

Conference Summary

Ministerial Debate on e-Inclusion Policy – Event and Exhibition

Lisbon, Portugal

2-3 December 2007

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Conference focus

“Inclusion is a cornerstone of the EU policy in the information society. It is a social necessity and an economic opportunity.”

Technology is creating new opportunities for more than 60% of Europe's population, connecting them to better paid jobs, instant information, new forms of communication and social interaction, community infrastructures, government services, consumer power and convenience. But for 30-40% of the population those benefits remain firmly out of reach - they are missing out on the opportunities, choices, savings and services that mobile devices, computers and the internet provide, and that other people consider a normal and integral part of their everyday lives.

This e-Inclusion challenge is a key political priority for Europe today, and it has never been more relevant. That's why on the 8th of November the European Commission adopted a Communication: "European i2010 initiative on e-Inclusion - to be part of the information society". During the Lisbon event, organised in conjunction with the Portuguese Presidency European Ministers had their first opportunity to discuss the content and implications of this new, European e-Inclusion Policy.

This meeting also served as the main launching event of the 2008 e-Inclusion Initiative which is proposed as part of that policy. The Initiative will culminate in an International e-Inclusion Summit 2008 where e-Inclusion issues will be discussed in a global perspective but with a local focus – as such is the nature of e-Inclusion.

The event was a follow-up to the Ministerial Declaration on e-Inclusion agreed in Riga in June 2006, and was an opportunity to reaffirm commitment to the decisions taken there and account for progress. The date was selected to coincide with the UN Day of Disability on 3rd December.

e-Inclusion challenges and e-Inclusion opportunities were discussed throughout the event – during the lively debates, thought provoking speeches and presentations, as well as the interactive exhibition, where everybody could experience for themselves what it feels like to be excluded from the Information Society and also to try out new gadgets and tools that help foster an inclusive Information Society..

We invited a select but comprehensive audience of key actors in the field of e-Inclusion: from civil society to industry; users' organisations, policy makers and academics were all present.

Welcome and Opening

Margaret Doyle (*Contributing Editor, Economist Conferences*) highlighted how the theme of e-Inclusion is high in the political agenda and introduced the keynote speakers: **Minister José Mariano Gago** and **Commissioner Viviane Reding**.

Minister José Mariano Gago (*Minister of Science, Technology and Higher Education, Portugal*) outlined the genesis of the e-Inclusion policy in the 80s and 90s as a key element of the concept of information highways. Inclusion in the information society has always been the key priority for developing a sustainable knowledge economy. Digital inclusion makes it possible to realise objectives of economic growth through social empowerment. In Portugal this has meant investing especially in digital education and learning. At the end of 1990 all Portuguese schools had access to the internet. This was coupled with social development initiatives such as the establishment of internet access points accessible to people with disabilities.

Commissioner Viviane Reding (*European Commissioner for Information Society and Media*) highlighted the potential for growth of the information society. She reminded participants that still one out of three Europeans is still left behind. Despite the good results in terms of inclusive technologies, the European framework is still fragmented especially in terms of digital accessibility and usability of ICT by all. Progress towards the Riga targets is only moving at half the speed required if we are to achieve them. Commissioner Reding, once again repeated that excluding a large part of citizens from electronic government services, education and broadband based services is not an option. Accessibility means accessible to all. The Commission launched the new i2010 European e-Inclusion Initiative to enable people with the necessary skills, access and accessibility to benefit from the information society, accelerating uptake of inclusive ICT services and integrating policy efforts at all levels to deliver results. The Commission will also work towards a horizontal legislative approach for an accessible information society, to guarantee equal rights and an effective internal market.

