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# SILHOUETTE

USING NOVEL INFORMATION  
AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGIES  
FOR THE SUPPORT OF ELDERLY'S ACTIVE  
PARTICIPATION IN THE INFORMATION SOCIETY



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## ICT-based Support for the Elderly in Wielkopolska: Strategies, Policies and Good Practices

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## 1. Introduction

A social policy implemented at the central level is to create a legal and organizational framework for action for an equal treatment of citizens, groups and communities in their development and protection of the environment and the quality of their lives. A social policy strategy for the region of Wielkopolska should include both continuity and change of the activities in the areas of determining the conditions and quality of life of the population and alongside the continuation of many on going and necessary programs, broaden the spectrum of activities for new ICT solutions for seniors in accordance with the guidelines set by the country's development strategy, sectoral policies and EU directives. Systems of social support in the region of Wielkopolska are based on both the activity of the government and its institutions, but also the resourcefulness and solidarity of individual people and groups. The brunt of activities connected with the realization of social policy is transferred nowadays, to the local government (on the municipal, county and province level) and NGOs and the private sector. The current demographic situation in the region of Wielkopolska seems to be a particularly strong argument in the debate over the quality of life in old age. The increasing of number of older people is essentially explained by the decline in birth rates and a longer life expectancy. In the light of demographic projections to 2020 the population of after working age will increase from 15.4% in Wielkopolska in 2010 to 21.5% ten years later and will be higher in cities.

The Polish population registered on December 31<sup>st</sup>, 2010 was 38 200 037 inhabitants, 19 755 664 of which were women and 18 444 373 men. In Wielkopolska the population registered on December 31<sup>st</sup>, 2010 was 3 419 426 inhabitants, 1 760 667 of which were women and 1 658 759 men.

**Table 1. Population broken down by age group and gender (Source: Główny Urząd Statystyczny)**

Age group and gender		Poland	The Wielkopolska Region
65-69	Total	1 355 471	106 720
	Men	586 301	46 715
	Women	769 170	60 005
70-74	Total	1 356 826	107 543
	Men	544 575	43 213
	Women	812 251	64 330
75-79	Total	1 145 520	89 160
	Men	422 882	33 054
	Women	722 638	56 106
80-84	Total	806 222	60 818
	Men	261 762	19 852
	Women	544 460	40 966
85+	Total	520 525	41 971
	Men	138 015	10 936
	Women	382 510	31 035

The total number of the aged population (65+) registered in Poland on December 31<sup>st</sup>, 2010 was 5 184 564 inhabitants, of which 2 502 346 were in old age, between 70 and 79 years old, and 1 326 747 were in very old age, aged over 80. In Wielkopolska the total number of the aged population (65+) registered on December 31<sup>st</sup>, 2010 was 406 212 inhabitants, of which 196 703 were in old age, between 70 and 79 years old, and 102 789 were in very old age, aged over 80 (see Table 1).

In Poland the responsibility for social care and healthcare is split between the state, province, county and the municipality. In the province of Wielkopolska the number of the oldest increases twice as fast as the proportion of people at retirement age in general - one of the foreseeable consequences of that state of affairs will increase the demand for long-term care and care services.

## 2. Regional strategies and policies supporting needs of the elderly

In Wielkopolska one can find 3 strategic documents that refer to the situation of the elderly in the region and discuss approaches to be taken to support their needs and solve the ageing challenge. The most important one is the **Social policy strategy for the region of Wielkopolska until 2020**. Other documents to look at for social policy implementation directions are **Strategy e-WIELKOPOLSKA: construction and development of information society in the region of Wielkopolska** and **Regional Operational Programme for Wielkopolska 2007 – 2013**.

