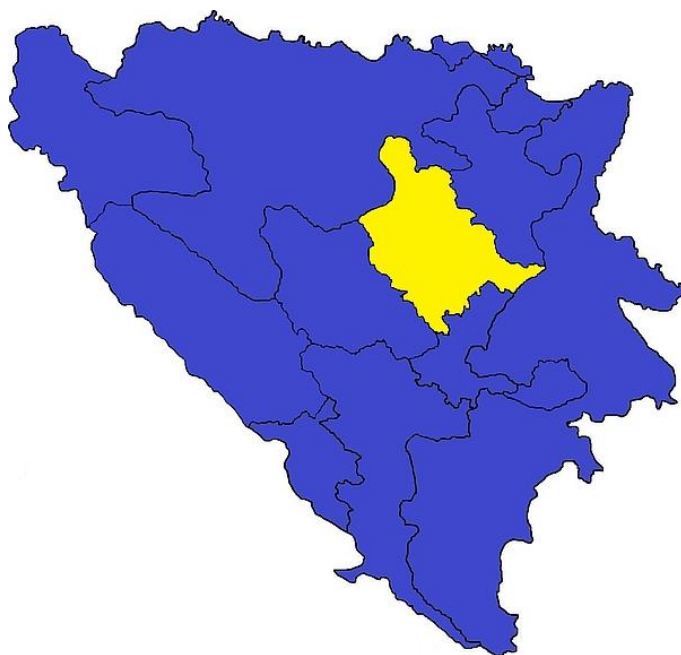


INTEGRATED ACTION PLAN

**TO REDUCE SOCIAL EXCLUSION
BY BRIDGING THE DIGITAL DIVIDE**

Zenica-Doboj Canton, Bosnia and Herzegovina



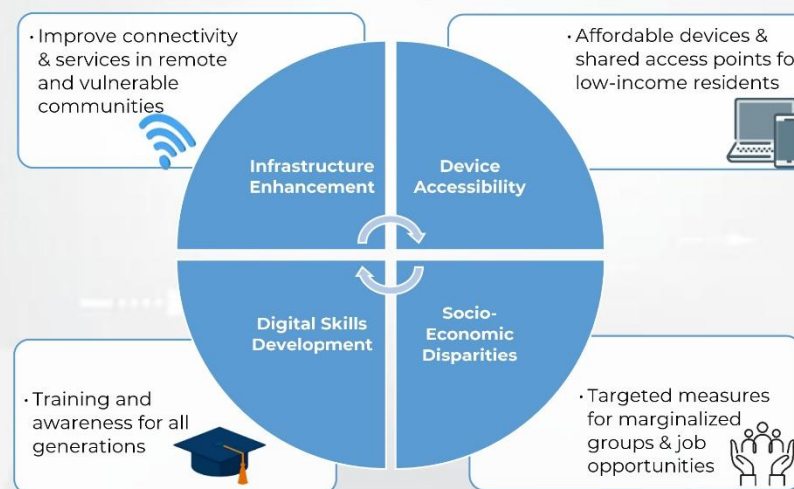
November 2025

Table of Contents

0. IAP summary	2
1. IAP section 1 – Context, Needs and Vision	5
1.1. Details on the overarching theme of the DIGI-INCLUSION APN	5
1.2. Current situation around digital literacy and digital divide	5
1.2.1. National level (Bosnia and Herzegovina)	5
1.2.2. Local level (Zenica / Zenica-Doboj Canton)	6
1.2.3. Data gaps	7
1.2.4. Tackling digital divide	8
1.3. Details on how the IAP and the theme of Digital inclusion links to wider strategy and policy locally and regionally	8
1.3.1. Development Strategy of Zenica-Doboj Canton	8
1.3.2. Annual Report on Strategy Implementation	9
1.4. Details on the specific problem to be addressed at local level around Digital inclusion	10
1.5. Declaration of Digital Rights	12
2. IAP section 2 – Overall Logic and Integrated Approach	14
2.1. Details on the vision to be realised through the IAP	14
2.2. Specific objectives identification and elaboration	15
2.3. Areas of intervention for Digital inclusion	16
2.4. Concept of Integration and aspects of Integration for Digital inclusion	17
2.4.1. Integration Self-Assessment	19
3. IAP section 3 – Action Planning Details	20
3.1. Action Planning Tables	22
3.2. SMART Action Tables	26
3.3. Testing Pilot Action 1: Identification and Analysis of Educational Resources for Digital Skills	37
3.4. Testing Pilot Action 2: Awareness-Raising Campaign on Digital Skills Training in ZDC	38
4. Implementation Framework	39
4.1. Governance	40
4.2. Ongoing Stakeholder Engagement	40
4.3. Costing and Funding Strategy	40
4.4. Risk assessment	41
4.5. Monitoring and Evaluation	41
5. Conclusion	44

0. IAP summary

"Digitally empowered Zenica-Doboj Canton with better digital infrastructure and improved digital literacy of its population in the upcoming 5-year period."



Governance & Policy Alignment



Infrastructure Development



Literacy & Accessibility



Inclusive Stakeholder Engagement

Outcomes/indicators

Higher % of digitally literate citizens

Reduced rural/urban gaps in access

More devices in households

Marginalized groups included in training & employment

Zenica-Doboj Canton faces a growing digital divide, where unequal access to technology, infrastructure, and digital skills risks leaving many citizens behind. The Integrated Action Plan (IAP) responds to this challenge with a coherent, inclusive framework for digital transformation. By aligning local needs with European priorities and the URBACT principles of co-creation, the Plan ensures that the Canton becomes a place where digital opportunities are available to all — regardless of age, income, or place of residence.

Vision: A digitally empowered Canton with improved infrastructure and digital literacy across its population.

Overall Goal: Bridge the digital divide and ensure equitable access to technology and opportunities for all.

Four Pillars of Action

1. **Infrastructure Enhancement** – expanding connectivity and digital services, particularly in rural and vulnerable communities.
2. **Device Accessibility** – providing affordable devices and shared access points for low-income households.
3. **Digital Skills Development** – offering training, learning hubs, and awareness campaigns to build literacy for all generations.
4. **Addressing Socio-Economic Disparities** – targeting support for marginalized groups, including women-led businesses, rural residents, elderly, and unemployed citizens.

The Plan combines:

- Policy Alignment – with Cantonal, national, and EU strategies.
- Infrastructure Investments – in connectivity and shared access.
- Capacity Building – through hubs, trainings, and apprenticeships.
- Inclusive Governance – with municipalities, NGOs, businesses, and citizens engaged in design, delivery, and monitoring.

Governance and Funding:

- Cantonal Commission provides strategic oversight.
- Municipal Implementation Teams coordinate actions locally.
- Implementation & Monitoring Forum (evolving from the URBACT Local Group) ensures stakeholder co-creation and continuous evaluation.
- Funding is diversified across municipal budgets, donor programs, EU instruments, and private sector CSR, with co-financing mechanisms in place.

Timeline 2025–2029

- 2025 – Pilot actions, mapping, awareness campaigns.

- 2026–2027 – Rollout of hubs, public Wi-Fi, and device donation/subsidy schemes.
- 2027 – Launch of digital platform, apprenticeships, and mid-term evaluation.
- 2029 – Final evaluation and sustainability integration into Cantonal policy cycle.

Progress will be tracked through **indicators** such as:

- Number of hotspots installed.
- Number of devices distributed.
- Citizens trained and certified in digital skills.
- Employment outcomes, especially for women and vulnerable groups.

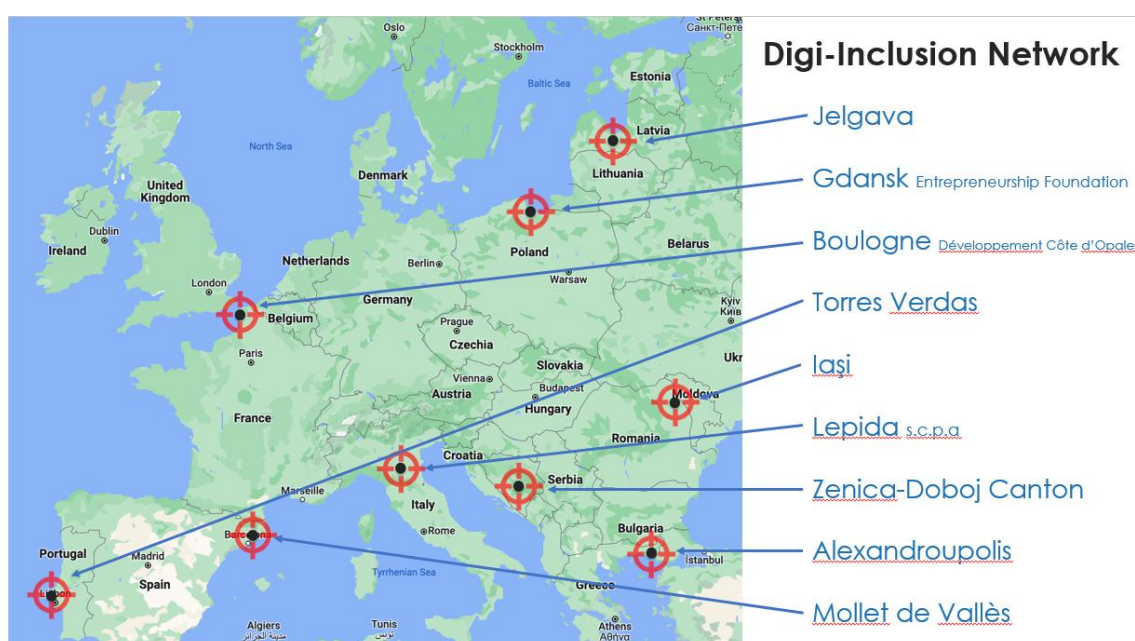
Expected Impact by 2029:

- ✓ Increased digital literacy among citizens.
- ✓ Reduced urban–rural disparities in access and opportunities.
- ✓ Enhanced competitiveness of local businesses.
- ✓ Stronger social cohesion and citizen participation in the digital economy..

1. IAP section 1 – Context, Needs and Vision

1.1. Details on the overarching theme of the DIGI-INCLUSION APN

The Digi-Inclusion Network is consisted of nine project partners (PPs) – five city/municipality partners and four non-city partners, whose locations are illustrated on the map below. There is geographical and cultural diversity to the partnership, it also includes one partner from an IPA (Instrument for Pre-Accession) country. Overall, the network forms a strong partnership, with examples of good practice and thematic knowledge available from various PPs. The PPs are all well motivated and on the whole have a good understanding of the network theme following the network's activation phase.



