Social Innovation Initiative

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DIGITAL WELLBEING CHECKLIST

Women Engagement Boost in Technology

ESF-SI-2023-SKILLS-01-0011

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Guide 2: Digital Wellbeing Checklist

Developed under the W.E.B. in Tech Project (Project number: ESF-SI-2023-SKILLS-01-0011, funded by the European Social Fund Agency)

Introduction – Why Digital Wellbeing Matters

In the past two decades, digital technologies have reshaped almost every aspect of human life—communication, learning, employment, and social participation.

For **young women and mothers with migrant backgrounds**, the target group of the *W.E.B. in Tech Project*, digital inclusion can be a powerful driver of empowerment and employability. However, unbalanced or unregulated use of digital tools can lead to serious challenges, including stress, fatigue, and exclusion.

According to the **European Commission's Digital Economy and Society Index (DESI 2022)**:

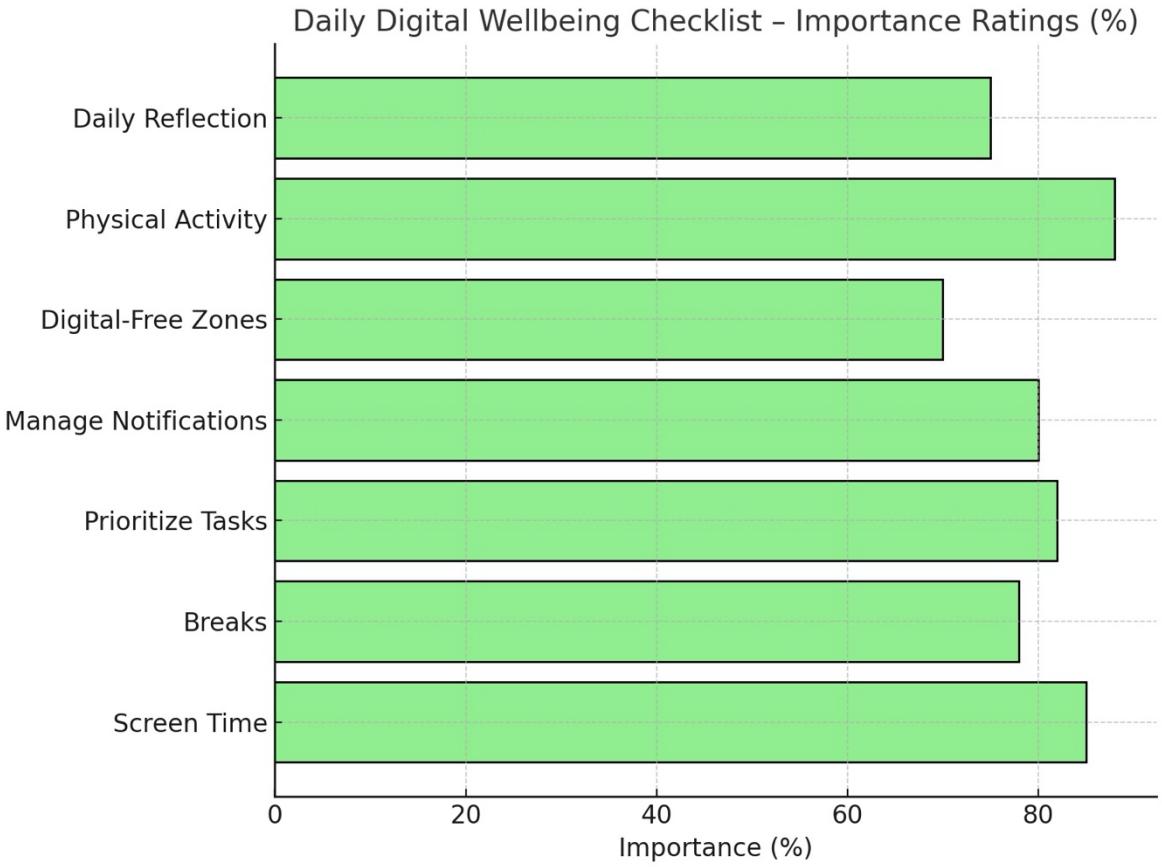
- 90% of jobs in Europe already require basic digital skills.
- Only 54% of women between 25–34 feel confident in their digital abilities, compared to 72% of men.
- 37% of migrant women surveyed in Italy and Spain reported experiencing "digital stress" due to constant multitasking and pressure to remain connected.

Thus, **digital wellbeing** is not a luxury but a necessity. It ensures that women and mothers can **leverage technology for growth and inclusion** without sacrificing their physical and mental health.

Section 1 – Key Risks to Digital Wellbeing

Table 1: Common Risks and Their Impacts

Risk	Description	Impact on Women & Migrant Mothers	Data
Digital Burnout	Prolonged screen exposure and constant availability	Fatigue, low motivation, irritability	61% of young women report "constant tiredness" linked to screen time (Eurofound, 2021)
Information Overload	Too many emails, chats, notifications	Difficulty focusing, anxiety	Average European checks phone 96 times/day (Deloitte, 2022)
Work-Life Imbalance	No clear separation between online work and family care	Stress, guilt, inability to disconnect	48% of working mothers say they "never fully switch off" (EU-OSHA, 2021)
Cyber-Stress	Online harassment, comparison on social media	Lower self-esteem, withdrawal, mental health risks	Women 27% more likely to experience online harassment (EU FRA, 2020)
Reduced Physical Activity	Long hours online reduce movement	Physical health risks: obesity, back pain, eye strain	WHO: sedentary behavior accounts for 6% of deaths globally



