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RESULTS OF THE PILOT EXPERIENCES

Testing of open educational resources
(app and e-learning course)

ITALY

December 2021

Io3a3/io4a3. Testing the app and e-learning course



**Sperimentazione delle
risorse educative aperte
AppForDem**

04 novembre 2021



AppForDem project

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1. THE PILOTING PROCESS

The piloting process in Italy led by the partner organisation *Anziani e non solo* lasted from October to December 2021. It started with targeted invitations to formal and informal caregivers of people with dementia as well as professionals who could play the role of promoting the use of resources in the care sector. In parallel, the resources and the pilot were spread through strategic dissemination activities via ANS channels and stakeholders' circle. The Italian pilot involved a total of 17 participants with different professional profiles in long-term care activities and was held online on the Zoom platform in order to allow the involvement of various relevant professionals both locally and nationally, and therefore distant from the partner organisation's location.

Presentation of the piloting activities

The piloting activities were held on the Zoom platform in two different sessions of 2 hours each, one month apart:

- The first one was held on 4th November 2021.
- The second was held on 2nd December 2021.

The purpose of the first session was to present the project, highlighting the objectives, target groups and resources developed. During the first meeting, professionals in the long-term care sector, formal and informal carers were presented with the objectives of the piloting activities, clarifying their role and the reasons for their involvement. At the end of the first meeting, participants were invited to take part in the next meeting after one month in order to allow them to explore the resources in depth in the light of what emerged during the first meeting.

Sending materials

At the time of the invitation, information materials developed within the project were sent to the participants to contextualise the project and the reasons for the invitation.

At the end of the first meeting, the resources developed were sent out:

- The link to the app "Dementia and daily living";
- The link to the E-learning course "Specialized care for people with dementia";
- The Didactic guide containing instructions for the use of the resources; and
- The link to the Evaluation questionnaire.

Methodology

After developing and finalizing the resources, they were submitted to the end users during the pilot phase. The objectives of this phase were to allow validation of the resources developed during the previous phases through concrete use during the care of people with dementia. During the first meeting, the project and its objectives, as well as the resources and rationale behind them, were explained to the participants. During the month between the first and second meetings, participants were asked to use the resources so that they could deepen and test them in their own care setting. In order to investigate the validity of the resources and any points for improvement, an evaluative questionnaire was administered to participants that aimed to investigate the evaluation of the resources in terms of duration, interface, usefulness, clarity, and the degree of satisfaction in using the resources. This report aims to present the results of the pilot, with particular attention to the opinions, comments and suggestions that emerged in both workshop sessions and from the evaluation questionnaires.



1. TESTING THE EDUCATIONAL APP & THE ELEARNING: WORKSHOP CONCLUSIONS (02/12/2021) - IO3 – IO4

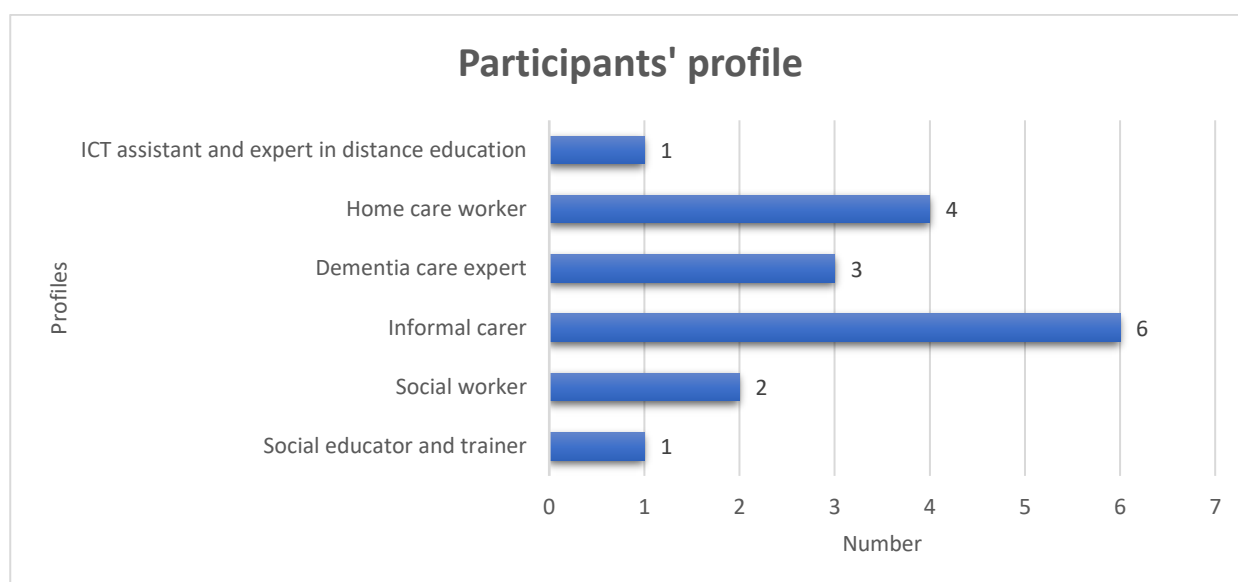
The participants tested the app **“Dementia and daily living”** and the E-learning course **“Specialized care for people with dementia”** from November the 4th to December the 2nd 2021.