1.2. Current situation around digital literacy and digital divide

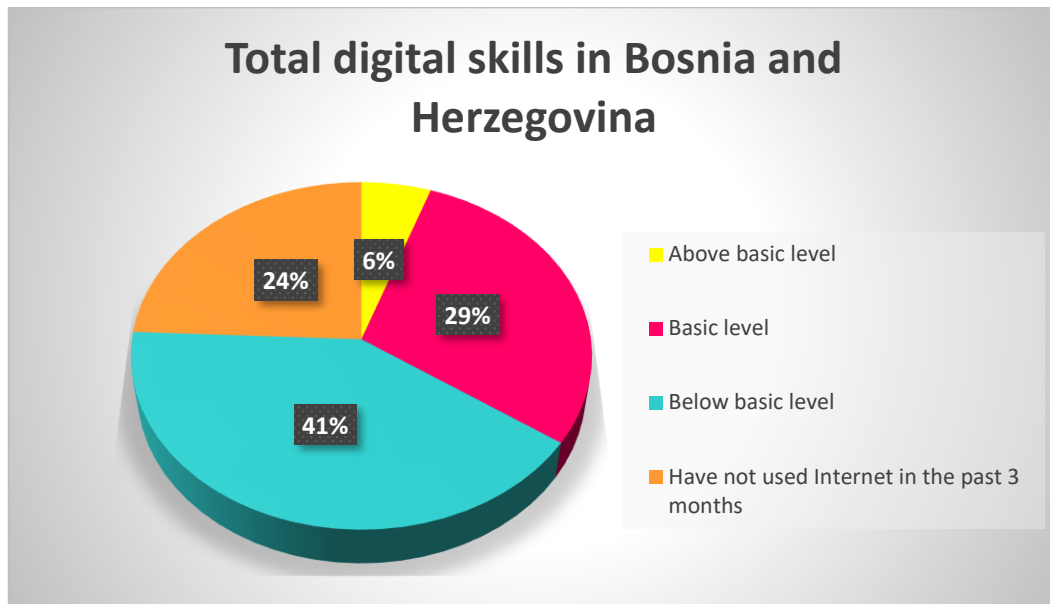
1.2.1. National level (Bosnia and Herzegovina)

5,35% of Bosnia and Herzegovina population has digital skills above the basic level. This suggests that they exceed the core competencies required for digital literacy. 29,29% of the population is at the basic level of digital skills, which indicates that they meet the standard level of competence required for efficient functioning in the digital environment. 41,04% of the population is below the basic level of digital skills, which suggests that they lack some of the basic competencies. 24,32% of the population did not use the Internet in the last three months, which could indicate a lack of access, skills or interest in using digital technologies.

The category "Above Basic Level" represents people who possess all five indicators of digital literacy at a level above basic, while those "At Basic Level"

fulfil all five indicators at basic level (although some may be above basic in some indicators, but not in all).

The data provide an insight into the level of digital literacy of BiH citizens, emphasizing that a significant part of the population may need support to improve their digital skills. Digital literacy is essential for accessing information, services, employment opportunities, and participation in the modern digital world.



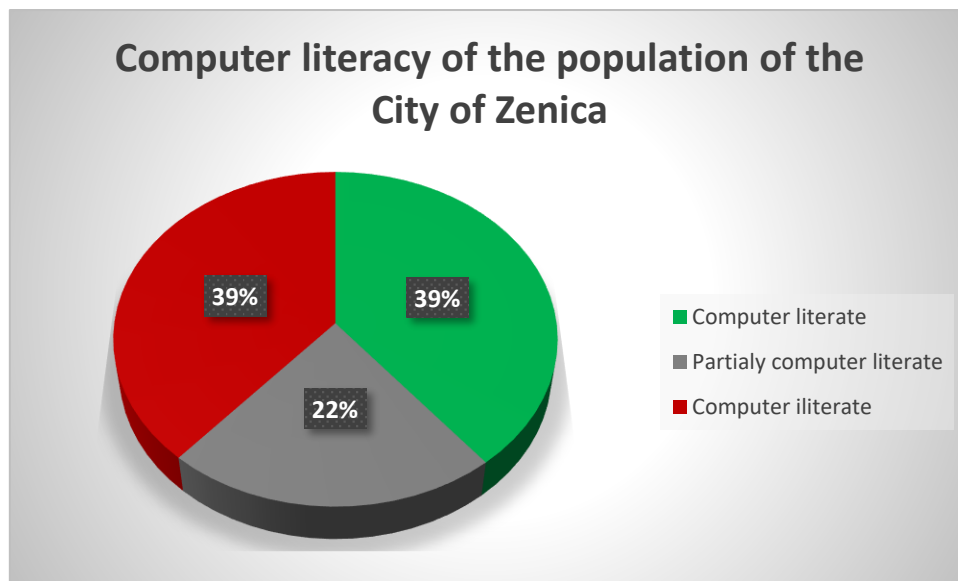
- Above basic level (5,35%) – a small percentage of citizens have skills that exceed the basic level.
- Basic level (29,29%) – just under a third of the population has basic digital skills.
- Below basic level (41,04%) – this is the largest segment of the population, indicating that a large number of people have limited digital skills.
- Have not used the Internet in the last 3 months (24,32%) - almost a quarter of the population has not used the Internet in the last three months.

The data shows that there is a significant digital divide in BiH. Challenges such as lack of infrastructure, education and resources can contribute to this situation. Increasing digital literacy is crucial not only for individual development and access to opportunities, but also for the economic development of the country as a whole. There is a need for investment in education and internet access to enable citizens to improve their digital skills and be more competitive in the labour market.

1.2.2. Local level (Zenica / Zenica-Doboj Canton)

According to the population census data from 2013, 98.950 inhabitants over the age of 10 lived in Zenica. Of these, 38.474 are computer literate, 21.869 partially

computer literate and 37.891 computer illiterate. This is exclusively data that the citizens themselves have declared.



“There were 2,51 million internet users in Bosnia and Herzegovina in January 2022. Bosnia and Herzegovina’s internet penetration rate stood at 77% of the total population at the start of 2022. There were 2,05 million social media users in Bosnia and Herzegovina in January 2022.

The number of social media users in Bosnia and Herzegovina at the start of 2022 was equivalent to 63 % of the total population, but it’s important to note that social media users may not represent unique individuals.

Data published in Meta’s advertising resources indicates that Facebook had 1,45 million users in Bosnia and Herzegovina in early 2022. However, Facebook restricts the use of its platform to people aged 13 so it’s also worth highlighting that 50,4 percent of the “eligible” audience in Bosnia and Herzegovina used Facebook in 2022. Numbers published in Meta’s advertising tools indicate that Instagram had 1,2 million users in Bosnia and Herzegovina in early 2022. This figure suggests that Instagram’s ad reach in Bosnia and Herzegovina was equivalent to 36,9 percent of the total population at the start of the year.”

1.2.3. Data gaps

The population census data was from 2013, while the internet usage statistics were from January 2022. This time gap makes it challenging to draw precise conclusions or trends about the relationship between computer literacy and internet usage. The data from Meta's advertising resources provides insights into the number of Facebook and Instagram users in Bosnia and Herzegovina, but it doesn't cover other social media platforms or online services.

Considering that above mentioned data citizens reported 10 years ago, the plan is to refresh the data in a way to send a query to digital services and internet providers,

telecom operators, banks etc., to obtain new, updated number of users of their services who come from our city/region.

1.2.4. Tackling digital divide

With 38.474 computer literate, 21.869 partially computer literate, Zenica, as a central urban area, can be taken as an example/reference to illustrate that the average situation in the Canton is generally worse, as rural areas face even greater challenges. This pertains to the digital divide situation. We are only halfway to achieving the digital goal.

To effectively address the digital divide in rural areas, it is crucial to include targeted initiatives in the Integrated Action Plan (IAP). This should encompass expanding broadband infrastructure, implementing digital literacy programs, ensuring access to affordable digital devices, establishing community hubs, fostering public-private partnerships, promoting online government services, integrating digital education in schools, conducting awareness campaigns, and maintaining ongoing data collection. These measures will empower rural communities with the skills, access, and resources they need to bridge the digital gap, aligning with your digital goals and aspirations.

Also, the digital divide among various segments of the public is enormous. The impoverished population, elderly individuals, rural residents, people with disabilities, and even women as a population, and women entrepreneurs as a subgroup, have failed to keep pace with the digitization of society and the economy. This is a significant challenge, as digitalization in Bosnia and Herzegovina is not progressing at the rate it should to keep up with trends in Europe.

1.3. Details on how the IAP and the theme of Digital inclusion links to wider strategy and policy locally and regionally

Existing local plans are grounded in the “Development Strategy of Zenica-Doboj Canton 2021-2027” (Official Gazette of ZDC, 3/21). Besides the Development Strategy of Zenica-Doboj Canton 2021-2027, majority of local communities (cities/municipalities of Zenica-Doboj Canton) possess their own local strategic documents - strategies of local development. The local communities that do not have their own strategic documents rely on and implement strategic documents of Zenica-Doboj Canton.

1.3.1. Development Strategy of Zenica-Doboj Canton

The development of the strategy of the City of Zenica is in progress includes medium-term action plans which are expected to ensure full integration of planned interventions within strategic city management (e.g. Action Plan for

Digitalization of Public Administration and Public Services, Digitalization and Improvement of the Parking System). Some of the already implemented and on-going solutions include:

- ✓ Web presentation of active waiting system (which can be seen at the city hall counter)
- ✓ Wi-Fi zones/hotspots
- ✓ Bike-sharing system
- ✓ Solar trees and solar benches
- ✓ Smart parking system
- ✓ Planned digital tourism projects (apps for trail mapping, cultural heritage and monuments)

The Zenica-Doboj Canton has been a leader in aligning its local strategies with broader national and international frameworks, particularly those focused on digital inclusion, sustainability, and socio-economic development. The key frameworks and initiatives include the following:

- Local Economic Development Strategy 2012–2022 – emphasized economic growth, environmental sustainability, and social inclusion, integrating participatory planning and EU alignment.
- Implementation of the B&H Development Strategy and Social Inclusion Strategy – promoted coordination between government levels and digital solutions for governance and service delivery.
- SME Development Strategy 2021–2027 – highlights digital transformation as key for competitiveness and innovation in the private sector, involving collaboration with local authorities, enterprises, and international partners.

Existing digital initiatives align well with these strategic frameworks and they not only reflect the city's commitment to integrating digital tools into daily life but also demonstrate alignment with broader regional and national strategies.

While the Development Strategy of Zenica-Doboj Canton emphasizes the digitalization of public services through smart city initiatives, there is a need to equally prioritize digital inclusion, particularly for marginalized and underserved groups. The Integrated Action Plan addresses this gap through:

- Community digital learning hubs
- Digital skills training for the elderly and people with disabilities
- Support for women and women entrepreneurs in rural areas

To summarize, Zenica-Doboj canton demonstrated a proactive approach to embedding digital inclusion in its strategic plans, and also aligning it to EU Digital Agenda. The IAP complements this by tackling the digital divide through targeted actions—digital literacy programs, affordable access to devices, and inclusive public services—ensuring equal opportunities in the digital economy.

1.3.2. Annual Report on Strategy Implementation

The Zenica-Doboj Canton prepares an Annual Report on the Implementation of the ZDC Development Strategy every year. This report analyses the current state

and trends of development in the Zenica-Doboj Canton in the areas of economic and social development, environmental protection, energy efficiency, and the development of public infrastructure. Additionally, it provides a detailed analysis and presentation of the degree of strategy implementation, institutional capacities, and specific challenges that may have arisen in the implementation of the Strategy and development management.

During the planned implementation period of the Development Strategy (in 2026), as well as in the penultimate year, an evaluation will be conducted. The on-going evaluation aims to assess the degree of implementation of strategic documents, as well as the effectiveness and efficiency of planned measures and results in relation to set goals and expectations. It also aims to summarize outcomes and provide input for strategic documents for the next planning cycle. Given the significant interconnectedness of the DIGI-INCLUSION network's Integrated Action Plan (IAP), the IAP could serve as an input for the ZDC Development Strategy for the next planning cycle, for the period 2028-2034.

1.4. Details on the specific problem to be addressed at local level around Digital inclusion

In Zenica-Doboj Canton several local problems and challenges are encountered in relation to the network challenge, particularly concerning the enhancement of digital integration and citizen engagement. The precise local challenge to be addressed concerning the DIGI-INCLUSION network of the URBACT programme lies in understanding and mitigating the impact of digital exclusion on the local population. This involves identifying specific barriers to digital inclusion that are unique for Zenica-Doboj Canton and developing tailored responses to address them effectively.