Panel Debate and Audience Questions

Rodolfo Cattani (*European Disability Forum*) stressed the importance of the Lisbon Ministerial Event taking place 18 months after the Riga Ministerial Declaration and 1 year after the UN Convention on the rights of people with disabilities. A focus of both policy documents is on eAccessibility. The Convention states that disabled persons must have equal access to the information society. However, facts and figures demonstrate that there is still a long way to go to achieve e-Accessibility. The UN convention has changed the tone in the debate introducing e-accessibility as a fundamental right. Therefore, new policies will need to be assessed in the light of the UN Convention. The EDF welcomes efforts from industry in self-commitments for accessibility (e.g. accessible DTV), but say that such commitments are not enough without a proper regulatory framework for e-Accessibility. **Mark McGann** (*Director General, EICTA*) highlighted the opportunity for the European Commission to promote leadership in establishing standards for e-Accessibility. He shares with other Panel members the view that there are large economic opportunities in inclusive technologies market. Industry is currently driving profound collaborations with users in this regard. EICTA made a plea for national governments to help by lowering consumption taxes related to inclusive technologies.

Veli Sundback (*Executive Vice President, Corporate Relations and Responsibility, Nokia Corporation*) showed the potential of the inclusive technologies' market especially in the case of mobile telephony for developing countries. In these areas affordability and total cost of ownership are key. He called on industry to continue to deliver better services and affordable products, and on governments to ease frictions on their side (such as costs associated to taxation, custom duties, licences). Nokia also sees e-Accessibility and usability of products as a distinctive factor for competitiveness and acceptance. It was also stated that assistive technologies are expensive, in part, due to lack of open standards and interoperability with mainstream products.

Professor Luc Soete (*MERIT / UNU Maastricht*) stated that ICT today has the unique chance to exploit market opportunities stemming from the diversity of consumer niches. Innovation to fill these niches is becoming more important than mainstream innovation. However, this phenomenon raises new questions, such as the balance between private and public responsibilities in delivering services to excluded groups with a higher potential for markets to do so, as well as a moral duty for the public sector to provide services in areas where multiple exclusion factors are at stake. He stated that e-Inclusion is an essential component for sustainable economic growth. In this regard, he invited of the concept of digital inclusion to be addressed on a global scale given its potential for development and for creating new global market opportunities.

Parallel Sessions

PS1 ICT and Disability

The chairman Professor Gerard Quinn (National University of Ireland) initiated the session reinforcing the importance of the ICT & Disability issue being discussed in this event. He then introduced the speakers.

1. **Mind the gap - disability and the digital divide** Mr. Dan Pescod
(*International Campaigns Manager, Royal National Institute of Blind People*)

Mr. Pescod started out by reminding us again that the ICT Revolution is not reaching everybody, namely citizens with disabilities. He explained that although several developments have been undertaken in the past years in the European context, many of the legislative objectives in this domain are not being fully accomplished. Answering a question about the economic viability of the ICT accessibility, Mr. Pescod stressed that it is firstly a matter of rights, and only then, one of economic viability.

2. **Three educational strategies for Higher Education** Prof. Francisco Godinho
(*Professor at the University of Trás-os-Montes and Alto Douro - UTAD, Engineering Department*)

Mr Godinho pointed out three areas that should be taken into account in order to extend accessibility education in Higher Education curricula: Assistive Technology, Design for All and Rehabilitation Engineering. These areas should be used as subjects in some courses, envisaging the promotion of awareness in these domains. The same areas should also be considered as Vocational Technology Specialization Courses, Graduate or Post-Graduate Courses with the objective of training professional experts.

3. **The Italian Experience: key success factors for an eAccessibility** Steven Sintini
(*eAccessibility expert, National Centre for Informatics in Public Administration CNIPA*)

Mr. Sintini started by stressing some of the benefits of accessible websites, namely in improving efficiency and maintenance, increasing market share and reach and, last but not least, in fulfilling the legal obligations and demonstrating social responsibility. He also underlined that *accessible can also be beautiful* and presented several examples in this domain. Referring to the Italian experience, Mr. Sintini pointed out the positive effects of the accessibility law. He stressed that public policies are now more aware in these domains, as well as the private sector. On the other hand, promotional campaigns also helped in the creation of an accessibility culture in the Italian society.