1. Name of Strategy	<b>2.1. Social policy strategy for the region of Wielkopolska until 2020</b>
2. Location	Wielkopolska
3. Description	It is one of the most important documents designating the main directions of the development and implementation of social policy in the region. Being an integral part of the Wielkopolska Regional Development Strategy until 2020, shall also attempt to answer the question about what measures should be taken to effectively raise the standard of living of the inhabitants of Wielkopolska and meet their various needs.
4. Relevant pages	58, 123
5. Text	<p><b>Priority I:</b> Wielkopolska equal opportunities in the area for seniors:</p> <p><b>Point 14</b> Development of infrastructure and conditions for investments in education and training to prepare for life after retirement.</p> <p>b) supporting educational workshops aimed at introducing older people to circulate the information society (priority is taming new technologies to facilitate daily operation)</p> <p><b>Point 16</b> Develop programs to help enclose the new position of older people and recreate social roles. In terms of raising the level of safety of old people in their immediate environment:</p> <p>a) preparing, in cooperation with the police, municipal guards, fire brigade and ambulance safety program for seniors at home and in the immediate vicinity</p> <p>b) to initiate, promote safety programs for socially isolated older people who live alone - to support projects that increase the availability of electronic monitoring of people reliant on staying at home and the development of volunteer resources, patron visits (the minimum: dissemination of electronic paging systems)</p> <p>c) initiating, developing and implementing programs for the construction of a system of early signals of threats and mechanisms for early intervention in areas of security threats</p>

	<p>for the oldest generation.</p> <p>Operational objectives and tasks of the local programs of social policy have been developed as a model to be used as a model program by the Wielkopolska municipalities and counties:</p> <p><b>Point 4</b> Prevention of accidents associated with the use of devices and household appliances (so-called consumer accidents):</p> <p>c) take steps to incorporate the municipality and county to prevent European Program Consumer Accidents.</p> <p>e) expanding learning opportunities for seniors through: supporting educational programs for the elderly introducing them into the information society (priority: taming the new technologies to facilitate daily functioning).</p>
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1. Name of Strategy	<b>2.2. Strategy e-WIELKOPOLSKA: construction and development of information society in the region of Wielkopolska</b>
2. Location	Wielkopolska
3. Description	Horizontal target: Building and developing the information society in conjunction with the main strategic objectives of the Wielkopolska Province
4. Relevant pages	20
5. Text	The strategy for e-WIELKOPOLSKA highlights the low level of modern knowledge among the older generation as a weakness in its SWOT analysis and identifies it as a threat to social exclusion of the older generation.

1. Name of Strategy	<b>2.3. Regional Operational Programme for Wielkopolska 2007 – 2013</b>
2. Location	Wielkopolska
3. Description	The programme comprises the period from January, 1st 2007 to December 31st 2013. It is an instrument fulfilling tasks that lead to the reduction of economic, social and territorial disproportions within the territory of the community.
4. Relevant pages	147
5. Text	The objectives of the program will be implemented through and by the development of human capital and social cohesion of the region's employment growth. The main objective will be achieved through the following specific objectives: adapt the education system to labour market needs, improve standards of care, reducing levels of social morbidity, intra-reducing regional disparities in access to social infrastructure, strengthening of the NGO sector.

### 3. Good practices

#### 3.1. ICT-based products and services for the support of elderly

1. Title/name of practice	<b>3.1.1. The button of life (www.guzikzycia.pl)</b>
2. Location	Poznań
3. Type of elderly utilizing solution	All
4. Provider(s) of solutions and/or service	Solution provider: GKT Serwis SP. Z o.o. Sp. kom.
5. Size of targeted population	Up to 400 thousands (total number of elderly in the province)
6. State of the practice	Production
7. Project pillars	Health safety
8. Cost	79-99 PLN (20€ - 25€) monthly Activation cost: 100 PLN (~25 €)
9. Pros and cons	Pros: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- ease of use</li> <li>- 24/7 emergency line availability</li> </ul> Cons: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- lack of health and environment monitoring</li> </ul>
10. Description	<p>The medical emergency system is used by the elderly to notify medical response staff in case of a health emergency. Upon being contacted people working in the medical emergency system center are able to send appropriate medical help as fast as possible. Based on the conversation with the calling elderly person and information stored about them in a database, it is possible to decide whether it's necessary to send an EMT, or if notifying a caregiver or a family doctor is going to be sufficient.</p> <p>The medical emergency system users feel safer being able to count on fast help 24 hours a day. The emergency system installed at home usually consists of a communication terminal (connected to the fixed phone line) and a wrist band with an emergency button</p>

