

DigiFuse

DIGITAL FUSION ENVIRONMENTS

Report on WP2: Field research based on S.O.I.T.

Results of the interviews



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1. Introduction

1.1. General Information About the DigiFusE Project

DigiFusE is an educational project that aims to reintegrate disadvantaged individuals who are isolated from digital developments, such as those in penal institutions, probation offices, and immigration centers, into society by improving their digital skills.

The project aims to update the outputs of three previously successful EU projects (BLEEP, TRIANGLE, PERSPEKTIVE) and disseminate them to a wider audience, based on the experiences gained from these projects.

Within this scope, the project's main method is to conduct a SWOT analysis to identify needs, develop a new “DigiFusE Methodology” based on the results of this analysis, and apply this methodology in partner countries. The ultimate goal of the project is to establish a structure that can provide consulting services across Europe using this developed training model.

1.2. The Purpose and Importance of SWOT Analysis Field Studies

The DigiFusE project aims to develop a methodology based on the real dynamics and needs of the field, rather than a theoretical training model, in order to increase the digital literacy capacity of the target audience.

To this end, SWOT, one of the most effective analysis methods, has been chosen to accurately assess the current situation in the field. The main objective of this study is to reveal the current state of digital learning environments in the penal system in all its dimensions. To accurately reflect this framework, face-to-face interviews were conducted with institutional managers, experts, and technical staff who work within this system on a daily basis and directly confront its challenges and potential. The first-hand information provided by experts working in the field is critical to the success of the project.

Using this method, strengths such as the existing digital infrastructure of penal institutions and weaknesses such as a lack of qualified trainers or gaps in legislation were identified. Similarly, opportunities such as new collaborations or project opportunities, and most importantly, threats and risks related to the profile of inmates or security policies have been accurately and realistically identified. Thus, the aim is to prevent the DigiFusE training methodology to be developed from becoming an unrealistic model that is disconnected from the realities of the field. This analysis is the most important step in ensuring that the project is based on a solid, feasible, and sustainable foundation.

1.3. Fieldwork Implementation Method, Dates and Scope

The SWOT analysis that forms the basis of this report, prepared within the scope of the DigiFusE Project, was conducted between May 13 and 20, 2025. The study covered five different Penal Institutions and Supervised Release Directorate under the administrative responsibility of the Kocaeli Chief Public Prosecutor's Office. These institutions are: Kocaeli Open Penal Institution, Kocaeli No. 1 T-Type Closed Penal Institution, Kocaeli No. 2 T-Type Closed Penal Institution, Kocaeli No. 1 F-Type High-Security Penal Institution, Kocaeli No. 2 F-Type High-Security Penal Institution, and the Kocaeli Supervised Release Directorate.

The main method used in the fieldwork was face-to-face individual interviews and discussions with key personnel at four different levels of expertise (strategic, institutional, informational, and technical). To make sure participants could express their thoughts more deeply and clearly, group discussions were avoided, and individual interviews were conducted with each expert in their own field.

Following the completion of the interviews, all data and notes collected from the field were compiled by the project team. This report was prepared to include the most effective and prominent findings obtained from the field following the compilation process.

2. Institutions Where Fieldwork Was Conducted

- 2.1. Kocaeli Open Penal Institution
- 2.2. Kocaeli No. 1 T Type Closed Penal Institution
- 2.3. Kocaeli No. 2 T Type Closed Penal Institution
- 2.4. Kocaeli No. 2 F Type High Security Closed Penal Institution
- 2.5. Kocaeli No. 1 F Type High Security Closed Penal Institution
- 2.6. Supervised Release Directorate

3. Participant Profile

3.1 Participant Profile on an Institutional Basis

The SWOT analysis of the DigiFusE project was conducted through fieldwork involving a total of 28 key personnel from five different penal institutions and supervised released directorate located in the Kocaeli Penal Institutions Complex. Participants were selected based on four main areas of expertise—Strategic, Institutional, Informational, and Technical—to enable them to assess the current state and potential of digital learning environments from various perspectives.

