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ICT-based Support for the Elderly in North-Hungary: Strategies, Policies and Good Practices

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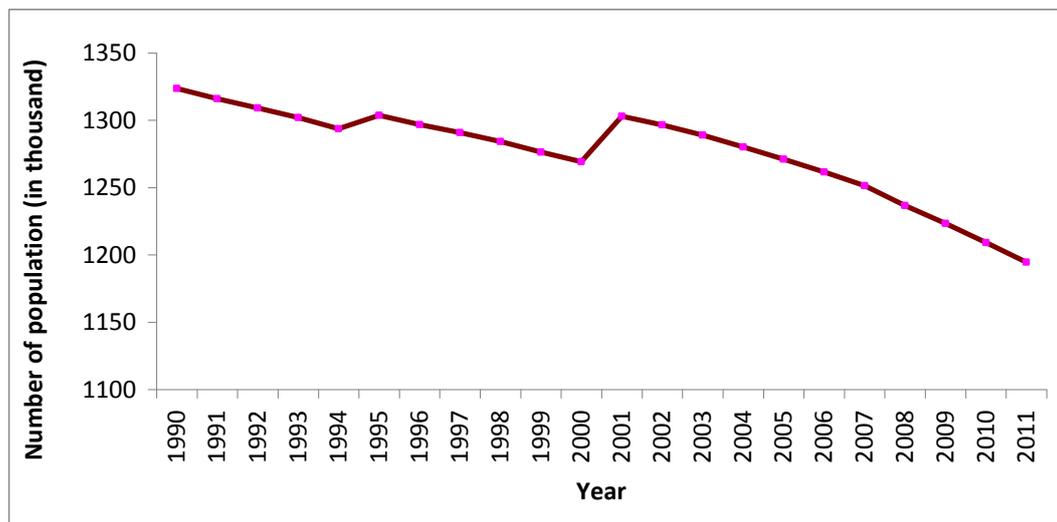
1. Introduction

Észak-Magyarország is the fourth largest region with one of the highest population densities in the country. Out of 605 settlements 39 are towns comprising approximately half of the regional residents. The population potential of the region is satisfied, but the economic potential has proved to be inadequate.

Northern Hungary has faced severe economic and social challenges since the transition to market economy. In spite of its natural and environmental potentials, the performance of the region is very poor both in terms of economic and social progresses. Currently real struggle has been fought for economic competitiveness and for a better quality of life.

According to the Hungarian statistical office by 2010 the region's number of inhabitants is 1109142. The gender ratio did not change significantly. Compared to 1990 the region's population has decreased by 9% which is the largest population decline in the country. The Northern Hungarian region had the largest population decrease to 86.5 % of the 1990 value among 15-39 year old women, compared to the other parts of the country. Despite the nationwide decrease in the demographic index, Central Hungary shows a 5% increase in the number of women of childbearing age, which is likely due to the internal migration trends; the central region has a more attractive economy and labour market ability.

Demographic development can be characterised by the number of population. The decline in the number of population was only interrupted twice in the past twenty years. Firstly it happened in 1995, when the number of population slightly increased by 0.8 percent. The second increase was in 2001, which is due to methodological changes taken into account that the 2001 census corrected the data derived from calculations.