	<p>for the supervised person. The staff working at the medical emergency system center has access to a communication system integrated with an application providing information about the caller. A large scale use of a fast notification system like this, a so called “button of life”, contributes to increased quality of life for the elderly as well as better utilization of the available medical and social services.</p> <p>Number of service users is unknown.</p>
11. Recommended for the site visit	No

1. Title/name of practice	<b>3.1.2. Public Internet Access Points (PIAPs)</b>
2. Location	Wielkopolska
3. Type of elderly utilizing solution	All
4. Provider(s) of solutions and/or service	Municipality
5. Size of targeted population	Up to 400 thousands (total number of elderly in the province)
6. State of the practice	Production
7. Project pillars	Novel communication
8. Cost	No cost
9. Pros and cons	<p>Pros:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Free access to the Internet</li> <li>- Located in places frequented by the elderly (e.g. senior clubs, churches)</li> <li>- Based on open software (e.g. in the Poznań city – Linux)</li> </ul>
10. Description	<p>To prevent the digital divide, which particularly affects the elderly, a decision to create a network of Public Internet Access Points in Wielkopolska has been made. Similar solutions, successfully implemented in other European countries, as well as in other regions in Poland, aim at popularizing Internet as not only an easily accessible information source, but as a new way to contact local governments and use their online services. The locations chosen for PIAPs are places where much of the community's activity and social life is already taking place. Besides government offices, PIAPs are also located in libraries, dayrooms, culture houses, seniors clubs, social welfare offices, disabled people associations' offices, walk-in clinics or parishes. Institutions hosting PIAPs provide appropriately trained staff that can assist first time Internet users and those who are not Internet or computer savvy. It's also quite important for the elderly that using the Internet at PIAPs is free of charge.</p>
11. Recommended for the site visit	No

1. Title/name of practice	<b>3.1.3. Project Ośrodek Opieki Środowiskowej (OOŚ, ang. <i>Community Care Centre</i>)</b>
2. Location	Poznań
3. Type of elderly utilizing solution	Elderly who need care and domestic help
4. Provider(s) of solutions and/or service	Project coordinator: Centrum Innowacji Społecznej SIC!
5. Size of targeted population	35 people
6. State of the practice	Pilot project (01.01.2008 -31.12.2009)
7. Project pillars	Health safety
8. Cost	None
9. Pros and cons	<p>Pros:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- ease of use</li> <li>- 24/7 emergency line availability</li> <li>- free for project participants</li> </ul> <p>Cons:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- limited scope of the project (only 35 seniors)</li> </ul>
10. Description	<p>The aim of the project was to provide high quality care services for the elderly in Poznań. The caregivers were working with senior citizens who needed extra care and domestic help. Moreover, the OOŚ initiated a service with the aim to ensure domestic safety during the absence of the carer. It was based on the utilization of “the button of life” system.</p> <p>“The button of life” is an alarm system, which ensures round-the-clock contact with the person in the program. In an emergency situation the patient pushes the button, which sets off an alarm in the service centre. An employee of the centre gets in touch with the patient and takes appropriate steps according to the situation. This service is not free with a monthly cost of about 80 PLN. Thanks to the project the service could be used by people who couldn’t normally afford it.</p> <p>Municipal Family Support Centre had chosen seniors, who, considering their health and bad financial situation, could benefit from OOŚ offering help in the form of “The button of life” service. In the end 35 people were granted such help in the city of Poznań. Many positive opinions about the service were received. It gave the seniors the feeling of safety</p>