In accordance with the URBACT stakeholder engagement methodology, a comprehensive list of stakeholders has been identified and analysed using the stakeholder ecosystem map. This map categorizes stakeholders into four main categories: public sector, NGO sector (civil society), business sector and education sector (academia/research).

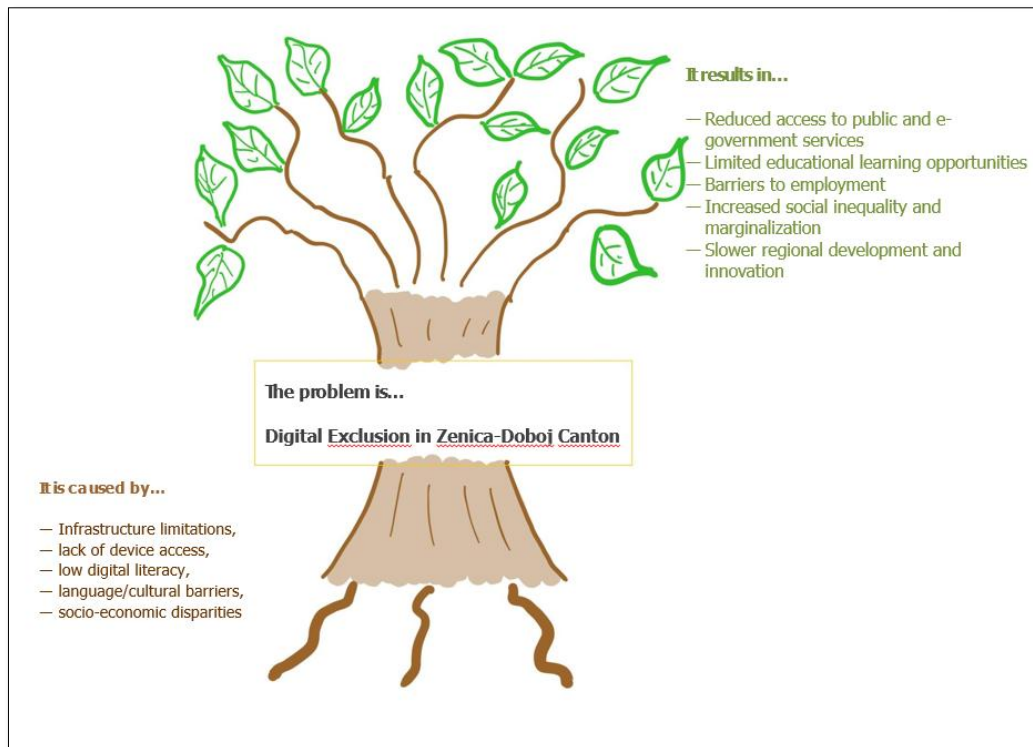
Within the public sector category, stakeholders are mainly representatives of municipalities including one local culture/education centre managed by a municipality. The business sector category includes private businesses from the areas of production, trade, consulting, and business support. Civil society stakeholders consist of non-governmental organizations with work scope of local activism, ecology, and women's associations. Lastly, education sector stakeholders involve university and secondary school. Each category represents a distinct set of actors with unique roles and interests, essential for understanding and engaging in collaborative efforts to achieve digital inclusion in Zenica-Doboj Canton. Key problems that are identified for the preparation of Integrated Action Plan include the following:

1. **Infrastructure limitations** (availability and quality of internet connectivity and digital infrastructure in different areas of the Canton, particularly in rural or socially vulnerable communities) - In many municipalities across ZDC, especially rural ones, stable internet connections are either weak or entirely absent. Households in such areas often rely on outdated mobile data networks or shared access points, which are insufficient for digital learning, job searching, or accessing e-government services. Public institutions such as schools and health centres also suffer from inconsistent connectivity, limiting the effectiveness of any digital transformation effort. The lack of broadband expansion is compounded by limited investment incentives for telecom providers.
2. **Access to devices and technology** (affordability and accessibility of digital devices such as computers, smartphones, and tablets for residents, especially those from low-income backgrounds or marginalized groups), - A significant portion of the population, particularly low-income households, do not own personal digital devices such as laptops or tablets. In some rural areas, device access is limited to one shared mobile phone per household, often without modern functionality. This hinders access to online education, remote work, and digital healthcare. Schools and public libraries often lack enough equipment to meet demand, and there are currently no active large-scale donation or subsidy programs to close this gap.
3. **Digital skills and literacy** (level of digital skills and literacy among the population, including challenges related to education, training, and awareness about digital technologies and online services) - Despite growing reliance on digital tools, basic digital literacy is lacking among many segments of the population, especially elderly citizens, women in rural areas, and low-income youth. The lack of structured digital skills training—either in schools, job centres, or community programs—means many people are unfamiliar with online navigation, document creation, or using digital platforms for job applications or accessing services. In some cases, fear or mistrust of digital tools further prevents adoption.
4. **Language and cultural barriers** (language or cultural barriers that may prevent digital inclusion efforts, such as the availability of support in local languages or services tailored to specific cultural needs) - Some digital platforms and public service interfaces are only available in one language or use overly technical language that is difficult for the average user to understand. This creates accessibility issues, particularly for ethnic minorities and older adults. In addition, digital literacy efforts rarely account for local cultural contexts, which can limit engagement and reduce the effectiveness of outreach campaigns. There is also a lack of inclusive training materials tailored for people with different learning needs or disabilities.

5. **Socio-economic disparities** (socio-economic factors that intersect with digital exclusion, including issues related to employment opportunities, income levels, and access to essential public services like healthcare and education) - Economic inequality in ZDC intersects directly with digital exclusion. Marginalized groups such as the unemployed, people with disabilities, Roma communities, and single-parent households are less likely to access digital services, education, or employment opportunities. They also often lack the resources or time to participate in digital training or purchase devices. Without targeted interventions, digital transformation risks widening the social divide rather than closing it.

By addressing these challenges, the DIGI-INCLUSION network can help Zenica-Doboj Canton to develop localized strategies and initiatives to bridge the digital divide and ensure that all residents have equal opportunities to participate in the digital world.

PROBLEM TREE – ZENICA – DOBOJ CANTON ULG GROUP



1.5. Declaration of Digital Rights

The Digi-Inclusion Declaration on Digital Rights, adopted by European cities and regions within the URBACT IV Programme, emphasizes digital transformation that leaves no one behind, ensuring access, inclusion, safety, and empowerment in the digital sphere. As a signatory through the involvement of the Zenica-Doboj Canton, this Declaration provides both a framework and a political mandate for advancing digital inclusion locally.

Digital inequalities in ZDC mirror those identified in the Declaration: disparities in access to digital infrastructure, skills gaps among vulnerable groups, and limited opportunities for meaningful participation in the digital economy. Therefore, localizing the Declaration's principles can serve as a foundation for the IAP and guide systemic change.

In Zenica-Doboj Canton, the Digi-Inclusion Declaration will be used as a guiding framework to shape local policies and initiatives in the field of digital inclusion. At the heart of this effort lies the need to close the digital divide. This means that municipal and cantonal authorities will focus on expanding digital infrastructure, especially in rural and underserved areas, while ensuring that marginalized groups such as persons with disabilities, the elderly, and residents of remote communities are not excluded from the benefits of digital transformation.

DECLARATION OF DIGITAL RIGHTS IN LOCAL LANGUAGE

Digitalna inkluzija u evropskim zajednicama:
Deklaracija partnera Digi-Inclusion o digitalnim pravima

Mi, gradonačelnici i službeni predstavnici evropskih gradova, regija i institucija koji učestvuju u mreži Digi-Inclusion u okviru URBACT IV Programa, zajedno smo kreirali ovu deklaraciju i međusobno se obavezujemo na sljedeće:

Inspirisani smo...

- Vrijednost koju Evropska unija pridaje postizanju digitalnih tranzicija koje su provedene i donose koristi svim građanima, ne ostavljajući nikoga iza sebe
- Evropskom deklaracijom o digitalnim pravima i principima, te kako ona stavlja ljude u središte digitalne transformacije
- Idejom sata digitalnih prava koja teži solidarnosti i inkluziji, slobodi labora, učestvovanju u digitalnom javnom prostoru, digitalnoj sigurnosti i zaštiti, te osnaživanju građana

Zalaganjem na nivou EU za digitalnu transformaciju koja nikoga ne ostavlja iza i ciljem da ona koristi svima, postigne nametnuto između spolova i posebno uključujući osobe, ljude koji žive u ruralnim područjima, osobe s invaliditetom ili marginalizovane, ranjive ili obespravljene pojedince i one koji djeluju u njihovo ime, kao i promocijom kulturne i jezičke raznolikosti.

Prepoznajemo da...

1. Digitalni jaz postaje u našim teritorijama i društvima i da je to društveni i ekonomski problem, a ne samo tehnički;
2. Ovakav karaktera nejednakosti u pristupu digitalnim tehnologijama, u vještinama koje su ključne za korištenje te tehnologije i u sposobnosti da se iskoriste sve prednosti digitalnih tranzicija u našem društvu;
3. Digitalna inkluzija podrazumijeva premošćivanje ovog jaza i više je od samo online tranzicija i bili online potrošača;
4. Potpuna digitalna inkluzija znači sudjelovanje u društvu putem digitalnog prostora - biti siguran u interakciju, radu, igri, učenju, stvaranju, socijalizaciji, potrošnji i sudjelovanju u našim zajednicama te u demokratskim procesima i diskursu.

Vjerujemo da...

Djeljenjem naših iskustava možemo bolje razumjeti naše individualne kontekste. Kroz proces kritičkog promišljanja i naprednog stvaranja možemo iskoristi kako se digitalna inkluzija može bolje integrirati i kao međusektorska tema u svim planiranjima i aktivnostima digitalne transformacije.

Definiramo da uspješne politike digitalne inkluzije trebaju biti usmjerene na:

- Osiguravanje da svi mogu pristupiti digitalnom svijetu i da digitalni svijet nudi usluge koje su im potrebne;
- Omogućavanje građanima da steknu i održavaju ključne digitalne vještine za sadržajnost i budućnost;
- Pomaganje građanima da steknu digitalni kapital, kako bi mogli najbolje iskoristiti svoje digitalne vještine i pristup, te tako biti osnaženi da izvuču maksimalnu korist iz digitalnog svijeta;
- Pružanje mogućnosti i vještina koje motiviraju građane da se uključe u digitalni svijet;
- Omogućavanje građanima da djeluju sigurno u digitalnom svijetu, uz osješt povjerenja u digitalni javni prostor i svijet u vlastitim sigurnosnim odgovornostima i ograničenjima

Obavezujeemo se...