Below are the general job descriptions for participants at these four levels:

Strategic Level (Total 6 Participants): Participants at this level consist of institution directors and their deputies who are responsible for the overall management of institutions and strategic decision-making processes. They have fundamental responsibilities such as determining the vision of the institution, supervising its overall operation, and ensuring the strategic distribution of resources.

Organisational Level (Total 9 Participants): This group includes Deputy Directors, who assist directors in administrative and operational processes, and Administrative Officers, who carry out the administrative, financial, and bureaucratic tasks of the institution. Their main duties are to manage the daily operations and operational processes of the institution.

Information Level (Total 6 Participants): Consists of specialized personnel responsible for the education, rehabilitation, and psychosocial support processes of prisoners and detainees. This group includes Teachers who plan and conduct educational activities, Psychologists who implement mental health and rehabilitation programs, and Social Workers who address the social issues of inmates and prepare them for the post-release process.

Technical Level (Total 7 Participants): The experts in this group are technicians responsible for the smooth operation of the IT and technology infrastructure of institutions. Their main areas of responsibility include the installation, maintenance, and repair of computer systems, network infrastructure, UYAP, SEGBİS, and other electronic systems.

The distribution of participants in the fieldwork according to institutions is as follows:

Interviews were conducted with one institution director, one administrative officer, one social worker, and one technician at the **Kocaeli Open Penal Institution**.

One institution director, one deputy director, three administrative officers, one psychologist, and one technician from **Kocaeli No. 1 T-Type Closed Penal Institution** participated in the interview.

Interviews were conducted with one institution director, one deputy director, one teacher, and one technician at **Kocaeli No. 2 T-Type Closed Penal Institution**.

One institution director, one administrative officer, one social worker, and one technician were involved in the process at **Kocaeli No. 2 F-Type High Security Closed Penal Institution**.

Finally, at **Kocaeli No. 1 F Type High Security Closed Penalty Institution**, interviews were conducted with 1 Deputy Director (Acting Director), 1 Administrative Officer, 1 Teacher, and 1 Technician.

At the Kocaeli Supervised Release Directorate, interviews were completed with the Deputy Director, 1 Deputy Director, 1 Psychologist, and 2 Technicians.

4. SWOT Analysis Findings

4.1. General Analysis of Findings According to S.O.I.T. Levels

4.1.1. Findings by Strategic Level

In the field study conducted at the Penal Institutions and Supervised Release Directorate in Kocaeli Province, a total of six managers were interviewed at the strategic level. Among these participants were the Director of the Kocaeli Open Penal Institution (1 person), the Director and Deputy Director of the Kocaeli No. 1 T-Type Closed Penal Institution (2 persons), the Director and Deputy Director of the Kocaeli No. 2 T-Type Closed Penal Institution (2 persons), the Director of the Kocaeli No. 2 F-Type High-Security Closed Penal Institution (1 person), and the Director of the Kocaeli No. 1 F-Type High-Security Closed Penal Institution (1 person). Director (2 persons), the Director of the Kocaeli No. 2 F-Type High-Security Closed Penal Institution (1 person), the Deputy Director of the Kocaeli No. 1 F-Type High-Security Closed Penal Institution (1 person), and the Deputy Director of the Kocaeli Supervised Release Directorate (1 person). These managers were responsible for the general management of the institutions, strategic decision-making processes, and resource allocation. These individuals have adopted a cautious approach regarding the implementation of digital education programs due to concerns about compliance with regulations and legal liability.

In evaluations conducted by administrators and managers, it is stated that the Open Penal Institution and Supervised Release Directorates have an innovative and dynamic structure thanks to the projects they have successfully carried out in the past. In this regard, it is reported that the aforementioned units have a more positive and enthusiastic approach to digital education programs.

However, managers working in closed and high-security prisons state that the use of digital tools and the internet is strictly restricted due to security policies, which seriously limits the feasibility of digital skills development programs.

In this context, it is emphasized that the widespread use of digital education applications in closed institutions is quite difficult due to existing security procedures.

