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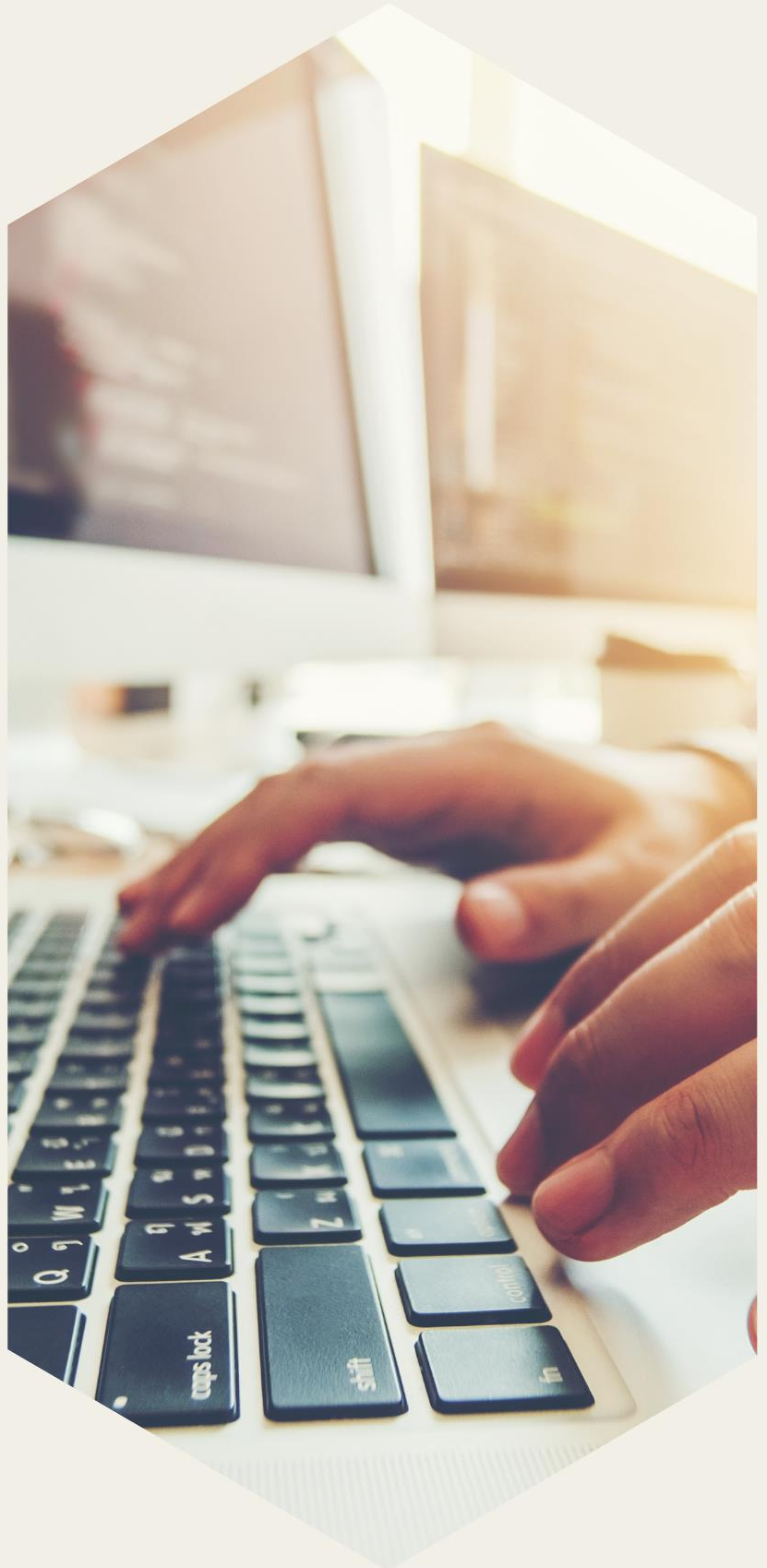
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WP5:
Upscaling, Exploitation and
Sustainability of Code4SP
Results

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Description of the project

The Code4SP project aims at transferring the "CodeDoor Best Practice" - transfer of computer programming (coding) skills to people from vulnerable socio-economic groups. Coding is a hard skill that is currently limited and highly paid on the labor market; the new "Coding experts" join the labor market with high success: Over 90% of the CodeDoor's alumni have been able to find a job or an apprenticeship in the last four years or have set up their own start-ups, and many CodeDoor alumni act as mentors for the new generation.

