

Editorial

Welcome to the eight edition of the CitizenFirst Newsletter. I am delighted to invite you all to participate in the CitizenFirst Final International Conference which is taking place in Ennis, Co. Clare, Mid-West Ireland on 25-26 September 2008. This event is a follow-on from the Conference held in Ieper, Belgium last September.



The theme of the Conference is "Citizen First...using Technology to Include ALL Citizens" and will be the final event of the CitizenFirst Project which will finish on 31 October 2008. I am delighted however to see many of the CitizenFirst Partners and Associated Partners working on initiatives for the new INTERREG IV Programme and I wish them the best of luck in securing funding.

In May of this year we help a second eInclusion Workshop in Eindhoven, The Netherlands, outcomes of which are included in the newsletter.

Finally I would urge all you to consider attending the CitizenFirst Conference in September as you will see some real experiences to Social Inclusion through ICT from all the CitizenFirst NWE Regions.

Final International CitizenFirst Conference

"Citizen First...using Technology to include ALL Citizens"

Old Ground Hotel, Ennis, Co.Clare, IRELAND, 25-26 Sep 2008

This Conference is aimed at public, local & voluntary stakeholders working on providing solutions to social exclusion in our communities by exploring the benefits of Information Communications Technologies.

The CitizenFirst activities to date have successfully concentrated on refocusing local and regional activities from organisation driven services to citizen centric services. The project has led to the successful implementation of services which focus and are deployed around the stated and diverse needs of citizens. However, despite the success of the current pilots the consortium acknowledges that some target groups are still at risk of further exclusion with the digitalisation of public services. In the last year, the project has been working closely with these target groups to further gain the participation of hard to reach, marginalized groups and people with special needs.

The Conference should be of interest to all regional or local authority officers and politicians involved in, or concerned with, social inclusion, e-inclusion, e-democracy, e-participation and people empowerment. The Conference Programme and Booking Form is attached. More information about transport, accommodation and conference content is available on the project website www.citizen-first.net.

For information on the Town of Ennis & Mid-West Ireland please visit www.discoverireland.ie/shannon.aspx

Eindhoven eInclusion Pilots

The Eindhoven Regional Government, supported by the local council of Hoogeloon and in cooperation with representatives of the Care cooperation Hoogeloon, the Catholic Union for the Elderly and the Point of support for the elderly, have realized an internet website www.hoogeloon.info. This website consists of a local portal with information on clubs and organizations in Hoogeloon and it also contains links to information and services of professional service providers. The local government, the local tourism office, the bank (Rabobank) and the Daily paper of the Eindhoven Region (Eindhovens Dagblad) are offering more and more information online and www.hoogeloon.info uses pictograms to make this easily accessible. Elderly with no internet experience can use this portal to explore the web without too many thresholds.

In the past few months the pilot in Hoogeloon has been completed with the delivery of two public internet access points which are equipped with a touch screen to provide the most easy access. The local portal www.hoogeloon.info is the start page at these access points.

The sustainability of this initiative has also been secured in the past few months by the working group which was developing www.hoogeloon.info. They have set up a Virtueel Plein Foundation (Virtueel Plein = Virtual Town Square) which will take care of the further development of the portal and the services provided by it. With this development this pilot has become a perfect example of community ownership.



The Public Internet Access Points were presented by mr. Daandels, the chairman for Rural Development at the Eindhoven Regional Government

Citizen First Workshops
Inclusion of People with
Special Needs &
eCommunities held in
Eindhoven, Netherlands, on
20 May 2008.

1. with Special Needs: Awareness, Advice and Guidance

This workshop was led by MENTOR, who specialise in teaching people with special needs.



1. People with special needs – making us aware : The workshop started with a hands on exercise. This involved us wearing ear plugs and ear defender to demonstrate to us what it felt like to not hear.

2. No speaking – just use your body! This exercise was to concentrate on body language and how it can be a vital tool as long as its used correctly. This was a good exercise to do making you aware of how your facial expressions are very important when delivering a message, instructing or asking questions.

3. Advice on how to train deaf/hard of hearing. Before you can start offering training you need to be aware of: the type of disability – hard of hearing, >



2. eCommunities: The Resilient Local Society

Michel Horrevoets (community expert) (SRE) gave a presentation on what makes a resilient community:

A resilient local society has created powers or community capital to cope with latent negative effects of turbulent societal changes. These negative effects have to do with (a) strategies of industries, government organisations and not for profit organisations to create economies of scale and (b) weakening of (local) societal associations based on voluntariness. Elderly people and persons with disabilities are the 'victims' of these tendencies. The insufficient access of modern communication media (ICT's) strengthens this process.