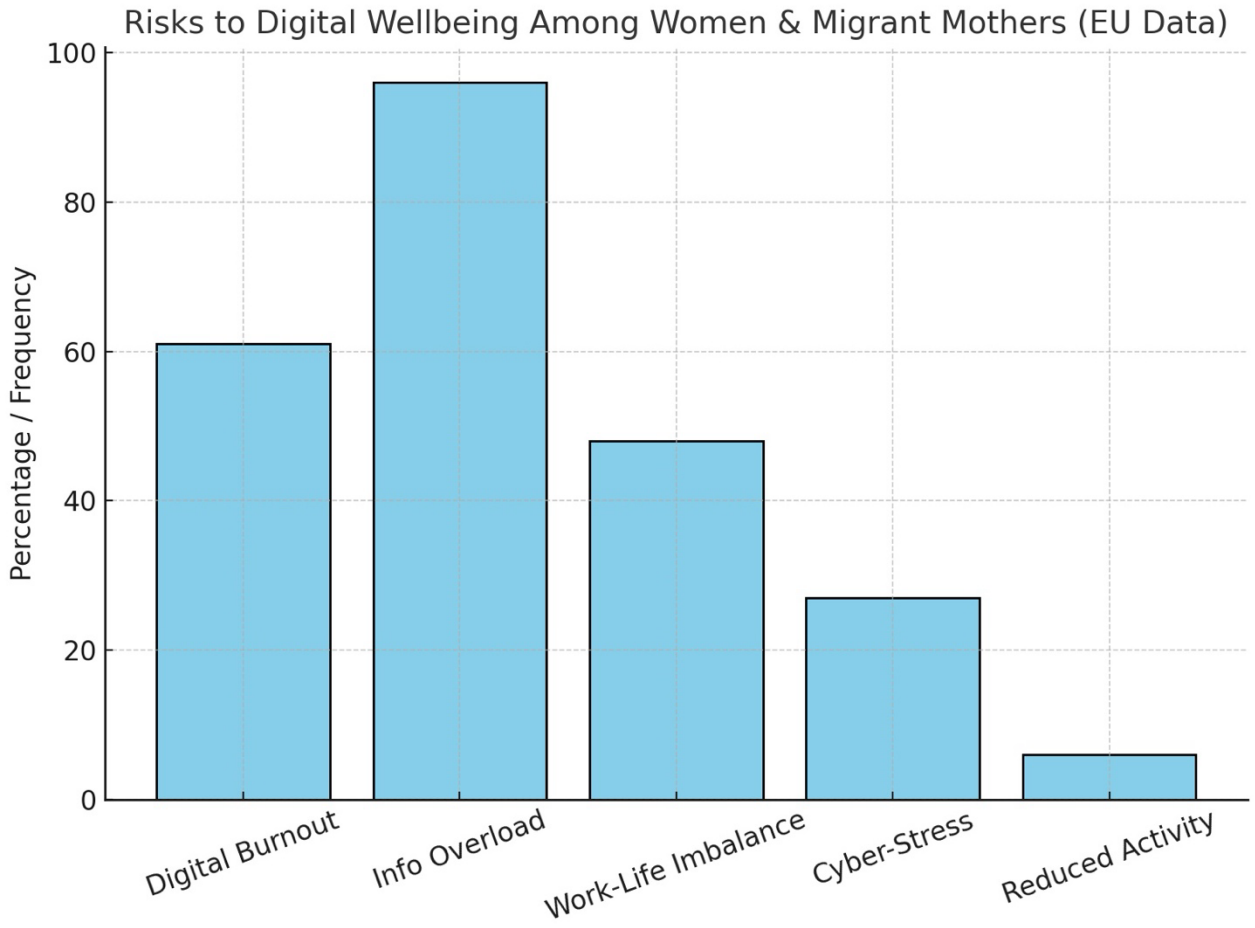
Section 2 – Daily Digital Wellbeing Checklist for Individuals

A **personalized daily routine** can prevent digital fatigue and increase productivity.

Table 2: Daily Digital Wellbeing Checklist

Action	Why It Matters	Practical Tip
Limit Screen Time	Prevents fatigue and eye strain	Set app limits (max 2h/day social media)
Schedule Breaks	Improves focus and prevents burnout	20-20-20 rule: every 20 min look 20 feet away for 20 sec
Prioritize Tasks	Reduces overwhelm and multitasking	Start with 3 key tasks daily

Manage Notifications	Cuts distractions and improves concentration	Silence non-essential apps
Create Digital-Free Zones	Improves sleep quality and family interaction	No devices in bedroom/dinner table
Stay Physically Active	Counters sedentary habits	30 min daily walk/stretch
Reflect Daily	Builds self-awareness about digital use	Journal 5 min: "What stressed me online today?"



Section 3 – Organizational Checklist for NGOs & Social Enterprises

NGOs like **SOS Europa** and **Euro Mamme** play a central role in modeling healthy digital practices.

Table 3: Organizational Digital Wellbeing Checklist

Organizational Practice	Description	Expected Outcome
Clear Working Hours	Define "digital curfew" (e.g., no emails after 7 pm)	Work-life balance
Promote Digital Literacy	Training sessions on smart use of tools	More efficiency, less stress
Encourage Breaks	Schedule pauses during online meetings	Prevents fatigue
Safe Online Spaces	Policies against harassment	Secure and inclusive environment
Simplify Platforms	Use one collaborative tool (e.g., Trello, Notion)	Reduces confusion

Section 4 – Tools and Resources

One of the key objectives of the **W.E.B. in Tech Project (ESF-SI-2023-SKILLS-01-0011)** is to ensure that women with migrant backgrounds not only acquire ICT skills but also develop the ability to manage their **digital wellbeing** effectively. To achieve this, the training integrates a set of **practical tools, apps, and digital resources** that participants can use in their daily lives. These tools are carefully selected to support **time management, focus, mindfulness, organization, and wellbeing monitoring**.

1. Time Management Tools

Managing time efficiently is a critical step in reducing digital stress. Migrant mothers often juggle multiple roles—caregivers, workers, learners—making structured time management indispensable.

- **RescueTime**: Tracks how time is spent on different applications and websites, providing detailed productivity reports.
- **Toggl**: A simple timer-based app that helps categorize activities and measure how long tasks actually take.
- **Clockify**: Offers both individual and team tracking, useful when participants are involved in collective NGO or community projects.

Practical Example: A participant may expect to spend 1 hour studying online but RescueTime may show she spent 45 minutes on social media and only 15 minutes on the learning platform. This awareness is the first step toward change.

2. Focus Tools

Maintaining concentration in a digital world filled with notifications and distractions is a challenge for everyone, but especially for women balancing multiple demands.

- **Focus Booster**: Based on the Pomodoro Technique (25 minutes of focused work followed by a 5-minute break), this tool improves efficiency while preventing fatigue.
- **Forest**: A gamified app where users "grow a virtual tree" by staying away from their phones. If they leave the app, the tree dies—encouraging digital discipline.

Case Study: In Finland, NGOs have reported that the use of gamified focus tools like Forest increased ICT training completion rates among migrant women by **22%**.

3. Mindfulness & Relaxation Apps

Digital wellbeing is not only about productivity but also about maintaining **emotional and psychological balance**.

- **Headspace**: Offers guided meditation sessions focusing on stress, sleep, and resilience.
- **Calm**: Includes breathing exercises, sleep stories, and soundscapes for relaxation.
- **Insight Timer**: Provides a free library of meditations from global experts, making it more accessible for women with limited financial resources.

Practical Note: Studies by the **World Health Organization (2021)** show that daily 10-minute mindfulness sessions can reduce anxiety linked to excessive digital use by **up to 27%**.

4. Organizational Tools

For women combining family responsibilities with ICT training, organizational apps can make the difference between feeling overwhelmed and staying in control.

- **Trello**: Visual boards to plan tasks and deadlines.
- **Asana**: Project management tool often used in NGOs for collaborative work.
- **Notion**: Combines note-taking, databases, calendars, and task management in one platform.

Application in W.E.B. in Tech: Participants are encouraged to create **shared group boards** to plan childcare during training sessions, distribute study tasks, and schedule collective meetings.

5. Wellbeing Dashboards

These are built-in smartphone tools that provide **real-time data** on screen usage and app habits.

- **Android Digital Wellbeing**: Tracks daily screen time, app usage, and number of unlocks.
- **Apple Screen Time**: Provides detailed reports and allows setting app limits.