On the first date, an online meeting was organized to present the ICT resources, explain their use and purpose of the piloting.

On the latter date, an online meeting was held to exchange opinions about the app and the e-learning course

Participants to the piloting

17 people participated in the pilot experience, 4 of whom work concretely in dementia and disability care, 4 are experts in caring for people with dementia and can play the role of promoting resources, 1 is an expert in ICT and distance learning and plays an advisory role, and 6 are informal caregivers who provided advices and comments centred on their needs to support the care of people with dementia.



* Only attended the first meeting (4th of November 2021)

In addition, we had 5 persons who piloted the resources but were unable to attend the meetings

Meeting agenda

Participants received in advance an invitation with the following agenda:

Meeting #1 – November the 4th 2021

- Presentation of the AppForDem project
- Presentation of the APP: aim, contents, how to download and use it
- Presentation of the E-learning course: aim, contents, how to access and use it
- The piloting: purpose and next steps



After the first meeting, attendants received an email including link to the e-learning course and step by step guide to use the resources.

Meeting #2 – December the 2nd 2021

- Round table of comments concerning the contents of the APP and the e-learning
- Round table of comments concerning the technical aspects / usability of the APP and the e-learning
- Round table of comments concerning the piloting
- Filling in of the evaluation questionnaire*

* a link to the questionnaire was sent also to participants to the piloting who couldn't attend the 2nd meeting

Workshop: online meeting minutes

4th November 2021

The 1st meeting was focused on presenting the resources and explaining the steps to access and use them (considering that many of the participants did not have advanced ICT skills).

After a short introduction to the project and its aims, we first presented the APP, using the “screen sharing” function from the mobile phone, we were able to illustrate all the steps to be followed and all the features of the APP.

Following to that, we presented the e-learning course. Again, sharing the screen, we showed the steps to be undertaken and the different components of the course (PDFs, case studies, Scorms).

Finally, we explained the criteria that were going to be used to assess the resources, as per the online questionnaire.

At the end of the meeting, we remembered to participants that they were going to have a month to try the tools and that a 2nd meeting was going to be organized to collect their feedbacks.

2nd December 2021

In relation to the **contents**, the general feedback of participants was that they are very comprehensive and suitable, especially in an initial phase after the diagnosis, when the informal caregiver doesn't really know what he/she should expect, or for a less-experienced professional. One of our participants said

“If I had this APP at the beginning of my career, I would have avoid making many mistakes”

Others said:

“Although I work in this field, I could still find new information in these resources, things I didn't know”

“The graphic summaries at the end of each chapter of the APP are very sweet”



On the other hand, there were also some suggestions for improvement, for example:

- Making explicit reference to the fact that while the APP and the e-learning are useful to better understand dementia, they can not replace the advice of a professional, so the carer should be encouraged to reach out to health care services or NGOs.
- Adding references to the importance of building support networks, to reduce the care-burden
- Adding a sort of “stress thermometer” which, based on certain answers you give, urges you to reach out to professional help
- It should be said more about the emotional impact on carers – for example the fact that feeling guilty or inadequate is normal. The feelings of carers should be recognised and mirrored, so that carers feel understood.
- Something more should be said in relation to what to do when the care-recipient refuses using a pad, as it is a very common situation (for example it could be suggested to start slowly, by using it only when going out and then progressively increasing the use)
- A participant suggested to explain better whether the diagnosis should be communicated or not to the person with dementia, as the current content seems a bit ambiguous in this regard
- There was some discussion in relation to the section “living well with dementia” of the APP (Module: understanding dementia) since it seems to be very simplistic and a bit frustrating for the carers reading it. It should be either rephrased (not “living well” but maybe “practical suggestion” and /or expanded as the current advices seem quite limited to be able to “live well”)
- It was very much appreciated that when doing the self-assessment test there are feedbacks to the given replies

In relation to **technical aspects / usability**

While all participants managed to use the ICT tools quite easily, some suggestions to improve usability were made:

- Some people mentioned that they had problems in downloading the APP (however, others didn't – so we couldn't say whether it was a matter of internet connection / old device or a technical issue of the APP itself)
- When entering the e-learning from a mobile phone, there is a calendar showing which disturbs the vision and it is not intuitive how to remove it
- Generally speaking, people said that it was not really friendly to use the e-learning from a mobile phone – maybe it should be recommended explicitly to use a tablet or a PC.
- It should be made more direct the link from the APP to the related module in the e-learning. I.e.: the APP should link to the relevant unit and not to the website in general
- It seems that the e-learning includes some unnecessary steps which complicate navigation. For example, there is an intermediate step to enter the module (you have to press a “enter” button) that should be removed if possible.

