

DIGITAL INCLUSION AND LITERACY SURVEY 2022

Introduction

In April and May 2022 SIS created a survey to measure the extent of Digital Inclusion and Literacy for SIS Service Users. The survey is based on the principles of *Community Participation Action Research* which follows a cycle; **identifying issues - researching – planning – action – reflecting on the action** in which work can be started anywhere within the cycle (See Appendix A).

Questions were designed to investigate

- potential barriers such as access to devices and the internet or lack of skills and support
- the current technology usage of our Service Users
- what Service Users may want additional support with

A final question asks if the Service User would like a demonstration of the SIS website and how it can be used to access fully translated information and make self-referrals to SIS services.

The aim of the survey was to use the information to help secure funding and design services and solutions that effectively target and address any identified support needs for SIS Services to get on-line and use internet-based services.

The survey was made available on SurveyMonkey and the link distributed to SIS Community Interpreters who supported Service Users to complete the survey either pre or post an interpreting session.

Outcomes

- There was a fairly good sample of languages and ages represented
- Results did not indicate any issue with access to devices
- Results did not indicate a common issue with access to the internet
- It wasn't clear whether respondents knew free wifi was often available in public spaces
- SIS Service Users needs support to make appointments through on-line systems
- Few respondents knew how to use language support tools e.g. Google translate
- Respondents seemed very satisfied with the extent of their internet usage
- The biggest barrier to access is language, 25% did not know how to translate a webpage
- Few respondents had used the SIS website

Recommendations

- Encourage public services to provide translated versions of digital tools for equitable access
- Ensure people know about cheapest and most convenient methods for accessing the internet
- Regularly and strategically promote the SIS website to all stakeholders
- Provide information and/or demonstration workshops to help using language support tools
- Use preferred social media platforms for promotion and information distribution

Further Research Required

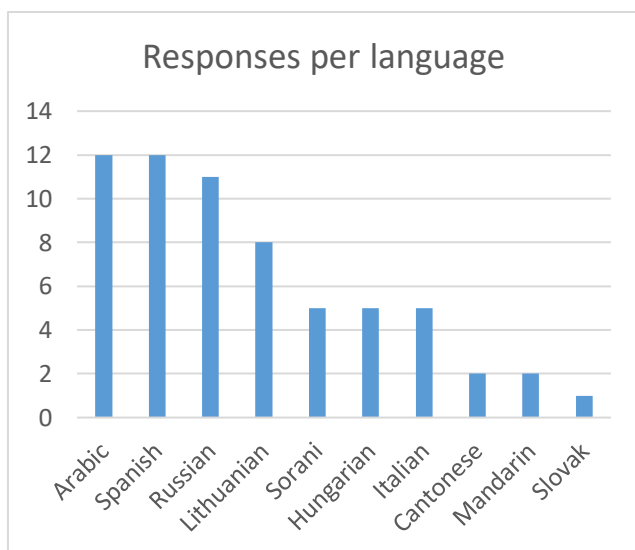
- Source feedback from “missing” language groups; Bengali, Portuguese, Farsi and Polish
- How much support are Service Users getting from friends/family to be digitally active?
- How confidently can people claiming benefits use the online forms and records?
- What are the preferred social media platforms for specific language communities?
- Better understand the Spanish speakers experience of using the internet to make appointments
- Compare Google Analytics of SIS website with the usage reported in the survey

Results

63 surveys were completed with the help of 10 Community Interpreters (CI).