4. **Accessibility of digital TV** Renaud Di Francesco
(*Chairman, EICTA Broadcasters Cluster Group*)

In his presentation, Mr. Di Francesco underlined the inclusion role that TV has and, in the specific case of Digital TV, that it is not enough to make services available. The inclusiveness of this new technology depends mostly on its capability to assist people in their use. Referring to EICTA priorities, Mr. Di Francesco pointed to the importance of making Digital TV services and equipment accessible. In this sense, issues like audio description or subtitles availability should be strongly considered. He announced that the next EICTA action will be the celebration of a MoU involving several stakeholders in these domains. A report on the developments in this area will be made available in 2008.

After the presentations, a good discussion was held between the audience and the speakers. Several ideas were highlighted: a) there are very different types of disabilities and inclusion policies should reflect this; b) the importance of empowering disabled citizens' own organisations; c) the positive effects of legal initiatives but also of promotion campaigns that can give rise to an "accessibility culture"; d) the importance of awareness raising and training of e- accessibility professionals in Higher Education Institutions.

PS2 ICT in support of Active ageing and employment

The session was chaired by **Ms. Susan Scott-Parker** (Employers' Forum on Disability), who started by underlining that ICT is a powerful tool in facing the challenges of an ageing workforce, and that good practice exchange is necessary on the changes the older is facing.

1. **Active Ageing at work** Kurt Vogler-Ludwig
(*Director of Economic Research & Consulting, European Employment Observatory*)

The speaker focused his presentation on background issues of ageing at work, pointing out the main findings of relevant research projects. Mr. Kurt Vogler-Ludwig stated that technology is needed for an ageing society, to reduce the need for physical effort and monotonous work, to implement a flexible work organisation, to support learning abilities and context-related learning. He also highlighted that the actors in the paradigm change of ageing at work are individuals, companies and governments and that some companies have started to reassess the advantages of having older workers in their staff.

2. **The added value of older workers** Anne-Sophie Parent,
(*Director, AGE – The European Older People's Forum*)

Ms. Parent presented ICT as a powerful tool to help older workers to stay longer in the labour market. She also stressed the need for internal cooperation in the European Commission, between DG Information Society and DG Employment and Social Affairs, as well as the relevance of making active ageing an integral part of the National Reform Plans, which is already happening in some Member States. Private sector companies also have an important role to play: in the ICT sector, for instance, companies have a special role in promoting the “Design for all” approach and should keep on developing research projects in this domain. The audience was invited to search for more information at www.age-platform.org.

3. **Next generation working practices** Dermot Honan
(*IT Innovation at Intel Information Technology*)

Mr. Honan started by emphasizing some workforce trends such as flexibility, mobility, remote connectivity, collaboration and knowledge management. Technology plays an important role in helping to create these environments. This has to be seen as an opportunity for the ICT industry to innovate on: a) ubiquitous connecting; b) collaboration tools for virtual presence; c) accessibility schemes; d) mentoring and knowledge management. He summarized by referring to the need to combine efforts of policy makers, users and the industry to learn how businesses can work with an ageing workforce.

4. **Better Work, Better Life** Prof. Christian Roßnagel,
(*Professor of Organisational Behaviour, Jacobs Centre on Lifelong Learning, Jacobs University Bremen*)

Prof. Roßnagel pointed out the need to e-include older workers and the barriers to such e-inclusion. He stated that e-including aged workers re-activates valuable knowledge resources, minimises the loss of tacit knowledge and creates a solid basis for knowledge tandems. He also mentioned the environmental and health dimensions of e-inclusion. Professor Roßnagel referred to the eSangathan project pilots that are exploring collaborative work environments.

After the presentations, the audience posed several questions to the speakers. Questioned about the older people's use of mainstream equipment, Mr. Dermot Honan stressed the relevance and need for customized working environments and well designed and flexible technology.

PS3 Digital Literacy & Competencies

Professor Valerie Frissen (Erasmus University, Rotterdam/TNO), chairman of the session, started by underlining the relevance of e-skills and digital literacy matters in the European e-Inclusion discussion.

