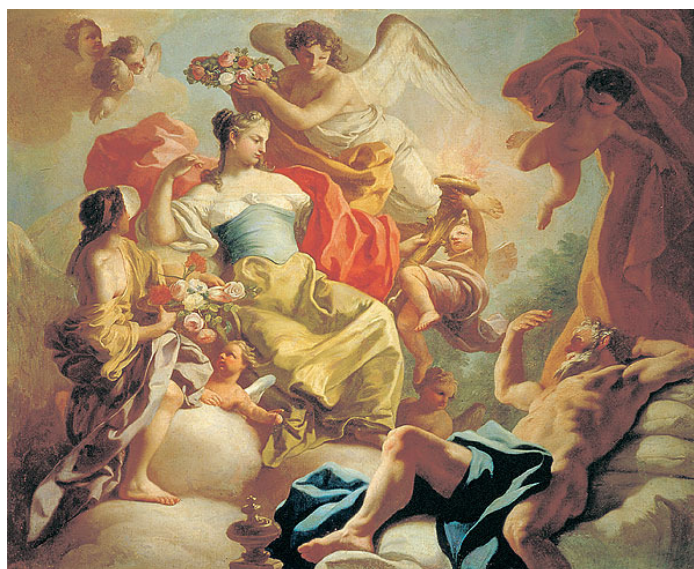


SENIOR

SOCIAL ETHICAL AND PRIVACY NEEDS IN ICT FOR OLDER PEOPLE: A DIALOGUE ROADMAP



Francesco de Mura
Aurora, goddess of the morning and Tithonus, Prince of Troy
Museo e Gallerie Nazionali di Capodimonte, Napoli

In Greek mythology, Tithonus was the lover of Eos, the dawn. Eos kidnapped him to be her lover. When Eos asked Zeus for Tithonus to be immortal, she forgot to ask for eternal youth. Tithonus indeed lived forever "but when loathsome old age pressed full upon him, and he could not move nor lift his limbs, this seemed to her in her heart the best counsel: she laid him in a room and put to the shining doors" (Homeric Hymn to Aphrodite)

Socio-Anthropological Workshop on ICT and Ageing

Meeting Room 0/82 in BU-31
Avenue de Beaulieu 31, 1160 Brussels, Belgium

June 2 & 3, 2008

BACKGROUND DESCRIPTION

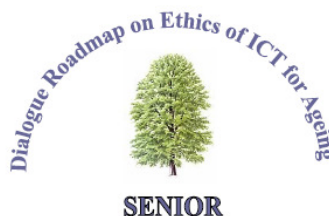
Assistive Technologies in the last few years have become easier and easier to use and therefore, they are more and more familiar to many senior European citizens by now. These technologies aim to support the day to day activities of older (or disabled) people to supplement their loss of independence. Thus, there are no doubts that on the one hand these technologies can dramatically improve the living conditions of older people, but on the other hand they can be driven, at least to some extent, by ageism. Thus, at the end instead of modifying processes of exclusion, they could just try to make senior citizens more acceptable. This negative view of ageing can distort the original aim and function of assistive technologies and can make the issue ethically problematic. SENIOR takes seriously this problem and intends to emphasize the distinction between personal independence, prolonging active participation in society and integrated care processes for the ageing population.

SOCIAL ETHICAL AND PRIVACY NEEDS IN ICT FOR OLDER PEOPLE: A DIALOGUE ROADMAP is a 24 month support action which aims to provide a systematic assessment of the social, ethical, and privacy issues involved in ICT and Ageing, to understand what lessons should be learned from current technological trends, and to plan strategies for governing future trends. The project takes seriously the distinction between 1) personal independence, 2) prolonging active participation in society and 3) integrated care processes for the ageing population. SENIOR's starting point is definitely the distinction between these three elements which contribute to the welfare of the elderly. The basic assumption of the project is that technology is not meant only for integrated care processes, but also, and often chiefly, for personal independence and prolonging active participation in society. This project aims to provide a systematic assessment of the social, ethical and privacy issues involved in ICT and Ageing, and tries to understand what lessons should be learned from current technological trends in order to plan strategies for governing future trends. SENIOR has three main principles, and this determines the main phases of this project: its goal is inclusion, dialogue is its instrument and design is the final target.

SENIOR is part of the wider EU strategy established by the Lisbon Treaty aiming at the eradication of poverty and social exclusion by 2010. The Riga Ministerial Declaration¹ on e-inclusion of June 2006 has then identified six themes which the European Commission uses to foster social inclusion: e-Accessibility (make ICT accessible to all), e-Ageing (empower older people to fully participate in the economy and society), e-Competences (equip citizens with the knowledge, skills and lifelong learning), Socio-Cultural e-Inclusion (enable minorities, migrants and marginalized young people), Geographical e-Inclusion (increase the social and economic well being of people in economically disadvantaged areas with the help of ICT), and Inclusive e-Government (encouraging increased public participation in democracy).

