

e-INCLUSION means...

- Using Information & Communication Technologies (ICT)
- To overcome social / economic disadvantage and exclusion
- By taking full advantage of new 'digital opportunities'



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for comment

e-INCLUSION includes...

Making ICT accessible by meeting a wide spectrum of people's needs, particularly special needs _____ **e-Accessibility**

Empowering older people to fully participate in the economy and society, to continue independent lifestyles and to enhance their quality of life _____ **e-Ageing**

Equipping citizens with the knowledge, skills and life-long learning approach needed to increase social inclusion, employability and to enrich their lives _____ **e-Competences**

Enabling minorities, migrants and marginalised young people to fully integrate in their communities and to participate in society by using ICT _____ **Socio-Cultural e-Inclusion**

Increasing the social and economic well-being of people in rural, remote and economically disadvantaged areas with the help of ICT _____ **Geographical e-Inclusion**

Delivering better, more diverse public services for all using ICT, while encouraging increased public participation in democracy _____ **Inclusive e-Government**

Getting to where we are now:



An EU initiative open to any person or organisation. First call for contributions ran between 8 October and 15 November 2007.

Activities are now being organised. Further calls may follow.

Next steps

The EU e-Inclusion Initiative 2008

Underway!

A call for individuals and organisations to share initiatives, knowledge and experiences on e-Inclusion. The themes are:

- Awareness of digital exclusion problems and digital inclusion opportunities
- Visibility of e-Inclusion good practices and planned initiatives
- Networking and joined up action by civil society, industry and public authorities

Anyone with experiences or information which may be relevant for e-Inclusion in Europe is urged to contribute what can be shared. Contributions from outside Europe are welcome insofar as they provide useful lessons for e-Inclusion in Europe.

Programme of events in 2008

Programme being finalised and will shortly be published.

International Conference / Exhibition

Late 2008:

- to close the *e-Inclusion: Be part of it!* campaign
- to celebrate the European e-Inclusion Awards which will be launched in 2008
- Yearbook to be published end of 2008



ICT is creating new opportunities for many people, connecting them to jobs, new forms of communication and participation, and to public services. But many more are missing out on these opportunities.

The ministerial declaration on "ICT for an Inclusive society", adopted by more than 30 European countries in Riga in June 2006, called on all stakeholders to increase their efforts on e-Inclusion.

By participating in *e-Inclusion: Be part of it!*, you will be associated with the efforts of the EU Commission and others to promote the goals and further advantages of e-Inclusion...

- Become part of a larger community and movement
- Increased recognition and visibility for your activities
- Possibility of receiving information material from the European Commission to support your activities and events
- Possibility of using the logo *e-Inclusion: Be part of it!*
- Appear in articles, presentations or videos
- Opportunity of competing for a European e-Inclusion Award
- Invitations to speak or attend events organised across Europe.



Citizen First fiches are published and maintained by
Mid-West Regional Authority of Ireland, mcollins@mwra.ie

Practitioners are invited to contribute experiences, news and comment
to Citizen-First@mwra.ie

e-Inclusion ...

By contributing, you show your willingness to exchange experiences and opinions about e-Inclusion with people who share similar values and goals.
Supporting e-Inclusion means promoting social equality and economic prosperity in Europe and the world.

Participation

Participation is easy and works through our ePractice portal (below). If you are not yet a member, simply register and then use 'e-Inclusion Call for Contributions' to tell us about your good practices, specifically:

- Initiatives, award schemes, projects or services addressing e-Inclusion issues and the organisations or groups working on / with them.
- Events relevant to e-Inclusion planned for 2008 – for example, meetings, seminars, conferences or workshops.
- Reports and studies on e-Inclusion experiences, analysis, past events or other.
- 'Free format' ideas or suggestions that you can share through the blog facilities on the website.

Submission

At the moment, the submission forms are only available in English. You can submit your information in other EU official languages but you are kindly requested to provide a short abstract of your submission in English.

You are also welcome to resubmit items already sent to ePractice prior to the opening of the current call – for example, an inclusive e-Government case. You may want to make a resubmission in order to provide additional information, or simply to associate yourself to the European e-Inclusion initiative.

Assessment

Contributions will be assessed against the four deliverables bulleted above ('Participation') using four relevance criteria:

- Clarity of purpose, quality of implementation and maturity of approach
- Visibility and level of commitment / support from relevant actors.
- Actual impact (provide data, illustrations or projections) , especially for targeted beneficiaries.
- Originality and potential for replication in other contexts.

Account will also be taken of the balance of your whole contribution and of the complementarity of individual elements in terms of geographical coverage, topics, target groups and so on.

Measurement and benchmarking

Our approach combines 'hard' and 'soft' indicators:

- 'Hard' indicators or common variables:
 - ⇒ Structural data (demographics, gender, socio-economic profiles)
 - ⇒ Technological data on e-Access (ICT and broadband take-up, digital divide index, internet costs, connectivity) and e-Usability (for example, the application of e-Skills) and e-Security
 - 'Soft' indicators or textual differences:
 - ⇒ Data on social embedding (for example, how ICT is adapted to users' life worlds)
 - ⇒ Data on motivational aspects of use
 - ⇒ Self-reported assessment of use / non-use impacts
- 'Soft' indicators are less developed than 'hard'. Techniques may include local observations, longitudinal studies, case studies and benchmarking.

Opportunities and challenges

- Greater access to a wider diversity of products, services and choices
- Enhanced role for consumers in product development, quality, utility and relevance
- Bringing people into the innovation process and creating the conditions for greater entrepreneurship
- Encouraging self-determination, self-expression and social interaction, through social networking
- Strengthening social capital by expanding social networking ICT to community based support networks
- Motivating participation in decision-making and democratic processes through a 'participative culture'
- Supporting the participative culture through the expansion of e-Government infrastructure.
- Reinforcing democratic structures, for example by increasing opportunities of scrutiny / critical review
- Improving the knowledge base by promoting knowledge creation and knowledge sharing through both formal and non-formal learning
- Similarly improving the skills base by promoting the acquisition of new skills.

Our challenge is to overcome cultural / social fragmentation and to reduce surveillance / control from the consequent polarisation of the e-included and e-excluded.

Links:

- www.epractice.eu/einclusion
- <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/E-Inclusion>
- http://ec.europa.eu/information_society/activities/

Contacts and projects:

- eInclusion@EU project at www.einclusion-eu.org
- e-Inclusion Measurement Analysis, www.tavinsitute.org/clients/detail.php?pid=16