



Seniors in the Knowledge Society

**Grundtvig Learning Partnership
Bergen – Norway
June 12th 2013**

E-Inclusion for Seniors

PhDr. Rosemarie Kurz
Department for Intergenerational Issues
Austrian Students Union
Karl-Franzens-Universität Graz

Dr. Rosemarie Kurz
Referentin für Generationenfragen
Österreichische Hochschülerschaft
Karl Franzens Universität Graz



Seniors in the Knowledge Society

EU Commission wants to include older persons in the social movement and supports e-inclusion with the goal to end the digital divide.

e-inclusion has the power to:

close the gap between developed and less developed countries;

promote democracy and mutual understanding;

empower disadvantaged individuals, such as seniors, the disabled, the poor and the unemployed.

Dr. Rosemarie Kurz

Referentin für Generationenfragen
Österreichische Hochschülerschaft
Karl Franzens Universität Graz



Seniors in the Knowledge Society

What does “Digital divide” mean and why should it be overcome?

The digital gap is highly impacted by factors related to age and levels of education.

Closing the gap with solutions that particularly address the unique physical needs of senior citizens.

The lack of access to ICT is limiting a person's chances

ICT can help senior citizens to lead an autonomous, secure, healthy and socially integrated life for as long as possible.

Dr. Rosemarie Kurz

Referentin für Generationenfragen
Österreichische Hochschülerschaft
Karl Franzens Universität Graz



Seniors in the Knowledge Society

What are the expected benefits?

The change from the industrial society to a modern, knowledge-based information society

Globalization has only been made possible by the rapid progress of ICT

ICT should help to create

- more economic growth,
- more jobs,
- more independence,
- better chances in life,
- solidarity within our society,

Dr. Rosemarie Kurz

Referentin für Generationenfragen
Österreichische Hochschülerschaft
Karl Franzens Universität Graz



Seniors in the Knowledge Society

Why is it essential for the market to take care of the specific needs of the seniors concerning ICT?

Europeans over 65 possess wealth of over €3,000 billion,

- + The ageing population will soon constitute a mainstream market
- Specific needs are not fully taken into account
- Design of ICT products and services are complicated to use and enjoy.



Dr. Rosemarie Kurz

Referentin für Generationenfragen
Österreichische Hochschülerschaft
Karl Franzens Universität Graz



Seniors in the Knowledge Society

Why do we talk about a paradox phenomenon concerning ICT?

Science and technology are having an increasingly **positive effect** on the lives of people in Europe...

Advances in knowledge and technology are greeted with growing scepticism, even to the point of **hostility**

Dr. Rosemarie Kurz

Referentin für Generationenfragen
Österreichische Hochschülerschaft
Karl Franzens Universität Graz



Seniors in the Knowledge Society

Why are contemporary societies described as “ageing societies”?

The number of people in the EU over 50 will rise by 35% between 2005 and 2050.

The number of people over 85 will triple by 2050.

Solutions:

- a higher level of participation of the older population in employment
- Digital capacity for digital divided persons
- more effective health and social care services

Dr. Rosemarie Kurz

Referentin für Generationenfragen
Österreichische Hochschülerschaft
Karl Franzens Universität Graz



Seniors in the Knowledge Society

Why is it necessary to distinguish between “Third and Fourth Age”?

The **“Third age”** is the extended middle age applying to the post-65 age group

The **“Fourth age”** includes frail older senior citizens

Frailty causes:

- less quality of life.
- a general decline in health,
- less personal autonomy,

e-Inclusion should take frailty into account and promote independent living

Dr. Rosemarie Kurz

Referentin für Generationenfragen
Österreichische Hochschülerschaft
Karl Franzens Universität Graz



Seniors in the Knowledge Society

Why did the EU Commission promote i2010?

Europe cannot afford a two-tier society!

Concepts have to ensure e-Inclusion for people with:

- a lower educational level and income,
- senior citizens
- persons with special needs.