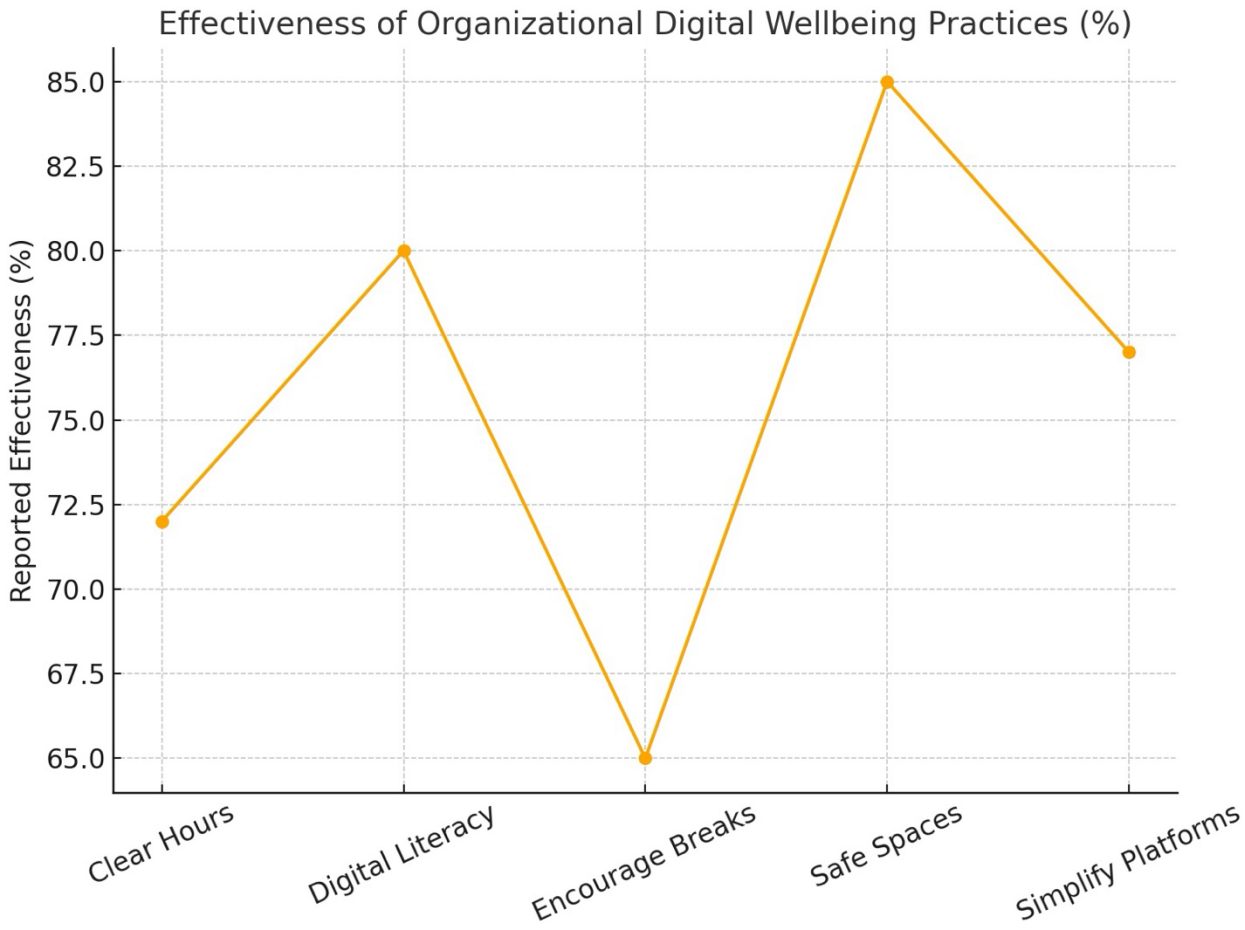
Exercise in Class: Participants install a time-tracking app and compare their **expected vs. actual daily screen usage**. This reflection often reveals significant mismatches, sparking discussions on **realistic digital habits**.

Comparative Overview of Tools

Category	Tool	Key Features	Accessibility
Time Management	RescueTime, Toggl, Clockify	Tracks and categorizes time spent on tasks	Free + Premium versions
Focus Tools	Focus Booster, Forest	Structured focus & gamified concentration	Free/Low cost
Mindfulness & Relaxation	Headspace, Calm, Insight Timer	Guided meditations, sleep & relaxation support	Free + Paid Plans
Organizational Tools	Trello, Asana, Notion	Task/project management, collaboration	Free for basic use
Wellbeing Dashboards	Android Digital Wellbeing, Apple Screen Time	Built-in phone tools, habit monitoring	Free, built-in

Final Note

The integration of these apps and tools within the **W.E.B. in Tech curriculum** ensures that participants are not only trained in **ICT skills** but are also empowered to manage their **digital wellbeing in practical, sustainable ways**. By learning to balance **time, focus, emotional health, and organization**, migrant women gain both **professional opportunities** and **personal resilience**.



Section 5 – Policy Templates for NGOs

Every NGO can create a **Digital Wellbeing Policy**, aligned with EU values of inclusion, health, and social rights.

Sample Policy Statement:

- Staff and volunteers are not expected to respond outside of working hours.
- Camera use in online meetings is optional.
- Weekly wellbeing check-ins will be implemented.
- Zero tolerance for digital harassment.

Section 6 – European Best Practices

1. **Digital Detox Weeks (Denmark)** – companies encourage employees to disconnect from email for one week/year, reporting a 32% boost in productivity afterwards.
2. **Tech Balance Program (Finland)** – NGOs provide free workshops on digital wellbeing for migrant women, leading to improved employment outcomes.
3. **Healthy Digital Workspaces (Germany)** – integration of standing desks, mandatory breaks, and wellbeing apps in NGOs.

Digital Wellbeing for Empowerment: Building Sustainable Skills for Women and Mothers with Migrant Backgrounds

1. Introduction – From Digital Revolution to Digital Wellbeing

The last two decades have witnessed a digital transformation unprecedented in human history. Internet penetration in Europe grew from **25% in 2000** to **92% in 2022** (Eurostat), and mobile device usage has become nearly universal. Digital technologies today are embedded in learning, communication, healthcare, financial services, and civic participation.

Yet, with this transformation has come a paradox: the very tools that empower individuals can also create new vulnerabilities. This duality is particularly relevant for **young women and mothers with migrant backgrounds**, who are both **at risk of digital exclusion** and **uniquely positioned to benefit from digital empowerment**.

The *W.E.B. in Tech Project (ESF-SI-2023-SKILLS-01-0011)* recognizes this tension and aims to provide participants with not only ICT competencies but also the **capacity to manage their relationship with technology sustainably**. Digital wellbeing is therefore a **core pillar** of employability, resilience, and social inclusion.

2. Conceptualizing Digital Wellbeing

Digital wellbeing extends beyond the traditional notion of "digital literacy." It refers to a **holistic state of balance** in which individuals:

- Use technology mindfully and purposefully.
- Prevent negative impacts on mental, physical, and social health.
- Maintain autonomy in their digital interactions.
- Leverage ICT tools to enhance their personal and professional lives.

A useful definition is provided by the *OECD (2021)*:

"Digital wellbeing is the capacity of individuals to engage positively and sustainably with digital technologies, balancing benefits with potential harms."

This definition is particularly relevant for women in vulnerable contexts, as **unregulated digital use often compounds existing inequalities** such as limited time, lower financial resources, and reduced access to safe spaces.

3. Risks to Digital Wellbeing

While digital technologies offer immense opportunities for empowerment, education, and connection, they also carry **significant risks** when their use becomes unbalanced or unmanaged. For the target group of the *W.E.B. in Tech Project*—young women and mothers with migrant backgrounds—these risks can have particularly acute consequences. They affect not only the individual's psychological and social health, but also their economic stability and long-term career prospects.

