

ICT - the key in seniors hand to active and healthy life



The 3rd project meeting in Austria was organized as planned by the Austrian partner SPES from September 16th to 19th 2019 at Schlierbach, Austria. The focus of the meeting was to present and exchange best practices. The first day was dedicated to presentations on project activities and best practice in the partner countries. Several members of the local Time Bank association participated also in exchanging experience.

Using ICT to help in remote areas: In the first presentation, Joanna Priwiezienczew who is a volunteer at SIE, talked about how to use ICT as a tool to help in remote areas. She shared her experience of working in a project in Korogocho, Nairobi's biggest slum, where the organization Ghetto Classics offers underprivileged children an education in classical music and ballet and thus gives them a perspective in life. She ended with an appeal to the audience. As we live in industrialized countries, we have access to information and also access to money. a small amount of money to us can make a huge difference in Kenya, whether we choose to adopt an elephant or to ensure the continuity of an educational programme. <http://www.artofmusic.co.ke/ghetto-classics/ghetto-classics-dance/>
<https://youtu.be/UnNv-wSZfaI>

ICT helps to improve quality of life in rural Finland: Our Finnish partner Tiedetila is based in the village of Pihlajavesi in central Finland, a very sparsely populated region with less than 1 person per square kilometre on average. The average age of the 400 Pihlajavesi inhabitants is over 65 years, thus cooperation among people is essential.

Pihlajavesi village is participating in a national competition to select the smartest village in Finland, and Tiedetila is also involved. The goals of the Erasmus+ project are similar to those of the Smart Village competition – to improve quality of life, security and cooperation among people living permanently or temporarily in Pihlajavesi... by digital means. In order to involve as many inhabitants as possible, the 3 main goals were divided into 13 so-called “threads”:

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The Internet (Identifying internet/mobile coverage and hardware), Computer skills and apps, Home security, Business (creating conditions for business development), Transport services (buses, taxis, shared rides), History of Pihlajavesi, Nature (places of experience and silence), Development projects (domestic and international), Documentation, Associations (cooperating with local associations), The Church, School, Tourism and culture (e.g. Exploring tourism opportunities)

Tiedetila also presented the user experience one senior from Pihlajavesi gathered when testing an inexpensive smart watch bought from China for one week. The key health-related functions of the watch are heart rate, blood pressure, blood oxygen saturation, fatigue status and monitoring sleeping quality. In addition, the watch also acts as a pedometer and it can alert the user of incoming messages on the phone. Of course, it also offers all functions of a normal watch. To test the reliability of the blood pressure measurement, the user compared the results of the smart watch to those of a traditional blood pressure monitor. His conclusion was that at least the heart rate measurement felt reliable, but he cannot say anything about the accuracy of the other information.



ICT training guides for seniors in Sweden:

The Swedish partner **MobilEducation** is an NGO founded in 2013 and based in Stockholm, where it offers training and information for seniors about the use of smart phones, tablets and digital services. They give concrete examples and use a variety of apps that can help seniors in everyday life.

In their presentation, MobilEducation showed examples of the guides they compiled for seniors so they can learn how to use voice assistants (like SIRI for IOS or GOOGLE ASSISTANT for Android) and cloud services (IOS/Android). They encourage seniors to learn how to use their smartphone as a PDA. MobilEducation offers the ICT training for seniors in co-operation with SeniorNet Sweden. They provide peer to peer ICT training for free to seniors who have smart phone/tablet problems. Members in different associations and other persons who are interested can work as volunteer tutors. The materials, videos and podcasts are free to download for all seniors.

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Refreshment University encourages seniors to question gender stereotypes in Turkey:

The Turkish partner organization Troy Environmental was founded in 2009 as a result of Local Agenda 21. Among the founding members were Academicians, journalists, social workers and engineers. Today, Troy has over 50 active members, and besides environmental protection and alternative energy, the organization works in projects that support senior citizens. At the meeting, Troy presented one of their recent and very successful projects – the Refreshment University. It was founded in 2016 at Akdeniz University in Antalya and offers a variety of courses and activities for senior citizens. In the first year alone, they had 350 students. The idea spread rapidly and now refreshment university operates in 5 universities. At the end of the presentation, they showed a short video on the different activities offered at refreshment university. Especially remarkable is the fact that they offer courses like cooking or needlework for men and small home repairs for women. These activities do not only help seniors to become more active and independent, but they also encourage them to question gender stereotypes and to become more open-minded. Video on refreshment university: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-xrWamAiJHE>

Innovative App supports active lifestyle for seniors:

SPES invited guest speakers from LIFEtool, an interdisciplinary non-profit organization located in Linz and founded by the Diakonie and the Austrian Institute of Technology. It promotes Assistive Technology (AT) and Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC) for people with disability and for seniors. LIFEtool is a best practice example regarding User Driven Research, User Centered Design and Open Innovation. LIFEtool is focusing on research and application-orientated development with the aim to help people with special needs to achieve a higher degree of autonomy. Their specialized knowledge enabled them to register two patents and bring 22 approved software applications on the market. They have won 8 national and international awards (including the prestigious red dot award for product design of IntegraMouse Plus).

The guest speakers presented two of their current projects that are especially interesting for seniors.

- SALSA (Supporting an Active Lifestyle for Seniors through an innovative App-based system for Fitness and Physiotherapy): SALSA supplies a smart, app-based solution that optionally includes sensors to support physiotherapy and all aspects of starting and maintaining an active lifestyle for older adults age 55+ with or without the supervision of a physiotherapist.
- MI-Tale: A personalized psychobiographic game to access and preserve memories of people with dementia <https://www.lifetool.at/en/home/>

<https://www.lifetool.at/en/research-development/rd-projects/project-details/salsa/>

<https://www.lifetool.at/en/research-development/rd-projects/project-details/mi-tale/>

Digital Storytelling: The second presentation SPES organized was on the powerful educational tool of Digital Storytelling. The main objective is to use the technique of digital narration to express our inner world, as well as our desires and aspirations, and the main conflicts that our current society has. Here, ICT is not only used to access knowledge available on the internet, but to produce learning content.

A Digital Story is a personal story that uses digital technology. Digital stories usually have two or more of the following components: only 2-3 minutes long, combination of voice and image, presented as a short film, told by the person whose story it is, images (still or moving), decisions and editing made by the storyteller themselves, may use music or sound effects. Together with one of the founding members of Time Bank 55+, SPES produced a digital story on Time Bank which was shown at the end of the presentation.



The afternoons and evenings were dedicated to a diverse cultural programme:

- Guided tour of the Baroque observatory at Kremsmünster monastery (mathematical tower, works of art, geological, palaeontological and prehistoric collections, museum of astronomy, chapel room and panoramic balcony) <http://www.specula.at/english.htm>
- Visit at the hazelnut cooperative “Kernhof” at Pfarrkirchen: In 2016, 5 farmers founded the first cooperative to produce organic hazelnuts in Upper Austria. In 2020, they hope to be able to sell the first organic hazelnuts. www.kernhof.at
- Dinner in a typical Austrian restaurant at Oberschlierbach <http://www.grosser-jaeger.at>
- Guided tour at Forum Hall, Bad Hall <http://www.forumhall.at>
- Dinner in the dark: a 3-course surprise menu in total darkness. At SPES hotel, the restaurant in the dark has been existing for over 10 years and offers guests a unique experience for four senses. <https://www.spes.co.at/hotel-seminare/dunkelgenussraum/>

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