- Promovirati ključna digitalna prava i principe za sva naša građane;
- Podržati implementaciju Integriranih Akcijskih Planova usmjerenih na omogućavanje digitalne inkluzije u našim teritorijama;
- Olučivati relevantne dionike i aktere civilnog društva kako bismo promovirali ove lokalne politike i podržali njihovo učešće u okvirnim deliratorijima, implementaciji i praćenju tih akcija;
- Promovirati u našim gradovima, regijama, zemljama i cijeloj Evropi unijeti različitosti našeg zajedničkog rada i naučne lekcije, doprinoseći naročito jačanju transnacionalnog rada na digitalnoj inkluziji u malim i srednjim gradovima te ruralnim zajednicama

**Polpisano u lasi (Rumunija)
24. septembar, 2024**

Politički potpisnici

g. Franco Cima,
zamjenik vijećnika za Digitalnu agendu,
urbani i metropolitanski poljoprivredu -
Metropolitanski grad Bologna (Italija).
Vijećnik općine Italija

g. Mirela Dionisio Cadi,
načelnica, Mollet del Valles (Španija)
koju predstavlja g. Ferran Segarra Sánchez,
vijećnik odgovoran za digitalizaciju.

g. Ina Rodriques,
načelnica Torres Vedras (Portugal)
koju predstavlja gđa. Dina Iaurica,
vijećnica lokalne općine, Jaldava

g. Aleksandra Dukiewicz,
gradonačelnica Grada Gdańsk (Poljska)
koju predstavlja g. Jarosław Pawłowski,
tematiki voditelj razvojnog programa
Digitalni grad i pametni grad (Poljska)

g. Denana Čakalović,
rukovodilac Službe za razvoj i tani član
Komisije za evropske integracije (Bosna i Hercegovina)
koju predstavlja g. Sali Alispahić,
stručni savjetnik za međunarodne projekte
u Službi za razvoj

g. Ioannis Zampoukis,
načelnik općine Alexandroupolis (Grčka)
koju predstavlja gđa. Evarhio Valacidou,
zamjenica načelnika za obrazovanje,
cjelovito učenje, brigu za životinje i
klubske prijatelje

g. Laura Rodriguez,
načelnica Torres Vedras (Portugal)
koju predstavlja gđa. Silvia Silva,
rukovodilac Ureda za društveni razvoj

g. Mihai Chitica,
načelnik općine lasi (Rumunija)

g. Frédéric Cuvillier,
načelnik Bouligny sur mer (Francuska),
predsjednik Vijeća dionika Bouligneta CoS
i predsjednik RDC O
koju predstavlja gđa. Lucie Mallard,
podpredsjednik Bouligneta sur mer vijećnik,
nadležna za komunikaciju i digitalnu
strategiju, CoS vijećnik, nadležna za
digitalnu strategiju i inovacije

Another essential dimension is the development of digital skills among citizens. Inspired by the Declaration's emphasis on competencies, Zenica-Doboj canton will commit to promoting training programs that are accessible to all generations, from schoolchildren to adults and seniors. These programs will be designed not only to cover basic digital literacy but also to enable participants to gain practical skills for employment, entrepreneurship, and participation in modern society.

Partnerships with universities, NGOs, and businesses will ensure that the training offer is diverse, inclusive, and adapted to the real needs of the population.

The Declaration also calls for greater citizen participation in digital public life, which will be reflected in ZDC through the expansion of e-governance tools. By developing digital platforms for public consultations, participatory budgeting, and dialogue on policy-making, the Canton will encourage inclusive and democratic engagement. Special emphasis will be placed on enabling women, young people, and underrepresented groups to have their voices heard in shaping local policies. The Digi-Inclusion Declaration commits signatories to bring together stakeholders from across civil society, academia, businesses, and public administration. In ZDC, this will be operationalized through a multi-stakeholder working group on digital inclusion, ensuring that local policies are co-created, monitored, and regularly updated in line with both local needs and European standards.

Finally, ZDC will use the Declaration to strengthen equal opportunities in the digital economy. Local businesses, particularly SMEs and start-ups, will be supported in their digital transformation, while women-led enterprises and social enterprises will receive targeted incentives to ensure that the digital transition fosters equality and innovation. In this way, the Canton will create conditions not only for technological progress but also for social and economic empowerment.

2. IAP section 2 – Overall Logic and Integrated Approach

The Integrated Action Plan (IAP) for the Zenica-Doboj Canton under the DIGI-INCLUSION network is structured around a comprehensive framework that responds to the core challenges of digital exclusion while aligning with broader development strategies. These challenges — including infrastructure gaps, device accessibility, and socio-economic disparities — are fully detailed in Section 1.4. The plan builds on these insights to develop a targeted, multi-dimensional response.

2.1. Details on the vision to be realised through the IAP

Vision for Zenica-Doboj Canton is one of serious digital transformation, where majority of residents, regardless of their age, socio-economic background, or geographic location, have certain level of digital skills and access to the resources necessary to their approach towards the digital age. Over the next five years, we envision the Canton as area where digital literacy is widespread, and access to digital technologies is available for all.



VISION STATEMENT:



“Digitally empowered Zenica-Doboj Canton with better digital infrastructure and improved digital literacy of its population in the upcoming 5-year period”

2.2. Specific objectives identification and elaboration

The Integrated Action Plan of Zenica-Doboj Canton, within the DIGI inclusion network, is to help and streamline the achievement of the vision’s goals over the upcoming five-year period.

Overarching goal encompasses various areas of digital inclusion, aiming to bridge the digital divide and ensure equitable access to digital technologies and opportunities for all residents. By addressing key challenges such as infrastructure limitations, device accessibility, digital skills development and socio-economic disparities, the plan seeks to create a more inclusive and digitally resilient community. Through collaborative efforts and targeted initiatives, the Integrated Action Plan aims to empower individuals and communities to fully participate in the digital economy and society, ultimately fostering greater social inclusion and economic development within Zenica-Doboj Canton.

Four main challenge areas have been defined, and specific objective of each area is elaborated as follows:

Challenge area	Specific objective
Infrastructure Enhancement 	1) To improve internet connectivity, digital infrastructure, and access to digital services in remote and socially vulnerable communities of Zenica-Doboj Canton.
Device Accessibility 	2) To increase affordability of digital devices for low-income residents and enhance accessibility to publicly available digital devices.
Digital Skills Development	3) To increase awareness about digital technologies and online services, and to enhance digital literacy among the population through comprehensive education and training programs focusing on basic digital (and language) skills.



4) To create and implement digital inclusion initiatives that specifically target marginalized groups addressing their socio-economic disparities and job opportunities.

2.3. Areas of intervention for Digital inclusion

The IAP identifies five core intervention areas that align with the strategic and operational goals of bridging the digital divide in Zenica-Doboj Canton. Each area includes specific actions that directly target barriers to digital inclusion and have been co-designed with relevant stakeholders.

Recognizing that digital exclusion compounds other forms of disadvantage, the IAP targets both urban and rural areas with tailored interventions. This multidimensional approach ensures that infrastructure investments are complemented by educational programs, affordable technology initiatives, and job-oriented digital training. By addressing systemic challenges, the IAP envisions a digitally inclusive Canton where all residents have the opportunity to thrive in an increasingly connected world.

The areas of intervention are as follows:

- **Governance and Policy Alignment** - Digital inclusion requires harmonized policy frameworks and governance structures to implement effective strategies. The IAP focuses on aligning Zenica-Doboj Canton's efforts with national policies and EU directives. Integration across municipal and cantonal levels ensures streamlined execution of interventions while promoting transparency and accountability. By embedding digital inclusion goals into local strategic plans, such as the "Development Strategy of Zenica-Doboj Canton 2021-2027," the plan strengthens institutional capacities for sustainable digital transformation.
- **Infrastructure Development** - Limited access to broadband and digital infrastructure remains a critical barrier, especially in rural and socially vulnerable areas. Expanding internet connectivity through targeted investments and leveraging public-private partnerships is a central strategy. The plan proposes the establishment of digital community centres and Wi-Fi hotspots, as well as the development of localized networks to connect underserved communities. By bridging infrastructural gaps, this intervention

ensures foundational access to digital platforms, facilitating further initiatives in education and economic participation.

- **Promotion of Digital Literacy and Accessibility** - Building digital skills and ensuring access to affordable devices are key pillars of this plan. Structured education and training programs target marginalized groups, including women, the elderly, and those with disabilities, using community-based and mobile initiatives. The IAP also includes mechanisms for providing affordable or donated digital devices through collaborations with tech companies and government subsidies. These measures enable citizens to actively engage in the digital society, improve their employability, and access online services.
- **Inclusive Stakeholder Engagement** – Effective digital inclusion necessitates the participation of diverse stakeholders. The IAP emphasizes the inclusion of NGOs, academia, private enterprises, and underserved communities in co-designing solutions. Using the URBACT methodology, working groups will ensure that perspectives from all demographic and economic backgrounds are incorporated into decision-making. This inclusive process builds trust, fosters community ownership, and strengthens the co-creation of digital opportunities.
- **Addressing Socio-Economic Disparities** – Socio-economic barriers such as poverty and unemployment exacerbate digital exclusion. Tailored initiatives aim to connect disadvantaged groups with employment opportunities through digital apprenticeships and job-readiness training. These efforts prioritize accessibility and inclusivity, offering practical and adaptive solutions to overcome systemic barriers.

2.4. Concept of Integration and aspects of Integration for Digital inclusion

The concept of integration in this IAP refers to practical collaboration between sectors, governance levels, and local actors to deliver coherent, inclusive digital inclusion efforts. Rather than operating in silos, municipalities, schools, NGOs, telecom companies, and social care institutions are brought together in specific actions—such as the establishment of community digital hubs and device donation schemes—that cross institutional and sectoral boundaries.

Integration in urban planning represents a collaborative approach aligning sectors, policies, and stakeholders toward shared objectives. In digital inclusion, it focuses on creating synergy between public, private, and civic actors to reduce the digital divide through coordinated policies, improved infrastructure, active stakeholder engagement, and measures addressing socio-economic disparities. Zenica-Doboj Canton has advanced digital integration through initiatives such as the Action Plan for Digitalization, smart parking, and e-services. Yet, rural areas remain disadvantaged due to weak connectivity and limited access to affordable

devices. Digital literacy gaps persist, especially among the elderly, rural residents, and low-income groups, highlighting the need for stronger policy alignment with the EU Digital Agenda and national frameworks.

Zenica-Doboj Canton has advanced digital integration through initiatives such as the Action Plan for Digitalization, smart parking, and e-services. Yet, rural areas remain disadvantaged due to weak connectivity and limited access to affordable devices. Persistent digital literacy gaps—especially among elderly, rural, and low-income groups—highlight the need for stronger policy alignment with the EU Digital Agenda and national frameworks.

The IAP represents a systematic and holistic approach to bridging the Canton's digital divide. Anchored in the principles of integration, it combines governance, infrastructure development, and capacity-building initiatives while promoting inclusive participation across public, private, and civil society sectors. It harmonizes resources, stakeholders, and policies to address both immediate deficits and long-term systemic barriers. Within this IAP, two types of integration are applied:

- **Horizontal integration:** cooperation across sectors — for example, municipalities, schools, and community organizations jointly implement digital hubs, while NGOs and suppliers support device access schemes..
- **Vertical integration:** alignment of local actions with cantonal, national, and EU-level strategies. The IAP reflects the priorities of the ZDC Development Strategy 2021–2027 and EU Digital Agenda, ensuring inclusion in future planning cycles (2028–2034)

The aspects of integration which are aligned with the requirements of the area of Zenica-Doboj Canton in relation to digital inclusion are as follows:

Governance and policy alignment

The IAP emphasizes unified governance and cohesive policy frameworks to ensure consistency across initiatives. Currently, digital efforts vary between municipalities, with rural zones lagging behind. The plan promotes harmonized municipal–cantonal coordination and alignment with national and EU policies, supported by capacity-building for local governments.

Infrastructure development

As infrastructure is the foundation of digital inclusion, the IAP identifies major gaps in broadband coverage, especially in rural and vulnerable communities. It proposes investments in broadband and public Wi-Fi hotspots, supported by partnerships with telecom providers and public–private agreements. Community-operated networks in remote areas will ensure sustainability and local ownership.