	and support.
11. Recommended for the site visit	No

1. Title/name of practice	<b>3.1.4. Basic medical telemonitoring network Monte (<a href="http://www.monte.net.pl/">http://www.monte.net.pl/</a>)</b>
2. Location	Poznań
3. Type of elderly utilizing solution	People who require craniological consultations
4. Provider(s) of solutions and/or service	Project coordinator: Prof. Ryszard Krzymieniewski, Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznań
5. Size of targeted population	A few hundred people
6. State of the practice	Pilot project
7. Project pillars	Health safety
8. Cost	None
9. Pros and cons	<p>Pros:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Faster and cheaper diagnosis process</li> <li>- More safety and mental comfort for the patient</li> </ul>
10. Description	<p>The main goal of implementation of the telemedical network Monte is to establish connections between individual patients and a leading doctor, a doctor presently on duty, or an expert centre in order to monitor the patient's health status.</p> <p>Telemedical network Monte provides the following remote services:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Advanced pulse analysis with use of a pulse oximeter and computer software PULSOKSYMETR HSR. This software provides information not only about the pulse, blood O<sub>2</sub> saturation, but also about the arterial system and heart state of the monitored patient and thus becomes a very helpful diagnostic tool in circulatory system diseases.</li> <li>2. NURSE-ECG, high resolution signal electrocardiography is a new way of examination in diagnostics. It's based upon digital electrocardiography. Thanks to this method it became possible to detect relatively small changes, invisible on standard electrocardiograms, in electric activity of different heart parts that can be caused by ischemia, drugs influence, rehabilitation or old infarction.</li> <li>3. Teleconsultations with doctors. During duty hours it is possible to seek</li> </ol>

	<p>cardiologist or nurse advise without prior registration.</p> <p>The Monte project is currently implemented in a few medical centres in Poland thanks to cooperation between Faculty of Physics Adam Mickiewicz University and the Diagnostic and Analytical Methods Centre of the AMU Foundation.</p>
11. Recommended for the site visit	No

1. Title/name of practice	<b>3.1.5. e-Troska (e-Care)</b>
2. Location	Poznań
3. Type of elderly utilizing solution	All
4. Provider(s) of solutions and/or service	e-Troska (e-troska.pl)
5. Size of targeted population	Up to 400 thousands (total number of elderly in the province)
6. State of the practice	Production
7. Project pillars	Health safety
8. Cost	699 PLN (175€) fixed line phone + transmitter
9. Pros and cons	<p>Pros:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Ease of use</li> <li>- No monthly service fee</li> </ul> <p>Cons:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The need for remote assistance of a caregiver</li> </ul>
10. Description	<p>The company e-Troska (e-Care) resells fixed line phones that have additional functions designed for people needing extra care and support like the elderly and chronically ill. Their phones come with a transmitter worn around the neck that has an emergency button. The transmitter has several functions. After the button is pressed the phone makes calls according to a pre-programmed list of numbers. If nobody picks up at the number being called, the next number from the list is chosen. Because the transmitter is equipped with a microphone and speaker, it's possible to have a phone conversation within the distance of 30m from the phone. Additionally, the transmitter allows picking up incoming phone calls without the need to look for the phone's handset. You can also place the phone by the bed and listen for sounds exceeding a certain preset loudness level. When such a sound is detected, the phone transmits the sound from the room to the transmitter for 1 minute. It allows to get an idea about what's going on in the room of the person being watched while being at home with them in another room.</p> <p>The company offers mobile phones with emergency button as well.</p>

	Number of phones sold is unknown.
11. Recommended for the site visit	No

1. Title/name of practice	<b>3.1.6. System Sensor (www.systemsensor.pl)</b>
2. Location	Ostrów Wielkopolski
3. Type of elderly utilizing solution	People with partial or total loss of use of their limbs
4. Provider(s) of solutions and/or service	System Sensor
5. Size of targeted population	<i>Not available</i>
6. State of the practice	Production
7. Project pillars	Novel communication
8. Cost	1150PLN (~290€) interface device with software
9. Pros and cons	<p>Pros:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- makes it possible for highly handicapped people to use electronic equipment</li> <li>- different interface devices adapted to different levels of handicap</li> </ul>
10. Description	<p>System Sensor is a computer device with motion sensor that allows to control the computer and other electronic devices, by a person with partial or total loss of use of all his limbs. The system can detect a motion of almost every part of the body i.e. eyelid, lips, hand, finger. It was created by the IT expert Roman Biedała, the founder of System Sensor company, with the idea to help the colleague, who was diagnosed with multiple sclerosis. A movement detected by the sensor, stops the cursor moving on the keyboard on the screen and the appropriate key is pressed. The system is still being perfected, and new interface devices are under development.</p>
11. Recommended for the site visit	?