This good-practice is self-sustainable for two motives:

1. The benefit that the alumni bring to the coding talent seekers is so high that the enterprises are interested in supporting the perpetuation of this good practice by allocating resources or funds. The alumni suddenly find themselves in such a higher socio-economic position that many feel the moral need to support the perpetuation of the good-practice by volunteering to provide on-line coding expert support to the current CodeDoor trainees. This support is usually provided through the use of specialized support forums/platforms.

2. This CodeDoor Best Practice has been implemented locally in different towns in Germany and is constantly evolving for improvement. In this project, this good-practice will be adapted and transferred to Mediterranean countries. The countries under focus (Greece, Portugal, and Cyprus) were chosen due to their high youth unemployment rate (above 20%) and the lowest ICT experts' rates in the national job markets – thus suggesting an increased need for ICT experts. Code4SP project is expected to impact the socio-economic promotion of the participants and their communities and create role models on socio-economic promotion through VET and the economic valorization of the local enterprises due to the recruitment of Coding experts.

Introduction

In the ever-evolving landscape of digital transformation, the Code4SP initiative takes center stage, dedicated to addressing the formidable challenges surrounding social inclusion and workforce upscaling through strategic implementation of digital technologies. This comprehensive policy recommendations guide has been meticulously crafted to navigate the unique contexts of Portugal, Cyprus, and Greece, drawing insights from interviews with influential policymakers and reliable sources within each country.

Across Portugal, Cyprus, and Greece, a pervasive digital divide poses a substantial obstacle to achieving holistic social inclusion and advancing workforce capabilities. This segment meticulously examines the specific challenges and gaps inherent in existing policies and practices, offering a tailored comprehension of the nuanced issues confronting each nation. By pinpointing key obstacles such as limited access to digital education and an uneven distribution of digital literacy skills, the guide aims to establish the foundation for targeted and effective policy interventions.

Code4SP introduces an innovative methodology with immense potential to tackle the identified challenges. This section provides an in-depth overview of Code4SP's methodology, accentuating its potential advantages for policymakers and institutions within Portugal, Cyprus, and Greece. Leveraging the distinctive characteristics of each country, we explore how Code4SP can amplify the efficacy and inclusivity of social inclusion programs and services, contributing to the cultivation of a digitally skilled and empowered workforce. Visual representations will elucidate key features and innovations, underscoring how Code4SP distinguishes itself in the landscape of coding and programming education in each nation.

Offering tailored guidance for policymakers and decision-makers, the subsequent section provides seamless recommendations for integrating Code4SP into local and

national policy frameworks. By identifying key stakeholders and decision-makers specific to each country, the guide endeavors to furnish a clear roadmap for successful implementation. Potential challenges and opportunities inherent in the adoption of the Code4SP methodology are outlined, empowering policymakers to navigate obstacles with strategic foresight. Furthermore, this section sheds light on potential synergies and complementarities between Code4SP and existing policies, fostering a unified and collaborative approach to digital inclusion initiatives.

Embarking on this transformative journey, this document aspires to be a cohesive and actionable guide, not only shedding light on the challenges faced by Portugal, Cyprus, and Greece but also presenting practical recommendations for policymakers to harness the transformative potential of Code4SP in shaping a more inclusive and digitally proficient future. Rigorous referencing ensures the credibility and reliability of the information presented throughout the guide.

The problem statement

Portugal

In Portugal, while there have been efforts to leverage digital technologies for social inclusion and job upscaling, several key issues, challenges, and gaps exist in current policies and practices¹. These include:

- **Digital Divide:** In Portugal, the digital divide poses a significant challenge, particularly for segments of the population from disadvantaged backgrounds or rural areas. This divide refers to the lack of access to digital technologies and the internet, hindering their full participation in the digital economy and access to online resources for social inclusion and job upscaling. According to the 2022 edition of the Digital Economy and Society Index (DESI), Portugal ranks 15th out of the 27 EU Member States in terms of digital performance, indicating room for further acceleration of digitalisation efforts. Disparities in ICT adoption are evident, with Portugal's performance lower in terms of mobile data subscriptions per 100 people and 5G deployment. While Portugal's share of graduates in ICT fields is on par with the EU average, there is a need for more graduates in these fields to address the digital divide. Overall, these findings highlight the challenges and gaps in digital access and adoption, particularly among disadvantaged populations and those in rural areas.²
- **Limited Digital Skills:** In Portugal, like many countries globally, there is a recognised challenge of limited digital skills among individuals, particularly those

¹ ÍNDICE de Digitalidade da Economia e da Sociedade de 2022: Progressos globais, MAS as Competências Digitais, as PME E as Redes 5G Estão Atrasadas. Representação em Portugal. (2022, July 28). https://portugal.representation.ec.europa.eu/news/indice-de-digitalidade-da-economia-e-da-sociedade-de-2022-progressos-globais-mas-competencias-2022-07-28_pt

² The Digital Economy and Society index (DESI). Shaping Europe's digital future. (n.d.). <https://digital-strategy.ec.europa.eu/en/policies/desi>

from marginalised communities. These individuals lack the necessary skills to fully utilise and benefit from digital technologies. To address this gap, Portugal has emphasised the importance of digital skills development and has implemented initiatives to bridge the skills divide.