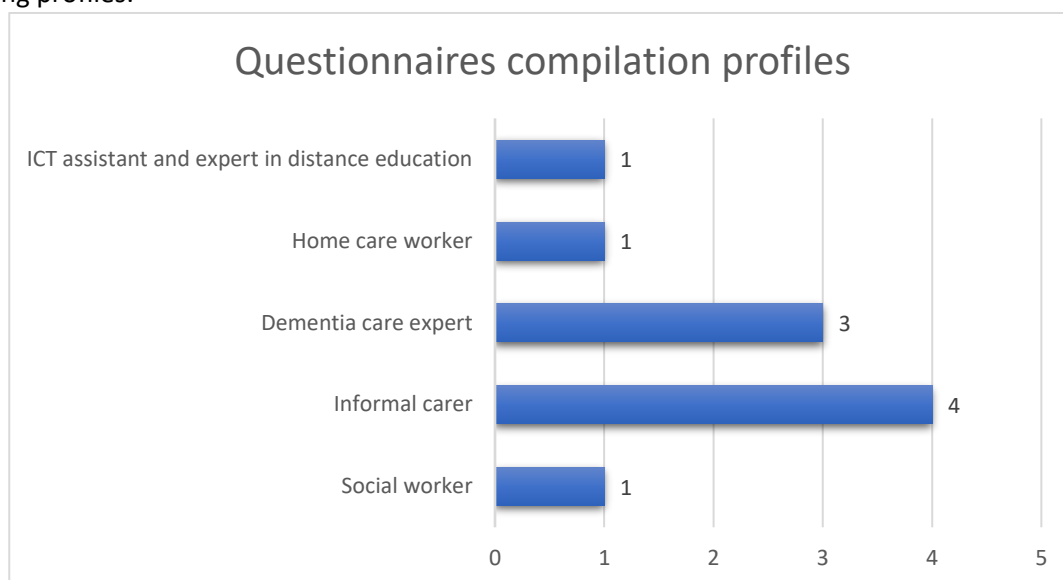
In relation to the **piloting** method, some participants said that they didn't really had the time to use all the resources properly, as their caring role keeps them very busy. Also, the fact that some participants do not have a PC but only a smartphone, led them to use more the APP than the e-learning because of the usability issues mentioned above when entering the e-learning from a phone.

Pictures



3. PILOT EXPERIENCES RESULTS: QUESTIONNAIRES AND WORKSHOPS

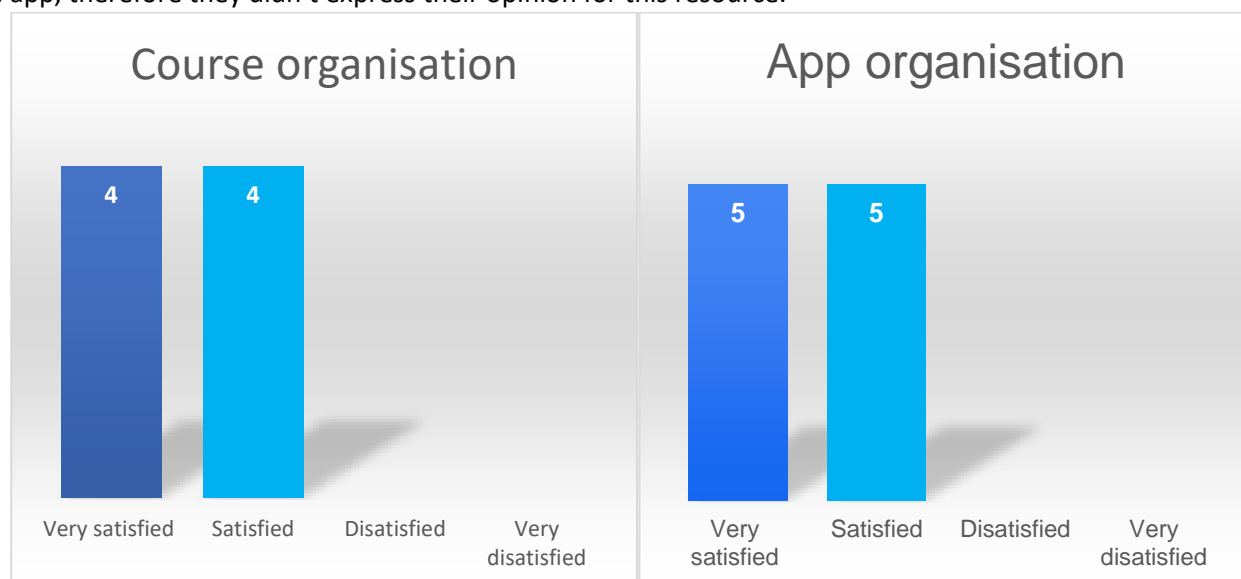
Below is a report with the main results of the piloting process. The report follows the 9 indicators proposed in the guidelines for IO 3 and 4. The quantitative information in this report shows the responses of 10 participants, with the following profiles:



1. Organization of the pilot experience

50% of the participants were very satisfied and 50% were satisfied with the pilot experience of the app and the e-learning course: information, meeting deadlines/schedules, delivery of training material, etc.