Promotion of digital literacy and accessibility

Access alone does not ensure participation. With 41% of residents below basic digital competency, the IAP introduces training programs for marginalized groups—elderly people, persons with disabilities, and rural residents. Community digital learning hubs, mobile workshops, and e-learning modules will offer free,

inclusive education. Partnerships with tech companies and subsidy programs will improve access to affordable digital devices.

Inclusive stakeholder engagement

The IAP ensures broad stakeholder involvement across government, private sector, NGOs, and communities. Using the URBACT stakeholder mapping methodology, regular forums, workshops, and working groups will sustain collaboration and representation, especially of rural and vulnerable groups. This participatory approach promotes transparency, shared responsibility, and solutions rooted in real local needs.

2.4.1. Integration Self-Assessment

To assess the degree of integration achieved in this IAP, a self-assessment was conducted using the URBACT framework. The results confirm that integration is a strength of the DIGI-INCLUSION plan, though some areas require ongoing attention.

- Horizontal integration: Actions cut across policy fields such as ICT, education, labour market inclusion, and social welfare. This dimension is well developed.
- Vertical integration: Coordination between the Canton and its municipalities is established through the Steering Committee and municipal teams. However, sustained dialogue with national authorities remains an area for further improvement.
- Territorial integration: The plan addresses both urban centres (e.g., Zenica, Zavidovići) and rural/mountainous areas where connectivity is weakest. This balance ensures that territorial disparities are reduced.
- Stakeholder integration: The continuation of the URBACT Local Group as an Implementation Forum ensures that public, private, and civil society actors remain engaged. Inclusion of marginalized groups (elderly, Roma, low-income households) is a priority, though continuous outreach will be needed.
- Financial integration: The combination of public budgets, donor support, and private sector contributions strengthens financial sustainability, though long-term commitments from municipalities will need to be secured.

This self-assessment confirms that the IAP demonstrates a high degree of integration, but it also highlights the importance of continuous capacity building, political support, and funding diversification to ensure sustainability beyond the initial implementation period.

SELF-ASSESSMENT SHEET FOR ZENICA – DOBOJ CANTON IAP

Which Digi-Inclusion Aspects >>> do your IAP actions address?	#1 - Resources	#2 - Skills	#3 - Positive Perceptions	#4 - Confidence in System	#5 - Affordability + Availability	#6 - Ease of Use	#7 - Added Value	#8 - Safety + Security	Insights & Data
Action title									
Analysis and assessment of the digital infrastructure (state of the art) in Zenica-Doboj Canton (ZDC)				Partly		Yes		Yes	
Setting-up of community digital centres equipped with computers and internet access	Yes	Partly	Yes					Yes	
Establishment and expansion of number of Wi-Fi Hotspot access points in the premises of local communities (e.g. on bus stops)	Yes		Partly					Partly	
Establishment and expansion of internet networks in remote and underserved areas of ZDC	Yes			Partly	Yes			Partly	
Identification of the needs for digital devices of low-income residents in ZDC	Partly		Yes					Yes	
Collection and distribution of used digital devices (organization of donation programs /activities)	Yes		Yes					Yes	
Program of support / subsidy measures for procurement of digital devices	Yes		Yes	Yes				Yes	
Analysis and report on increase of affordability				Partly		Yes		Yes	
Identification and analysis of the availability and accessibility of educational resources and training programs aimed at improving digital skills and literacy among residents		Partly				Yes		Yes	
Awareness-raising campaign on education and training programs for digital skills		Partly	Yes			Yes		Yes	
Establishment of Community Digital Learning Hubs	Yes							Yes	
Development and realization of digital skills improvement trainings	Yes							Yes	
Creation of Online Self-Paced Learning Platform	Yes							Yes	
Investigation of relationship between digital exclusion and employment opportunities in ZDC			Yes			Yes		Yes	
Awareness-raising campaign on digital inclusion initiatives for job opportunities		Partly	Yes			Yes		Yes	
Development of Job Readiness training programs that address identified needs and incorporate accessible teaching methods		Partly				Yes			
Implementation of Job Readiness training programs	Yes							Yes	
Development and implementation of digital apprenticeship programs that provide marginalized individuals with on-the-job training in digital skills	Yes							Yes	

3. IAP section 3 – Action Planning Details

By connecting high-level strategic priorities to actionable steps, this chapter provides clarity and coherence to the planned interventions, ensuring a focused and systematic approach to addressing the digital inclusion challenges faced by Zenica-Doboj Canton.

This chapter's significance lies in its ability to bridge the gap between broad vision statements and the tangible actions required for implementation. It contextualizes the subsequent "Action Planning Tables" by laying out the rationale behind the selection and prioritization of actions. These actions are carefully aligned with the identified needs and opportunities, including infrastructure development, accessibility enhancements, digital literacy improvement, and socio-economic inclusion.

Furthermore, the "Action Planning Details" section underscores the participatory approach adopted throughout the planning process. By involving a wide range of stakeholders (government agencies, local NGOs, educational institutions, and private sector partners) the chapter ensures that the action plan reflects diverse perspectives and expertise. This inclusive approach not only enhances the

relevance and feasibility of the proposed actions but also fosters ownership among stakeholders, a key factor for successful implementation.

A major focus of this chapter is on providing a structured framework for the actions detailed in the tables. Each proposed action is described in terms of its expected outputs, required resources, lead implementing agencies, supporting partners, and timelines. The inclusion of measurable indicators within the tables allows for effective monitoring and evaluation, ensuring accountability and progress tracking as the IAP unfolds.

The "Action Planning Tables," presented in the following section, serve as the operational core of the IAP. They translate strategic goals into detailed tasks, providing a clear roadmap for implementation. Each table delineates the specific actions, anticipated results, responsible entities, and collaboration mechanisms necessary to address the digital divide and empower communities within the Canton. This comprehensive and methodical structure highlights the interconnectedness of all initiatives and demonstrates how each action contributes to the broader vision of creating a digitally inclusive Zenica-Doboj Canton.

Ultimately, this chapter and the accompanying tables form a cohesive and actionable blueprint that guides stakeholders from planning to execution, ensuring that the IAP's objectives are met with precision, efficiency, and sustainability.

3.1. Action Planning Tables

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE: 1. To improve internet connectivity, digital infrastructure, and access to digital services in remote and socially vulnerable communities of Zenica-Doboj Canton				
ACTION	Outputs	Lead Agency	Key partners	Timescale
Analysis and assessment of the digital infrastructure (state of the art) in Zenica-Doboj Canton (ZDC)	Report on digital infrastructure identifying at least 5 key infrastructural gaps and priority areas for improvement	- Cities /municipalities of ZDC	- Local public companies and development agencies - Local NGOs and associations	Approx. 2025-2026
Setting-up of community digital centres equipped with computers and internet access	Establishment of at least 1 digital centre serving a minimum of 100 users per centre annually	- Cities /municipalities of ZDC	- Local public companies and development agencies - Local NGOs and associations - Community centres, schools	Approx. 2026-2028
Establishment and expansion of number of Wi-Fi Hotspot access points in the premises of local communities (e.g. on bus stops)	Installation of minimum 5 Wi-Fi Hotspots with a target of serving at least 3.000 unique users annually	- Cities /municipalities of ZDC	- Local public companies and development agencies	Approx. 2026-2028
Establishment and expansion of internet networks in remote and underserved areas of ZDC	Installation of new community-operated internet networks covering at least 2 remote areas, ensuring connectivity for at least 1.000 residents	- Cities /municipalities of ZDC	- Local public companies and development agencies - Telecom companies	Approx. 2027-2029

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE: 2. To increase affordability of digital devices for low-income residents and enhance accessibility to publicly available digital devices

ACTION	Outputs	Lead Agency	Key partners	Timescale
Identification of the needs for digital devices of low-income residents in ZDC	1 needs assessment report identifying affordability barriers and solutions based on data from at least 100 low-income households	- Cities /municipalities of ZDC	- Social care providers - Local development agencies	Approx. 2026-2027
Collection and distribution of used digital devices (organization of donation programs /activities)	Reduction of electronic waste through at least 1 yearly collection campaign	- Local NGOs and associations	- Social care providers - Local community leaders - Schools	Approx. 2025-2028
Program of support / subsidy measures for procurement of digital devices	Creating at least 2 digital device subsidy programs enabling digital devices to be procured for low-income households	- Cities /municipalities of ZDC	- Donor institutions - Local businesses and corporations - Social care providers and community representatives	Approx. 2026-2028
Analysis and report on increasement of affordability	Report measuring affordability improvements, including feedback from at least 50% of recipients of subsidies or donations	- Cities /municipalities of ZDC	- Social care providers - Local development agencies, NGOs and associations	Approx. 2027-2029

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE: 3. To increase awareness about digital technologies and online services, and to enhance digital literacy among the population through comprehensive education and training programs focusing on basic digital (and language) skills

ACTION	Outputs	Lead Agency	Key partners	Timescale
Identification and analysis of the availability and accessibility of educational resources and training programs aimed at improving digital skills and literacy among residents	Gap analysis report identifying at least 5 underserved areas requiring digital education resources	- Cities /municipalities of ZDC	- NGOs and community organizations focused on education and digital inclusion - Relevant ministries of ZDC	Approx. 2025 as Pilot Action
Awareness-raising campaign on education and training programs for digital skills	Campaign reaching at least 3.000 residents through various media platforms, with an engagement rate of at least 20%	- Cities /municipalities of ZDC	- Local media, development agencies and NGOs - Schools	Approx. 2025 as Pilot Action
Establishment of Community Digital Learning Hubs	Creation of at least 2 digital hubs supporting the improvement of digital literacy and providing at least 5 training sessions to at least 250 individuals annually	- Cities /municipalities of ZDC	- Local libraries and community centres - Volunteer organizations - Public, private and international support sectors	Approx. 2026-2028
Development and realization of digital skills improvement trainings	Enhanced digital literacy improving ability to utilize digital tools and platforms via training for at least 100 participants annually	- Cities /municipalities of ZDC	- Educational institutions - NGOs active in the education sector	Approx. 2026-2027
Creation of Online Self-Paced Learning Platform	Development of an online learning platform offering at least 5 free courses for at least 100 users per year	- Cities /municipalities of ZDC	- Educational institutions - IT companies and web development firms - NGOs of the education sector	Approx. 2027-2029

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE: 4. To create and implement digital inclusion initiatives that specifically target marginalized groups addressing their socio-economic disparities and job opportunities.