The European Commission's Digital Economy and Society Index (DESI) report acknowledges Portugal's efforts in addressing the digital skills gap. However, it also highlights the need for comprehensive digital literacy programs that enable people to navigate online platforms, effectively use digital tools, and leverage digital opportunities for social and economic advancement.

The INCoDe.2030 initiative in Portugal further demonstrates the recognition of the importance of enhancing digital skills among the population. This initiative sets goals and indicators to be achieved by 2025 and 2030, reflecting the commitment to improving digital skills in the country. The INCoDe.2030 initiative aims to increase the number of Portuguese adults with basic digital skills to 75% by 2025 and 85% by 2030. This would help to improve the employment prospects of Portuguese citizens and make Portugal a more competitive economy.³

- **Inclusive Digital Infrastructure:** Ensuring equitable access to reliable and affordable digital infrastructure is crucial. Some regions, especially rural areas, may face challenges in terms of internet connectivity, hindering access to online resources and opportunities for social inclusion and job upscaling. Investment in broadband infrastructure and initiatives to improve connectivity in underserved areas is essential. According to the European Commission's Digital Economy and Society Index (DESI) report, while Portugal performs well in terms of fixed broadband access of at least 100 Mbps and fixed high-speed internet coverage, there are challenges in terms of mobile data subscriptions per 100 people and 5G deployment. This suggests that there may be disparities in internet connectivity across different regions, including rural areas.

³ En. Incode 2030. (2022, August 7). <https://www.incode2030.gov.pt/en/incode-2030-en/>

- **Tailored Digital Training Programs:** Existing digital training programs should be tailored to meet the specific needs of disadvantaged groups and individuals at risk of socio-economic exclusion. Effective training initiatives should consider the diverse backgrounds and abilities of participants, focusing on building foundational digital skills as well as specialised skills for job upscaling in high-demand sectors. One example of a tailored digital training program in Portugal is the INCoDe.2030 initiative. This national strategy focuses on digital competences and skills development, aiming to bridge the digital divide and ensure that all citizens can benefit from digital technologies.
- **Digital Inclusion for Older Adults:** The digital inclusion gap among older adults is recognised as a significant challenge, limiting their access to digital technologies and online services. In Portugal, data from Eurostat indicates that a significant percentage (56%) of individuals aged 65-74 have never used the internet or have limited internet use⁴. To address this issue, it is crucial to prioritise digital literacy programs specifically designed for older adults, enabling them to participate in the digital economy and access online services. While specific figures and references for Portugal may vary, initiatives implemented in other countries emphasise the importance of tailored digital training for seniors. In Portugal, organisations such as senior centers and educational institutions often offer digital literacy programs for older adults, empowering them with the necessary skills to navigate digital technologies effectively.
- **Collaboration and Partnerships:** Collaboration among public institutions, private sector entities, non-profit organisations, and civil society is crucial to address the challenges and gaps in current policies and practices. Creating

⁴ Statistics explained. Statistics Explained. (2023). https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php?title=Ageing_Europe_-_statistics_on_social_life_and_opinions

partnerships that leverage resources, expertise, and best practices can enhance the effectiveness of initiatives aimed at digital inclusion, social integration, and job upscaling. Based on the Code4SP-related policy makers' interviews made in Portugal, collaboration and partnerships among public institutions, private sector entities, non-profit organisations, and civil society are crucial for addressing the challenges and gaps in current policies and practices related to programming training for low socioeconomic individuals. The interviewees highlight the need for closer collaboration between training entities and companies, as well as involvement from municipal entities, to enhance employability and strengthen the quality of training.

- **Digital Skills for Displaced Populations:** Special attention should be given to displaced populations, including migrants and refugees, who face unique challenges in terms of language barriers, cultural adaptation, and recognition of qualifications. Policies and programs should focus on providing targeted digital skills training to empower these populations to access job opportunities and integrate into society. The policymakers interviewed in Portugal have stated that initiatives such as Code4SP could be a great starting point for the integration of this intended audience, as their participation in the course will provide participants with the opportunity to address several shortcomings in their situation. They will have access to a free training opportunity in a high-demand sector, where they will meet other trainees and trainers who can help them to create synergies and exchange knowledge. They will also be entered into a European database, which will make them aware of several job opportunities in several EU countries in a particularly attractive salary market.
- **Continuous Learning and Upskilling:** Given the rapid evolution of digital technologies, policies should emphasize the importance of continuous learning and upskilling to adapt to changing job market demands. Supporting lifelong learning initiatives and promoting access to online learning platforms can