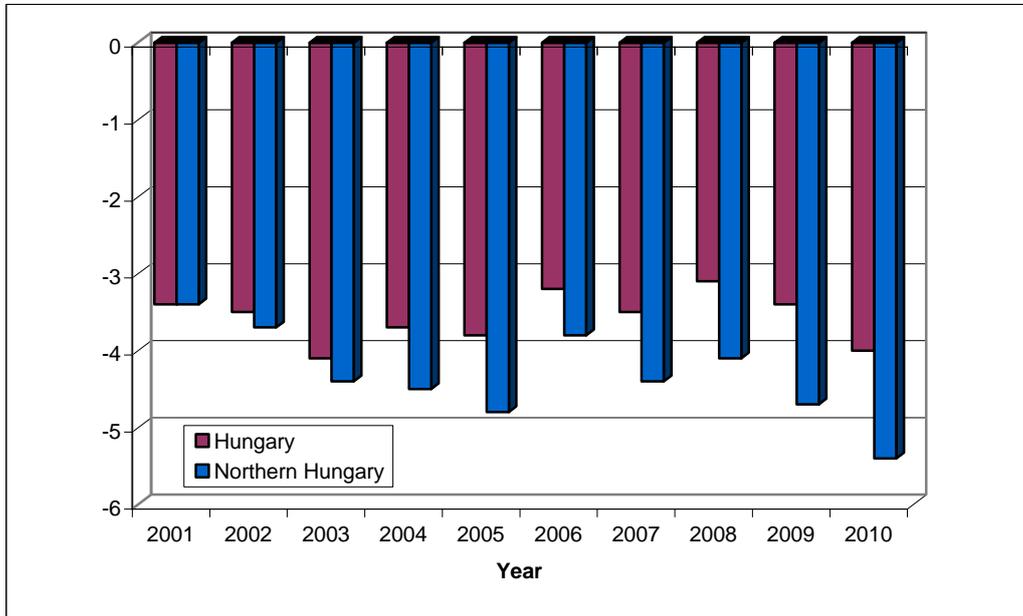


Population of Northern Hungary (1990 – 2011)

Source: own compilation based on data from www.ksh.hu and www.registar.hu

Besides looking at the total number and the changes of the population, its composition is also worth examining. Population changes can have two sources: vital events and migration. Vital events include birth and death and

natural increase or decrease expresses the sum of these two factors. The next figure shows the natural increase and decrease per thousand inhabitants for Hungary and Northern Hungary.



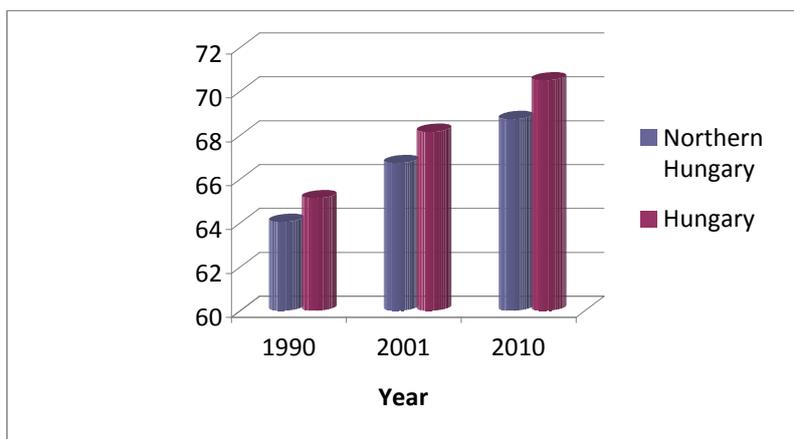
Natural increase (+) and decrease (-) per thousand inhabitants (2001-2008)

Source: own compilation based on data from www.ksh.hu

In the examined period the balance was always negative for both of them, and in Northern Hungary, the natural decrease is always higher. Even if the live birth for thousand inhabitants is higher in the region than the national average, deaths per thousand inhabitants is also higher.

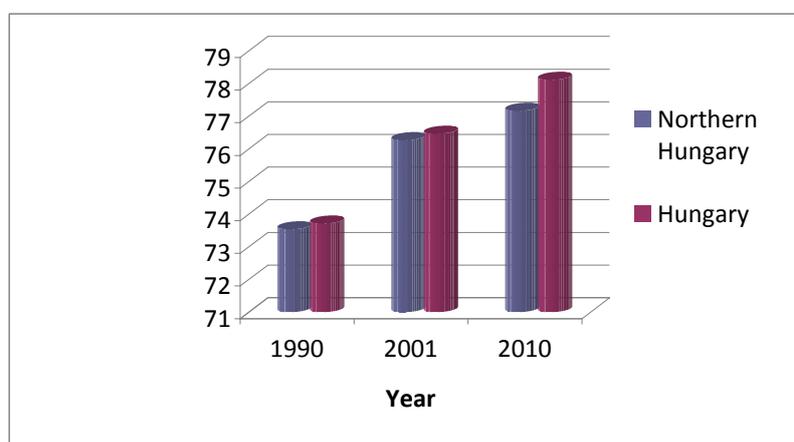
Note that one of the highest fertility rate indicator can be found in Northern Hungary. This is due to the fact that fertility rate is extremely high among women younger than 14 (which is three times higher than the national average) and women between 15 and 19 years (twice as high as the national average), while the fertility rate of those above 25 is lower than in Hungary. This leads to the unfavourable fact that young mother get out of the education system, do not get any qualification and thus cannot reach the living standard necessary to satisfy the minimum needs. Early founding of family can be a reason for poverty and deprivation.