The theory of resiliency gives the starting points for local communities to anticipate on turbulent societal changes and makes use of new positive (+) developments on the three angles of the 'Resilience Triangle' (see figure 1).

'The angle of the state': A positive influence for building resilient communities by new laws, more participation in local programs creating active citizens. Demand orientated egovernment services.

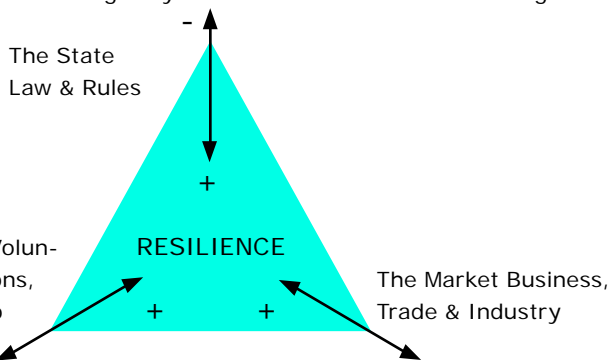
'The angle of the market': Offers a chance for resilience by new business models based on strategies for realising economies of scope by clustering various services eg One Stop Shops. Local entrepreneurs can support local initiatives, offering financial contributions for local projects.

'The angle of civil society': Increases the co-operation of citizens by creating local volunteers, voluntary associations and local networks of citizens with various competencies.

Subsequent Workshop discussions identified various examples in all 4 regions on how citizen-centric initiatives are critical in realising resilient local eCommunities. Balancing top-down and bottom-up needs to come together and work to create community involvement and ownership as long as the outcome is positive and continued ongoing local usage and support ensures sustainability.

Fig. 1 The Resilient Society

Resilience= power of local communities to cope with latent negative effects of societal changes by new business models and strategies including ICT's



Triangle of Resilience (resource Van Zijderveld Meijjs)

Social Inclusion of Vulnerable Elderly through the use of ICT in Kortrijk

Students from Katho school of higher education, department Ipsoc have completed their final report. Students from Katho school of higher education, department Ipsoc have completed their final report on "social inclusion of vulnerable elderly through ICT". The Five students: Greta Decraemer, Fien Fonteyne, Joke Vangampelaere, Ilse Gevaert and Wouter Degryse have written a 53 page report as an exam for their Bachelor degree. There has been an event in June in which the students presented their work. In the pictures you can see one of the elderly students of a course in the use of the GSM making a presentation, three of the five students giving their presentation and Katho's Jelske Vandormael who co-ordinated the students work.



students targeted some of the most poignant cases of socially excluded elderly. Some of them had no electricity or water or no contact with the outside world whatsoever.

After the students had concluded there is no demand or need for computer lessons amongst their target group they – based on further research – decided to change their goals. There simply is a group of elderly for whom the PC is a bridge too far. They don't (even) know how to use a mobile phone. Given the fact that a mobile phone is more useful and important for them (it can be a live saver!) the students then started to organised lessons in the use of GSM telephones. This was something for which there was demand and need. In some respects this may seem a step back from computer and internet courses. On the other hand it seems logical to focus on mobile phones since they are more elementary than computers and much more useful to the target group of vulnerable elderly.

This final report is very valuable for several reasons. Firstly, the students have hands-on experience with some of the most vulnerable elderly in Kortrijk. Secondly, they have a objective outsider view to the subject matter, which is trying to include elderly through the use of ICT (e-Inclusion). Thirdly, because they dare to draw conclusions that may not be what we want to hear. The students concluded that trying to (partly) solve the (social) exclusion of vulnerable elderly through the use of ICT is not the right approach. We must first try to solve their social isolation before we even thing about teaching them ICT skills. Once again, it must be said that the

These GSM courses were a success. Four courses of two lessons were organised in four different locations in April and May. Most notable conclusions of the students concerning these course were:

- This course is not enough, we need more time to teach all the basics
- One teacher for a group is not enough, we need one extra teacher (student) for every 2 or 3 elderly
- Go slow!
- Repeat!
- Put a sticker on the back-side of the GSM on which you write the most important phone numbers.
- Focus on Nokia, the fast majority of elderly uses this brand
- Individual help and assistance is crucial. ○

Cambridgeshire eInclusion Pilots



The last few months have been a busy time for the Cambridgeshire Citizen First pilots, particularly as our team - and one of our volunteers - were nominated for prestigious awards recognising their work to promote e-inclusion!