On the other hand, administrators state that digital training is perceived by staff as an additional workload due to staff shortages and heavy workloads, which leads to a loss of motivation. In addition, managers believe that the fact that participation in digital training and specialization in this field does not contribute concretely to staff career development is one of the main factors limiting voluntary participation.

All strategic stakeholders interviewed share the view that digital skills are critical to the process of reintegrating prisoners and detainees into society. In order to realize this potential, it is necessary to establish a modern and flexible legal framework that clarifies the scope and limits of digital education. This would alleviate managers' concerns about legal liability and create an environment conducive to the widespread adoption of digital education.

In the field study, it is recommended that digital education be launched primarily in open penal institutions through pilot projects. The data obtained from pilot projects will lay the groundwork for the development of adaptable and scalable models for other closed and high-security prisons. Two strategies have been evaluated to minimize internet access restrictions and security risks: the first is to host educational content on Ministry of Justice servers and provide institutions with controlled access to this platform; the second is to create a digital content library approved by the Ministry that can be distributed offline to all institutions. These approaches will contribute to overcoming limited internet access issues and addressing security concerns.

In conclusion, technical infrastructure improvements, the creation of staff incentive mechanisms, and the updating of legal regulations are essential for the successful implementation of digital education programs. In addition, reducing bureaucratic barriers, increasing the capacity to develop educational materials, and strengthening inter-institutional cooperation will increase the sustainability and effectiveness of projects. In this regard, initiatives such as the DigiFusE project offer important opportunities for the dissemination and modernization of digital skills training in the penal system.

4.1.2. Findings by Organisational Level

Within the scope of this study, a SWOT Analysis Field Study Survey was administered to staff working at the Kocaeli Open Penal Institution, Kocaeli No. 1 T-Type Closed Penal Institution, Kocaeli No. 2 T-Type Closed Penal Institution, and Kocaeli No. 2 F-Type High-Security Closed Penal Institution. The survey was administered to an Institution Administrative Officer at the Kocaeli Open Penal Institution; an Institution Deputy Director at the Kocaeli No. 1 T-Type Closed Penal Institution; three Institution Administrative Officers at the Kocaeli No. 1 T-Type Closed Penal Institution; an Institution Deputy Director at the Kocaeli No. 2 T-Type Closed Penal Institution; and an Institution Deputy Director at the Kocaeli No. 2 F-Type High-Security Closed Penal Institution and three Institution Administrative Officers; one Institution Deputy Director working at the Kocaeli No. 2 T-Type Closed Penal Institution; and one Institution

Administrative Officer working at the Kocaeli No. 2 F-Type High-Security Closed Penal Institution, for a total of 9 people.

Kocaeli Open Penal Institution, Kocaeli No. 1 T-Type Closed Penal Institution, Kocaeli No. 2 T-Type Closed Penal Institution, and Kocaeli No. 2 F-Type High-Security Closed Penal Institution have computer training classrooms where prisoners and detainees can receive basic computer training and improve their digital literacy levels. These classrooms generally operate under the coordination of the Institution's Education Units. The Education Units provide services under the responsibility of the Institution Deputy Directors and Administrative Officers, as assigned by the Institution Directors.

In high-security and partially high-security closed penal institutions (Type F and T Penal Institutions), Deputy Directors and Assistant Directors emphasize the need to prioritize security policies. Deputy Directors are taking a cautious approach to digitalization activities and improving the digital literacy of inmates/detainees; they indicate that they are inclined to influence Institution Directors to act cautiously in this regard in order to prevent unfortunate incidents that may occur in the units under their responsibility.

Some Deputy Directors and Assistant Directors working in penal institutions have stated that, with regard to the approach to digital education activities planned within the scope of European Union projects, specifically the DigiFusE Project, "We must remain cautious about these applications until this issue is clearly regulated in legislation." In general, they emphasize that their priority is to ensure internal order and security within the institution, and they believe that any application outside the scope of the legislation could pose risks.