SENIOR contribution to policy implementation is twofold. On one hand SENIOR aims to describe what ethical and privacy perspectives are currently applied to ICT for inclusion. This objective will be achieved through a series of thematic expert meetings. In its own area, each meeting will (i) define ICT systemic solutions and technology trends; (ii) discuss different ethical and privacy approaches; (iii) weigh the tradeoffs between privacy, ethics and technological innovation. On the other hand the project aims to identify what ICT services and solutions are more important to prevent exclusion and promote inclusion of senior citizens and to plan how ethics and privacy principles could be incorporated in technology design as well as what actions should be taken. This will be achieved by road-mapping (2020 key actions, priorities for investments and investment strategies, resources, risks, and milestones).

The main outcome of the project will be the Roadmap (2020) that is expected to drive future development and deployment of the ICT for ageing while incorporating ethical a privacy principle as per the EU Charter of fundamental rights.



¹ Further policy documents that constitute SENIOR background are COM (2005) 425/F of 13/09/2005; COM (2007) 332/F of 14/06/2007 and the COMMISSION STAFF WORKING PAPER [COM(2007)332] – Brussels, 14 June 2007 SEC (2007) 811

SOCIO-ANTHROPOLOGICAL WORKSHOP: OBJECTIVES AND THEMES

The main objective is to understand the social meaning² of ICT for ageing. We aim to understand what people expect from this technology and what values, beliefs, hopes and hype are embedded in information technology for older people. We aim also to understand how information technology is changing people's perspective on ageing, how people's standards about ageing (ageism included) have been influenced by ICT advances. Understanding societal factors that drive inclusion and exclusion processes is the core of e-Inclusion and preliminary analysis of ICT for elderly and inclusion processes is vital for addressing ethical issues.

The objective of the workshop is to examine socio-anthropological themes related to ICT and ageing, and to address the social and cultural meanings of this mega-trend.

Three main themes will be explored during the socio-anthropological workshop:

Human-ICT Interaction in the Ageing context: In their influential book, the Media Equation (1996), Nass and Reeves demonstrated convincingly that interactions with ICTs are identical to real social relationships. People equate media with real life, in a fundamentally social and natural way, and way not even realise that they are doing so. One of the transformations brought about by the ageing of society is the total reorganisation of social ties. Trends in family structures (e.g., declining birth rates, tendency towards families with fewer members, single-parent families, and childless, rather than extended, families, etc.) and trends in mobility, which increase physical distance between generations of a family, have resulted in weakening social ties and networks, and this is likely to continue. These trends are leading to a reshaping of civil society characterised by new forms of communication. Social structures are moving in an increasingly virtual direction: phone calls instead of visits, e-mails instead of phone calls, instant messages instead of e-mails, from instant messages to monitoring the ambient environment and from there to assuming that the ambient environment alerts us when 'necessary'. The widespread deployment of intelligent user interfaces will probably be a critical factor in shaping the future. Human-ICT interaction will probably become a real component of individuals' social network. How is this trend going to impact on older people? Is this going to impair or to improve their capacity for establishing social connections?

Techno-animism: Marc Pesce (2000), one of the early pioneers in virtual reality, speaks of 'techno-animism' to describe a world pervaded by computational objects. Humans have a deeply intuitive tendency to project human features onto non-human aspects of the environment, and we commonly perceive intentional agency even in inanimate objects. Animism is a feeling or belief that our environment is saturated by invisible communication between the things that surround us in our daily lives. That is, things have the ability to observe, gather knowledge, to communicate and perform actions in the real world. This is actually what smart networked technologies promise to do. Blogjects is a neologism introduced to describe objects that blog, a network of tangible, mobile, chatty objects enabled by miniaturisation, the ubiquity of consumer electronics and a pervasive Internet. Techno-animism can have deep a psychological impact on older people who are expected to be less able to cope with this experience. Special attention should be paid to people suffering from any mental impairment or disturbances. Still more important is to analyse in depth the effects of techno-animism on older people's experiences of exclusion, isolation and loneliness. Are techno-objects destined to become "man's best friend"?

Homeliness: "Home" means the house but also everything that is in and around it, as well as the people, and the sense of satisfaction and contentment that all these convey. Since about 1985, starting with the TRON-house in Japan, houses (or at least flats) were built and equipped with modern technology. Examples for automated or smart homes in Europe are "Futurelife" (Switzerland), "Homelab" (Netherlands) and e2-home (Sweden). Smart homes might raise issues because they are exposed to public view. The distinction between 'private' and 'public', and correspondingly between 'insiders' and 'outsiders', is a key criterion in the meaning of home. Emotions, experiences and feelings occur in space and inevitably become associated with various highly charged places; feelings cannot occur "out of space". This hold true in particular for the elderly. Memories of events such as marriage, bereavement, having children and transitions into adulthood are tied to the physical home. Likewise, these events often trigger physical relocations or major conceptual redefinitions of home space. Home is linked to each individual's inner private sphere, to one's sense of self-history and personal identity. In many cases, home based care can be both more comfortable and convenient for senior citizens and less costly for providers. Yet this change implies some organisational changes in services, for instance, by moving the responsibility of care from health institutions to the family, elderly individual and service sector. The introduction of smart home services might impair the "human" quality of services. "Technology should not be substituted for human contacts, and citizens who ask for human warmth and care, should not be given machines," said the EPTA report on ICTs and elderly people. How can this risk be countered?