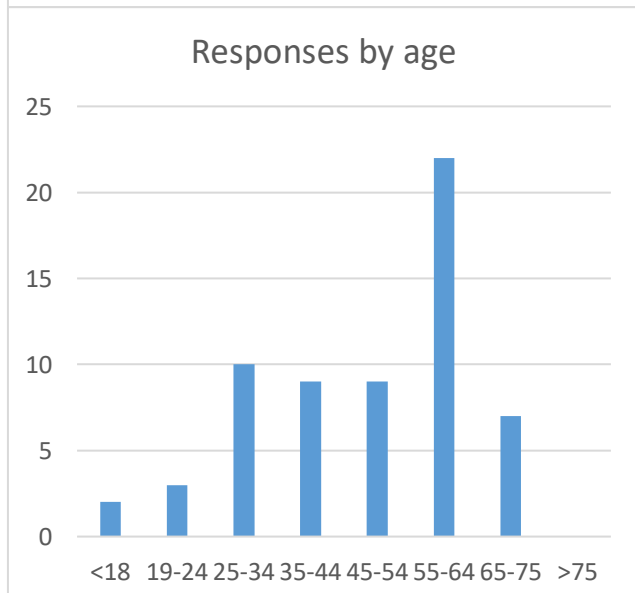
Feedback from other CI indicated some logistical difficulties with completing the survey

- time restraints for Service Users or CI who may need to leave an appointment promptly
- covid restriction in place in some venues so there was no waiting area to sit
- lack of 4G or wifi connection at venues to get access to the on-line survey
- the payment rates was thought insufficient for the time it might take to complete
- not attending face-to-face appointments



There was a wide spread of languages represented. Speakers of these languages account for 55% of all interpreting activity

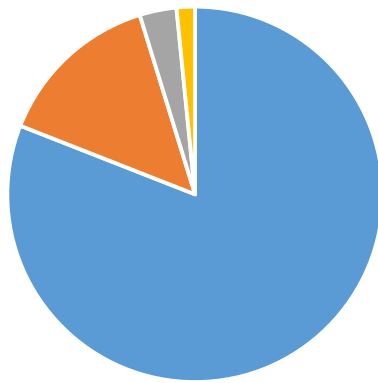
Some of the most frequently requested language speakers weren't surveyed; Bengali, Portuguese, Farsi and Polish. These languages account for 27% of all interpreting activity.



There was a large number of older Service Users surveyed >55.

It is helpful to have some representation for >65s who (according to [Digital Nation 2021](#)), compared to extensive internet users, are 8 x more likely to be digitally excluded. The Service Users in this age category were representative of 6 different language groups.

Frequency of internet use



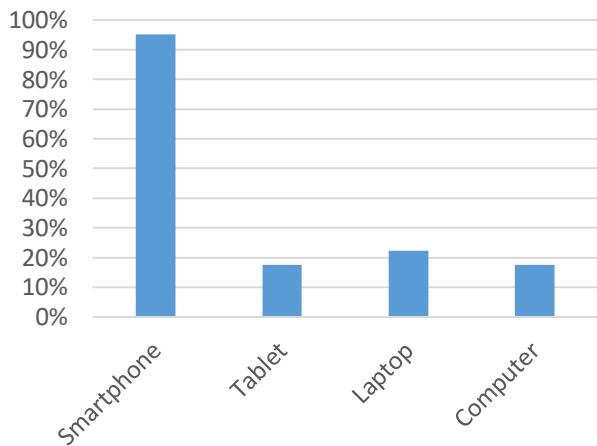
■ More than once a day ■ Once a day
 ■ A few times per week ■ Once a week

100% of respondents used the internet at least one per week

95% of respondents used the internet daily

There were no respondents who were completely digitally excluded.

Devices used

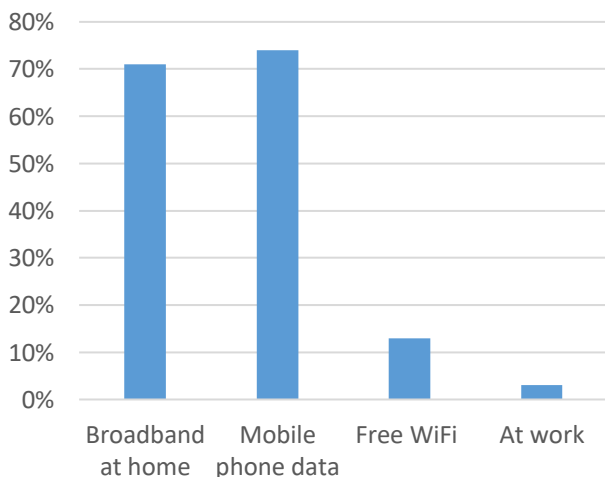


100% of respondents had access to a device.