Not only population data, but also average life expectancy is an important social indicator of regional performance. The average life expectancy is shown for men and women in the next two figures. This value is much lower for men then for women, which is a problem throughout the country. In case of Northern Hungary, however, all values are lower than the national average. The difference between regional and national data is more significant in the case of men, representing inadequate positions for us.



Average life expectancy for men (1990, 2001, 2010)

Source: own compilation based on data from www.ksh.hu



Average life expectancy for women (1990, 2001, 2010)

Source: own compilation based on data from www.ksh.hu

Besides demographic data, labour market position of the region also worth assessing. The unemployment rate can be a measure of regional performance. The trend of the rate is the same in the region as at national level, but it is always higher than the national average for Northern Hungary. It has been increasing since 2001 and for four years it has been over 10 percent, while the national average has been below 8 percent.

The average activity rate increased by just 2% in the examined period. The activity rate was the highest in Central and Western Hungary, and the lowest in Northern Hungary and the Great Plain. In the latter regions the average rate was 50%. The trend of this indicator was decreasing in the most developed regions, but in the others it was increasing. After the recession the activity rate stagnates or slightly decreases everywhere. The activity rate of Northern Hungary region is 3 percentage points below the country's average. The activity rate of the Northern Region improved by 4% percent, which is mainly caused by Borsod-Abaúj-Zemplén county's development.

Number of population per gender and changes in the rate of the elderly

County, region	Rate of people aged 60 and over of the permanent population, 31 Dec., %	
	2000	2009
Borsod-Abaúj-Zemplén	19.1	19.9
Heves	21.6	22.4
Nógrád	21.0	21.9
North Hungary	20.0	20.9

Source: CSO

Because of the increasingly growing share of the elderly population, the social directions of the country and the region have to be re-structured. At present, there is lack of possibilities for the elderly that would improve their quality of life and make their home area more attractive. In this research we are planning to map the claims and futural possibilities of the elderly population.

2. Regional strategies and policies supporting needs of the elderly

Concerning the Hungarian situation we took a survey of the Hungarian strategic plans from 2007. In these documents the connection between ICT-sector and elderly people appear just as a soft factor. We have examined most of the regional documents, and we have found two that mention the topic of elderly people. These are the following:

<p>The New Hungary Development Plan National Strategic Reference Framework of Hungary 2007–2013 Employment and Growth</p>
<p>Social Infrastructure Operational Programme (SIOP) Action Plan 2009-2010 3rd priority</p>
<p>Digital Renewal Action Program 2010 – 2014 Action plan of the infocommuniacion sector for the renewal of the society and the economy Ministry of National Development</p>
<p>The North Hungarian Operational Programme 2007–2013</p>
<p>The North Hungarian Operational Programme Action Plan 2009–2010</p>
<p>Tourism development strategy of the North Hungarian region 2007-13</p>

Further reviewed documents:

- Gazdaságfejlesztés Operatív Program / Economic Development Operational Programme 2009-2010, 2011-2013
- Közlekedés Operatív Program / Transport Operational Programme 2009-2010, 2011-2013
- Társadalmi Infrastruktúra Operatív Program / Social Infrastructure Operational Programme 2009-2010, 2011-2013
- Környezet és Energia Operatív Program / Environment and Energy Operational Programme 2009-2010, 2011-2013
- Elektronikus Közigazgatás Operatív Program / Electronic Public Administration Operational Programme 2009-2010, 2011-2013
- Végrehajtás Operatív Program / Implementation Operational Programme 2009-2010, 2011-2013
- Államreform Operatív Program / State Reform Operational Programme 2009-2010, 2011-2013
- Társadalmi Megújulás Operatív Program / Social Renewal Operational Programme 2009-2010, 2011-2013
- Új Széchenyi Terv / New Széchenyi Plan
- Országos Területfejlesztési Koncepció
- Szélessávfejlesztési koncepció 2011 / Broadband development concept 2011
- The New Hungary Development Plan
- National Strategic Reference Framework of Hungary 2007–2013
- Social Infrastructure Operational Programme (SIOP), Action Plan 2009-2010
- Digital Renewal Action Program 2010 – 2014
- Action plan of the infocommunication sector for the renewal of the society and the economy Ministry of National Development