In addition, there are differences in approach between Deputy Directors working in Closed Penal Institutions and those working in Open Penal Institutions. Deputy Directors working in Open Penal Institutions state that physical conditions and security flexibility are more suitable, and therefore they are more receptive to project activities. On the other hand, Deputy Directors working in Closed Correctional Institutions adopt a more cautious approach, stating that "Security is a priority here, and the feasibility of these projects is problematic."

In conclusion, the general approach of Deputy Directors and Assistant Directors regarding digital literacy and computer training in penal institutions in Kocaeli Province varies depending on the type of institution, security priorities, physical conditions, and regulatory provisions. It is observed that a security-oriented approach is prioritized in high-security institutions, whereas open institutions tend to have a more positive attitude toward digitalization activities.

4.1.3. Findings by Informational Level

Face-to-face interviews were conducted with a total of **6 individuals** working as education, counseling, and rehabilitation officers at five different correctional institutions and the Probation Office in Kocaeli. Educators and experts stated that there are work areas where the target audience, namely offenders, prisoners, and detainees, can observe their digital skills. In these interviews, it was observed that there was a common belief that young offenders, convicts, and detainees in particular have a greater inclination and ability toward digital education.

In their assessments of the feasibility of training programs, trainers and experts have pointed out that the difficulties encountered in current practices and potential risks must be taken into account. They have stated that there are deficiencies in the equipment and competencies of personnel in the field of digital education, and that there are also deficiencies in areas such as infrastructure and device support to support digital education.

Experts emphasize that prisoners and detainees have limited access to the internet in penal institutions and the Supervised Release Directorate, stating that open internet access cannot be provided within the framework of existing possibilities, and that only certain universities approved by the General Directorate can be accessed for course content and exam applications. However, they have also stated that individuals undergoing the enforcement process at the Supervised Release Directorate are integrated into social life and can freely use their own digital devices in their daily lives, so it is believed that they can more easily access digital education opportunities.

It has been suggested that conducting field studies to analyze the needs of people with different cultural and linguistic backgrounds will increase their motivation to adapt to society. Additionally, in the interviews, trainers stated that innovative studies would contribute positively to individuals in areas such as work, family relationships, and coping with problems, thereby making them more equipped. It was stated that increasing awareness and knowledge about adapting to society would contribute to reducing potential risks and dangers.

Experts have emphasized the importance of improving employees' expertise through in-service training and public training. They have also stated that in order to increase the success rate of projects, it is crucial to develop high-quality training content that addresses technical challenges and ensures digital security.

4.1.4. Findings by Technical Level

As a result of face-to-face interviews conducted with technical level managers working in five different Penal Institutions and Supervised Release Directorate in Kocaeli, the feasibility of digital education programs, the adequacy of the existing technical infrastructure, the difficulties encountered, and the potential

risks were examined from the perspective of technical staff. Interviews were conducted with a total of **7 participants**.

All institutions interviewed stated that access is provided through the central data system UYAP, that these systems operate on closed-circuit networks, and that they are protected by central security policies. It was noted that all institutions have computer classrooms and basic hardware (projectors, announcement systems, central TV broadcasts, etc.) used for educational purposes, but the condition, performance, and up-to-date status of this infrastructure may vary from institution to institution.

All technical experts interviewed agreed that the greatest strength of the UYAP system is its closed-loop operation, protected by a central firewall and antivirus software. They stated that user sessions are restricted based on permissions, thereby minimizing risks such as the installation of malicious software.

In particular, the successful implementation of projects such as SEGBİS and ACEP in penal institutions demonstrates that these institutions are able to adapt to digital transformation and that such innovations reduce labor loss and increase institutional efficiency.

In institutions, having technical personnel who are competent to deal with basic hardware and software problems encountered on a daily basis is considered an important advantage in terms of continuity of operations.

The most fundamental and widespread weakness mentioned by almost all technical staff is that some of the computer hardware in institutions is nearing the end of its technological life. It has been noted that older computers struggle to run current operating systems and software, which not only reduces performance but also makes it difficult to receive security updates.