95% had a smartphone.

44% had a smartphone and access to another device.

Accessing the internet

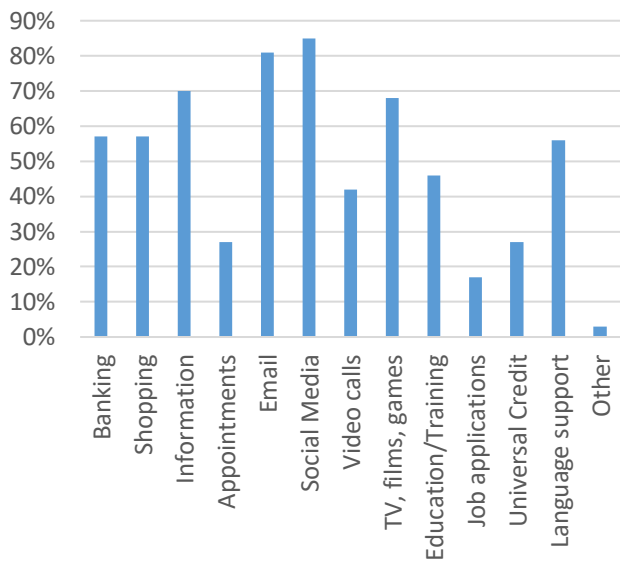


98% had personal internet access through broadband or mobile data.

The internet access option available was not always the most convenient;

- The 15 respondents who did not have mobile data, all had broadband at home
- 2 respondents, both Spanish speakers, had a tablet, laptop or computer at home but did not have broadband access
- 7 people used free wifi in public spaces but only one person, a Sorani speaker, did not have any other access options

Use of the internet



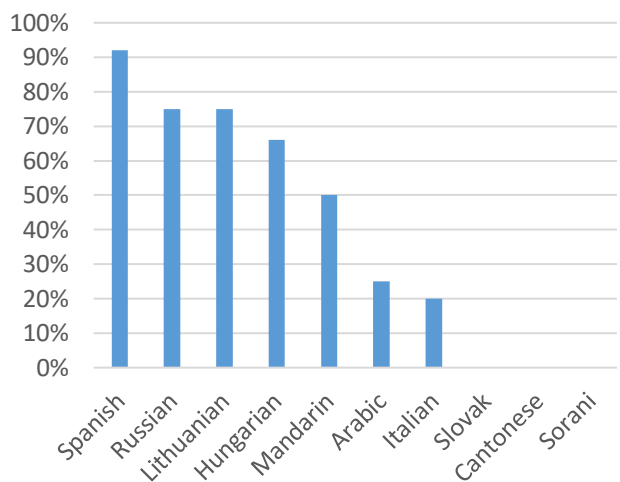
The most common internet use was for social media, followed by email. These would be good conduits for service promotion and information distribution.

Few Service Users were using the internet for making appointments, a key NHS service.

More information is needed about the low usage of the internet for job applications and universal credit because these service may not have been needed by this group of respondents.

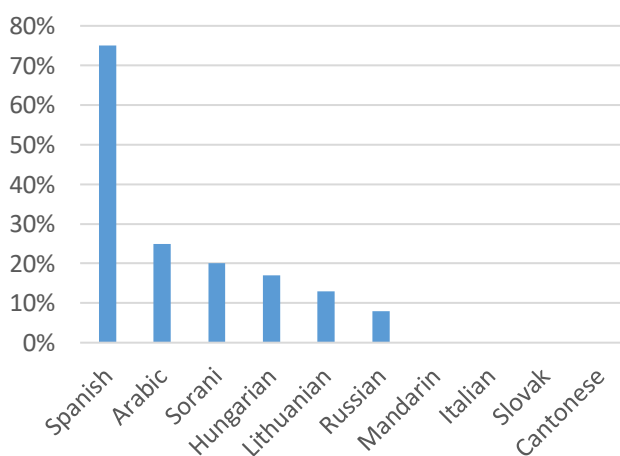
More information is needed about the 50% of respondents using the internet for language support e.g. what sites are being used?