1. Name of Strategy	North Hungary Operational Programme (2007-2013)
2. Location	NUTS 2, North-Hungary
3. Description	Development directions in many fields from Northern Hungary.
4. Relevant pages	27, 30, 37, 45, 95
5. Text	<p>“Not only the Roma but also a number of other groups are in danger of exclusion from community life and from the labour market. Such groups include the low-income families with a large number of children, the elderly as well as multi-child single parents, whose ratio is more than twice as high in the region than the national average. The region offers little employment opportunity to its almost 40 thousand disabled residents; furthermore, victims of addictions and homeless persons, who are at risk due to their health and lifestyles, also find it difficult to resume employment.”</p> <p>“The proportion of people in need of help at home is growing; The number of people receiving meals and help at home has grown considerably, by 21% since 1996; the extent of this growth has been greater than the national value. The number of meals provided per one thousand people aged 60 and over is higher than the national average; however, the rate of help services at home lags behind the national average. The proportion of people receiving meals and help at home is the highest in Borsod-Abaúj- Zemplén County and the lowest in Nógrád. In 2004 there were 9,472 spaces at institutions providing permanent boarding and temporary accommodation services in the region available to people cared for – the value projected on one thousand inhabitants is lower than the national average. This latter proportion implies that the spaces provided are less than in general in nationwide services, what is more, most of the social institutions provide services under out-of-date circumstances. In Borsod-Abaúj- Zemplén County the situation is highly tense only because the death rate is unfortunately high.”</p> <p>The operational programme adds the following point to the weaknesses of the human resources and society.</p> <p>“Simultaneously with increasing needs there are few spaces complying with legal provisions at institutions providing permanent boarding for elderly people and institutions providing child protection services.”</p> <p>To ensure the modernization of health care services, it is necessary to support developing a complex and integrated system to take care of elderly people</p> <p>“The health care system must adjust itself to a change in the illness profile in addition to a change in the age profile, since the prevalence of old-age diseases grows. These changes imply the necessity to implement structural changes in both the health care and the social services systems; to meet quality requirements and to integrate the systems. The most</p>

	<p>efficient form of taking care of the elderly is an integrated, person centred service, which can be implemented primarily by a network of connected institutions.”</p> <p>The operational programme includes that support should be given to the development of „civil and ecclesiastical community centres and information points at existing buildings having lost their functions, adjusted primarily to the needs of the young and elderly people” to attain the development of social services in order to strengthen social adoption.</p>
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1. Name of Strategy	The North Hungarian Operational Programme Action Plan (2009–2010)
2. Location	NUTS 2, North-Hungary
3. Description	Development directions in many fields from Northern Hungary.
4. Relevant pages	39
5. Text	<p>4.1.2 Rehabilitation and long term care services</p> <p>3. Justification of the planned operations</p> <p>“The integrated service system of the centre that provides long term care service for elderly people and for those who need chronic catering, tries to solve the needs of those in need whose treatment is usually long and cannot be carried out at home. With the development of rehabilitation service, the return of the population of working age, who needs rehabilitation service to the labour market can be facilitated.”</p>