facilitate individuals' ability to upgrade their skills and remain competitive in the digital age. Regarding the policymakers' interview carried out in Portugal, the interviewees highlighted the importance of continuous learning and upskilling in the context of the rapid evolution of digital technologies. They emphasized the limited availability of training programs for low socioeconomic individuals in programming and the need for tailored and relevant training content. They stressed the importance of partnerships between training providers, companies, and municipal entities to integrate programming training into local and national policies effectively. The interviewees also highlighted the value of practical experience, ongoing support, and access to job placement services for successful integration into the job market. Overall, the interview supports the idea that continuous learning and upskilling are crucial to adapt to changing job market demands, and initiatives promoting lifelong learning and online learning platforms can facilitate individuals' ability to upgrade their skills and remain competitive in the digital age.

A more inclusive and digitally empowered society in Portugal will result from addressing these important problems, difficulties, and gaps in the country's current laws and practices. This will enable social inclusion and increase work prospects for all demographic groups. These factors are pertinent to the Code4SP project because they show the areas that require interventions and advancements to maximise the initiative's influence on social inclusion and job upscaling by utilising digital technology.

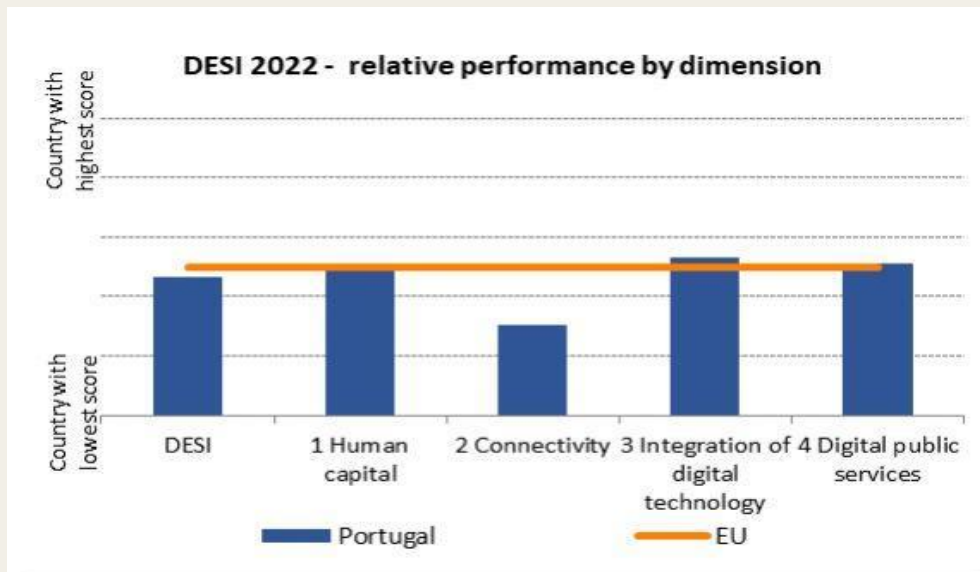


Image 1: DESI 2022: relative performance by dimension – Portugal (DESI 2022)

Cyprus

In Cyprus, the interplay between digital technologies, social inclusion, and job upscaling takes center stage, prompting both exploration and concern. Navigating the complexities of the digital era, the nation confronts clear issues and challenges, revealing gaps in its existing policies and practices.

- Cyprus faces a digital literacy gap, as indicated by the Digital Economy and Society Index (DESI) 2022. Despite improvements, 50% of individuals lack basic digital skills, highlighting a need for targeted initiatives to enhance digital literacy among the population. This gap can impact job opportunities and social inclusion, emphasizing the importance of educational programs and awareness campaigns.
- Rural and remote areas in Cyprus, along with migrants, immigrants, and asylum seekers, may encounter challenges related to connectivity and access to up-to-date devices. The Digital 2023 Cyprus report notes that 9.1% of the population lacked internet access in early 2023, indicating a need for infrastructure

development and initiatives to ensure equal access to technology across different regions and demographic groups.