2 informal caregiver that filled in the questionnaire stated that they didn't use the E-learning course but only the app, therefore they didn't express their opinion for this resource.

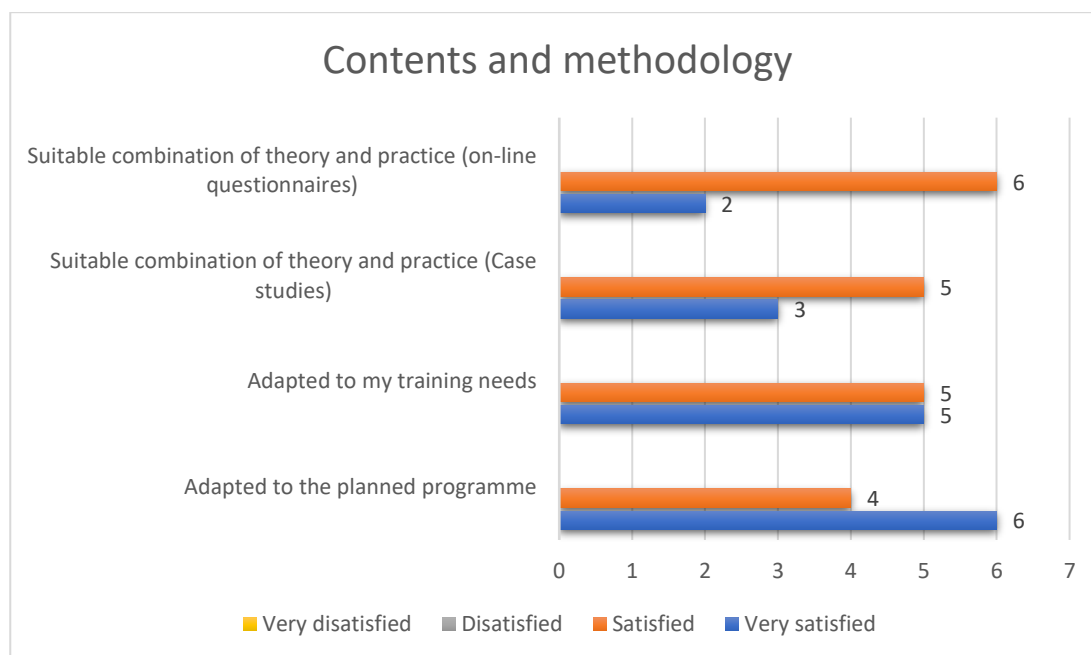




A participant suggested to simplify access to e-learning and give the possibility to use the course contents in pdf format on the app.

2. Contents and methodology of the app and e-learning course

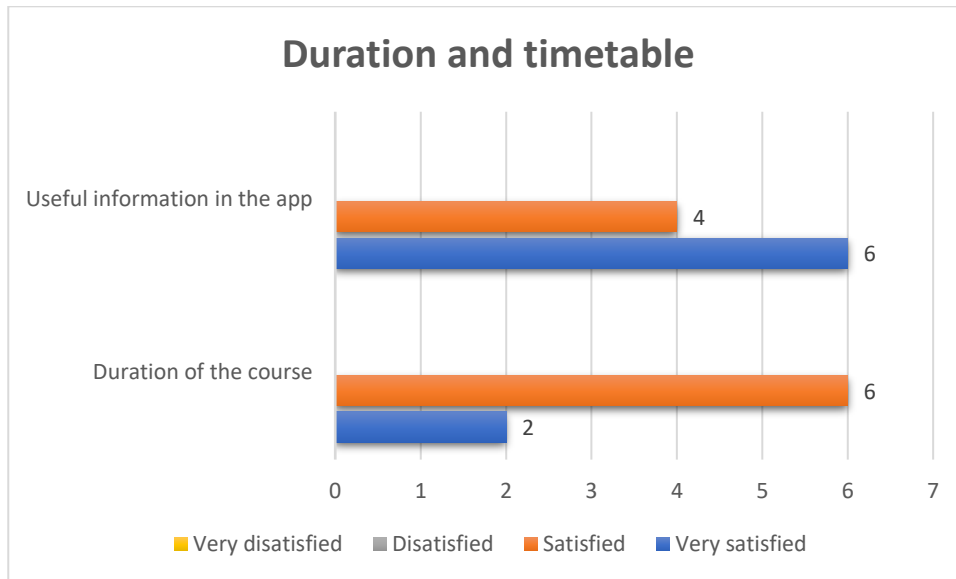
43% of participants were very satisfied with the content and methodologies used. Of the total input received, 2 informal caregivers refrained from answering the questions on the case studies and self-assessment questionnaires because they did not use the course.