It has been commonly noted that the internet speed and bandwidth provided to institutions is insufficient, especially for applications such as video conferencing, online education, or high-volume data transfer.

In particular, it has been reported that, following updates to the UYAP system, there has been a general slowdown in the systems and that software used in different units does not work in full integration with each other, creating additional workloads such as manual data entry.

It has been understood that the slow process of meeting new hardware or technical equipment requests and bureaucratic obstacles in the procurement process have slowed down the process of meeting urgent needs.

However, projects such as DigiFusE are seen as an opportunity to review and modernize the existing digital infrastructure and create budgetary opportunities.

There is consensus that improving digital systems (especially bandwidth) will accelerate internal data sharing, reduce manual processes, and increase overall organizational efficiency.

The biggest concern for technical experts is the security risks posed by controlled or uncontrolled internet access provided as part of digital education programs. In high-security institutions in particular, the potential for inmates to use digital education opportunities for communication, organizational activities, or other illegal purposes is considered the greatest threat.

It has been stated that the current legal framework hinders the establishment of new systems and digital educational content because it does not provide a clear framework for technological developments.

It has been observed that dependence on external companies, particularly for server maintenance, network security, and technical support for certain specialized software, can prolong response times in large-scale emergencies. In addition, it has been reported that the end of manufacturer support for aging systems is a factor that makes it difficult to find spare parts and obtain support.

As a result of technical discussions and analyses, it was assessed that although significant steps have been taken towards the digitization of penal institutions, there is a serious need for infrastructure modernization and updating. While the security infrastructure is generally considered adequate, the obsolescence of hardware and the weakness of the internet infrastructure are seen as the biggest technical obstacles to innovative programs such as digital education. It has been observed that opinions have been expressed that the success of the projects to be developed depends on overcoming these technical difficulties and creating educational content designed within a digitally secure environment.

4.2. Current Digital Education Opportunities

Field studies have revealed that all Penal Institutions and Supervised Release Directorate interviewed have a certain basic infrastructure for digital education activities.

Physical and Hardware Facilities: All institutions have computer training classrooms of varying capacities, primarily allocated for basic computer use training. In addition to these classrooms, all institutions have an information television channel that broadcasts from a central system. Furthermore, modern digital tools such as smart boards and electronic equipment capable of simultaneous translation are available in Type T Penal Institutions No. 1 and No. 2.

Current Educational Content: Digital education offered in institutions mostly consists of basic computer literacy courses conducted in collaboration with Public Education Centers affiliated with the Ministry of National Education. In addition, computer classrooms are actively used to enable convicts and

detainees to continue their education by participating in distance learning exams.

Successful Digital Applications: The ACEP project, developed by the Ministry of Justice, digitizes many services ranging from canteen purchases to video calls and video examinations (e-doctor), and is a successful application that both facilitates the adaptation of institutions to digital transformation and increases the digital tool usage experience of prisoners. Additionally, the SEGBIS system, which enables remote participation in court hearings via audio and video, is a robust component of the institutions' digital infrastructure. Conducting individual meetings in a digital environment via video at Supervised Release Directorate is of great importance in terms of both time and cost.

4.3. Institutional Approaches and Personnel Attitudes

Approaches to digital education activities vary depending on the position of the staff and the structure of the institution.

One of the clearest observations from fieldwork is that managers at the strategic and corporate levels (directors, deputy directors, administrators, and supervisors) are more cautious about digital training and are concerned that the subject must first be brought into compliance with legislation. In contrast, it has been observed that specialists at the information level (teachers, psychologists, social workers, sociologists) evaluate the issue from the perspective of both their own professional development and the positive impact it will have on the rehabilitation of prisoner, and thus demonstrate a more enthusiastic and positive attitude.

In particular, experienced institutions that actively express themselves, such as the Open Penal Administration and Supervised Release Directorate, define themselves as innovative and dynamic. Successfully implemented projects in the past have fostered a positive outlook toward new projects within these institutions. However, it has been noted that issues such as the heavy workload and staff shortages in correctional institutions may lead to new projects being perceived as an additional burden, potentially causing reluctance or resistance among staff.