1. Title/name of practice	<b>3.1.7. Elderly Initiative Center (www.centrumis.pl)</b>
2. Location	Poznań
3. Type of elderly utilizing solution	All
4. Provider(s) of solutions and/or service	Municipality
5. Size of targeted population	Up to 73 thousands (total number of elderly in Poznań)
6. State of the practice	Production
7. Project pillars	Novel communication
8. Cost	None
9. Pros and cons	
10. Description	<p>Elderly Initiative Center is a municipal organizational unit, one of the first of this type in Poland. As part of its activities, it is running a website for the elderly of Poznań.</p> <p>On the website, one can learn about news, events and trainings referring to the 50+ community. In the “50+ Information Point” section provides current information about various offers aimed at the elderly in different domains like: support and staying active, education, health, care, counselling, 50+ work and training, knowledge base.</p>
11. Recommended for the site visit	No

### 3.2. Practices promoting ICT within elderly communities

1. Title/name of practice	<b>3.2.1. Digital divide prevention in Poznan ( <a href="http://www.poznan.pl/wykluczeniacyfrowe">www.poznan.pl/wykluczeniacyfrowe</a>)</b>
2. Location	Poznań
3. Type of elderly utilizing solution	Handicapped people
4. Provider(s) of solutions and/or service	Municipality
5. Size of targeted population	< 3000
6. State of the practice	Pilot project
7. Project pillars	Novel communication
8. Cost	None
9. Pros and cons	<p>Pros:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- free</li> </ul> <p>Cons:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- in practice an elderly person must be handicapped to be included in the program</li> </ul>
10. Description	<p>The project supported by a grant from EU is aimed to provide Internet to 3000 households threatened by the digital divide in the city of Poznan. For the duration of the project the beneficiaries receive free computers with software and access to the Internet. Additionally they receive computer training and take part in e-learning classes.</p> <p>The project is aimed at households that meet certain low income criteria, handicapped people, as well as children and adolescents.</p>
11. Recommended for the site visit	No

1. Title/name of practice	<b>3.2.2. Active 50+ fair (<a href="http://50plus.mtp.pl">http://50plus.mtp.pl</a>)</b>
2. Location	Poznań
3. Type of elderly utilizing solution	All
4. Provider(s) of solutions and/or service	Poznań International Fair
5. Size of targeted population	Up to 400 thousand (total elderly population in the province)
6. State of the practice	Production
7. Project pillars	All
8. Cost	6PLN (1,5€) for 1-day pass, 8PLN (2€) for 2-day pass
9. Pros and cons	Pros:  - Location in the communication center of Poznań
10. Description	„Active 50+” fair has been held annually since 2010, and it’s always organized during the two days of a weekend. Among other things, there is an exhibition of products in the category of „New technologies and media” which includes mobile phones, computers, software, internet message boards, ecommerce and online services.
11. Recommended for the site visit	No

1. Title/name of practice	<b>3.2.3. Free of charge computer trainings</b>
2. Location	Poznań
3. Type of elderly utilizing solution	All
4. Provider(s) of solutions and/or service	<p>1. Help-Activity-Support project (<a href="http://www.mopr.poznan.pl/index.php/projekt-pomoc-aktywizacja-wsparcie-paw.html">http://www.mopr.poznan.pl/index.php/projekt-pomoc-aktywizacja-wsparcie-paw.html</a>)</p> <p>2. e-Elderly Academy (<a href="http://akademia.allegro.pl/pl/oferta/szkolenia_terenowe/abi_senior/">http://akademia.allegro.pl/pl/oferta/szkolenia_terenowe/abi_senior/</a>)</p> <p>3. @ Elderly Academy (<a href="http://wrotawielkopolski.org.pl/index.php?option=com_content&amp;view=category&amp;layout=blog&amp;id=45&amp;Itemid=137">http://wrotawielkopolski.org.pl/index.php?option=com_content&amp;view=category&amp;layout=blog&amp;id=45&amp;Itemid=137</a>)</p>
5. Size of targeted population	<p>Trainings no. 1, 2: Up to 400 thousand (total elderly population in the province)</p> <p>Trainings no. 3: Up to 6,4 thousand (total elderly population in Kępiński district)</p>
6. State of the practice	Production
7. Project pillars	Novel communication
8. Cost	None
9. Pros and cons	<p>Pros:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- free of charge</li> <li>- educational programme adjusted to the need of the target group</li> </ul>
10. Description	Free of charge computer trainings
11. Recommended for the site visit	No