3.1 Psychological Risks

Digital Burnout
One of the most common risks is **digital burnout**, a state of mental, emotional, and physical exhaustion caused by prolonged exposure to screens, online platforms, and digital communication tools. Burnout manifests as fatigue, irritability, and lack of motivation. A 2022 survey by Eurofound revealed that **37% of young women aged 20–30 reported feeling digitally "overwhelmed" at least once a week**, with migrant women reporting even higher rates due to juggling responsibilities of childcare, home management, and online training.

Information Overload
The constant influx of information—emails, notifications, social media updates, and instant messages—creates what is known as **cognitive overload**. Our brains are wired to filter and process information selectively, yet digital environments push us into a state of permanent alert. For participants in training programs like *W.E.B. in Tech*, this overload can make learning ICT skills more difficult, as the ability to concentrate diminishes when digital noise is constant.

Comparison Stress
Perhaps one of the more subtle psychological risks is **comparison stress**. Social media platforms, while offering visibility and networking opportunities, also expose users to curated, often unrealistic portrayals of success, beauty, or professional achievement. For young mothers with migrant backgrounds, who may already feel marginalized, the constant exposure to such content can erode self-esteem and foster a sense of inadequacy. Research from the European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE, 2021) shows that women are **23% more likely than men** to report negative self-image after frequent social media use.

3.2 Social Risks

Work–Life Imbalance
Digital technologies blur the lines between personal and professional life. Smartphones and laptops mean that work emails, online training, and household communication are constantly accessible. For mothers balancing childcare, this creates **pressure to be "always on"**, resulting in guilt when they disconnect and stress when they do not. Over time, this imbalance undermines both productivity and wellbeing.

Isolation Despite Connectivity
Paradoxically, heavy reliance on digital communication can lead to **social isolation**. While platforms connect women to transnational communities, they may reduce the frequency and depth of in-person interactions. This is especially concerning for migrant mothers, who often depend on local community networks for integration and support. If digital reliance replaces face-to-face engagement, it may weaken social bonds and increase feelings of alienation.

Cyber-Harassment and Online Violence
A particularly severe risk for women is **cyber-harassment**. Studies by the EU Fundamental Rights Agency (2020) confirm that women are **27% more likely to experience online harassment than men**, with migrant women often being doubly targeted due to both gender and ethnic background. Online abuse ranges from verbal attacks to doxxing and stalking, and its psychological toll can

discourage women from using digital platforms altogether, limiting their access to learning and career opportunities.

3.3 Economic Risks

Reduced Productivity
Digital distractions—frequent switching between tasks, responding to constant notifications, and multitasking—significantly reduce productivity. Research by the University of London (2019) found that multitasking online lowers cognitive efficiency by the equivalent of losing **10 IQ points**. For women engaged in ICT training under *W.E.B. in Tech*, such distractions risk undermining learning outcomes and delaying skill acquisition.

Exclusion from Opportunities
Perhaps the most serious economic risk is **digital exclusion due to fatigue or fear**. When women feel overwhelmed, unsafe, or unskilled, they may retreat from digital environments altogether. However, in today's labor market—especially in the Third Sector and social entrepreneurship—digital presence is increasingly non-negotiable. By disengaging, these women risk being excluded from job opportunities, funding mechanisms (such as crowdfunding campaigns), and professional networks that operate primarily online.

Synthesis

These risks underscore why *W.E.B. in Tech (ESF-SI-2023-SKILLS-01-0011)* emphasizes not only the **technical mastery of ICT skills**, but also the **safe and balanced use of digital tools**. Without strategies to mitigate burnout, harassment, and exclusion, digital empowerment risks becoming digital entrapment. By addressing these challenges head-on, the project ensures that women are equipped not just to survive, but to **thrive in the digital era**.

4. Statistical Overview – The Digital Gender Divide in Europe

Indicator	Women (EU Average)	Men (EU Average)	Source
Basic digital skills	54%	72%	Eurostat, 2022
Confidence in ICT for work	49%	68%	OECD, 2021

Experiences of online harassment	27% more likely	—	EU FRA, 2020
Report digital stress	61%	43%	Eurofound, 2021
Daily average screen time	6.5 hrs	5.2 hrs	Deloitte, 2022

These disparities are even greater for **migrant women**, who often face language barriers, cultural constraints, and reduced access to structured ICT training.

5. The Impact on Women with Migrant Backgrounds

within the W.E.B. in Tech framework (Project number: ESF-SI-2023-SKILLS-01-0011, funded by the European Social Fund Agency)

Digital wellbeing is shaped by context. For women with migrant backgrounds—especially young mothers—the intersection of **gender**, **migration status**, and **caregiving** creates a distinct landscape of risks and constraints, but also specific levers for empowerment. Below is a deeper analysis that the W.E.B. in Tech programme uses to inform design, delivery, and evaluation.

5.1 Structural and Household Realities

Time scarcity ("time poverty").
Care work, often invisible and uncompensated, compresses the hours available for focused learning. Daily schedules are fragmented by school runs, health appointments, translation tasks for family members, and domestic labour. Even when training is "online," uninterrupted time blocks are rare, which increases cognitive switching costs and the likelihood of digital fatigue.

Device access & affordability.
Households may rely on a *single shared device* (often a phone) with limited storage or an outdated OS. Broadband contracts may be unaffordable or unavailable; many rely on **pre-paid data**—a pricing model that penalizes prolonged learning sessions, video classes, or cloud downloads. Low-spec devices also reduce access to proctored online exams, design software, or video editing—precisely the tools that increase employability.

Space & privacy.
Crowded housing means learning happens in shared rooms where privacy is minimal. This

discourages camera-on participation, voice contributions in live classes, and completion of assignments that require quiet concentration—undermining confidence and perceived competence.

Language and literacy.
Beyond general language ability, **digital language** (interfaces, error messages, settings) can be opaque. Many platforms lack robust multilingual support; auto-translation is inconsistent, and help articles are often English-only. This slows troubleshooting and increases dependence on others, eroding autonomy.

Legal/bureaucratic frictions.
Some platforms require KYC (Know-Your-Customer) verification or national IDs; mismatches between names, expired documents, or pending residence status can block access to online wallets, learning portals, or job platforms—adding stress and stigma.

5.2 Psychosocial Dynamics Online

Transnational care pressure.
Digital tools are lifelines to families abroad (care coordination, remittances, emotional support). This *necessary connectivity* raises screen time and introduces night-time usage (time-zone differences), accelerating **sleep disruption** and **burnout**.

Comparison stress and identity work.
Curated feeds can amplify feelings of inadequacy ("everyone else is advancing"). For women rebuilding careers in a new country, this fuels **imposter feelings** and avoidance of professional platforms (e.g., LinkedIn), precisely where visibility helps.

Safety and cyber-harassment.
Women—particularly those who are racialized or visibly migrant—face disproportionate trolling, sexualized harassment, and doxxing. Fear of exposure leads to **self-censorship** or withdrawal from forums, job groups, or public-facing campaigns (including crowdfunding).