One of our outreach tutors, Mel Khan, was one of 5 national award winners in the 'Best Centre Staff' category at the UK Online Award ceremony held at Shakespeare's Globe Theatre, London in June. Mel has spent the last year working on our Citizen First pilots targeting the over 50s, travellers, migrant workers and those living in rural isolation. Mel says 'I really love the social aspect of working with our learners. I'm thrilled to have won an award for my work helping people learn a new skill and put it to good use. Thanks to Citizen First hundreds more people are now online - and that's really a better reward than anything else'. The photograph shows Mel with GMTV's Andrea MacLean, who awarded the trophies in London.

In July our Community Access Point outreach team was nominated as runner-up in the Nominet Best Practice Challenge Awards in the Best Development Project category. The judges were impressed by the way our Citizen First pilot uses volunteers effectively and addresses a diverse set of beneficiaries across Cambridgeshire. The photo shows Nyree Scott (Outreach and Volunteer Co-ordinator), Matthew Hall and Craig Muir (Outreach Tutors).

We were all extremely pleased when we discovered that one of our oldest volunteers, Ted Howard (at the tender age of 83), had won an Outstanding Learner Award at the Learndirect Regional Achievement Awards in Norwich. Ted, who lives in Ramsey and left school at 14 with no qualifications, studied at the Ramsey Community Access Point, will now travel to London in October for the National Awards. He was referred to the Library Learning Centre after becoming involved in our community archives group in Ramsey. Our outreach tutor, Naomh Campbell, said: 'Ted wanted to improve his writing skills to enable him to write a book about his travels. He has successfully written one book entitled 'Life on the Fen Edge,' which he handed to the publishers without any punctuation marks. For his second book he wanted to write with more confidence and skill. He sped through his Level 1 Literacy and attained his Level 2 within the year. He is much more confident when writing now, both personal and business letters, and he showed me a page of his new book recently, complete with punctuation - I even spotted a semi colon.' Naomh added: 'It just shows that you're never too old to learn, and that we're here to help!' The photo shows Ted with his award at the ceremony in Norwich. ○



There are 5 Citizen First for eInclusion pilots taking place in the Mid West of Ireland during the period November 2007 to October 2008.

1. Access Limerick Directory

Access Limerick will be an online directory to inform people with disabilities, their families and carers of the various accessible facilities which are available to them in the city centre. It aims to enhance the quality of lives of people with disabilities, their families and carers by ensuring up to date information is provided on the accessibility of local cultural and recreational services.

The directory will seek to provide information on a selection of accessible venues, in Limerick City Centre, for people with disabilities who are either living or visiting the city. Information will be provided on the following - Accommodation; Pubs; Shopping; Culture and Leisure and Eating Out. Each venue is assessed by a person with a disability and rated as to the level of their accessibility.

2. Local Library Assistive Technologies.

County Libraries in Limerick aim to enhance the lives of their local communities by providing:

- A promotional campaign to highlight the new Assistive Technologies available in Library Branches (see <http://www.lcc.ie/Library/Asst-Tech/>), and
- Loaning laptops within each Library (including the Mobile Library) to enable people to access Internet services using their Wi-Fi / 3G networks.



The Limerick County Library Service has 24 Branch Libraries throughout County Limerick. This network of branches ensures that there is a Library Service in most of the towns and Villages in the County. In addition, the Library Service has 1 Mobile Library which services remote parts of the County.

3. ICT Initiative for Older People in RAPID Areas

This pilot is exploring the feasibility of older people using laptops and 3G broadband to:

- Enhance their relationship with their community of origin
- Develop their relationships with their family members.
- Strengthen their self-organising capacity.
- Engage with and avail of current supports.



The pilot aims to enhance the quality of Older Peoples' lives through strengthening their relationships to their neighbourhood, family and community of origin by the use of ICT. >



4. Limerick Community ICT Access and Awareness raising

This pilot focuses on Access and Awareness raising to maximise the effective use of ICTs, and address digital exclusion within socially and economically disadvantaged communities in Limerick City, by supporting community group to purchase install and manage the resources necessary for delivery of their services.

The Limerick City Community ICT Steering Group is a network consisting representatives from five community centres in socially and economically disadvantaged areas in Limerick City, PAUL Partnership and City of Limerick VEC (see and contribute at <http://einclusionlimerick.blogspot.com>).