1. **EC Digital Literacy Review** Emilie Normann
(Chief Consultant, Danish Technology Institute)

Ms. Normann based her presentation on a study conducted by the EC, reviewing Digital Literacy policies in the EU. The study focuses on policies being developed mostly to support the unemployed, senior citizens, single mothers and immigrants. Ms. Normann noted the diversity and very different objectives of policies in this domain at national levels. She summarized some of the first findings of the study: the situation in the EU is positive; there are very different approaches and examples to be studied, as well as base levels of usage. More information can be found on www.digital-literacy.eu

2. **Social integration (via ICT) of immigrants and ethnical minorities** Pedro Calado
(High Commission for Integration and Inter-Cultural Dialogue, Portugal)

Mr. Calado presented the Choices Program, a Portuguese national initiative to promote the inclusion of children and youngsters through ICT. At present, the program finances 121 projects. One of its components is the creation of Digital Inclusion Spaces - free and open places which also organise IT trainings. Their objectives are focused on organising learning actions and after school activities. Mr. Calado also stressed the important effort being made to increase e-competences, namely through the “Unlimited Potential” curriculum of Microsoft and through the creation of several Cisco Networking Academies.

3. **Do partnerships work?** Elena Bonfiglioli
(Director Corporate Citizenship, Microsoft Europe Middle East and Africa)

In her presentation, Ms Bonfiglioli started by emphasizing the role of multi-stakeholders partnerships as important vehicles to overcome the fragmentation of initiatives in digital literacy domains. They also enable the sustainability of pilot projects and maximize their impact on beneficiaries. In this context, she stressed some of Microsoft's activities in these domains, namely the “Unlimited Potential” program for ICT training, currently reaching about 140 NGOs and 7000 community centres in the EU.

4. **The new Digital literacy: is the gap narrowing or broadening?** Prof. Tapio Varis
(University of Tampere Finland and Unesco Chair in global e-learning)

Prof. Varis stressed three elements of Digital Literacy: 1) media education, 2) critical and creative abilities and skills and 3) participative and active citizenship. He also presented multi-faceted, key factors of Digital Divide identified by UNESCO: from economic resources to age, from geography to gender and language, from level of education to disabilities. Prof. Varis stated that several ICT developments and policies have contributed to narrowing the gap. However, new digital literacy is mainly related to the challenges of social web, so linking people, and not only documents.

At the end of the session, in response to questions from the audience, the speakers concluded that digital literacy policies and initiatives must bear in mind the diversity of target population segments. They also agreed that digital literacy is a domain that must be reinforced in the e-Inclusion agenda.

PS4 e-Inclusion for economic growth

The session was chaired by **Ms. Anabela Pedroso** (President, Agency for Administrative Modernisation, Portugal). She initiated the session by highlighting that governments, civil society and industry have allowed almost 40% of the European population be left behind in the Information Society. Perceptions need to change and innovative ways to connect the need for e-Inclusion, and the opportunity it represents. Ms. Pedroso stated that e-inclusion shouldn't be seen as a cost..

1. The long tail of e-inclusion Loris Di Pietrantonio *(Policy Officer, ICT addressing Societal Challenges)*

Mr. Pietrantonio started by presenting the long tail of e-inclusion referring to the distribution of market potential and barriers to e-inclusion. He underlined that the differences and gaps between ICT users and those who are excluded will continue to go, unless addressed by policy.. He summarised by stating that efforts can be undertaken in two domains: a) Technology & services – with the development of web 2.0 services, user-centric design, inclusive e-government and e-health; b) Social cohesion – through the improvement of quality of life, affordability of services, low-cost opportunities and case for human development and economic return.

2. The economic value of e-Inclusion Cristiano Codagnone *(University of Milan)*

Professor Codagnone presented dimensions of the economic value of e-Inclusion. He pointed out that ICT access can cause social differentiation and that there is a need for measures that enable barriers to be removed, accelerate and support use, and integrate and improve policies. e-inclusion will have an impact on the growth of mainstream ICT industry output and the growth of human and social capital. e-inclusion outputs will lower the cost of assisting disabled people, increase participation and public sector efficiency and productivity. He highlighted the two views on e-inclusion – “Help them use ICT” and “Use ICT to help them” – as well as the danger of fragmented national e-inclusion policies.