ACTION	Outputs	Lead Agency	Key partners	Timescale
Investigation of relationship between digital exclusion and employment opportunities in ZDC	Making of at least 1 research report outlining the barriers for at least 100 marginalized individuals with actionable recommendations.	- Cities /municipalities of ZDC	- Local employment bureaus, development agencies and NGOs	Approx. 2024-2025
Awareness-raising campaign on digital inclusion initiatives for job opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Increased awareness among marginalized groups via at least 2 awareness campaigns per year - Social engagement via at least 2 annual community events and workshops 	- Cities /municipalities of ZDC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Local media, development agencies and NGOs - Local employment bureaus 	Approx. 2025-2026
Development of Job Readiness training programs that address identified needs and incorporate accessible teaching methods	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - At least 4 modular content programs created to build job readiness digital skills - At least 5 signed partnership agreements with local businesses to provide internships and create opportunities for new jobs 	- Cities /municipalities of ZDC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Local employment bureaus - Local businesses and employers - Educational institutions and community centres 	Approx. 2025-2027
Implementation of Job Readiness training programs	At least 100 users trained/involved in at least 4 Job readiness training programs	- Cities /municipalities of ZDC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Local employment bureaus - Local businesses and employers - Educational institutions and 	Approx. 2026-2028

			community centres	
Development and implementation of digital apprenticeship programs that provide marginalized individuals with on-the-job training in digital skills	Enrolment of at least 100 participants in apprenticeship programs with at least 25% job retention rate	- Cities /municipalities of ZDC	- Local employment bureaus - Local businesses and employers - Educational institutions and community centres	Approx. 2025-2027

3.2. SMART Action Tables

ACTION Title: Analysis and assessment of the digital infrastructure (state of the art) in Zenica-Dobo Canton (ZDC)

ACTION Owner: Cities /municipalities of ZDC*

Short Description:	A comprehensive analysis of the existing digital infrastructure in ZDC's municipalities will be conducted to identify key infrastructural gaps and propose priority areas for improvement. The assessment will result in detailed reports, including interactive maps and input from local stakeholders.	Stakeholders:	Lead Agency: Municipal administration of ZDC (IT departments/coordinators and social department coordinators)
		Finance & Resources:	Funding required for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Contracting technical experts for conducting surveys, questionnaires, stakeholder meetings and reporting Potential funding sources: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Municipal budgets ✓ External donors Total Projection: €7.500 – €12.500

		Action Readiness:	The action is well-defined and technically feasible. Missing points are finalization of budget allocation and confirmation of participating experts.
Links to Objectives:	SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE: 1. To improve internet connectivity, digital infrastructure, and access to digital services in remote and socially vulnerable communities of Zenica-Doboj Canton	Main Risks:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⇒ Lack of engagement from key municipalities ⇒ Limited availability of up-to-date or accurate digital infrastructure data ⇒ Insufficient funding ⇒ Low response rate from surveys/questionnaires

*All municipalities of ZDC are invited to realise this type of action

Specific Tasks needed to complete this ACTION:

Task	Dates	Outputs	Related Activities	Problems / Concerns
Task 1 - Data collection Conduct surveys, interviews. Collect data on existing digital infrastructure, coverage, performance, and gaps.	Start: December 2025 End: January 2026	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Completed survey forms/questionnaires (min. 20) ✓ Preliminary data report on infrastructure status 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Coordination with municipalities to nominate focal points ➤ Preparation of survey tools ➤ Outreach to telecom providers for data access 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⇒ Need for harmonized data collection tools ⇒ Accessibility issues in remote or marginalized communities ⇒ Risk of receiving inaccurate data from telecom operators
Task 2 - Stakeholder mapping Technical consultations with local stakeholders (municipalities, telecom operators, NGOs, development agencies).	Start: January 2025 End: March 2026	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Stakeholder list ✓ Meeting reports/minutes (min. 5 meetings) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Scheduling of meetings and focus groups 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⇒ Potential low engagement from stakeholders or late responses

Task	Dates	Outputs	Related Activities	Problems / Concerns
Task 3 - Compilation of findings and development of a summary report Organize the collected data into a structured summary report. The report will highlight key trends and findings from surveys and interviews, list identified gaps in infrastructure, and suggest next steps.	Start: April 2026 End: July 2026	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ One summary report (approx. 10–12 pages) ✓ At least one basic map indicating priority digital gaps ✓ Executive summary for decision-makers (2–3 pages) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Internal review of raw data collected from Task 1 ➤ Drafting and editing of report sections 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⇒ Data gaps or inconsistencies that may weaken conclusions ⇒ Need to simplify language and visuals for non-technical audiences

ACTION Title: Establishment and expansion of number of Wi-Fi Hotspot access points in the premises of local communities (e.g. on bus stops)

ACTION Owner: Cities /municipalities of ZDC

Short Description:	This action involves the installation of minimum 5 public Wi-Fi hotspot access points in strategic public spaces across local communities within Zenica-Doboj Canton, such as bus stops, markets, and municipal buildings. The goal is to provide free, high-speed internet access to users annually to support digital inclusion.	Stakeholders:	Lead Agency: Municipal administrations of ZDC (municipal IT or digital service departments and social affairs departments) Key experts and partners: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Municipal IT officers ➤ Local public utility companies ➤ Local development agencies ➤ Community councils for hotspot location input
		Finance & Resources:	Funding required for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Routers and signal boosters ➤ Power supply and internet lines

			<p>➤ Human resources (technicians, IT staff)</p> <p>Potential funding sources:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Municipal budgets ✓ Private sector (CSR programs of telecoms) ✓ Donor grants (EU, UNDP, digitalization funds) <p>Total Projection: €10.850 – €17,500</p>
		Action Readiness:	The concept is clear and feasible, missing points site selection, technical specifications for procurement, securing financing and signing implementation agreements
Links to Objectives:	SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE: 1. To improve internet connectivity, digital infrastructure, and access to digital services in remote and socially vulnerable communities of Zenica-Doboj Canton	Main Risks:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⇒ Delays in funding or procurement ⇒ External damage to the equipment ⇒ Unstable internet connection in remote areas ⇒ Low usage or lack of public awareness ⇒ Legal or technical restrictions related to data privacy or public internet provision

*All municipalities of ZDC are invited to realise this type of action

Specific Tasks needed to complete this ACTION:

Task	Dates	Outputs	Related Activities	Problems / Concerns
Task 1 - Feasibility assessment and site selection Conduct a needs assessment in municipalities to identify ideal public locations for Wi-Fi hotspots. Include consultations and technical	Start: February 2026 End: May 2026	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Feasibility reports (min. 5) ✓ Minutes from consultation meetings (min. 5) 	<p>➤ Outreach to local communities and councils</p>	<p>⇒ Disagreements among stakeholders about which locations to prioritize</p>

Task	Dates	Outputs	Related Activities	Problems / Concerns
checks to ensure power and network availability.			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Coordination with telecom companies for site diagnostics ➤ To check alignment with municipal digital strategies or inclusion plans 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⇒ Difficulties in getting power/internet access to certain locations ⇒ Public concern over privacy or security
Task 2 - Installation and launching of Wi-Fi hotspots Procure equipment, sign technical agreements with telecom companies, and install up to 5 Wi-Fi hotspots.	Start: June 2026 End: October 2026	✓ Minimum 5 fully operational Wi-Fi access points	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Procurement procedures and vendor selection ➤ Installation of Wi-Fi hotspot 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⇒ Delays due to public procurement procedures ⇒ Installation challenges (weather, vandalism risk)
Task 3 – Small informative campaign Launch a small informative public campaign to inform citizens about availability and access.	Start: October 2026 End: November 2026	✓ Launch event/media coverage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Publicity materials (media outputs, posts) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⇒
Task 4 - Monitoring and Evaluation of Wi-Fi Hotspot Usage Implement a system to regularly track and analyse Wi-Fi hotspot usage (number of users, peak times, connection stability). This task ensures the service is functional, secure, and achieving its digital inclusion	Start: November 2026 End: October 2027	✓ Basic analytics dashboard (user numbers, uptime, usage patterns) ✓ Feedback forms or digital user	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Configuration of routers to collect anonymized usage statistics ➤ Design and dissemination of simple user surveys 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⇒ Data privacy compliance (e.g. anonymization of user data) ⇒ Technical challenges in retrieving reliable analytics

Task	Dates	Outputs	Related Activities	Problems / Concerns
goals. Results will inform future expansion or adjustments.		satisfaction survey (min. 100 responses) ✓ Quarterly monitoring reports	➤ Integration of findings into municipal planning discussions	➤ Low response rate to surveys ➤ Need for clear responsibilities (who monitors what, and how often)

ACTION Title: Identification of the needs for digital devices of low-income residents in ZDC

ACTION Owner: Cities /municipalities of ZDC

Short Description:	This action aims to assess digital access barriers for low-income households in ZDC, focusing on affordability and availability of digital devices. At least 100 households will be surveyed, and the findings will streamline future interventions such as device donation schemes or subsidies.	Stakeholders:	Lead Agency: Municipalities/Cities of Zenica-Doboj Canton (ZDC) Key experts and partners: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Municipalities ➤ Relevant offices ➤ Local development agencies for coordination and outreach ➤ NGOs and associations with access to low-income communities
		Finance & Resources:	Funding required for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Designing and conducting the survey (staff time, printing) ➤ Data entry and analysis Potential funding sources:

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Municipal budgets ✓ Social inclusion grants ✓ Donations from CSR programs Total Projection: €3.800 – €5.500
		Action Readiness:	The concept is clear and well-timed, what is missing is finalization of survey design, budget confirmation and identification of research team.
Links to Objectives:	SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE: 2. To increase affordability of digital devices for low-income residents and enhance accessibility to publicly available digital devices	Main Risks:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⇒ Low response rate or data quality from low-income households ⇒ Difficulty accessing certain areas ⇒ Limited cooperation from retailers or financial institutions for affordability data

*All municipalities of ZDC are invited to realise this type of action

Specific Tasks needed to complete this ACTION:

Task	Dates	Outputs	Related Activities	Problems / Concerns
Task 1 - Design and conduct the household survey Develop a tailored needs assessment tool and conduct surveys (face-to-face and online) with at least 100 low-income households.	Start: February 2026 End: May 2026	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Survey tool in 2 formats (paper and digital) ✓ Completed responses from at least 100 households 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Identification of target households with help from social welfare offices ➤ Coordination with NGOs to reach marginalized populations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⇒ Potential reluctance to participate or disclose financial information ⇒ Ensuring data security and respondent anonymity
Task 2 - Data analysis and report development	Start: June 2026	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ One needs assessment report 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Preparation of a report 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⇒ Incomplete data

Task	Dates	Outputs	Related Activities	Problems / Concerns
Analyse the collected data and compile a report identifying affordability barriers, access gaps, and possible solutions. The report will inform decision-makers and potential funders.	End: August 2026	✓ List of proposed solutions (e.g. device donation options, subsidy models)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Meetings with municipal and NGO partners to validate findings ➤ Presentation of results to decision-makers ➤ 	

ACTION Title: Collection and distribution of used digital devices (organization of donation programs /activities)

ACTION Owner: Local NGOs and associations

Short Description:	Organize and implement donation programs to collect and redistribute used digital devices to underserved community members, aiming to enhance digital inclusion and reduce electronic waste. Each year, at least one campaign will be held, with a target of collecting and distributing a minimum of 50 devices per campaign.	Stakeholders:	Lead Agency: Local NGO/Association Key experts and partners: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ ICT Equipment Suppliers (e.g., donation program managers) ➤ School IT Administrators ➤ Local Community Leaders (e.g., municipality representatives) ➤ Social Workers from social care bodies ➤ Volunteer Coordinators
		Finance & Resources:	Funding required for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Logistics ➤ Promotional materials, ➤ Device refurbishment, transport Potential funding sources:

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Local government grants ✓ CSR contributions from tech companies Total Projection: €5.500 – €7.500 per annual campaign
		Action Readiness:	The action framework concept is developed and key stakeholders identified. What is missing is confirmed budget and detailed logistics plan.
Links to Objectives:	SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE: 2. To increase affordability of digital devices for low-income residents and enhance accessibility to publicly available digital devices	Main Risks:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⇒ Low number of devices collected ⇒ Insufficient quality of donated devices ⇒ Lack of sustained volunteer participation ⇒ Data privacy concerns with reused devices

*All municipalities of ZDC are invited to realise this type of action

Specific Tasks needed to complete this ACTION:

Task	Dates	Outputs	Related Activities	Problems / Concerns
Task 1 - Plan and launch a collection campaign Organize structured donation programs in a six-month period to collect, refurbish, and distribute used digital devices (e.g., laptops, tablets) to reduce e-waste and enhance digital inclusion among underserved groups.	Start: November 2025 End: November 2028	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ At least 50 digital devices collected per 12 months ✓ 2 local drop-off points established per campaign ✓ 3 promotional campaigns executed (social media, community meetings) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Coordination meetings with schools and NGOs ➤ Communication with IT suppliers for device donations ➤ Education of volunteers for collection site management 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⇒ Low volume or poor condition of donated devices ⇒ Lack of awareness/publicity for the campaign ⇒ Inadequate volunteer capacity

Task	Dates	Outputs	Related Activities	Problems / Concerns
Task 2 - Basic sorting and distribution of collected devices A basic visual inspection to sort collected devices. Usable devices without refurbishment will be distributed to identify priority recipients.	Start: January 2026 End: January 2029	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Total number of devices collected and sorted into categories ✓ Number of devices distributed ✓ Number of unusable devices safely recycled or stored 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Basic training session for volunteers on device sorting criteria ➤ Coordination with local e-waste facility or recycling partner 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⇒ Some devices may not function properly even if they look usable ⇒ Safe storage may be limited for items that need repair or recycling ⇒ Data wiping is minimal or visual-only

ACTION Title: Development of Job Readiness training programs that address identified needs and incorporate accessible teaching methods

ACTION Owner: Public institution Employment Service ZE-DO canton

Short Description:	This action involves designing and delivering job readiness training programs that focus on building digital and employment-related skills through at least 4 modular programs. The programs will be tailored to community needs, and delivered using accessible teaching methods. Partnerships with local businesses will support internships and job placement opportunities.	Stakeholders:	Lead Agency: Municipalities/Cities of Zenica-Doboj Canton (ZDC) Key experts and partners: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Curriculum Designer – Adult Education Expert ➤ Regional labour market consultant ➤ Career counsellor from Employment Bureau
		Finance & Resources:	Funding required for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Curriculum development, materials, experts Potential funding sources: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Public budgets

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ EU employment or digital skills grants ✓ Private sector co-funding Total Projection: €8.500 – €12.000
		Action Readiness:	Throughout the realised pilot action, preliminary needs assessments have been outlined and core partners have been identified. What is missing is to confirm funding.
Links to Objectives:	SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE: 4. To create and implement digital inclusion initiatives that specifically target marginalized groups addressing their socio-economic disparities and job opportunities.	Main Risks:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⇒ Low engagement or enrolment by target users ⇒ Difficulty in aligning content with actual job market needs

*All municipalities of ZDC are invited to realise this type of action

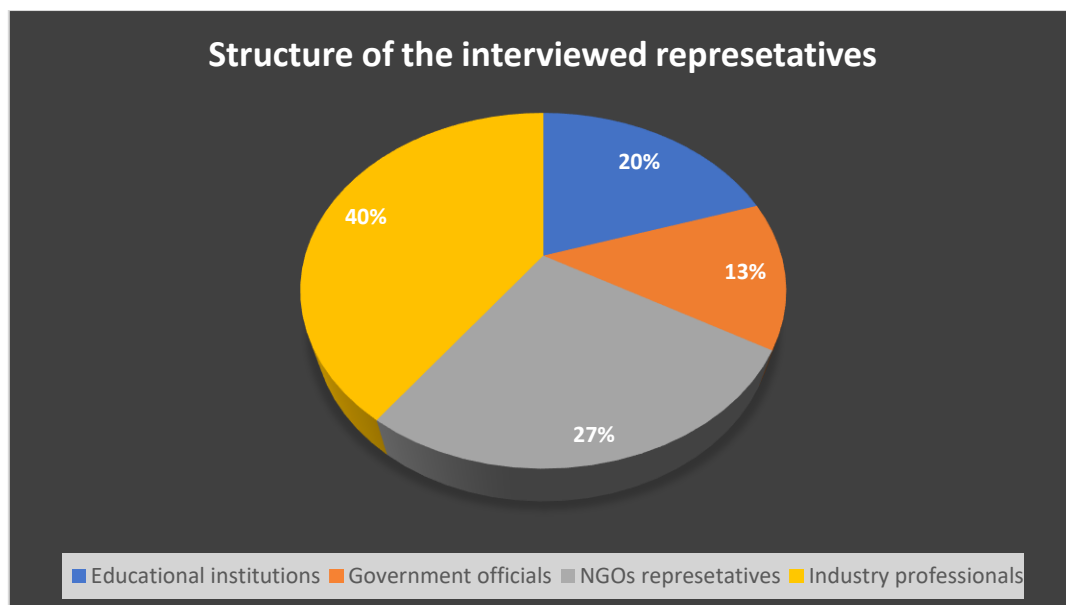
Specific Tasks needed to complete this ACTION:

Task	Dates	Outputs	Related Activities	Problems / Concerns
Task 1 - Design and develop modular job readiness training content Collaborate with job market experts to identify local skill demands and create at least 4 modular training units covering core digital skills, CV writing, interview prep, and workplace communication. Ensure the units use visual aids, plain language and flexible formats.	Start: January 2026 End: July 2026	✓ 4 modular training units developed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Research of local employer needs and vacancies ➤ Consultation with education NGOs and job experts ➤ Enabling auditing of the training materials 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⇒ Relevance of the curriculum according to evolving job markets? ⇒ Availability of qualified content creators and experts

3.3. Testing Pilot Action 1: Identification and Analysis of Educational Resources for Digital Skills

This pilot assessed the availability and accessibility of digital literacy programs in Zenica-Doboj Canton, aiming to identify gaps and provide recommendations for future interventions. Using focus groups, interviews, and secondary data, it examined how well existing programs respond to community needs.

Key findings showed that while several initiatives exist (teacher training, SME digital transformation courses, e-government services, and community workshops for older adults), access remains uneven. Rural areas, older adults, and low-income groups are underserved due to limited infrastructure, socio-economic barriers, and reluctance to adopt new tools. Teachers often lack continuous training, while professional and unemployed populations face a shortage of advanced, labour-market-relevant programs.



Lessons learned include the importance of tailoring training to diverse groups (e.g., advanced modules for students vs. simplified hands-on sessions for elderly residents), strengthening teacher professional development, and ensuring equitable access to resources in rural communities. Collaboration between government, NGOs, and businesses proved valuable and should be scaled up. The pilot faced challenges with incomplete data, fragmented program records, and low engagement from some educators and older adults. However, it confirmed the need for centralized mapping of digital literacy initiatives, stronger follow-up mechanisms, and targeted awareness campaigns.

With a modest budget of €2,000, the pilot provided a cost-effective but impactful mapping exercise. Recommendations include expanding teacher training, incentivising SME involvement, deploying mobile training units for rural areas,

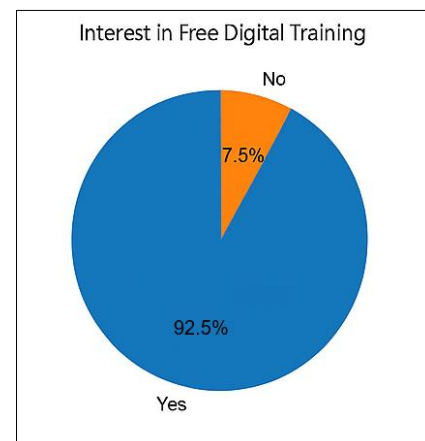
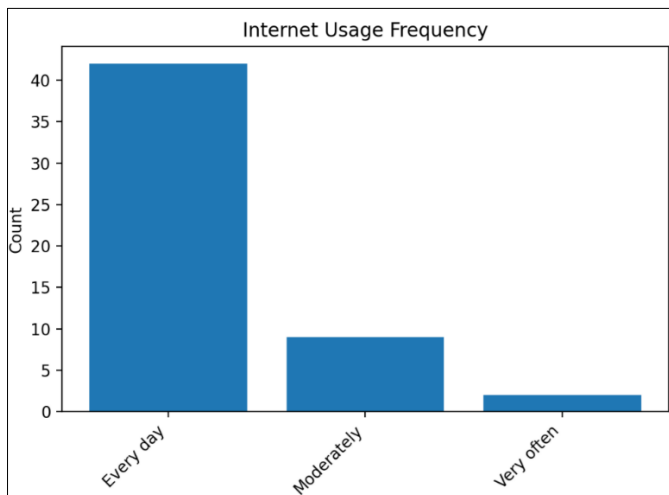
and establishing structured, inclusive, and sustainable digital literacy programs across the Canton.

3.4. Testing Pilot Action 2: Awareness-Raising Campaign on Digital Skills Training in ZDC

This pilot tested a participatory awareness campaign designed to inform citizens about digital skills and available training opportunities. It combined printed materials, social media outreach, a youth-driven online challenge (“Koliko Važno je Digitalno?”), and a public info kiosk in Zenica. A QR code linked to a Google Form survey captured perceptions and needs.

The campaign engaged 53 respondents, mostly youth and urban residents. Results showed strong digital engagement (nearly 80% daily users) but a clear gap in awareness of formal training opportunities—particularly among younger people. Interestingly, some participants who considered themselves “uninformed” had already attended trainings, suggesting weak communication and visibility of programs rather than lack of availability.

Challenges included difficulty reaching the digitally excluded (older adults, rural residents) despite offline channels, showing that marginalized groups require more targeted, community-based outreach. However, creative tools like the digital challenge successfully engaged younger demographics and generated reliable user-driven content.



The campaign cost €2,500 and delivered concrete lessons: future initiatives should develop dual strategies—one tailored to highly active digital users, and another focused on the disconnected. Clearer communication of training pathways is needed, along with stronger partnerships with schools, libraries, and NGOs to act as intermediaries.

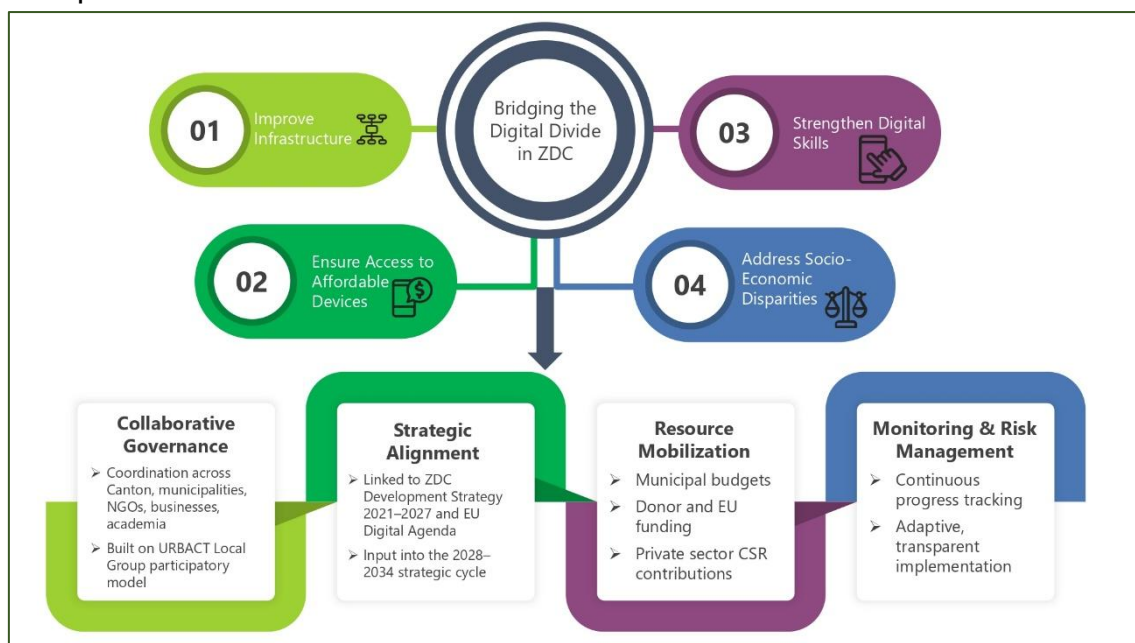
Next steps should include piloting micro-trainings as onboarding for hesitant groups, expanding the role of info kiosks to provide guided tutorials, and improving feedback loops by contacting interested respondents directly when training opportunities open.