- The skills demanded by the job market are evolving rapidly due to technological advancements. In Cyprus, where 2.7% of graduates are in the ICT field (below the EU average), there may be a skills gap between the workforce's capabilities and the requirements of emerging digital-centric roles. Efforts to address this mismatch could involve targeted education and training programs to equip the workforce with relevant digital skills.
- Cyprus, like many countries, has an aging population. Ensuring digital inclusion for older adults is crucial, considering potential barriers related to familiarity with technology. Tailored digital literacy programs for older individuals in Cyprus could help bridge the gap and ensure their active participation in the digital age.
- Socioeconomic disparities in Cyprus contribute to a digital divide, with lower-income individuals having less access to technology. Initiatives, such as those by the Cyprus Digital Skills and Jobs Coalition, can play a vital role in reducing this divide by providing affordable access, digital literacy programs, and targeted support for marginalized communities.
- The Cyprus Digital Skills and Jobs Coalition aims to address digital inclusion challenges through efficient coordination and cooperation among various stakeholders. Ensuring effective collaboration between government agencies, educational institutions, and the private sector is crucial to implementing comprehensive policies and initiatives for digital inclusion and upskilling.
- Overcoming resistance to adopting new digital technologies may be a challenge in Cyprus, as it could be in other regions. Raising awareness about the benefits of digital adoption, addressing concerns about disruption and cost, and providing

support for businesses and individuals transitioning to digital platforms are essential components of efforts to foster a positive attitude toward technological change.

Furthermore, as of the 2022 Digital Economy and Society Index (DESI⁵), Cyprus has shown improvement but remains below the EU average in basic digital skills, with 50% of individuals lacking these skills. In the Human Capital DESI, Cyprus ranks 21st in the EU, with 50% having basic digital skills, 21% possessing advanced digital skills, and 60% having fundamental content creation skills. The country falls below the EU average in the percentage of ICT specialists in the labor force and the number of graduates in the ICT field. In addition, the Digital 2023 Cyprus report indicates internet penetration at 90.9%, with 114.2 thousand Cypriots lacking internet access.

In summary, Cyprus faces specific challenges related to digital inclusion, including digital literacy gaps, access issues in rural areas, skills mismatches in the job market, considerations for the aging population, socioeconomic disparities, coordination challenges, and potential resistance to change. Ongoing initiatives aim to address these challenges and promote digital inclusion across various segments of the population.

Greece

In Greece, a large part of the population belongs to vulnerable target groups and there is a need for them to be integrated in the society. This includes migrants, refugees, people from low socio-economic backgrounds, people from minority groups etc. However, there are many challenges in using digital technologies for social inclusion and job upscaling. These challenges include:

⁵ *Cyprus: a snapshot of digital skills.* (2023, June 12). Digital Skills and Jobs Platform. <https://digital-skills-jobs.europa.eu/en/latest/briefs/cyprus-snapshot-digital-skills#:~:text=Introduction,on%20Human%20capital%20DESI%202022>

- Lack of flexible training programs that are affordable for individuals with limited financial means. Most of the training programs have fixed training schedules and do not propose flexible scheduling and part-time options to accommodate individuals who may have other responsibilities such as work or family.
- Lack of financial assistance or scholarships to cover the costs of training programs, including tuition, materials, and other associated expenses.
- Low status of vocational education programs. The vocational education programs in Greece have low status and they are not developed. There are no mentorship programs connecting trainees with experienced professionals in the field and thus, the opportunities to provide guidance on career paths, networking opportunities, and industry insights to help them navigate the tech sector are limited.
- Lack of culturally sensitive training programs that will cover the specific needs of migrants and refugees
- Weak connection between vocational education and the labour market. The mechanisms that ensure that the vocational education is teaching skills needed in the local labor market are weak and often VET is not up-to-date with the needs of the industry
- Lack of internship or apprenticeship opportunities for those that are out for the formal education sector. This leads to lack of real world working experiences.
- There is a lack of ongoing support services after program completion, including career counseling and professional development opportunities.

A brief description of the potential of Code4SP

Portugal

In the context of enhancing the efficacy and inclusivity of social inclusion programmes and services, the Code4SP methodology is a promising approach that has the potential to deliver various benefits to policymakers and policy-implementing institutions. Policymakers may harness the power of coding and programming training to enable people, particularly those from poor socioeconomic backgrounds, to improve their digital skills and access new job possibilities in the digital era by incorporating Code4SP into local and national policies.

As was said in the interview with the Portuguese policymakers, the poor accessibility to programming training programmes for low-income people in Portugal can be addressed by incorporating Code4SP into local and national policies. By offering training materials that are both approachable and pertinent to the needs of the target community, the Code4SP technique may close this gap. Policymakers may guarantee that training programmes are in line with the needs of the local labour market by collaborating with training providers, businesses, and municipal organisations. This will increase employability and improve the standard of workforce development programmes.

Code4SP's emphasis on gaining practical experience through internships or apprenticeships sets it apart from other coding and programming courses in several important areas. Participants may put the skills they have acquired into practice in real-world situations thanks to this hands-on approach, which fosters networking and career development opportunities while boosting confidence and job readiness. The Code4SP technique also emphasises ongoing support after the training phase, including job placement services, mentoring, and chances for continued study. Individuals are guaranteed possibilities for career growth and promotion as well as to stay competitive in the job market thanks to this all-encompassing support structure.

