STUDY

Digital skills will be more important

What level of digital competency do people in Germany have? A representative survey carried out on behalf of the Bertelsmann Stiftung shows there's still a considerable need for support – especially among the older Generation.

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In a time of ongoing digitalization, people of all ages have to be able to interact effectively with digital services and applications. Digital sovereignty means more than just knowing how to download an app to your smartphone or doing your banking online. It means being able to correctly assess the consequences of your activities on the web and understanding updates and new technology.

The representative survey “Digitale Kompetenzen im Alter” (Digital Competency in Later Life) carried out by research firm Kantar on behalf of the Bertelsmann Stiftung investigated the question of how confident people in
Germany are when they use the Internet or digital devices such as smartphones. The results show that a lot must still be done to improve digital skill sets among the country’s population.

Overall, 62 percent of the respondents say they are confident or very confident of their ability to use the Internet. When the responses are broken down by age group, however, a different picture emerges: While 79 percent of 14 to 29-year-olds feel confident or very confident, only 41 percent of 60 to 69-year-olds feel the same way. Among people over 70, the figure falls to roughly one-third (36 percent).

Yet digital services and apps have considerable potential to help the older generation. For example, they can assist the elderly in remaining independent and in their own homes longer than might otherwise be possible. The prerequisite, of course, is that older people acquire digital skills and develop them further.

The study Digital souverän? Kompetenzen für ein selbstbestimmtes Leben im Alter (Digitally Sovereign? Skills for Remaining Independent in Later Life) was conducted by the Institute for Innovation and Technology (iit) at service provider VDI/VDE Innovation + Technik GmbH on behalf of the Bertelsmann Stiftung. In addition to a scientific analysis of digital sovereignty, the study provides recommended action plans and selected best practices showcasing potential solutions.
PUBLICATION

Digital souverän?

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