Another noteworthy aspect of the interviews is that, despite the staff's expertise in the digital field or their participation in such projects, there is no clear benefit or incentive in terms of career development. This situation acts as a barrier to the staff's self-improvement or voluntary participation in this field.

4.4. Security Policies and Implementation Barriers

Security is at the heart of all activities in penal institutions and stands out as the most decisive factor in the digitization process.

It has been observed that the “security-oriented policies” implemented in F-type and T-type penal institutions have led to a more distant approach to digitization efforts. Security concerns may result in educational needs being relegated to the background.

The most concrete obstacle to digital education is the lack of internet access or extremely limited access. The risk of prisoners and detainees using the internet to communicate with the outside world without supervision, engage in organizational activities, or commit cybercrimes is the primary concern of institutional administrators.

Nearly all participants emphasized the need to establish a specific, clear, and up-to-date legal framework on this issue before expanding digital education. The current legislation is seen as a bureaucratic obstacle that hinders the implementation of new applications due to its ambiguities and failure to respond to current needs.

4.5. Convicted/Prisoner Profile and Participation Risk

The success of digital education largely depends on the profile of the target audience, namely prisoners and detainees, which includes factors such as the type of crime and educational background, and on managing risks in line with this profile.

The nature of the crimes committed by prisoners housed in Type F High Security Institutions makes their participation in digital education programs high risk. In Type T institutions, the greatest risk is that the crowded population (25-30 people) in the room system negatively affects group dynamics and makes it difficult to monitor educational activities. In this context, it has been concluded that Open Penalty Institutions and Supervised Release Directorate are the most suitable institution types for digital education programs, as they have a lower-risk prisoner profile and more flexible physical conditions.

The most fundamental risk for all types of institutions is the misuse of the digital capabilities provided and the skills learned by prisoners. In particular, in institutions housing prisoners convicted of organizational and organized crimes, the risk of these tools being used for organizational communication comes to the fore. The fact that some inmates are in prison for cybercrimes also justifies this concern.

Differences in education and literacy levels within the target audience, as well as language barriers for some refugee prisoners, are key barriers to participation. However, some inmates' general resistance to rehabilitation activities or their belief that the skills they learn will not be useful after release are important factors that reduce motivation.

4.6. Insufficient Trainers and the Need for Capacity Building

One of the clearest findings of the fieldwork is that the widespread adoption of digital education depends on increasing the number of trainers with the necessary equipment.

Institutions have stated that they have difficulty finding trainers who are experts in computer use and digital content. They generally try to meet this need through experts from public education centers, whose quotas and working hours may be limited.

There is consensus that the capacity of the institution's staff must also be developed for the success of the projects. This includes training specialists such as psychologists and teachers in digital literacy, as well as technicians in new technologies and cybersecurity. It has also been stated that administrative staff and managers must be equipped in this area to be able to lead the digital transformation.

Systemic problems such as inadequate in-service training for institutional staff and the lack of career paths in the field of digital expertise prevent institutions from developing their own trainers.

5. The Impact of Organisational Differences on Digital Education Application

5.1. Comparison of Open and Closed Penal Institutions

There are fundamental differences between open and closed penal institutions in terms of the applicability of digital education, which can be summarized as follows:

The strict security policies implemented in closed penal institutions (F and T types) give rise to a more distant and cautious approach to digitalization efforts. The physical constraints and control mechanisms in these institutions make it difficult to implement educational programs. In contrast, the Kocaeli Open Penal Institution and the Kocaeli Supervised Released Directorate offer a more conducive environment for digital education activities due to their more flexible physical conditions and lower security concerns.

The fact that inmates in open prisons are nearing the end of their sentences, are concerned about reintegrating into society, and belong to less risky crime groups increases their interest and motivation in rehabilitation and education activities. This situation creates a higher potential for efficiency in participation

in digital skills training. In the Supervised Released Directorate, the participation of individuals in social life, In closed institutions, it has been assessed that some types of crimes, which are held under limited conditions, pose a risk of misuse if they have access to digital education materials.