By integrating Code4SP into local and national policies, policymakers can promote lifelong learning initiatives and facilitate access to online learning platforms, aligning with the goal of continuous learning and upskilling to adapt to changing job market demands. By empowering people with in-demand technical skills, like programming languages and software development tools, as well as crucial soft skills, like problem-solving, communication, and teamwork, the Code4SP methodology can increase the success of social inclusion programmes and services. This all-encompassing strategy not only enhances employment chances but also fosters economic empowerment and social mobility, encouraging inclusivity and lowering socioeconomic inequities.

In short, Portugal can reap several advantages by incorporating the Code4SP technique into local and national policies. It addresses the lack of programming training options for low-income people, ensures that training material is up-to-date, promotes collaboration between stakeholders, offers hands-on training and ongoing support, and enhances the efficacy and inclusiveness of social inclusion programmes and services. Code4SP stands apart from other coding courses because of its cutting-edge features, making it an important instrument for enabling people to succeed in the digital era and support the socioeconomic development of the nation.

Cyprus

Cypriot policymakers were having doubts concerning integrating Code4SP in Cypriot policies. They were actually wondering how this project can make a difference, since there are already a great number of policies and programs that try to do the same, help people integrate and of course improve their digital skills. They are afraid that integrating the project within the policies might turn out insufficient, like other programs have been. They have also shared their concern about the project being a hit the first year and then being set aside like some other projects. Having policies that have a short living time is difficult.

They believe that in a pilot implementation the project can work. But, the only way that it can work is by selecting a small number of people from the target group that may not be facing other problems, such as financial issues, women who have children and are unable to pay for childcare or even people who might have language barriers. They then added that in order to have a bigger impact on people, the people that will be selected should be the ones who have mastered the other skills that are necessary for a person, like soft skills as well as, confidence in themselves. Finally, they talked about motivation. Even though Code4SP can provide the target group and everyone else interested in learning some advanced digital skills (coding etc), there should be a small reward. When talking about the rewards they mentioned that an economic benefit can not only help them financially but it can motivate them even more on being persistent.

In general they believe that is a good initiative to see the applicability in Cyprus however, other parameters should be taken into account. For example, the lack of vision and strategy can prove the difficulty of integrating a coding training.

When it comes to the strong emphasis of the project on practical experience, some policymakers shared that the hands-on experience is really important for everyone learning programming and coding. Therefore, the fact that Code4SP is providing those people with this opportunity is really important. They also believe that people coming from different professional and educational backgrounds are capable of learning something if they want to, and by having a program like COde4SP which gives you the opportunity to have an internship afterwards it benefits the trainees themselves and the companies that are doing their internship. In general, programmers are in demand and the training can make their job integration easier. On the other hand, one of the policymakers disagreed. They did not believe that becoming a programmer is as easy as it sounds and they took into account that in order for someone to be able to respond to this training and succeed, academic background and their programming thinking should be examined and taken into account.

Finally, Cyprus can benefit from incorporating Code4SP in local and national policies. However, since there are already a lot of other programs concerning digital upscaling, they need to make sure that the project's sustainability will encourage and not discourage people from joining. By doing so, policymakers can address the lack of programming training options for low-income individuals, ensure that training materials remain up-to-date and relevant, foster collaboration among stakeholders, offer practical and hands-on training, and provide ongoing support to program participants. Code4SP's innovative features make it a crucial tool for enabling individuals to thrive in the digital era and contribute to the socioeconomic development of the nation.

Greece

Code4SP is an approach that can address the challenges mentioned above because:

- it provides flexible courses and time slots, students to study online at their own rhythm with the support of a tutor
- Includes long internship participants to gain work experience in the field.
- It follows and provide mentoring and support to the participants from the beginning until the end of the pathway giving emphasis on both soft and technical skills
- It promotes discussion and cooperation between companies, VET and various stakeholders in the coding and software development sector bringing VET closer to the needs of the industry
- Offers career upgrading opportunities to people that have not completed a higher education institution and wish to change careers.

Therefore, by integrating Code4SP in national/ local policy, the benefits are going to be the following:

- Inclusive Economic Growth: Providing coding skills to vulnerable populations enhances their employability in the digital economy. This, in turn, contributes to

overall economic growth by diversifying the workforce and reducing unemployment rates.