1. Name of Strategy	Tourism development strategy of the North Hungarian region (2007–2013)					
2. Location	NUTS 2, North-Hungary					
3. Description	Development directions of tourism in Northern Hungary that effects on the elderly..					
4. Relevant pages	39, 63, 70, 86, 87					
5. Text	<p>Mega trends of tourism</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="400 689 1465 1189"> <thead> <tr> <th data-bbox="400 689 810 779">“Trend</th> <th data-bbox="810 689 1465 779">Its effect on tourism and on the demand of the tourists</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td data-bbox="400 779 810 1189"> DEMOGRAPHY The number of elderly people is increasing considerably. </td> <td data-bbox="810 779 1465 1189"> The demand for quality, comfort and safety is increasing. The demand for comfortable means of transportation increases. The demand for institutions that provide quiet entertainment (such as golf-courses) increases. The demand for tailor-made services increases. The demand outside peak season increases. More emphasis should be put on comfort instead of age in marketing.” </td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>SWOT analysis</p> <p>Opportunities</p> <p>- “Inland tourism, the increase of demand lasts longer. Travel willingness of the elderly population increases.”</p> <p>Health tourism</p> <p>“Target groups:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - traditional (primarily, but not exclusively) elderly people, who use services based on medical indication - ... - self healing bather, holiday-maker, elderly age group” 		“Trend	Its effect on tourism and on the demand of the tourists	DEMOGRAPHY The number of elderly people is increasing considerably.	The demand for quality, comfort and safety is increasing. The demand for comfortable means of transportation increases. The demand for institutions that provide quiet entertainment (such as golf-courses) increases. The demand for tailor-made services increases. The demand outside peak season increases. More emphasis should be put on comfort instead of age in marketing.”
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1. Name of Strategy	The New Hungary Development Plan, National Strategic Reference Framework of Hungary (2007–2013) Employment and Growth
2. Location	NUTS 0, Hungary
3. Description	Development directions in national level, highlighting the parts that refer to the elderly.
4. Relevant pages	35, 89, 90, 94, 100
5. Text	<p>„Extremely low numbers are involved in adult training and considerable inequalities can be revealed behind such low participation rates. In this respect, elderly people and people with low educational qualifications are at a particular disadvantage: in 2004, the rate of involvement in training of people with up to primary school qualifications was 0.4% whereas that of graduate degree holders was 3.4%; the participation rate of people between the age of 55 and 64 years was 0.8%, while the same rate was 4.4% for those between 25 and 64 years.”</p> <p>„A basic condition for long term and growing employment and increased activity is people’s ability to join the labour market. The improved employability of unemployed and inactive people is indispensable for increasing the economic activity of the population. This primarily means that the knowledge and skills needed for taking up a job and self-employment are to be developed, the will to obtain a job strengthened, the chances of integration improved and health condition improved. The labour market position and social conditions of those who are capable of working are to be primarily improved by helping and promoting their employment. Thus the employment services are gradually extended to cover, in addition to the registered unemployed, everyone who is in the working age, capable of work but lacks income from work and is obtaining some sort of social allowance because he/she is in need. This – in line with the contents of the National Action Programme - can be achieved by the harmonized operation of the employment and social services systems. The interventions necessary for the above shall go hand in hand with the adequate development of to make sure that those searching for a job obtain as much information and help tailored to individual needs as possible in the earliest possible phase of unemployment, and that services are appropriately flexible and accessible to all. In addition, the employment chances of those disadvantaged from a labour market point of view have to be improved by targeted support and allowances. Attention has to be paid to the needs of social groups struggling with difficulties and wayward regions need to be developed, too. The tool kit for active labour market policies has to be adjusted to the services offered by the social support system, the local labour market conditions and the needs of social groups struggling with particular employment difficulties (young people starting out on a career, elder people, women, Roma, people</p>

	<p>living with a disability and people whose ability to work has changed). The development of skills needed for employment acquired within and outside schooling is placed in the centre of training services.”</p> <p>„The tool kit for active labour market policies has to be adjusted to the services offered by the social support system, the local labour market conditions and the needs of social groups struggling with particular employment difficulties (young people starting out on a career, elder people, women, Roma, people living with a disability and people whose ability to work has changed). The development of skills needed for employment acquired within and outside schooling is placed in the centre of training services.”</p> <p>„Of the social and child welfare services, the aim is to support primarily innovative social and child welfare services responding to local needs, which support the compatibility of family life and work especially for women, and contribute to integrating unemployed, inactive people on the labour market, as well as the creation and strengthening of network-like social services connected to the integrated social and employment system. Another important issue is the development of services offered at home for the care of disabled, elderly people, or people depending otherwise on the care of family members. These interventions shall be implemented in line with the development of the infrastructure of social and childcare services.”</p> <p>„There should be services provided for the elderly and for groups of disadvantaged people close to home and close to families, in areas of small villages and homesteads suffering from accessibility problems. Information-IT and transport accessibility should improve in areas of small villages and homesteads suffering from accessibility problems and in peripheries far from main railway lines, speedways and in the most disadvantaged regions.”</p>
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1. Name of Strategy	Social Infrastructure Operational Programme (SIOP) Action Plan 2009-2010 Development of the infrastructure supporting labour market participation and social inclusion
2. Location	NUTS 0, Hungary
3. Description	Development directions in national level (refer to human resources and social politics), highlighting the parts that refer to the elderly.
4. Relevant pages	7
5. Text	<p>SIOP 3.3.1.a) Creation conditions of the access to public services: comprehensive elimination of physical obstacles of the public services</p> <p>The aim of the programme is the improvement of the quality of life of handicapped - furthermore elderly, sick, baby-carriage using people and families with small children, assisting social acceptance – with the development of conditions to enable the equal access to public services.</p>