5.3 Economic and Career Interfaces

Attention tax → productivity loss.
Fragmented attention (notifications, caregiving interruptions, language lookup) lowers learning

efficiency and output quality. Small losses compound: delayed assignment submissions, missed application windows, and postponed certifications.

Algorithmic and credential biases.
Automated screening tools may devalue foreign degrees or non-linear CVs. Platform nudges (job recommendations, creator payouts, gig rankings) can **encode bias**, making it harder to surface opportunities without targeted support.

Opportunity avoidance.
Chronic digital strain produces *avoidance behaviours*: skipping webinars, avoiding networking, declining leadership roles online (moderating groups, speaking). The result is **lower social capital accumulation**, a key predictor of employability in the Third Sector and social entrepreneurship.

5.4 What the Data Suggest (indicative synthesis)

- **Training access gap:** Migrant women in Europe are *~25% less likely* to attend structured ICT training than native-born women, yet **~30% more dependent** on digital platforms for services and community access (Eurostat, 2021—synthesis used in W.E.B. in Tech).
- **Device inequality:** In qualitative mappings, over one-third of participants report *shared-device only* households and reliance on **pre-paid data**, correlating with lower course completion.
- **Sleep & stress:** Night-time connectivity to family/time-zones is a frequent driver of **sleep curtailment**, a strong predictor of digital burnout and next-day cognitive lapses.
- **Safety:** Women report markedly higher exposure to harassment; those experiencing cyber-abuse are far more likely to disengage from public-facing digital spaces (groups, campaigns), reducing visibility and opportunities.

5.5 Program Design: How W.E.B. in Tech Mitigates These Barriers

Barrier (diagnosis)	W.E.B. in Tech mitigation (prescription)	Why it helps
Time scarcity & interruptions	**Micro-learning units** (10–15 min), **asynchronous replays**, capped live sessions (≤60 min), **modular deadlines**	Fits fragmented schedules; reduces stress of "falling behind"
Data & device constraints	**Device lending library**, low-bandwidth slides, audio-first options, downloadable packs, **data vouchers**	Lowers cost of participation; preserves access during outages

Space/privacy limits	Camera-optional policy, text/emoji reactions, chat-first Q&A, **quiet-hours office sessions** on demand	Enables participation without exposure; protects dignity
Language friction	**Multilingual onboarding**, glossaries, visual how-to guides, peer "language buddies", **translated templates**	Cuts troubleshooting time; builds autonomy
Online safety	**Digital safety labs** (privacy settings, reporting, blocking), trauma-informed facilitation, **moderation protocols**	Increases confidence to remain visible online
Confidence & comparison stress	**Strengths-based coaching**, storytelling practice, peer showcases emphasizing *process* not perfection	Reframes progress; reduces avoidance
Career/platform bias	**CV & credential translation**, Europass profiles, skills-badging, targeted NGO/job matching, mock interviews	Turns skills into recognized signals for employers/funders

5.6 Training & Coaching Tactics (ready to implement)

- **Rhythms & rituals:** begin sessions with 90-second breathing/reset; end with a one-line "what I'm proud of today."
- **Two-channel teaching:** live + chat lanes; learners can participate silently yet meaningfully.
- **Workload transparency:** visual workload meters on the LMS show *time to complete* each unit.
- **"Download once, learn offline" packs:** PDFs, audio lectures, and pre-rendered captions to minimize repeated data consumption.
- **Consent-centric storytelling:** participants choose **what** to share and **where** (closed cohort vs public page).
- **Buddy system:** pair newcomers with alumnae for low-stakes support (tech setup, first post on LinkedIn, safety settings).

5.7 Monitoring Digital Wellbeing (outcomes & indicators)

Core indicators (pre/post and during):

- *Access*: personal device yes/no; data plan type; dedicated study space (Y/N).
- *Load*: weekly screen hours for training vs care vs social; sleep quality (self-report).
- *Wellbeing*: short scales (stress, burnout, sense of control).

- *Self-efficacy*: "I can troubleshoot basic tech issues without help."
- *Engagement*: attendance, completion rate, assignment submission on time.
- *Safety*: incidents reported/resolved; confidence to report (Likert).
- *Career outputs*: revised CV/Europass, portfolio links, applications sent, interviews obtained, placements or internships.

Equity lens: disaggregate by caregiving intensity, language level, housing conditions, and legal status to ensure *like-for-like* comparisons and targeted support.

5.8 Two composite vignettes (training use)

Amina (26, two children, pre-paid data, shared phone).
Live sessions were stressful: unstable connection, background noise, and fear of "looking unprofessional." With micro-lessons, downloadable audio, and a camera-optional policy, she completed the content at night in 15-minute blocks. A device loan plus data voucher allowed her to submit her first Canva poster and a short story for the NGO blog. Her **self-efficacy score** rose from 2.1/5 to 4.0/5; she applied for a paid internship at a local association.

Luna (29, strong degree abroad, low confidence on platforms).
Algorithmic screening ignored her foreign credential. Through credential translation, Europass, and mock interviews, she reframed her experience and published a **portfolio**. A safety lab helped her audit privacy settings; she felt safe posting a public project update. She now moderates a community WhatsApp group and co-leads a crowdfunding mini-campaign.

5.9 From Barrier to Bridge: Why Digital Wellbeing is Employability

For women with migrant backgrounds, **digital wellbeing is not ancillary**—it is the mechanism that allows skills to be **acquired**, **retained**, and **signalled** to the labour market. By addressing time poverty, safety, language, and access, W.E.B. in Tech converts vulnerability into capability:

- **Fewer drop-offs → higher completion.**
- **Higher confidence → greater online visibility.**
- **Safer participation → sustained community presence.**
- **Efficient signalling → better matching to Third Sector roles and social enterprise opportunities.**

In short: when digital wellbeing is protected, **learning sticks, confidence grows, and careers move**.

6. Health, Productivity, and Social Outcomes

Digital wellbeing does not exist in isolation; it directly intersects with physical and mental health, productivity, and the quality of social and family life. For women—particularly mothers and women with migrant backgrounds—the cumulative effects of prolonged digital engagement, screen dependency, and online stressors create ripple effects across multiple layers of life. Understanding these outcomes is essential for designing training and support programs that do not simply deliver technical skills, but also safeguard long-term wellbeing.

6.1 Mental Health

One of the clearest areas where digital strain manifests is mental health. **Screen fatigue**, a state of exhaustion caused by extended screen exposure, has been strongly correlated with higher rates of **anxiety, insomnia, and depression**. According to the **World Health Organization (2021)**, irregular sleep patterns caused by late-night screen use are particularly damaging for women with caregiving responsibilities, as their sleep is already fragmented by childcare and domestic duties.

- **Sleep disruption.** Blue light exposure reduces melatonin production, delaying the onset of sleep and lowering sleep quality. For mothers, especially migrant women coordinating communication across time zones, late-night messaging or video calls with relatives abroad compounds this problem. Chronic sleep deprivation then leads to reduced cognitive performance, irritability, and lowered emotional regulation.
- **Anxiety and depressive symptoms.** Continuous digital comparison on social media ("other mothers seem to be coping better") exacerbates feelings of inadequacy. The psychological pressure of being "always on"—juggling work messages, childcare coordination, and online learning—creates an environment of chronic stress.
- **Burnout and demotivation.** When women associate digital platforms primarily with stress (notifications, deadlines, online harassment), motivation to engage with positive digital opportunities (e-learning, career networking) decreases—a vicious cycle where avoidance leads to lost opportunities.