- **Closing the Digital Skills Gap:** Integrating coding training programs helps address the digital skills gap by equipping individuals with the skills needed for a technology-driven job market. This aligns with broader national strategies to foster a digitally literate and competitive workforce.
- **Entrepreneurship Development:** Coding skills empower individuals to pursue entrepreneurial ventures in the technology sector. This can stimulate innovation and contribute to the growth of a local ecosystem of startups and small businesses.
- **Global Competitiveness:** A workforce with coding skills enhances a country's competitiveness in the global market. As technology becomes increasingly central to various industries, having a skilled workforce can attract foreign investments and partnerships.
- **Adaptation to Technological Changes:** The flexible nature of online coding training allows individuals to adapt to rapidly changing technological landscapes. This aligns with policies aiming to build a workforce that can navigate evolving industries and emerging technologies.
- **Workforce Resilience:** Equipping vulnerable groups with coding skills enhances their resilience in the face of economic challenges. These individuals become better prepared to adapt to job market changes and transitions in industries affected by automation and digital transformation.
- **Community Empowerment:** Coding skills empower individuals within vulnerable communities to actively participate in the digital economy. This not only improves their economic prospects but also fosters a sense of empowerment and community development.
- **Fostering Innovation Ecosystems:** A workforce with coding skills contributes to the development of local innovation ecosystems. This is essential for fostering a culture of creativity and problem-solving, which benefits not only the technology sector but also other industries.

Suggestions/Recommendations for integration in local and national policy

Portugal

Integrating the Code4SP methodology into local and national policy frameworks and processes requires a collaborative approach involving various stakeholders and decision-makers. Here are some suggestions and recommendations for a successful integration:

- **Stakeholder Engagement:** Engage key stakeholders such as government representatives, policymakers, educational institutions, training providers, technology companies, civil society organizations, and community leaders. To guarantee that objectives, resources, and skills are in line, their participation is essential.
- **Policy Alignment:** Identify existing policies and initiatives related to social inclusion, digital skills development, and employment. Invite key stakeholders to participate, including political representatives, decision-makers in the policymaking process, leaders in the community, educational institutions, training providers, technological businesses, and civil society organizations. To guarantee that objectives, resources, and skills are in line, their participation is essential.
- **Funding and Resources:** Allocate sufficient resources and funding to support the implementation of Code4SP. This could involve leveraging existing funding streams, seeking public-private partnerships, and exploring grants or sponsorships from relevant organizations and foundations.
- **Curriculum Integration:** Work with educational institutions and training providers to integrate the Code4SP curriculum into existing education and training programs. Ensure that the curriculum complies with regional hiring needs, developing technology trends, and industry standards.

- **Partnerships with Industry:** Foster partnerships with technology companies and businesses in the region. Encourage them to participate in the Code4SP initiative by offering internships, apprenticeships, mentorship programs, and job placement opportunities for program participants. This collaboration will ensure that the training provided is relevant to industry needs and enhances employability.
- **Monitoring and Evaluation:** Create systems for tracking and assessing the success of the Code4SP implementation. This entails keeping an eye on participants' advancement, monitoring results like employment rates and job retention, and obtaining stakeholder input. The program's performance will be maintained via routine evaluation, which will help pinpoint areas that need improvement.
- **Awareness and Outreach:** Promote Code4SP's advantages through awareness campaigns and get the target audience involved. To spread awareness and recruit people, make use of a variety of platforms, including social media, multiplier events, alliances with regional groups, and partnerships with educational institutions.

Challenges and Opportunities

Challenges:

- Limited resources and funding may pose a barrier to scaling up the Code4SP program and reaching a larger population.
- Ensuring the sustainability of the program beyond the initial implementation phase, including securing long-term funding and institutional support.

Opportunities:

- The Code4SP methodology can address the digital skills gap and enhance social inclusion by providing targeted training for low-income individuals, leading to improved employment prospects and socioeconomic mobility.

- Code4SP can contribute to the development of a skilled and competitive workforce in the digital age, promoting innovation and economic growth.
- By integrating Code4SP into local and national policy frameworks, policymakers can demonstrate their commitment to digital inclusion and equitable access to opportunities, fostering social cohesion and reducing inequalities.

Coordination, collaboration, and an all-encompassing strategy are needed to incorporate the Code4SP technique into regional and national policy. Successful implementation depends on involving key parties, adhering to current policies, securing funding, and monitoring results. By utilizing partnerships, arguing for sustainable funding, and emphasizing the potential that Code4SP presents in terms of social inclusion, skill development, and economic growth, the difficulties may be overcome.

Cyprus

To effectively integrate the Code4SP methodology into local and national policy frameworks and processes, it is essential to adopt a cooperative approach that involves diverse stakeholders and decision-makers. Here are some recommendations for a successful incorporation:

- Code4SP aligns with the objectives of lifelong learning policies, promoting continuous skill development and enabling individuals to remain competitive in the job market.
- By providing coding and programming skills to underserved communities, Code4SP contributes to digital inclusion efforts, narrowing the digital divide and empowering marginalized groups.
- Code4SP can complement existing employment and social development initiatives by providing targeted training to enhance job prospects for disadvantaged populations.