In Closed Penal Institutions, the room system and restricted movement rights make it difficult for prisoners to access educational facilities or specialist staff, whereas free movement in open institutions facilitates access to information and educational opportunities. Open Penal Institutions also offer prisoners more flexible working hours for educational activities thanks to more flexible accommodation conditions.

In Supervised Released Directorate, individuals who are under supervision and whose sentences have not yet been completed, who are involved in social life, who are in contact with their families, and who are employed, have access to digital resources, which facilitates the provision of technological literacy training and enables them to use these resources.

As a result of these comparisons, it was observed that Open Penal Institutions and Supervised Released Directorate are the most suitable penitentiary models for the implementation of digital education activities, based on both the profile of prisoners and institutional conditions.

5.2. Risk Assessment in F and T Type Institutions

F and T type prisons, which are high-security and closed penal institutions, pose unique risks due to the profiles of the prisoners they house and their physical structures.

Type F High-Security Closed Penal Institutions: The main risk factor in these institutions is the nature of the crimes committed by the prisoners/detainees housed there. In these institutions, which generally house individuals convicted of organized crime and terrorism, the misuse of digital tools for illegal organizational communication is seen as the most significant risk. In fact, the presence of some inmates in these institutions due to cybercrimes further exacerbates the risk. While the institution's structure, consisting of rooms accommodating 1 to 3 individuals, may seem advantageous for educational programs, the high-risk criminal profile of the inmates overshadows this advantage.

T-Type Closed Penal Institutions: The main risk in T-type institutions is not so much the profile of the prisoners as the physical structure of the institution and overcrowding. Housing an average of 25-30 people in one room and requiring them to participate in training as a group can create serious difficulties and risks in terms of both security and control. Negative dynamics within large groups and the difficulty of maintaining individual control during training are the most significant risks in these institutions. Additionally, the high turnover rate (transfers, releases, etc.) in T-Type institutions is considered a negative factor in terms of the continuity of long-term training programs.

5.3. Suitability of Supervised Release Directorate

The Supervised Released Directorate aims to reintegrate offenders into society outside of prison and rehabilitate them under supervision, making digital education a highly suitable tool in this context. Digital education offers a flexible structure that is compatible with the current living and working conditions of offenders. It also provides individuals with remote access, overcoming physical environment limitations. The use of digital education within the scope of the Supervised Released Directorate emerges as a solution that both supports individual development and increases institutional efficiency.

6. Conclusions and Recommendations

6.1. Overall Assessment

SWOT analysis field studies conducted at five different penal institutions of three different types (F Type, T Type, and Open) in Kocaeli Province and at the Supervised Released Directorate as part of the DigiFusE Project revealed significant potential for the development of digital learning environments, as well as serious structural and systemic challenges.

There is general consensus that digital skills will play a critical role in the rehabilitation and reintegration of prisoners and detainees into society. The availability of computer classes at a basic level in institutions, the existence of successful digitalization examples such as ACEP, and especially the positive and enthusiastic attitude of specialized personnel (teachers, psychologists, social workers) toward such innovations are positive strengths for the project's feasibility.

However, there are obstacles to realizing this potential. Chief among these are security-focused policies adopted in closed and high-security institutions. These policies severely restrict the use of digital tools and the internet. Another significant obstacle is the lack of a clear, up-to-date, and flexible legal framework for the implementation of digital education. This situation leads to legal liability concerns and a cautious approach, particularly among management. In addition, resource constraints such as hardware and budget shortages and a lack of qualified trainers across institutions are key factors that make it difficult to expand the project.

As a result, the feasibility of digital education varies significantly depending on the type of institution. Open Penal Institutions and Supervised Released Directorate offer the most favorable environment, while F and T type closed institutions pose much higher risks and difficulties due to the profile of the prisoners/detainees they house and their physical conditions. Despite all these challenges, the general approach of participants is that digital education can serve as a modern and beneficial improvement tool for the correctional system if proper planning, adequate resources, and a solid legal foundation are established.