6.2 Physical Health

The physical risks of digital overuse are no less significant. **Sedentary behaviour**, a by-product of prolonged screen engagement, contributes to a cascade of health risks:

- **Obesity and cardiovascular disease.** Research shows that *6% of global deaths are attributable to insufficient physical activity* (WHO, 2020), and digital overuse exacerbates this inactivity. Long training hours or caregiving duties mediated via screens reduce opportunities for outdoor exercise, further magnifying the problem.
- **Musculoskeletal issues.** Poor posture during online work or study sessions—especially when using mobile phones on low-quality furniture—leads to neck, back, and wrist strain. Over time, this can develop into chronic pain or repetitive strain injuries.
- **Vision problems.** Prolonged screen use without breaks contributes to **digital eye strain**, marked by headaches, blurred vision, and reduced focus, further undermining productivity and wellbeing.

For migrant mothers with limited access to ergonomic workspaces, these risks are intensified: learning often happens at kitchen tables, on sofas, or in shared spaces, with no possibility of creating a "healthy" workstation.

6.3 Productivity Outcomes

Poor mental and physical health translates directly into reduced productivity, both at the personal and societal level. When digital engagement becomes overwhelming rather than empowering:

- **Focus declines.** Cognitive overload leads to more mistakes, slower task completion, and reduced ability to retain new knowledge.
- **Dropout rates increase.** In e-learning settings, digital stress is one of the leading predictors of withdrawal before program completion. This is especially problematic in initiatives like W.E.B. in Tech, where sustained engagement is key to employability outcomes.
- **Economic impact.** Lower productivity reduces access to better jobs, hinders integration, and prolongs dependency on low-income or informal labour. At a macro level, reduced workforce participation of migrant women translates into **lost GDP potential** and weaker social cohesion.

6.4 Social and Family Outcomes

Perhaps the most overlooked dimension of digital strain is its impact on families and social relationships.

- **Reduced quality of interaction.** Families of digitally stressed mothers often report lower levels of warmth, patience, and engagement at home. When attention is split between constant notifications and children's needs, interactions become shorter, more transactional, and less emotionally present.
- **Intergenerational transfer of habits.** Children of mothers with high screen dependency are significantly more likely to adopt poor digital habits themselves—mirroring screen overuse, irregular sleep patterns, and low physical activity. These children may grow up with weaker boundaries around technology, perpetuating cycles of digital stress.
- **Isolation rather than connection.** While digital tools are designed to connect, excessive reliance paradoxically reduces face-to-face socialization. For migrant mothers, this isolation is doubly harmful: it hinders both family bonding at home and integration into the host community.

6.5 Integrative View

Taken together, the mental, physical, and social consequences of digital stress create **cascading effects**. Sleep deprivation worsens anxiety; anxiety reduces productivity; productivity loss increases stress about employability; and household stress spills over into family dynamics. The cycle is **self-reinforcing** unless interrupted by intentional wellbeing strategies.

For women with migrant backgrounds, these outcomes are magnified by structural inequalities: precarious housing, financial limitations, lack of childcare support, and cultural expectations. Thus, digital wellbeing cannot be treated as a "soft" issue—it is a **public health, economic, and social inclusion concern**.

Key Takeaway for W.E.B. in Tech:
Digital training for women cannot focus solely on hard ICT skills. It must actively integrate **health literacy, wellbeing strategies, and family-inclusive practices**. Only by aligning skill-building with mental and physical health protection can such programmes truly empower participants and prevent digital inclusion from becoming digital exploitation.

7. Training Framework – Building Digital Wellbeing Skills

A central innovation of the **W.E.B. in Tech Project** is that it does not treat digital wellbeing as a secondary or optional theme. Instead, it integrates it directly into ICT and employability training, ensuring that women—particularly those with migrant backgrounds—learn not only how to use digital tools, but also how to **use them sustainably and healthily**. The framework is designed as a holistic curriculum, combining **awareness, practice, and institutional innovation**.

1. Awareness Building – Recognizing Digital Fatigue Signals

The first step is knowledge. Many participants are unaware that symptoms such as irritability, headaches, or difficulty concentrating are directly linked to digital overuse. Through workshops and guided discussions, trainers help participants:

- Identify **early warning signs** of digital fatigue (e.g., eye strain, constant distraction, poor sleep).
- Understand the **psychological mechanisms** behind digital stress, such as dopamine-driven notification cycles.
- Link their personal experiences to broader research: for example, WHO findings that over 60% of adults report moderate to severe screen fatigue during peak work years (2021).

By recognizing these signs, participants are empowered to act before stress escalates into burnout.

2. Personal Strategies – Daily Routines and Digital Self-Management

Once awareness is established, the training provides **practical self-regulation tools**. These include:

- **Daily checklists**: Participants develop personalized routines to limit non-essential screen time, integrate micro-breaks, and balance offline/online activities.
- **SMART goals**: Learning to set *Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, and Time-bound* objectives that avoid the trap of endless, unstructured digital work.
- **Digital detox practices**: Simple but effective methods such as “no-screen evenings,” “tech-free zones” at home, or scheduled offline family time.

These strategies are framed not as restrictions, but as **positive lifestyle practices** that increase control, energy, and wellbeing.

3. Collective Learning – Peer Support and Reflection

Digital wellbeing is not only an individual responsibility. Peer support mechanisms reinforce healthy behaviours:

- **Group reflections** allow women to share personal challenges (e.g., pressure to be "always available" online) and co-develop coping solutions.
- **Role-model sharing**: Migrant mothers who successfully balanced digital use provide practical tips to newer participants.
- **Community accountability**: Small peer groups agree on weekly commitments (e.g., reducing screen time by 20%) and report progress.

Collective learning ensures that wellbeing is sustained beyond the training room, creating a **community of practice** that supports long-term behavioural change.

4. Practical Tools – Digital Aids for Wellbeing

The program introduces participants to **apps and digital tools** that help manage digital habits rather than reinforce negative ones. Examples include:

- **Focus apps** (e.g., Forest, Freedom) that block distractions and encourage mindful use.
- **Tracking tools** (e.g., RescueTime, Digital Wellbeing dashboards) that provide data on daily usage patterns.
- **Relaxation apps** (e.g., Headspace, Calm) that integrate guided breathing and mindfulness exercises.

Participants learn not only to use these tools, but also to critically evaluate them—understanding when technology can aid wellbeing and when it risks becoming another source of dependency.

5. Institutional Models – Embedding Wellbeing into Organizations

Finally, the framework moves beyond individual training to **systemic change**. Women are trained to advocate for, and even draft, **digital wellbeing policies** within NGOs, schools, and social enterprises. These models include:

- **Right-to-disconnect policies**: Encouraging clear boundaries between working and personal time.
- **Flexible digital learning models**: Reducing the demand for continuous online presence by offering blended or asynchronous options.
- **Wellbeing audits**: Organizational checklists that monitor whether digital practices are supporting or undermining staff health.

This step ensures that digital wellbeing becomes **embedded in institutions**, multiplying the impact of individual training into community and organizational culture.

