Desks and 139 977 accesses to public services have taken place.

Success factors

Success factors include the establishment of accessible facilitation points, comprehensive training programs, and strong collaboration between different Public Entities (Municipalities, Health Agencies, Job public agencies etc.) These efforts target different social groups, particularly in the inner areas of the region, through the involvement of third-sector bodies and municipal social inclusion offices. Activities in these areas are managed by welfare and inclusion experts who understand the needs of the population and can effectively engage the most vulnerable socio-economic groups.





Implementation challenges

Challenges include reaching and engaging citizens with limited digital skills, ensuring the accessibility of facilitation points, and providing ongoing support and training by a pervasive communication work. A broad communication campaign and locally embedded facilitators helped increase outreach and trust among potential beneficiaries.

In line with the European Union's Digital Decade 2030 strategy, the Regional Council of Apulia supports digital transformation as a means to enhance the competitiveness and attractiveness of the territory. The goal is to increase the number of citizens with adequate digital skills and achieve a highly qualified digitalisation of public services.

The conclusion of our expert Gaetano Grasso – Responsible of Technology Monitoring Office/InnovaPuglia SpA in house ICT company of the Regional Council of Apulia, thanks to the insights provided by Vito Bavaro - Manager of the Digital Growth of People, Territory & Business Section of the Regional Council of Apulia - Department of Economic Development

“What makes this practice unique is that by assisting citizens on how to access digital services through tailored training, ‘Punti di Facilitazione Digitale’ create opportunities for talent retention by job engagement, particularly in digital SMEs and startups thanks to digital public services offered by ARPAL, (Regional Agency for Active Labour Policies), such as “Lavoro per te Puglia” (“I work for you Apulia”) <https://arpal.regione.puglia.it/web/guest/servizi/persone/lavoroperte-puglia-persone> and like “GOL - Garanzia di occupabilità dei lavoratori” (“Employability guarantee for workers”) <https://arpal.regione.puglia.it/web/guest/opportunita/gol> that, supported by the digital facilitator action in collaboration with ARPAL, have been the main required services access at the ‘Punti di Facilitazione Digitale’ up today and taking in account that in Apulia, already at the second quarter of 2024 the employment rate for 15-64 year olds is increased +0.8% and the unemployment rate decreased (-1.8 percentage points) both compared to the second quarter of 2023”.

Useful sources

Official website: <https://www.regione.puglia.it/web/trasformazione-digitale/punti-di-facilitazione-digitale>

<https://innovazione.gov.it/italia-digitale-2026/attuazione-misure-pnrr/>

<https://www.regione.puglia.it/web/trasformazione-digitale/punti-di-facilitazione-digitale>

<https://www.regione.puglia.it/it/web/trasformazione-digitale/punti-di-facilitazione-digitale/notizie-dai-punti>

<https://www.regione.puglia.it/web/trasformazione-digitale/-/in-fiera-del-levante-il-primo-forum-della-rete-regionale-della-facilitazione-digitale?redirect=%2Fweb%2Ftrasformazione-digitale%2Fpunti-di-facilitazione-digitale>

<https://youtu.be/R-OEiXZiWIA>

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