% in each language using the internet for language support



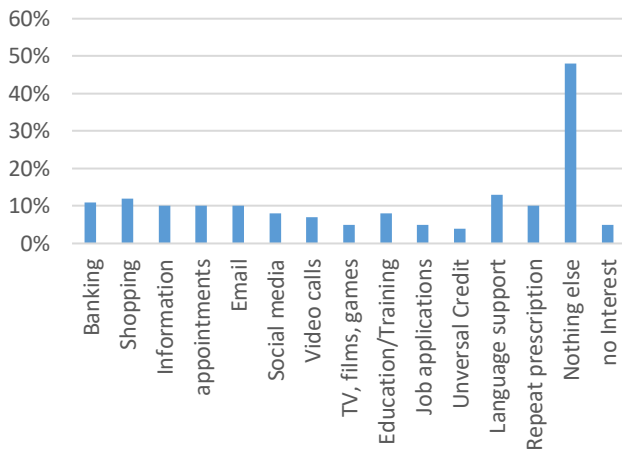
Only around 20% of respondents in Arabic and Italian used the internet for language support.

% in each language using the internet for making appointments



It is mainly Spanish speakers who are using the internet to make appointments.

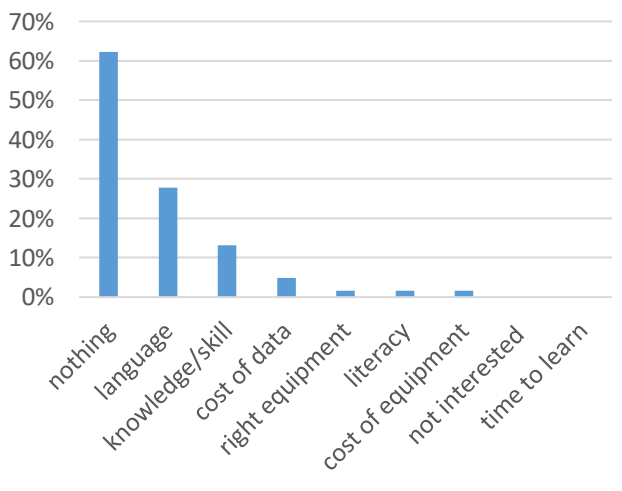
Other things people would like to do on the internet



This response indicated a high satisfaction with the extent of existing internet usage

There is a willingness to expand usage and knowledge across many different functions

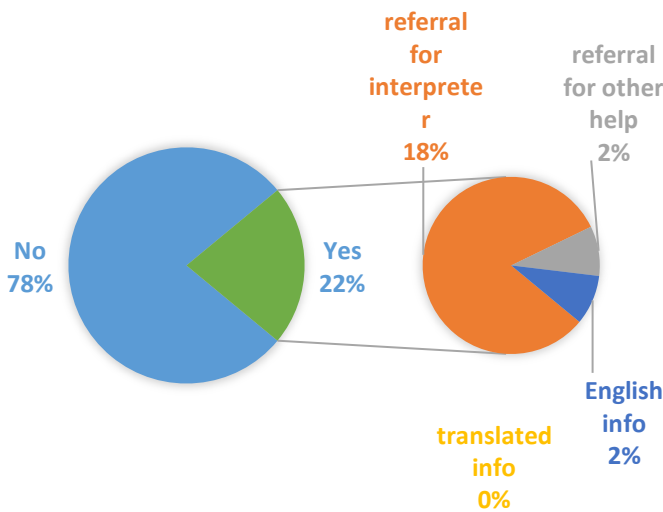
Barriers to access



There are few reported barriers to access for the respondents completing this survey.

Language, as expected, remains the biggest barrier although 75% of respondents reporting knowing how to translate a webpage into their language.

USE OF SIS WEBSITE



Nearly 80% of respondents had never visited the SIS website.

Of those that had, none had accessed the translated information library including the extensive COVID information pages.

57% of those who hadn't used the SIS website before had a demonstration of the Service User pages from the Community Interpreter

Appendix A: Research cycle

This is an action-orientated research cycle. Your work can start at any place in this cycle.

Produced by SCDC³