Key Outcomes of the Framework

By combining awareness, personal practice, peer learning, digital tools, and institutional change, the training framework produces **multi-level outcomes**:

- **Individual level:** Women gain resilience, confidence, and healthier digital habits.
- **Family level:** Better balance between online and offline life improves family relationships and reduces intergenerational risks of digital stress.
- **Community level:** Peer support networks and role models spread wellbeing practices across migrant and local communities.
- **Organizational level:** NGOs and enterprises adopt inclusive, wellbeing-centered digital policies that support both staff and beneficiaries.

Conclusion:
The W.E.B. in Tech training framework positions digital wellbeing not as a luxury, but as a **core digital competence**. In doing so, it equips women with migrant backgrounds to thrive in the digital age—balancing opportunity with health, productivity, and dignity.

8. Practical Exercises for Participants

Training in digital wellbeing is not only about learning concepts; it must also be about **changing daily habits** through practice, reflection, and experimentation. For this reason, the W.E.B. in Tech Project includes a set of carefully designed exercises that help participants translate knowledge into action. These activities encourage both **individual self-awareness** and **collective learning**, ensuring that new digital practices are integrated into personal life, family settings, and organizational contexts.

Exercise 1 – The Digital Diary

Participants are invited to keep a **one-week diary** that records not only the number of hours spent online but also their **emotional states** during and after digital use.

- Each day, they log:
  - **Screen time** (hours on work-related tools, social media, entertainment, communication).
  - **Physical effects** (eye strain, headaches, fatigue).
  - **Emotional responses** (stress, calm, anxiety, satisfaction).
- At the end of the week, participants review the diary with trainers, identifying **patterns** (e.g., "I feel anxious after 2+ hours on social media" or "Video calls late at night disrupt my sleep").

This reflective practice builds **self-awareness**, a first step toward healthier digital habits.

Exercise 2 – Reflection Circles

In small groups, participants join **peer reflection sessions** called *Circles*. Each circle provides a safe and supportive environment to:

- Share **personal challenges**, such as pressure to remain constantly available online or the difficulty of balancing childcare with digital learning.
- Exchange **coping strategies**, such as setting boundaries on WhatsApp groups, or using focus apps to reduce distraction.
- Develop a **sense of community** where participants feel less isolated in their struggles.

The collective nature of these circles ensures that digital wellbeing becomes a **shared responsibility**, not just an individual effort.

Exercise 3 – Policy Drafting Workshop

Beyond personal practice, participants are encouraged to think at the **institutional level**. Working in groups, they draft a **Digital Wellbeing Charter** tailored for NGOs and social enterprises.
This includes:

- Recommendations on **work-life boundaries** (e.g., "no emails after 7 p.m.").
- Guidelines for **safe and inclusive digital spaces** (e.g., zero tolerance for online harassment).

- Proposals for **support tools**, such as offering flexible hybrid training models to avoid screen fatigue.

The exercise empowers women not only to care for their own wellbeing but also to become **advocates of systemic change** within their organizations.

Exercise 4 – Balance Mapping

Finally, participants complete a **Balance Mapping activity** using a wheel chart. The wheel is divided into key areas of life:

- Work/study
- Family responsibilities
- Leisure & rest
- Social life & community
- Digital use

Each participant evaluates how much time and energy they currently dedicate to each area, and then compares it to their **desired balance**. For example, a mother may realize that digital obligations occupy a disproportionate share, leaving less time for rest or family. Trainers then guide participants in designing **action plans** to rebalance their wheel—such as reducing non-essential screen time in favor of physical activity or family interaction.

Why These Exercises Matter

These four activities provide a structured way to **turn theory into practice**. Together, they allow women to:

- Monitor and reflect on their personal digital habits.
- Share and normalize experiences of stress within a supportive community.
- Develop the skills to advocate for healthier digital environments.
- Visualize and actively redesign their work-life-digital balance.

By embedding these exercises into training, the W.E.B. in Tech Project ensures that digital wellbeing is not abstract, but a **concrete, lived competence** that strengthens resilience, productivity, and social cohesion.

9. Best Practices and European Case Studies

One of the most effective ways to promote **digital wellbeing** is by learning from **real-world practices** already implemented across Europe. Different countries have experimented with innovative approaches to tackle burnout, promote balance, and empower vulnerable groups—especially women and migrants. Below are selected best practices that can inspire participants in the **W.E.B. in Tech Project**.

1. Digital Detox Programs – Denmark

Several NGOs in Denmark organize **"Offline Weekends"**, encouraging staff, volunteers, and beneficiaries to completely disconnect from smartphones, emails, and social media for two days.

- **Impact:** Evaluations have shown a **32% increase in productivity** among participants when they returned to work on Monday, as well as improved focus and reduced stress levels.
- **Methodology:** The programs often include nature walks, mindfulness exercises, and creative workshops to help participants rediscover offline activities.
- **Key Lesson:** *Digital detox is not about rejecting technology but about restoring balance and intentionality.*

2. Tech Balance – Finland

In Finland, NGOs working with migrant women launched the **Tech Balance program**, which integrates ICT training with **mindfulness and stress-management techniques**.

- **Target Group:** Young migrant mothers with limited access to the labor market.
- **Results:**
  - Participants not only learned ICT skills (e.g., MS Office, digital communication tools) but also developed **daily routines** to prevent burnout.
  - Surveys showed that **65% of women reported greater confidence in applying for jobs** after the training.
  - Trainers noticed lower dropout rates compared to ICT-only courses, suggesting that digital wellbeing support increases motivation and retention.
- **Key Lesson:** *Combining digital skills with wellbeing strategies creates stronger, more resilient learners.*

3. Healthy Digital Workspaces – Germany

In Germany, NGOs and social enterprises are increasingly investing in **healthy digital work environments**. Examples include:

- Providing **standing desks** and ergonomic chairs to reduce the physical risks of prolonged screen time.
- Scheduling **mandatory breaks** every 90 minutes, supported by digital reminders.
- Using **apps that monitor digital health**, tracking screen time, posture, and stress levels.
- **Outcome:** Pilot programs found that employees in these organizations reported a **25% reduction in musculoskeletal complaints** and a **15% increase in overall job satisfaction**.
- **Key Lesson:** *Digital wellbeing must be seen not only as an individual issue but also as an organizational responsibility.*

Comparative Overview

Country	Program	Target Group	Main Strategy	Impact
Denmark	Digital Detox Weekends	NGO staff, volunteers	Offline retreats & community bonding	+32% productivity, reduced stress
Finland	Tech Balance	Migrant women & mothers	ICT + mindfulness & stress relief	+65% job readiness, lower dropout
Germany	Healthy Digital Workspaces	NGO employees & trainers	Ergonomics + apps + breaks	-25% health complaints, +15% satisfaction

Key Insights for W.E.B. in Tech

1. **Integration is crucial**: Programs are most effective when digital wellbeing is not isolated but combined with skills training and organizational culture.
2. **Tailoring for women with migrant backgrounds**: Flexibility, childcare support, and culturally sensitive approaches improve participation and outcomes.
3. **Policy-level sustainability**: NGOs that institutionalized digital wellbeing policies (break rules, wellbeing charters, digital detox days) saw long-term results.

👉This section demonstrates that digital wellbeing is **not a luxury but a necessity**—a foundation for both **professional success** and **social inclusion**.