One participant commented that she finds all of the practical and general dementia presentation texts/references in the app to be excellent, but recommends reviewing some of the texts pertaining to ethical aspects of care and family support.

3. E-learning course and app duration and timetable

25% of participants who used the course considered themselves very satisfied with the duration, and 60% considered the app to include very useful information that left them very satisfied.

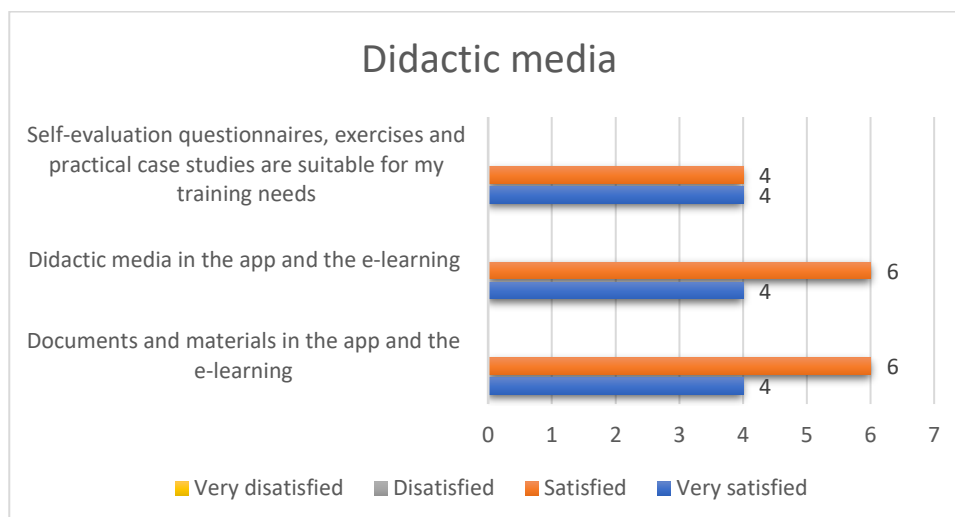




4. Didactic media (scorms, audiovisuals, pdf files)

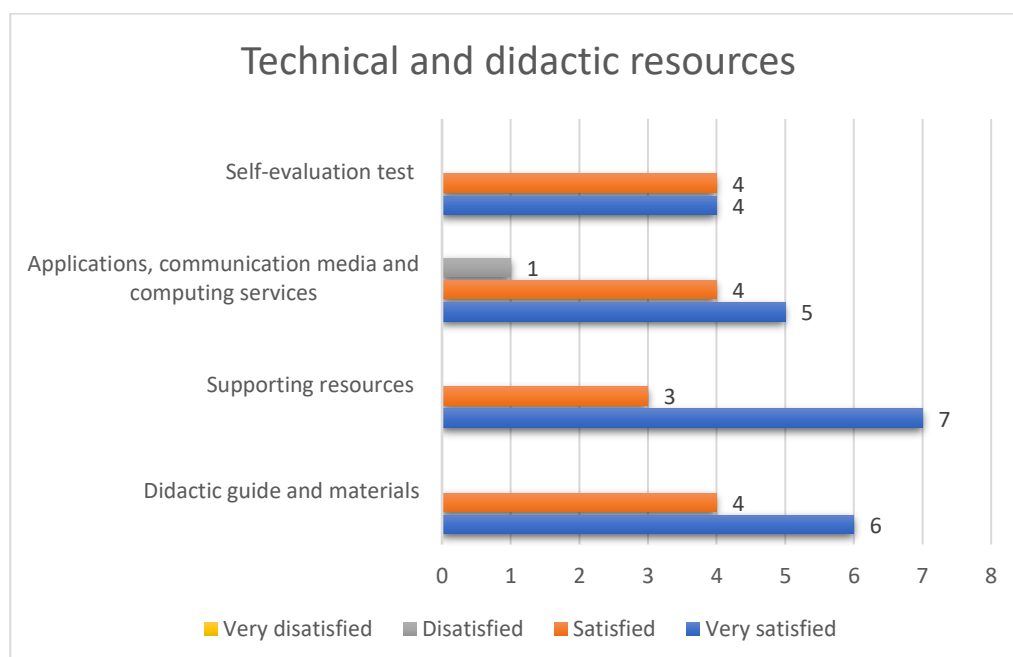
40% were very satisfied with the documents, materials, and instructional resources in the app and course. However, 2 of the participants specified that they were referring only to the app.

50% of the participants were very satisfied with the questionnaires, exercises, and case studies as they are adapted to their training needs.