1. Name of Strategy	<p>Digital Renewal Action Program 2010 – 2014 Action plan of the infocommuniaction sector for the renewal of the society and the economy</p>
2. Location	NUTS 0, Hungary
3. Description	Development directions in national level (refer to ICT), highlighting the parts that refer to the elderly.
4. Relevant pages	12, 24, 54, 76, 77
5. Text	<p>“According to the Digital Agenda the European Union members do not utilize the facilities in the ICT sector to manage society problems such as challenges of the environment, help the underdeveloped areas to fall in line with or help the elderly, handicapped people to reach an effective public service.”</p> <p>“Half of the population over 16 years is not digital literate. Especially among elderly people, underprivileged, people living in small villages and people with no higher education.”</p> <p>“The main priority of the Action Program is the consumer aspects. The target group is the elderly people and handicapped people. The main objective is to create a consumer friendly policy in the communication sector, where the central group is the consumers. The main parts: more information and better service, save of personal information, easy change of service.”</p> <p>“Healthy living supported by electronic health services, such as remote monitoring, remote diagnostics and telemedicine.</p> <p>Main targets: Development of innovation based infocommunications solutions in public health, increase of quality of life, make easier the life of elderly and handicapped, rising of comfort sensation, keep the elderly in the active part of the society. This programs can relieve the public health system.</p> <p>Elements of the programme: 1. Innovation tenders to develop the telemedicine solutions and the quality of life. 2. Incentive the Hungarian companies to take part in international R&D programs. 3. Support SMEs in the field of disease prevention, rehabilitation, help elderly people to do the daily routine alone with remote monitoring, remote diagnostics.”</p> <p>“Modern applications to support the healthy living</p>

	<p>The main target: Introduce of developed, high innovation products which support the new infocommunications solutions, with special regard to handicap or elderly target groups.</p> <p>Main parts of measure:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Promotion of telemedicine tools, solutions for healthy living, doing motivation campaign.2. Organization of presentations in eHungary points, improvements in the field of eConsultant education.”
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3. Good practices

3.1. Practices promoting ICT within elderly communities

1. Title/name of practice	Silver Academy
2. Location	Miskolc
3. Type of elderly utilizing solution	All
4. Provider(s) of solutions and/or service	University of Miskolc
5. Size of targeted population	50 person/semester
6. State of the practice	Production
7. Project pillars	Education
8. Cost	-
9. Pros and cons	The project is useful for a group of ageing population, who plans to improve their knowledge and to take part in higher education. The main goal is to organise professional trainings that give multidisciplinary qualification to the active over 50 citizens seeking further qualification in many possible field of studies - e.g. computer science, European studies, social policy, environmental policy as well as well-being or health care.
10. Description	<p>Active over 50 years, people usually do not get a chance to take part in the lifelong learning process and come back to the university. Silver Academy's main purpose is to provide active life and new learning model opportunity for the ageing. With the knowledge improvement through a higher peer training the project will improve the quality of life at the case of the ageing population and give the opportunity for getting a qualification in a certain profession. Regarding the fact that the recipient of the higher education is mainly the youngsters, it is acquired to give possibilities also to the ageing population and ensure professional training to support the higher quality of life.</p> <p>With the re-integration of the elderly into the labour market, the ratio of the actives would growth that is an important factor of the regional development process. In the framework of the Silver Academy we create new levels of motivation through supporting materials, networking, or business mentoring. The combination of theory and practice, and to strengthen the social cohesion ensures personal development after the age of the elderies in professional fields or as consumers of services.</p>
11. Recommended for the site visit	?

Summary

This report contains a short summary regarding the elderly and ICT politic directions that refer to the regional situation in Northern Hungary. Unfortunately the documents we asked for pointed out that the connection between ICT-sector and elderly people appear just as a soft factor.

The policy for elderly (and ICT-sector) does not appear as a core factor either, just a complementary. The instruments of ICT-sector are not used by a wide range of elderly. The main target of the reviewed national policies is to incentive using of that by elderly to improve the quality of life, to reach the public health service or stay in the labour market. The connection between ICT and elderly people is not a separate policy, it is just one part of infrastructure or public health care development.

It also inadequate that no good practices of supporting elderly with ICT have been identified in the region. Therefore it is recommended that efforts are undertaken to transfer solutions to North Hungary in order to establish services that increase the quality of life of the elder citizens.