6.2. Applicability Recommendations

Based on field data, institutional conditions, and participant opinions, concrete recommendations regarding the applicability of digital education in the penal system are presented below under the following headings:

Prioritization and Phased Start: Applications should start with units where risk is lowest and motivation is highest. In this regard, it is recommended that the first pilot studies be conducted in Supervised Released Directorate and Open Penal Institutions. In closed institutions (F and T types), projects should begin with small, controlled pilot groups selected from inmates with lower-risk criminal profiles and sufficient basic education levels.

Secure and Controlled Content Delivery: In order to minimize security concerns, it has been determined that closed-circuit networks or offline platforms containing educational content approved by the Ministry of Justice should be the preferred method, rather than open internet access. It would be appropriate to take such measures regarding issues that experts working in the field are concerned about from a security standpoint. Additionally, conducting work within these restricted areas will also reduce the risks of misuse of digital education.

Flexible and Engaging Training Methods: In order to make training more efficient and engaging, modern training methods such as project-based work, gamification, and interactive simulations should be used in addition to theoretical explanations. For individuals who have been in correctional facilities for a long time and have low digital literacy levels, such training may be intimidating. To overcome this, it was determined that the training content should be supported with content that is more entertaining rather than focused on intensive knowledge transfer.

Differentiated Curriculum Based on Needs: As a result of field studies, it was thought that it would be beneficial for the educational content to vary according to the institution. For example, common modules such as basic digital literacy, e-government use, and safe internet should be offered in all institutions. However, in open penal institutions and supervised release, these trainings can be enriched with vocational content that prepares inmates for life after release, such as online job search and CV preparation. It is believed that a digital education curriculum developed based on accurate needs analysis will provide greater benefits.

6.3. Areas for Improvement

Based on data obtained from field studies, it is assessed that Open Penal Institutions are the most efficient and least risky institutions for implementing digital education within the penal system, followed by Supervised Released Directorate, Type T Closed Penal Institutions, and finally Type F Closed Penal Institutions due to their highest security profile.

Regardless of the type of institution, there are topics that should be standardized for all prisoners and detainees in digital education content. In this context, common modules such as basic digital literacy, e-government use, and safe internet should be offered wherever they are implemented. However, in Open Penal Institutions and Supervised Released Directorate, these trainings can be enriched with vocational content that prepares inmates for life after release, such as online job searching and CV preparation, thereby enabling them to be converted into tangible benefits more quickly.

During the interviews, it was frequently mentioned that the effectiveness of digital education is directly related to the profile of the target audience; such

programs are much more successful among young prisoners and detainees who have a high level of basic education and literacy, are more familiar with technological tools, and are open to learning.

It is believed that the most effective implementation strategy in the field would be to proceed with pilot projects starting with Open Penal Institutions, which are the most suitable institutions, before launching large-scale programs. Evidence-based data obtained from these pilot projects will pave the way for the development of scalable and adaptable models for other institutions.

Two options were considered to minimize internet access problems and security risks:

1. The educational content created could be uploaded to the Ministry of Justice servers, allowing institutions to access this platform and preventing disruptions caused by limited internet access.

2. A standard offline digital content library containing educational content approved by the Ministry of Justice can be created and distributed securely to all institutions for portable use.

However, the success of these strategies depends on fundamental improvements in several key areas. First and foremost, it is essential to prepare a modern and flexible legal framework that clarifies the limits and conditions of digital education in order to pave the way for implementation and alleviate the legal concerns of administrators. Secondly, it is necessary to develop a strategic investment and resource plan that will modernize and standardize the digital infrastructure of institutions.

Perhaps the most important area for improvement in this regard is personnel capacity. Continuous in-service training programs should be designed to ensure that both specialist personnel become competent in digital pedagogy and technical personnel become competent in new technologies. Career incentives and new job descriptions should be created to motivate personnel working in this area and ensure their retention within the institution.

7. Attachments

7.1. Survey Sampla

Examples of surveys conducted as SWOT analyses are included in the appendix to this report.

7.2 .Conducted Evidence