5. Technical and didactic resources

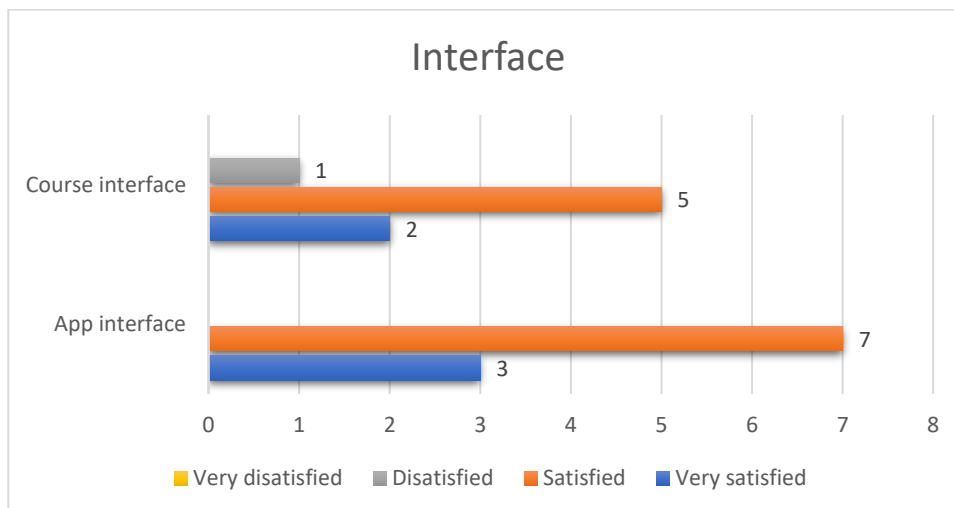
60% were very satisfied with the didactic guide and materials: these documents allow them to follow the content of the app and the e-learning course. 70% were very satisfied with supporting resources (virtual library, o-line videos...) provided. 50% were very satisfied with the easy to use of applications, communication media and computing services and with the self-evaluation test the allow the student and user to know the learning level achieved.



A participant suggested to simplify the guide that is too long and full of information.

6. App and e-learning platforms on the Internet: interface

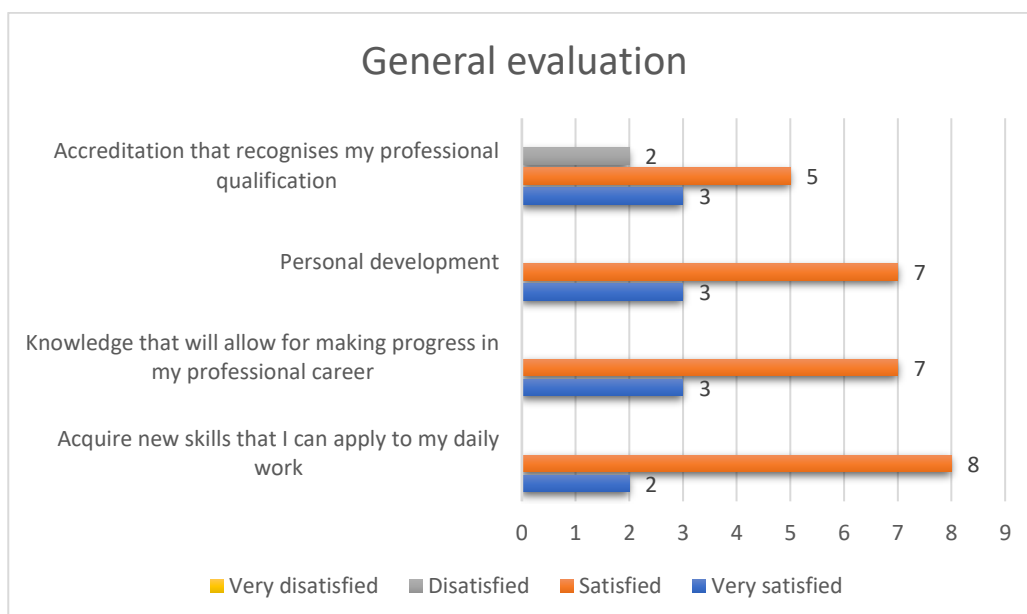
30% were very satisfied with the course and 25% with the app, in the criteria: user control, flexibility and efficiency of use, help and documentation, aesthetic design, language with simple words, phrases familiar to the user.



A participant considered that the initial screens in the course are not easy to understand.

7. Overall evaluation of the app and the e-learning course

With regard to this section, it must be kept in mind that not all participants actually work in caring for people with dementia, either because some are informal caregivers or because some have a different role in the care sector. 20% of the participants considered that the resources allowed them to acquire new skills that they can apply to daily work. 30% considered that they have acquired knowledge that will allow them to progress in their professional career, and that it has helped them in their personal development. 30% say that it can help them to obtain an accreditation that recognizes their professional qualification. Regarding the latter question, participants responded by making particular reference to how resources can help caregivers in their job search.