4. Implementation Framework

DIGI-INCLUSION framework outlines the mechanisms that will enable actions to move from planning to reality by building on the priorities already identified—improving infrastructure, ensuring access to affordable devices, strengthening digital skills, and addressing socio-economic disparities. It defines how governance should be structured across the Canton and its municipalities, how the participatory approach of the URBACT Local Group could evolve into implementation, and how resources and responsibilities could be mobilized.

Given the wide diversity of stakeholders—from municipal administrations, telecom providers, and educational institutions to NGOs and local communities—the framework emphasizes collaborative governance and inclusive engagement. It also reflects the Canton's strategic alignment with the Development Strategy 2021–2027 and future cycle (2028–2034), ensuring that the IAP contributes directly to broader regional priorities and to EU-level digital inclusion objectives. Cost estimates prepared for each action provide a realistic projection of needs, while the funding strategy leverages a mix of public budgets, donor support, and private-sector contributions.

Implementation will follow a staged timeline from 2025 to 2029, with milestones linked to surveys, infrastructure rollouts, community hubs, device donation campaigns, and job-readiness programs. Risk management and continuous monitoring are embedded, ensuring that progress is measurable, adaptive, and transparent.



This framework acts as the bridge between planning and execution, equipping Zenica-Doboj Canton with the structures, resources, and monitoring tools required to achieve tangible improvements in digital inclusion and to ensure that all citizens can participate fully in the digital society.

4.1. Governance

The governance of the DIGI-INCLUSION IAP in Zenica-Doboj Canton will be ensured through a multi-level coordination structure. The Cantonal Government could be tasked to oversee the process, while municipalities could remain responsible for action-level implementation. An independent commission could be formed which will provide strategic oversight.

Operational responsibility will be delegated to municipal implementation teams composed of IT coordinators, social departments, NGOs, and local development agencies. Commission will meet half-yearly, while municipal teams will meet quarterly to track progress, resolve bottlenecks, and ensure coherence with cantonal and national digital strategies.

4.2. Ongoing Stakeholder Engagement

Stakeholder engagement remains at the core of this IAP, following the URBACT Local Group methodology. The ULG will transition into an Implementation and Monitoring Forum, ensuring that the participatory spirit of the planning phase continues. This forum will:

- ✓ Take part in bi-annual workshops to gather citizen feedback (with emphasis on marginalized groups).
- ✓ Facilitate working groups for each thematic area (infrastructure, devices, literacy, socio-economic inclusion).
- ✓ Maintain direct communication channels with telecom operators, schools, NGOs, and business associations.

Engagement will be sustained through digital platforms, public campaigns, and community consultations, ensuring inclusivity and transparency.

4.3. Costing and Funding Strategy

Financial projections have been projected for 5 actions which have been elaborated in detail vi SMART Action tables, with cost ranges estimated between €36.150 and €55.000 for the initial implementation phase. The funding allocations has been suggested from multiple sources depending on budgeted availability of the following:

- Municipal and Cantonal Budgets – to cover baseline infrastructure and staff costs
- EU and International Donor Programs (e.g., Interreg, UNDP, Digital Europe, Erasmus+).
- Private Sector Partnerships – via CSR initiatives from telecom operators, ICT companies, and banks.

- NGO Grants and CSR Donations – especially for device donation and refurbishment programs.

A co-financing model was also suggested where the municipalities could opt for covering 20–30% of direct costs while external sources fund the remainder.

4.4. Risk assessment

The implementation of the DIGI-INCLUSION IAP in Zenica-Doboj Canton faces some risks that stem both from systemic conditions in the Canton and from challenges specific to digital inclusion.

First, financial delays may occur if donor or municipal funding is not available on time. These risks can be mitigated by phasing activities to match available resources and by diversifying funding sources early.

Second, technical issues such as minor equipment failures or disruptions to Wi-Fi hotspots are likely but not too difficult to manage. These can be dealt with through simple maintenance contracts, local technical support, and community oversight of equipment.

Third, stakeholder disengagement is possible if progress is not visible quickly. To counter this, regular communication, recognition of contributions, and early “quick wins” (e.g., device donation campaigns or small-scale trainings) will keep partners and citizens motivated.

Finally, capacity gaps among municipal IT staff and NGOs may slow down implementation, but this risk can be reduced with targeted training, resource sharing across municipalities, and partnerships with local universities or ICT companies.

By anticipating these manageable risks and putting in place clear mitigation measures, the Canton will ensure that the IAP remains on track and adaptable to changing circumstances.





4.5. Monitoring and Evaluation

Monitoring and evaluation will ensure that the DIGI-INCLUSION Integrated Action Plan is not only implemented as planned but also generates the intended results for citizens across Zenica-Doboj Canton. The approach combines continuous tracking of activities with regular assessments of outcomes, allowing for timely adjustments and learning throughout the implementation period.

Progress will be measured at two levels. The first relates to outputs, which capture the tangible products of the actions. These include the establishment of new Wi-Fi hotspots, the collection and distribution of refurbished devices, and the delivery of digital training sessions. Each of these outputs is countable and directly linked to the actions described in the plan.

The second level concerns results, which reflect the broader changes in digital inclusion that the IAP seeks to achieve. These will be monitored through indicators such as the increase in households with access to devices, improvements in digital literacy among citizens, and the number of marginalized individuals who enter employment after participating in training. Tracking these changes will provide evidence of how the IAP contributes to reducing the digital divide in the Canton.

To ensure clarity between objectives, actions, and measurable progress, the following expanded table links each challenge area to its main interventions and indicators. These indicators are directly aligned with the Monitoring and Evaluation Framework (Section 4.5), ensuring consistency between planning, implementation, and assessment.

Challenge area	Specific objective	Key Actions / Expected Results	Monitoring Indicators
Infrastructure Enhancement  Device Accessibility  Digital Skills Development  Addressing Socio-economic Disparities 	1) To improve internet connectivity, digital infrastructure, and access to digital services in remote and socially vulnerable communities of Zenica-Doboj Canton.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Mapping and assessment of digital infrastructure in ZDC. - Establishment of community digital centres and public Wi-Fi hotspots. - Expansion of internet networks in rural and underserved areas. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Number of hotspots installed. - Number of digital centres established. - Coverage expansion (% of population connected).
	2) To increase affordability of digital devices for low-income residents and enhance accessibility to publicly available digital devices.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Needs assessment of low-income households. - Donation and refurbishment programs for used digital devices. - Establishment of subsidy programs for device procurement. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Number of devices collected and distributed. - Number of households benefiting from subsidies. - Reduction in % of households without digital devices.
	3) To increase awareness about digital technologies and online services, and to enhance digital literacy among the population through comprehensive education and training programs focusing on basic digital (and language) skills.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Awareness-raising campaigns on digital skills training. - Creation of online self-paced learning platforms. - Establishment of community digital learning hubs and delivery of training sessions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Number of citizens trained and certified. - Number of active users of the online platform. - Level of digital literacy improvement (pre/post surveys).
	4) To create and implement digital inclusion initiatives that specifically target marginalized groups addressing their socio-economic disparities and job opportunities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Job-readiness training programs integrating digital skills. - Awareness campaigns on digital job opportunities. - Digital apprenticeship programs and SME support. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Number of participants in job-readiness programs. - Employment rate among trained participants. - Number of SMEs adopting digital tools.

Monitoring will be carried out through half-yearly reports prepared and delivered to the Commission, which will summarize progress across all municipalities. These will be complemented by annual public reports made available online to ensure transparency and maintain citizen engagement. In addition, a mid-term evaluation in 2027 will assess whether the actions are on track, while a final evaluation in 2029 will examine the overall impact and draw lessons for future planning cycles.

In this way, monitoring and evaluation will serve not only as a tool for accountability but also as a mechanism for learning and adaptation, ensuring that the IAP remains responsive to the needs of the people of Zenica-Doboj Canton.

5. Conclusion

The Integrated Action Plan for Zenica-Doboj Canton sets out a comprehensive and forward-looking framework to deal with the digital divide and strengthen the resilience of local communities in the digital era. With the main focus in the principles of equity, inclusiveness, and sustainability, the Plan acknowledges the structural barriers that prevent equal participation in the digital society—ranging from insufficient broadband infrastructure and lack of affordable devices, to digital illiteracy and socio-economic inequalities. By aligning with the Development Strategy of Zenica-Doboj Canton 2021–2027, as well as the wider European frameworks such as the EU Digital Agenda and the URBACT principles of co-creation, the Plan ensures that local action is not only tailored to specific community needs but also contributes to broader policy objectives at the national and EU levels.

Through the measures identified, the Plan makes it clear that digital transformation in the Canton is not to be understood merely as a technological upgrade, but as a process of social inclusion. The interventions—such as establishing digital community hubs, organizing training programs for elderly citizens and marginalized groups, or supporting women entrepreneurs in rural areas—reflect the recognition that access to technology must be coupled with the capacity to use it meaningfully. At the same time, awareness-raising campaigns, youth-driven challenges, and the promotion of participatory e-governance tools show that the Canton is committed to embedding democratic values and citizen engagement into its digital future. By creating opportunities for all residents to acquire digital skills and by lowering the barriers to access, the Plan strengthens both individual empowerment and the collective competitiveness of the region. While the action plan identifies concrete interventions to be implemented between 2025 and 2029, its real strength lies in its long-term vision. The governance framework developed under this Plan ensures that digital inclusion will not remain a one-off initiative but will instead become a lasting component of Cantonal development. By proposing a structured coordination mechanism involving municipalities, NGOs, universities, telecom providers, and the private

sector, the Plan builds the foundation for continuous cooperation across sectors and governance levels. In this way, it transforms the URBACT Local Group from a planning tool into a permanent forum for dialogue, monitoring, and adaptive policymaking.

The costing and funding strategy further secures sustainability by drawing on a combination of municipal budgets, private-sector partnerships, and international donor programs. This diversified approach reduces dependency on a single source and increases the likelihood that actions such as Wi-Fi hotspot expansions, device donation schemes, or digital apprenticeship programs will continue beyond the initial implementation period. Risk assessments and mitigation measures, alongside the monitoring and evaluation framework, provide additional assurance that progress will be measured, obstacles addressed, and results made visible to citizens and stakeholders.

Ultimately, this Integrated Action Plan is more than a roadmap—it is a commitment by Zenica-Doboj Canton to leave no one behind in the digital transition. By localizing the principles of the European Declaration on Digital Rights, the Canton positions itself as a regional leader in inclusive digitalization. The steps outlined here will not only bridge the gap between digitally connected and disconnected groups but will also ensure that technological progress goes hand in hand with social cohesion, economic opportunity, and democratic participation. In the long run, the success of this Plan will be measured not only by the number of Wi-Fi hotspots installed or devices distributed, but by the extent to which citizens of Zenica-Doboj Canton feel empowered, capable, and confident to take part in the digital society of tomorrow.