Dr. Rosemarie Kurz

Referentin für Generationenfragen
Österreichische Hochschülerschaft
Karl Franzens Universität Graz



Seniors in the Knowledge Society

What did the EU states agree to in RIGA 2006

The EU states agreed to implement an e-Inclusion policy focusing on the following core themes:

- Improvement of the **online services** offered by the **public** authorities;
- Ensuring that everyone is included in the information society by:
 - ✓ Forcing digital skills in general
 - ✓ Taking in account geo-graphical factors
 - ✓ Including senior citizens;
 - ✓ Forcing solutions for disabilities;

Dr. Rosemarie Kurz

Referentin für Generationenfragen
Österreichische Hochschülerschaft
Karl Franzens Universität Graz



Seniors in the Knowledge Society

The Commission laid particular emphasis on the following aspects:

- Including 30-40% of the population in ICT world with mainstreaming ICT
- Saving costs and forcing a profitable economic sector
- Adapting basic prerequisites:
 - a broadband connection,
 - non-discriminatory access to all websites
 - the necessary digital skills

Dr. Rosemarie Kurz

Referentin für Generationenfragen
Österreichische Hochschülerschaft
Karl Franzens Universität Graz



Seniors in the Knowledge Society

What is needed to make the e-inclusion challenge a success?

A **web portal** making it easier for senior citizens to start using the Internet.

Manufacturers and providers have to offer products and services that take care of **the needs of senior consumers**.

Websites have to be suitably designed and it is **a case of discrimination** which could be dealt with at a national justice court.

Dr. Rosemarie Kurz

Referentin für Generationenfragen
Österreichische Hochschülerschaft
Karl Franzens Universität Graz



Seniors in the Knowledge Society

Which specific interventions must be forced?

- Easy to understand interfaces
- Easy to handle hardware
- Easy to handle software (touch screens for fourth age)
- Broadband for everyone (financial allowance for low incomes)
- Assistance
- Specific designed training courses

Dr. Rosemarie Kurz

Referentin für Generationenfragen
Österreichische Hochschülerschaft
Karl Franzens Universität Graz



Seniors in the Knowledge Society

The future started yesterday! Which inventions will be a challenge for seniors?

- Reading pads
- Apps
- GPS
- Public services
- Post offices work with electronic delivery
- Home care solutions
- ???

Dr. Rosemarie Kurz

Referentin für Generationenfragen
Österreichische Hochschülerschaft
Karl Franzens Universität Graz



Seniors in the Knowledge Society

What should seniors learn concerning the usage of ICT tools?

Overcoming **social isolation** with internet connections

Daily shopping, travel, social life, public services

Safety: making sure entrance doors, windows locked/closed; leaving the house or sleeping; checking water or gas leaks and lighting

Reminders: memory problems are associated to ageing - support may be needed taking medication and fulfilling household tasks.

User-friendly interfaces: all sorts of equipment in the home and outside, taking into account that many elderly people have impairments in vision, hearing, mobility or dexterity.

Dr. Rosemarie Kurz

Referentin für Generationenfragen
Österreichische Hochschülerschaft
Karl Franzens Universität Graz



Seniors in the Knowledge Society

What should seniors learn concerning the usage of ICT tools?

Telecare and telemedicine providing medical care at home, ways of monitoring wellbeing providing a secure home environment.

Personal health systems: wearable and portable systems for monitoring and diagnosis, therapy, complemented by telemonitoring and telecare, thus **avoiding hospitalisation**.

e-Government Administration for everyone will work with documents so e-Government requires electronic documents.

Support for people with cognitive problems and their carers to stay at home for longer and remain active for as long as possible (cognitive training, reminders GPS)

Dr. Rosemarie Kurz

Referentin für Generationenfragen
Österreichische Hochschülerschaft
Karl Franzens Universität Graz



Seniors in the Knowledge Society

PhDr. Rosemarie Kurz
Austrian Students Union University Graz
<http://oeh-ref-generationen.uni-graz.at/de/en>
Rosemarie.kurz@oehunigraz.at

Thank you for listening

<http://www.bka.gv.at/DocView.axd?CobId=34376>

http://ec.europa.eu/information_society/activities/einclusion/events/workshop_ethics_09/index_en.htm

<http://www.cssc.eu/public/Ethics%20of%20e-Inclusion%20of%20older%20people%20-%20Bled%20%20Paper.pdf>

http://ec.europa.eu/information_society/activities/einclusion/bepartofit/index_en.htm

Dr. Rosemarie Kurz

Referentin für Generationenfragen
Österreichische Hochschülerschaft
Karl Franzens Universität Graz