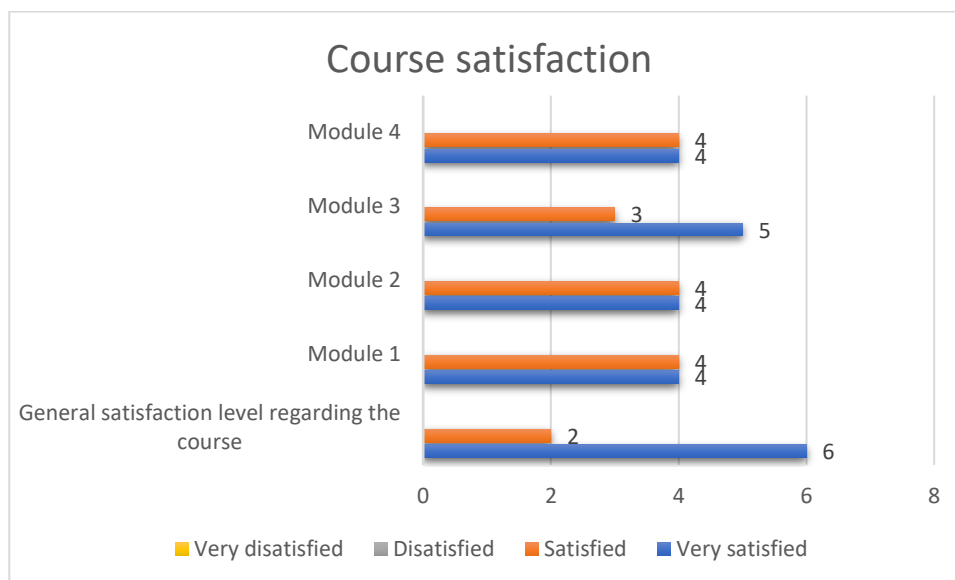




8. Overall satisfaction: e-learning course

2 participants reported that they did not use the e-learning course, but only the app.

75% of the participants were very satisfied with the e-learning course. 50% were very satisfied with the Module 1. Understanding dementia, Module 2 Specialized care and Module 4. Behavioural alteration. While the 37,50% were very satisfied with the Module 3. How to approach a person with dementia.



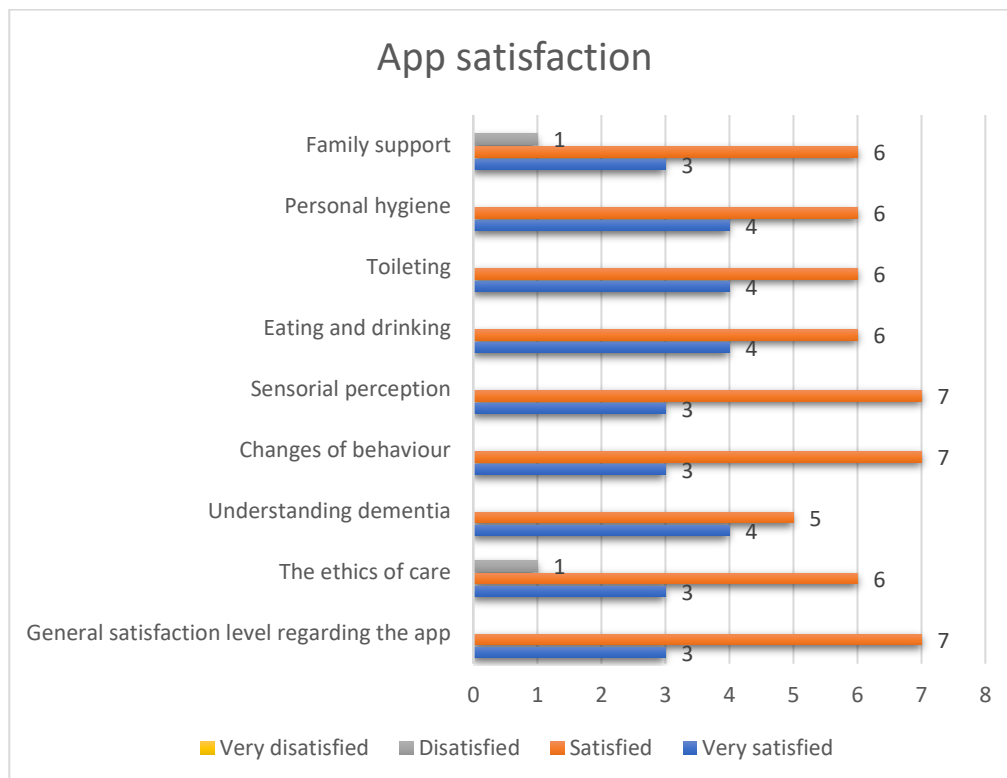
62,50% were very satisfied with Case nº1. *Sarah is living in her own apartment but has a hard time coping with everyday life*, Case nº 3. *Maria is restless and not at ease at the nursing home* and Case nº4. *Peter is living in a nursing home. He is not satisfied with much and the staff is frightened of him*. 50% of participants were very satisfied with the Case nº2. *John is living in a nursing home. He has Lewy body dementia and from time to time he is hallucinating*.