3. The economic potentials of broadband enabled services George Hall *(Member of the Board of Broadband Stakeholder Group (BSG), EU Public Affairs and Government Relations Consultant)*

Mr. Hall started by stressing the existence of the broadband paradox – people who need most have less, and broadband coverage does not solve e-inclusion gaps. He also underlined that member states should focus on this priority, by empowering local public authorities and communities. Referring to some member states' experience, Mr. Hall pointed that the technology must not only be available, but also affordable.

4. Regions, the necessary, logical and opportune territorial scale for making e-Inclusion work Hervé Le Guyader *(Vice President of the Board of eris@, the European Regional Information Society Agency)*

Mr. Le Guyadier said that e-inclusion must be tackled in an integrated way through regional authorities, NGO's and communities, by embracing ICT as an enabling technology. Referring

to the Riga Declaration, he considered regions and municipalities as important actors in implementing e-inclusion measures, as a way to address the policy fragmentation and the geographical digital divide. In this sense, he stressed that the Lisbon agenda is clearly present in the Regional Operational Programmes priorities.

5. The social impact of e-inclusion *Helen Miller*
(*Managing Director, UK online centres*)

Ms. Miller underlined the link between digital and social exclusion. She presented some testimonies that showed how e-inclusion changes peoples' lives, highlighting the root from digital and social cohesion to confident e-citizenship, through learning. She emphasised that the economic models point out that economic benefits are bigger than costs. Ms. Miller ended her presentation by stating that decisions on e-inclusion are made at a departmental level and what is needed is holistic measures and policies.

After the presentations, a healthy discussion was held between the audience and the speakers. Several issues emerged: a) the relevance of the regional approach to e-inclusion; b) the importance of empowering and motivating learning processes; c) the need for a holistic approach to e-inclusion in member states. d) the idea that e-inclusion and economic growth are not a trade-off.

Exhibition

The conference exhibition was interactive – everybody could experience what does it really feels like to be excluded from the Information Society. In 23 steps (or stands) one could experience what does it mean to ‘watch TV’ when ones sight is impaired or make a phone call if you are hard of hearing. Participants could test their hearing, try out technology concepts to live longer independently or see how children who are ill can still participate in classes – remotely, but in real time, just like their peers.

The “Aging suit” proved to be extremely popular.. Wearing the age suit restricts movement of the body, reduces eyesight, diminishes the sense of touch and decreases hearing, akin to the ageing process.

To learn more see our Exhibition guide
(http://ec.europa.eu/information_society/events/einclusion_lisbon/docs/guide_complet.pdf)

Programme

Sunday 2nd December

13:30	Registration opens
14:00	Living e-Inclusion exhibition opens
16:00	Welcome Almada Negreiros (S6)
16:00	Welcome and Opening Statement Minister José Mariano Gago, Minister of Science, Technology and Higher Education, Portugal
16:15	The European e-Inclusion Initiative Commissioner Viviane Reding, European Commissioner for Information Society and Media
16:45	Panel Debate and Audience Questions Almada Negreiros (S6)
	<i>facilitated by Margaret Doyle, Contributing Editor, Economist Conferences</i>
	Sustainable and Inclusive Design - What do people really think? Rodolfo Cattani , European Disability Forum e-Inclusion is Good Business, not just a social responsibility Veli Sundbäck , Executive Vice President, Corporate Relations and Responsibility, Nokia Corporation e-Accessibility legislation: help or hindrance? Mark McGann , Director General, EICTA The Fourth World economy: e-Inclusion for Social Change Luc Soete , Professor MERIT / UNU Maastricht
18:00	Exhibition Tour and Exhibitor workshops
20:00	Dinner