- A skilled and diverse workforce cultivated through Code4SP can drive innovation and economic growth, as coding skills are increasingly integral to various industries and sectors.

Challenges:

- Securing adequate funding for the implementation of Code4SP at a national or local level could be a challenge. Policymakers will need to allocate resources to support training programs, internships, and ongoing support for participants.
- Integrating Code4SP into policy frameworks would require collaboration among various stakeholders, including government agencies, educational institutions, businesses, and non-profit organizations. Ensuring effective communication and coordination among these entities may present challenges.
- Tailoring the Code4SP methodology to suit the specific needs and demographics of different regions and communities is essential for successful implementation. Addressing local skill gaps and job market demands will require customization of the training programs.
- Raising awareness about the benefits of Code4SP and reaching out to individuals from low socioeconomic backgrounds might be challenging. Effective outreach strategies will be needed to ensure inclusivity and participation from the target population.
- Ensuring the long-term sustainability of Code4SP initiatives is crucial. It requires planning for continuous funding, monitoring, and evaluation to demonstrate the program's impact and value.

Opportunities:

- Integrating Code4SP into policy frameworks can significantly enhance the employability of individuals from low socioeconomic backgrounds, enabling them to access high-demand jobs in the digital economy.

- Code4SP can serve as a powerful tool for social inclusion, breaking barriers and providing opportunities for underserved communities to bridge the digital divide and improve their socio-economic status.
- Collaborating with private sector employers can offer internship and job placement opportunities, ensuring that the training aligns with industry needs and leads to tangible employment outcomes.
- Code4SP fosters both technical and soft skill development, equipping individuals with problem-solving, communication, and teamwork abilities, which are valuable in any profession.
- Upskilling for the Digital Age: Integrating Code4SP into national and local policies reflects a commitment to lifelong learning and upskilling, essential for adapting to the rapidly evolving job market demands in the digital era.

Integrating the Code4SP methodology into local and national policy frameworks requires proactive efforts from policymakers, engagement with relevant stakeholders, and a commitment to addressing the challenges that may arise. By harnessing the opportunities and synergies, policymakers can create a more inclusive and dynamic workforce, fostering social mobility and reducing socioeconomic disparities.

Greece

Code4SP could be included in:

Local Level

- Initiatives in the framework of social solidarity actions of local municipalities and training courses offered
- Targeted upskilling programs organized at the local level

National Level

- Project courses can be used as a resource in the public secondary VET education (EPAL). In order to achieve this support of the Institute of Educational Policies (IEP) will be necessary.

- Inclusion in upskilling programs offered by the Public Employment Service (DYPA) and inclusion in training programs for unemployed people.
- Inclusion in the various digital skills development programs that are funded by the Ministry of Labour and implemented through the Centres for Vocational Training (KEK). These are post-secondary non-tertiary VET centers.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the EU project Coding for Social Promotion (Code4SP) represents a significant stride towards addressing the pressing challenges of social inclusion and workforce upscaling within the dynamic landscape of digital transformation. The Code4SP initiative takes center stage as a strategic response to the pervasive digital divide in Portugal, Cyprus, and Greece, offering a meticulously crafted guide that draws insights from influential policymakers and reliable sources within each country.

As this comprehensive guide delves into the nuanced issues inherent in the existing policies and practices across these nations, it becomes evident that a tailored approach is imperative to bridge the gaps in digital education and literacy skills. Code4SP introduces an innovative methodology uniquely positioned to overcome these challenges, leveraging the distinctive characteristics of each country and contributing to the cultivation of a digitally skilled and empowered workforce.

The subsequent sections of the guide provide a roadmap for policymakers, decision-makers, and key stakeholders to seamlessly integrate Code4SP into local and national policy frameworks. By offering clear recommendations, addressing potential challenges, and highlighting synergies with existing policies, the guide fosters a collaborative approach to digital inclusion initiatives. "Empowering Digital Futures" aspires to be more than an elucidation of challenges; it serves as a practical resource, providing actionable steps for policymakers to harness the transformative potential of Code4SP in shaping a more inclusive and digitally proficient future.

With a commitment to credibility and reliability, the guide stands as a testament to rigorous referencing, ensuring that the insights and recommendations presented are founded on robust evidence. As we embark on this transformative journey, "Empowering Digital Futures" aims to inspire strategic actions that will pave the way for a future where

digital inclusion is not just an aspiration but a tangible reality for the people of Portugal, Cyprus, and Greece.