1. Title/name of practice	<b>3.2.4. Payable computer trainings</b>
2. Location	Poznań
3. Type of elderly utilizing solution	All
4. Provider(s) of solutions and/or service	<p>1. Third Age Academy (<a href="http://www.wsnhid.pl/2011-atw.html">http://www.wsnhid.pl/2011-atw.html</a>)</p> <p>2. Every Age University (<a href="http://www.wsb.poznan.pl/universytet-kazdego-wieku,sekcje-informatyka">http://www.wsb.poznan.pl/universytet-kazdego-wieku,sekcje-informatyka</a>)</p> <p>3. Dapro (<a href="http://poznan-informatyk.pl/podstawowe-kursy-komputerowe">http://poznan-informatyk.pl/podstawowe-kursy-komputerowe</a>)</p> <p>4. Gloker Poznan (<a href="http://gloker.edu.pl/centrum/kurskomputerowydlaseniow">http://gloker.edu.pl/centrum/kurskomputerowydlaseniow</a>)</p> <p>5. Transformata (<a href="http://www.transformata.com.pl/index.php?inc=graficzny">http://www.transformata.com.pl/index.php?inc=graficzny</a>)</p>
5. Size of targeted population	Up to 400 thousand (total elderly population in the province)
6. State of the practice	Production
7. Project pillars	Novel communication
8. Cost	From 8 PLN (2€) per hour
9. Pros and cons	<p>Pros:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- educational programme adjusted to the need of the target group</li> <li>- low cost</li> </ul>
10. Description	Payable computer trainings
11. Recommended for the site visit	No

## 4. Summary

This report contains summary of the review of public strategies towards supporting the elderly population in the province of Wielkopolska. It also contains a list of practices aimed at delivering services and tools based on ICT technologies for the support of the elderly and at promoting ICT usage by the elderly, identified within the territory of Wielkopolska.

The major document discussing the challenges concerning the needs of the elderly communities in the region are listed in the regional social policy strategy until 2020. The strategy analyzes the situation of various social groups in Wielkopolska and proposes approaches aimed at reducing risks of social exclusion of these groups. It lists undertaking activities towards enabling the elderly a part of the information society in Wielkopolska as one of the target priorities. This is in correlation with the e-Wielkopolska strategy which identifies the need to increase the level of ICT knowledge and skills among the elderly as a key to reduce the risk of their exclusion from the society.

While the regional strategies enable public administrations to work towards fulfilling the needs of the elderly through the utilization of ICT innovation, little is done practically. Overall 7 practices related to supporting elderly in communication within the society, in mobile participation in communities and in looking after their health were identified. No practice was found supporting elderly out-of-home. The most successful practice in Wielkopolska is the establishment of Public Internet Access Points (PIAPs). PIAPs are used daily by a good amount of elderly, especially where they are established in locations naturally visited by this societal group (e.g. senior clubs or churches). Apart from this practice, public administration struggles to support seniors on a wider scale through practical use of ICT, usually executing only pilot projects. Three of identified production-like practices are services and tools offered commercially on the market.

In terms of practices aimed at promoting ICT usage by the elderly the situation seems a bit better. Several programmes are being established, including first of all a multiplicity of educational programmes as well as yearly fairs event aimed specifically at the seniors. Public administration (Poznań city) are also looking into equipping the most needing citizens with free of charge devices (the identified practice concerns personal computers) enabling them to actively participate in the information society thus reducing their risk of exclusion.