² Andrew Feenberg calls "social meaning" the social ends that justify a technology. Social meaning is the reason why a society develops one technology instead of another, and why, among a batch of technical viable options, only some are chosen by social actors. Feenberg, A., *Questioning Technology*, Routledge, New York, 1999.



SOCIO-ANTHROPOLOGICAL WORKSHOP

AGENDA 2nd June 2008

10:00	<i>Registration</i>	
Morning Session		
10:30	Welcome Remarks	Chair: Trine F. Sørensen , In-JeT, SENIOR Project Partner Silvia Bojinova , DG INFSO, EC, SENIOR Project Officer
10:35	Introducing the SENIOR project	Emilio Mordini , CSSC, SENIOR Project co-ordinator
10:50	Ethical Aspects of Inclusion in the Information Society	Paul Timmers , Head of Unit H3, ICT for Inclusion, DG INFSO, EC
11:00	Opening Key Note Lecture: ICT and the Social Inclusion of Older Adults: Can the Social Sciences Contribute to New Solutions to Old Problems?	Victor W. Marshall , Professor of Sociology and Director, Institute on Ageing, University of North Carolina, US
11:30	Panel I: Human-ICT Interaction in the Ageing Context <i>How is ICT changing or reproducing social relations and how does this affect the elderly?</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dr. Mary P. Zajicek, Reader in Computer Science, School of Computing and Mathematical Sciences, Oxford Brookes University • Stef Steyaert, Senior Researcher, Flemish Institute for Science and Technology Assessment. 	
12:30	Questions and Discussion	
13:00	<i>Lunch</i>	
Afternoon Session		
14:00	Panel II: Techno-animism <i>How are the elderly's experiences of exclusion, isolation and loneliness affected by the notion of techno-animism?</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Øyvind Nøhr, Assistant Professor, Lillehammer University College • Peter Lutz, Marie Curie Research Fellow, Philips Research Europe, Media Interaction 	
15:00	Questions and Discussion	
15:30	<i>Break</i>	
16:00	Panel III: Homeliness <i>Smart home: Independence or isolation for the elderly?</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dr. Athena Mclean, Senior Researcher at the Irish Centre for Social Gerontology, National University of Ireland, Galway and TRIL • Isabel Mota Borges, Policy Officer, AGE – The European Older People's Platform 	
17:00	Questions and Discussion	
17:30	Final Remarks and Agenda for Tomorrow	
17:45	<i>Adjourn</i>	
19:30	DINNER at La Belle Maraîchère , Place Ste-Catherine 11A, 1000 Brussels All Welcome!	



SOCIO-ANTHROPOLOGICAL WORKSHOP

AGENDA 3rd June 2008

9:00	<i>Welcome</i>	
Morning Session		
9:30	Welcome Remarks: Objectives for the day	Chair: Trine F. Sørensen, In-JeT, SENIOR Project Partner
09:40	Key Note: ICT and Ageing: Ethical Perspectives	Peter Wintlev-Jensen , Head of Sector, DG Information Society, Unit H.3 - ICT for Inclusion, EC
10:10	Round Table Discussion on issues raised during Day One Panel: All speakers from Day One	
11:10	<i>Break</i>	
11:30	Discussion	
12:15	Summary and conclusion	
12:30	<i>Adjourn</i>	

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5. **Antonio M. D’Amico**, *Inclusion Alliance For Europe – Geie*, RU
6. **Jean-Paul de Cros Péronard**, *University of Southern Denmark*, DK
7. **Paul de Hert**, *Vrije Universiteit Brussels*, BE
8. **Maria Carla de Maggio**, *European Business Associates Srl*, IT
9. **Serge Gutwirth**, *Vrije Universiteit Brussels*, BE
10. **Paul de Kervasdoue**, *AQUIS*, FR
11. **Peter Lutz**, *Philips Research Europe, Media Interaction*, NL
12. **Eugenio Mantovani**, *Vrije Universiteit Brussels*, BE
13. **Victor Marshall**, *The Institute on Ageing*, US
14. **Athena Mclean**, *Centre for Social Gerontology, National University of Ireland, Galway*, IE
15. **Emilio Mordini**, *Centre for Science, Society and Citizenship*, IT
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