Monday 3rd December

09:00	Parallel Sessions	
	ICT & Disability	PS1
	The challenges of ensuring that technology is designed for all including disabled people, and contributes to achieving greater independence, improving quality of life, empowerment and active involvement in society and the economy.	
	<i>Chair: Professor Gerard Quinn, National University of Ireland</i>	
09:05	Mind the gap - disability and the digital divide Dan Pescod , International Campaigns Manager, Royal National Institute of Blind People	
09:15	Three educational strategies for Higher Education: Design for all education, assistive technology training and Rehabilitation Engineering Education Professor Francisco Godinho , Professor at the University of Trás-os-Montes and Alto Douro (UTAD), Engineering Department	
09:25	The Italian experience: key success factors for an eAccessibility Steven Sintini , eAccessibility expert, National Centre for Informatics in Public Administration (CNIPA)	
09:35	Accessibility of digital TV, or how can accessibility problems be solved by users and industry Tony Graziano , Director, EICTA	
09:45	Q&A	
10:30	Close	
	ICT in support of Active ageing and employment	PS2
	In a world with an ageing population, how ICT can help older people continue to work productively for longer and live more independent lives.	
	<i>Chair: Susan Scott-Parker, Employers' Forum on Disability</i>	
09:05	Active Aging at work Kurt Vogler-Ludwig ; Director of Economix Research & Consulting, European Employment Observatory	
09:15	The added value of older workers Anne-Sophie Parent , Director, AGE - the European Older People's Platform	
09:25	Next Generation working practices Martin Curley , Director, IT Innovation at Intel Information Technology	
09:35	Better Work, Better Life Professor Christian Roßnagel , Professor of Organisational Behaviour, Jacobs Centre on Lifelong Learning, Jacobs University Bremen	
09:45	Q&A	
10:30	Close	
10:30	Coffee Break	

11:00	Parallel Sessions	
	Digital Literacy & Competencies	PS3
	Challenges and steps to take for digital literacy and competences as core enablers for everyone to fully take part in the economy and have an active role in society.	
	<i>Chair: Valerie Frissen, Erasmus University, Rotterdam/TNO</i>	
11:05	EC Digital Literacy Review Emilie Normann , Chief Consultant, Danish Technology Institute	
11:15	Social integration (via ICT) of immigrants and ethnical minorities Dr. Rui Marques , High Commissioner, High Commission for Integration and Inter-Cultural Dialogue	
11:25	Do partnerships work? The role of multi-stakeholder partnerships in delivering Digital literacy & competences Elena Bonfiglioli , Director Corporate Citizenship, Microsoft Europe Middle East and Africa	
11:35	The new Digital literacy: is the gap narrowing or broadening? Prof. Tapio Varis , University of Tampere Finland and Unesco Chair in global e-learning	
11:45	Q&A	
12:30	Close	
	e-Inclusion for economic growth	PS4
	Identifying how an inclusive information society can be - and should be - a major contribution to the Lisbon agenda for growth and competitiveness.	
	<i>Chair: Prof. Cristiano Codagnone, University of Milan, Italy</i>	
11:05	The long tail of e-Inclusion Loris Di Pietrantonio , European Commission.	
11:15	George Hall , EU Public Affairs and Government Relations Consultant	
11:25	Regions: the necessary, logical and opportune territorial scale for making e-Inclusion work Hervé Le Guyadier , Vice President of the Board of eris@, the European Regional Information Society Association	
11:45	Q&A	
12:30	Close	
12:40	Closing Plenary	
	e-Inclusion Initiative for Portugal Luis Magalhães , President, UMIC Knowledge Society Agency, Portugal	
	e-Inclusion 2008: Be a Part of it! Frans de Bruïne , Director, "ICT addressing Societal Challenges" Information Society and Media, European Commission	
	Keynote Address Cognitive Horizon - Are we including everyone? John D Kemp , Partner, Powers, Pyles, Sutter & Verville, PC	
	Conference Close Minister José Mariano Gago , Minister of Science, Technology and Higher Education, Portugal Commissioner Viviane Reding , European Commissioner for Information Society and Media	
13:30	Close	