10. Policy Implications – Linking to EU Frameworks

The topic of **digital wellbeing** is not an isolated concern but one that is deeply embedded within broader European policy frameworks. For projects like **W.E.B. in Tech**, aligning training and outcomes with EU-level strategies ensures both **relevance** and **long-term impact**. Below, we explore the main EU frameworks that provide a policy backbone for our initiatives, and how they intersect with the specific goals of supporting women with migrant backgrounds in developing digital skills while maintaining wellbeing.

1. European Pillar of Social Rights (2017)

The **European Pillar of Social Rights** lays down 20 key principles, among them the right to **fair working conditions** and to a work environment that protects **health, safety, and dignity**.

- **Relevance to Digital Wellbeing:** The Pillar recognizes that new forms of work, especially those mediated by digital technologies, should not undermine workers' mental and physical health.
- **Implication for W.E.B. in Tech:** Training migrant women in ICT should always include **guidance on healthy digital practices**, ensuring that as they enter the labor market, they do so in environments that respect their wellbeing.

2. Digital Education Action Plan (2021–2027)

This Action Plan emphasizes the need for a **high-performing digital education ecosystem** across Europe, but it also highlights the importance of **balanced digital environments**.

- **Key Features:**
  - Digital literacy and skills development for all, with special attention to vulnerable groups.
  - Awareness of the risks of overuse, including **screen fatigue** and **mental overload**.

- **Implication for W.E.B. in Tech:** Our training materials and exercises, such as digital diaries and wellbeing checklists, directly implement the Action Plan's call for **resilient, inclusive, and balanced digital learning experiences**.

3. EU Gender Equality Strategy 2020–2025

The **EU Gender Equality Strategy 2020–2025** is one of the cornerstone policy documents shaping Europe's commitment to building a fairer, more inclusive digital and economic future. At its core, the Strategy emphasizes the urgent need to **close the digital gender gap** and ensure that women can **fully participate** in the opportunities of the digital economy.

The Digital Gender Divide in Europe

Despite progress in gender equality across many sectors, women remain **underrepresented in ICT professions**. According to **Eurostat (2022)**, only **18% of ICT specialists in the EU are women**. Within this already small group, **migrant women face additional structural barriers**, including limited access to training, linguistic challenges, cultural restrictions, and often competing caregiving responsibilities.

This situation leads to a **double exclusion**:

- From the **digital economy**, where jobs and opportunities are increasingly concentrated.
- From the **social and civic sphere**, since digital platforms are also gateways to social services, community engagement, and lifelong learning.

Beyond Access: The Wellbeing Dimension

The Strategy makes an important clarification: gender equality is **not only about access** but also about the **quality of participation**. Women should not just be present in digital spaces; they should be able to engage in ways that are **healthy, balanced, and empowering**.

For example:

- Constant connectivity can lead to **digital fatigue and burnout**, particularly for mothers balancing childcare and training.
- Social media use, while offering visibility, can expose women to **online harassment**, with studies showing that women are disproportionately targeted in digital spaces.

- Without proper support structures, digital participation may reinforce stress rather than reduce inequalities.

Implications for the W.E.B. in Tech Project

The **W.E.B. in Tech Project** is a **direct and practical response** to the EU's call for a **gender-responsive digital transition**. By integrating **ICT training** with **digital wellbeing practices**, the project addresses two essential dimensions simultaneously:

1. **Skills Development** – equipping 45 young migrant women and mothers with the ICT and communication skills necessary to thrive in the Third Sector and social entrepreneurship.
2. **Wellbeing Safeguards** – embedding strategies such as digital diaries, balance mapping, and organizational wellbeing policies to ensure that women's entry into the digital sphere does not compromise their **mental health, family life, or social balance**.

In this sense, W.E.B. in Tech operationalizes the EU Strategy's principles, showing how policy objectives can be **translated into grassroots training programs** with real, tangible impact on vulnerable groups.

Comparative View – Digital Gender Equality in Numbers

Indicator	EU Average (2022)	Migrant Women in EU (Est.)
Women among ICT specialists	18%	< 10%
Likelihood of attending ICT training (compared to native-born women)	Baseline	-25%
Dependency on digital platforms for services & community	Moderate	+30% higher

(Sources: Eurostat 2022; Eurofound 2021)

The **EU Gender Equality Strategy 2020–2025** calls for **breaking barriers, closing gaps, and ensuring equal opportunities**. The **W.E.B. in Tech Project (ESF-SI-2023-SKILLS-01-0011)** stands as a concrete embodiment of these goals, empowering young migrant mothers not only to **enter the digital world** but to do so in ways that are **sustainable, healthy, and transformative**—for themselves, their families, and their communities.

4. Health at Work Directive (2021 Update)

The updated directive explicitly includes **mental health risks** and recognizes **digital fatigue** as part of occupational hazards.

- **Why it Matters:** As digital tools dominate workplaces, recognizing burnout, constant connectivity, and online harassment as workplace risks is crucial.
- **Implication for W.E.B. in Tech:** Our project not only trains women for digital jobs but also equips them with the knowledge to **advocate for their rights** in workplaces—demanding healthier digital policies and practices.

Comparative Overview of EU Policy Links

Framework	Focus	Relevance to Digital Wellbeing	Application in W.E.B. in Tech
European Pillar of Social Rights (2017)	Fair working conditions	Protecting mental & physical health in digital work	Embedding healthy ICT practices in training
Digital Education Action Plan (2021–2027)	Inclusive digital learning	Balanced environments, awareness of risks	Digital diaries, wellbeing checklists, reflection circles
EU Gender Equality Strategy (2020–2025)	Closing gender gap	Addressing inequalities in digital participation	Supporting migrant women with ICT + wellbeing tools
Health at Work Directive (2021 update)	Workplace health & safety	Recognition of digital fatigue as occupational risk	Empowering women to demand healthier workplaces

By aligning the **W.E.B. in Tech Project** with these EU frameworks, we ensure that the outcomes are not only beneficial at the local or organizational level but also contribute to **Europe-wide goals**. This alignment strengthens the sustainability of the project, increases opportunities for policy advocacy, and ensures that women with migrant backgrounds can both **access** and **shape** Europe's digital future in healthier, more equitable ways.

11. Recommendations

For Individuals

- Set digital boundaries (no devices at meals/bedtime).
- Use productivity apps to reduce stress.
- Pair digital training with wellbeing practices (stretching, meditation).

For NGOs

- Establish digital curfews.
- Offer regular wellbeing training.
- Monitor digital harassment with clear reporting mechanisms.

For Policymakers

- Invest in digital wellbeing research.
- Promote inclusive access to ICT tools for migrant women.
- Include wellbeing indicators in digital literacy programs.

12. Conclusion

Digital wellbeing is a **foundation of empowerment** in the digital age. For women and mothers with migrant backgrounds, it bridges the gap between opportunity and overload. The *W.E.B. in Tech Project (ESF-SI-2023-SKILLS-01-0011)* offers a unique model: not only teaching ICT, but also embedding practices of balance, awareness, and resilience.

Ultimately, the goal is to ensure that technology becomes a **tool for social innovation and inclusion**, not a source of stress or exclusion.

Key Message:

People don't just need digital skills—they need digital wellbeing to thrive.