European Parliament
Joint Intergroup Meeting

The future of Europe is co-created.
Digital public services for age-friendly cities and communities

29 January 2019

Rationale

Governments and public services rely on open data to communicate with citizens, to provide specific services, and to shape policies at various level. However, they lack tools on how to involve citizens, especially the digital literate, in the design, planning, implementation and evaluation of these initiatives in order to effectively address citizens' needs and expectations.

The Horizon2020-funded **Mobile-Age project**, together with older persons, local governments, social care service providers, and researchers, has developed and tested a co-creation methodology and a set of practical and accessible mobile applications in pilot sites across Europe (Bremen, South Lakeland, Zaragoza and Region Central Macedonia).

Hosted by the **Intergroup on Active Ageing, Intergenerational Solidarity and Family issues**, and the **URBAN Intergroup**, this event offered tools and insights paving the way to European strategies putting citizens' needs on the agenda of European policies.

Main conclusions

Co-creation helps smart cities and villages understand the diversity of needs of their older resident. In this context, the key role of local and regional authorities was highlighted by Kieran McCarthy - Committee of the Regions and the Cork City Council: "*localities are at the heart of changes, they are becoming '**glocalities**', and need to adapt constantly. Horizon2020 projects*

offer practical solutions to cope with changes, and with that respect the Mobile-Age project is a great example which deserves a follow-up".

Indeed, the Mobile-Age project has the potential to move forward, and its tools are suitable to help policy-makers and researchers shaping the society we want to live in. Niall Hayes - Project Coordinator of Mobile-Age, emphasized the take-away messages from the project: "*in the first place, the accent must be on what **meaningful services** are, and in the case of Mobile-Age we investigated what is meaningful to older adults; secondly, we developed services with older adults, not only for them, but actually with them; and thirdly, we studied ourselves along the pathway, though rounds of assessments, in order to improve our actions and our outcomes at each iteration*".

Among the added values of the project, MEP Lambert Van Nistelrooj welcomed the Mobile-Age's approach based on co-creation: "*considering the **social dimension** is key, we may be technology-driven, but we need to step back and use a more participatory approach".* As Chair of the Intergroup on Active Ageing, Mr. Van Nisterlrooj underlined that "*this is something we – at both the URBAN Intergroup and the Intergroup on Active Ageing, Intergenerational Solidarity and Families issues- value a lot*".

Furthermore, Prof. Hayes highlighted that the so-called "pathways to access", which were explored and implemented in the project, do not encompass only accessibility and technological issues, but lead to what is meaningful to seniors. "*We start with the assumption that we design services for older adults, but we need to break such assumption if we want digital services to be meaningful for all. Intermediaries (family members, friends, careers, colleagues…) are a vital component in this process*", especially such a digitalized one, that goes beyond geographical borders and allows connections to everywhere from everywhere. It is more realistic to think about **mediated access**, rather than individual access.

Closing the event, MEP Jan Olbrycht underlined that "*as politicians, we must think about what can we do for the people, how we can improve their lives by reinforcing trust and using trustworthy technology.*" As Chair of the URBAN Intergroup, he expressed his satisfaction on

the event: "*I am very happy of our deep and optimistic debate with Age Platform and Mobile-Age at the European Parliament. We did not speak about technology, but mainly about people! Firstly, we need to identify people's needs by working with them. We then need to identify issues and concerns that affect people most, in order to meet their expectations. Only then, accessibility to different services in cities should be improved. This is the positive approach presented by the MobileAge project!*"

Presentations displayed at the event

- Kieran McCARTHY, European Committee of the Regions and Cork City Council
  Creating a society for digital change and innovation

- Niall HAYES, University of Lancaster, Organisation, Work and Technology
  The Mobile-Age approach for senior-friendly digital public services

- Konstantinos Kapsouropoulos, European Commission, DG Connect
  European policies for age-friendly environments

- Juliane JARKE, Institute for Information Management, University of Bremen
  Participatory digital service design and e-Inclusion

- Susanna LAURIN, CEO Funka, Stockholm
  Practical implementation of tools for citizen involvement – A Norwegian government's study

- Niall HAYES, University of Lancaster, Organisation, Work and Technology
  Accessible digital services for older people

- Jonathan BROOK, Deputy Leader of South Lakeland District Council
  Connecting older adults to technological public services

Further references from the Mobile-Age project

The Mobile-Age project encourages to follow up this work, especially by using the **Interactive Platform and Guidebook for Co-Creation** - **CIDER**: http://co-creation.mobile-age.eu/
Every co-creation process is unique. This guidebook will give you an impression of what it means to co-create and what it requires, thereby providing you with practical guidance and orientation based on previous experiences.

A Guide to
Co-Creating Digital Public Services

Mobile-Age moreover issued **policy recommendations** as lessons learnt from the whole co-creation experience.
Please find each brief and its direct link on the web:

- Policy Brief: Pathways to Meaningful Access: Accessible digital services for older adults
- Policy Brief on co-creation method for e-Government services
- Policy Brief on e-inclusion of Europe's older adults
- Policy Brief on privacy implications of technologies to address older adults' social isolation
- Policy Brief on GDPR and SMEs
- Policy Brief on loneliness and social isolation amongst older adults

Mobile Age Published Six Policy Briefs Focused On Topics Related To Older Adults' Needs

South Lakeland: video testimonials about Mobile Age co-creation process

Short **videos with testimonials** of the Mobile-Age co-creation workshop are available on-line with English subtitles:

- Testimonials from South Lakeland
- Testimonials from Bremen
- Testimonials from Zaragoza
- Testimonials from Region of Central Macedonia

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This event was organised by the Mobile-Age project and reflects only the authors' view.

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