Overall, participants who saw the course complimented it and considered it a good course, clear and detailed.

9. Overall satisfaction: educational app

30% of participants were very satisfied with the app in general and with the topics The ethics of care, Changes of behaviour, Sensorial perception and Family support. 40% were satisfied with the topics Understanding dementia, Eating and drinking, Toileting and Personal hygiene.



Final comments on questionnaires

- "Beyond the difficulties that an elderly person not very technologically familiar with technology may encounter, I think it is very helpful. Thank you."
- "Important to maintain the ability to update/implement/integrate content. THANKS"
- "Write key phrases about caregiver emotions indicating the normality of experiencing feelings such as guilt, anger, and the inability to solve problems that dementias have. Thank you"
- "Overall a very good job"
- "The course, in my opinion, is well done. Simple and clear, with good usability and easy to use. The materials are well presented, with many useful resources for those doing care work and also for personal *background*. The guide is of fundamental importance and functionality. Overall, my rating is overwhelmingly positive."

5. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

In general, the opinions of the participants show a high degree of satisfaction with the 9 indicators defined in the guidelines document for the piloting, so we can conclude that the educational app "Dementia and daily living" together with the e-learning course "Specialized care for people with dementia" are very suitable for the vocational training of formal and informal caregivers of people with dementia. Below we present a summary of the opinion of the participants in the piloting related to the nine indicators defined to test the open educational resources of the AppForDem project:



P1. ORGANIZATION OF THE PILOT EXPERIENCE: APP AND E-LEARNING COURSE

Participants consider that the piloting process was well organised. They show a high level of satisfaction with the information about the process, with schedules, delivery of training material and presentation of the workshops.

P2) CONTENT AND METHODOLOGY

Participants consider that the topics of the app are very appropriate for the needs of those caring for people with dementia. They agree that the learning content is presented in a simple way, it is concrete, clear and easy to understand. The e-learning course is highly valued by participants. The learning content in the modules and units is very important for caregivers and students. The course uses simple language and the content is very easy to understand. They consider it a very useful course for formal and informal caregivers of people with dementia.

P3) CASE STUDIES

The participants emphasize that the case studies offer different alternatives and possible solutions to the cases. However, more precision in the solutions of the cases would be useful. Participants point out the importance of the tutor giving technical explanations of the different processes of caring for people with dementia, e.g., in case no. 3, it would be very important to know how to handle a rocking chair. The use of comics to explain the daily situation is highly appreciated by the participants. The comics facilitate interest and understanding of the situation and allow users and students to follow the case.

P4) DURATION OF THE APP AND THE E-LEARNING COURSE

Regarding the application, the participants agree that a topic can be consulted quickly as the index of the app is well defined. They find the letters in bold very useful to find the necessary information. Participants consider that the course has a lot of useful information for caregivers of people with dementia (contents, videos, links, exercises, case studies). They agree that it would take more than 30 hours to review all the content and study the cases in depth.

P5) CONTENT AND DIDACTIC RESOURCES

The participants consider that the app provides good solutions for facing situations of daily life in the care of people with dementia, from a person-centred care approach. They also agree on the high quality of the documents and material of the e-learning course. Concerning the app and the e-learning course, they think that the learning content is understandable and appropriate for everyday situations. They also consider that the materials are up-to-date and agree that the questionnaires, exercises, and case studies are well tailored to their training needs.

(P6) TECHNICAL AND DIDACTIC RESOURCES.

Participants think that the app is easy to download from Android and iOS stores and very easy to use. They consider that the guides and materials allow caregivers and students to follow the lessons well. The e-learning platform is very intuitive and they offer enough support resources (links, videos, bibliography) for self-study. Self-assessment tests allow users to know the level of learning achieved.

(P7) THE PLATFORMS

Participants believe that it is easy to manage the app, since its structure is flexible and efficient to use. They consider the design friendly and attractive, inviting interaction with the content, in simple and familiar language compatible with the needs of the caregiver. One participant considers that "the structure of both the app and the



e-learning is very attractive and easy to use, so that caregivers and students will be interested in continuing learning with the material."

(P8). OVERALL EVALUATION OF THE APP AND THE E-LEARNING COURSE

The app allows users to acquire new skills that they can apply to activities of daily living. The participants show great satisfaction with the e-learning course and congratulate the work team on a job well done.

(P9). OVERALL SATISFACTION

Participants are very satisfied with the results of the AppForDem project. They consider that the connection between the application and the e-learning course is very interesting to learn about caring for people with dementia. The app presents the topics in a simple and concrete way and the caregiver and student can learn more about the individual topics in the e-learning course.