5. eInclusive Regional Authority Website

The Mid-West Regional Authority is redeveloping its website based on Universal Design principles and General Accessibility guidelines to provide accessibility to the widest user audience, including older users and users with disabilities. As the site will be accessible to people with special needs it will increase awareness of eInclusion by making information easily available to the public. ○



The CitizenFirst project is a project funded by the INTERREG IIIB North West Europe Programme. More information on the CitizenFirst project: www.citizen-first.net
More information on the INTERREG IIIB NWE-ENO Programme: www.nweurope.org

Lead Partner / Project coordinator: Mid-West Regional Authority Friar Court, Abbey Street, Nenagh, Co. Tipperary, Mid-West Region, Ireland
Contact: mcollins@mwra.ie



CitizenFirst International Conference

Citizen First...
***using Technology to include ALL
Citizens***

**Ennis,
Co. Clare,
IRELAND**

25th - 26th September 2008

Conference Fee ~ €60.00

To register please contact the Mid-West Regional Authority or log onto the CitizenFirst Website: www.citizen-first.net

Mid-West Regional Authority
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Web: www.mwra.ie



This project has received
European Regional
Development Funding
through the INTERREG III B
Community Initiative



Conference Programme

Thursday – 25th September 2008

19.00h – 20.15h

**Conference Registration & Civic Reception in Clare County Council Offices
New Road, Ennis, Co. Clare**

Address by **Cllr. Madeline Taylor-Quinn, Mayor of County Clare & Cllr. Bernard Hanrahan, Chairperson of Mid-West Regional Authority**

Display of Mid-West/CitizenFirst ICT eInclusion Projects
Wine Reception & Entertainment

Friday – 26th September 2008

09.00h

**Conference Registration
The Old Ground Hotel, Ennis, Co. Clare**

09.30h

Welcome by **Cllr. Bernard Hanrahan, Chairperson of Mid-West Regional Authority**

09.40h

Keynote address by **Ms. Máire Hocht, T.D., Minister of State with responsibility for the Elderly**

10.00h

European Perspective – presentation by **Ms. Michela Marasco, Joint Technical Secretariat, INTERREG IVB North West Europe**

10.20h

CitizenFirst Lessons learned through eInclusion projects: recommendations for local & regional policy makers – **Ms. Rebecca Morgan, Cambridgeshire County Council**

10.40h

Questions & Answers

11.00h

Coffee Break

11.30h

Mr. Liam Conneally, Director, Mid-West Regional Authority
Introduction to Case-Studies – Setting the Scene

11.45h

CitizenFirst eInclusion Initiatives – presentations will highlight the issues faced, solutions undertaken & action needed (what can be done at local level)

Themes:

1. Disadvantaged Areas ~ **Limerick City ICT Steering Group, Mid-West Ireland**
2. Young People ~ **Cambridgeshire UK**
3. People with Special Needs ~ **Kortrijk Belgium**
4. eCommunities ~ **Eindhoven The Netherlands**
5. eAgeing ~ **ClareCare, Mid-West Ireland & Cambridgeshire UK**

13.00h

Panel Discussion ~ Questions & Answers

13.30h

Wrap-up

13.45h

Networking Lunch

15.00h

Close of Conference – **Closing Address by Mid-West Regional Authority**

CITIZENFIRST PARTNERS





Registration Form

Citizen First... using Technology to include ALL Citizens

Final International Conference
The Old Ground Hotel, Ennis, Co. Clare, IRELAND
25-26 September 2008

First Name	
Family Name	
Organisation	
Address	
Email	
Telephone	
Conference Fee	€60.00 – includes Conference material, refreshments & lunch
Payment	With Registration or within 10 days following Conference Payment can be done by: <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Cheque – made out to the Mid-West Regional Authority Or <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Via Bank Transfer Bank: Bank of Ireland, Nenagh, Co. Tipperary, Ireland A/C Name: Mid-West Regional Authority A/C Number: 46882782 Sort Code: 904368 Swift Code: BOFI IE 2D IBAN Number: IE65 BOFI 9043 6846 8827 82

Please return this Registration Form to: **Mid-West Regional Authority**
Address: Friar Court, Abbey Street, Nenagh, Co. Tipperary, Mid-West, Ireland
Email: info@mwra.ie
Telephone: + 353 67 33197
Fax: + 353 67 34401
Contact Person: Ms. Marie Collins

For details on the Conference Venue & Accommodation please visit www.flynnhotels.com or call + 353 65 682 8127. Please quote "CitizenFirst Conference" when booking to avail of Special Conference Rate.

For details on Ennis & the Mid-West Region please visit: www.discoverireland.ie/shannon.aspx

