



Project acronym: **Go-myLife**

Project full title: **Going on line: my social Life**

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Abstract

This document presents the data description and analysis of the pilot testing, phase 1 of the Go-myLife pilot platform, conducted in the UK and Poland within workpackage (WP) 6. The aim of WP6 is to ensure that the Go-myLife services are in line with the defined objectives set out by the project and according to real older people's needs as explored and defined in WP2. During a two months testing, 37 older people from UK and Poland participated in a first evaluation of the Go-myLife services, collecting inputs for the further improvement of the technical pilot for phase 2 and helping to understand in how far the mobile social network influences older peoples' social lives.

The deliverable describes the involved pilot sites in UK and Poland, number and profiles of test users, as well as the introduction and facilitation processes for the acquisition, training and support of end-users during the pilot tests. It presents the main findings from this first testing phase and comes up with the main conclusions and recommendations for the pilot phase 2. Version 2 of this document will be provided after the pilot testing, phase 2 in month 24 of the Go-myLife project.

Keywords

Older people, online social network platforms, user involvement, evaluation, methodology, measurement, benefits

Table of Contents

1	Introduction	8
1.1	About the Go-myLife project	8
1.2	About this deliverable	8
2	The pilot testing concept of the Go-myLife services	10
2.1	Criteria for the pilot testing and evaluation.....	10
2.2	Go-myLife methodology for the pilot testing	11
3	Setting of the pilot sites	13
3.1	Overview of the pilot setting in Poland.....	14
3.1.1	Socio-demographics of participants - Poland.....	14
3.1.2	Framework of the pilot testing - Poland.....	16
3.1.3	Sources of information collected - Poland	18
3.2	Overview of the pilot setting in the UK	20
3.2.1	Socio-demographics of participants – UK	20
3.2.2	Framework of the pilot testing - UK	21
3.2.3	Sources of information collected – UK.....	25
3.3	Technical devices for the pilot participants.....	26
3.4	Ethical considerations	27
4	Main Findings from Go-myLife Pilot 1	28
4.1	Social support and social networks - Findings derived from questionnaires	28
4.1.1	Material and instrumental support.....	28
4.1.2	Emotional and appraisal support	32
4.1.3	Summary	37
4.2	Access to the Go-myLife platform – derived from the analysis of log files	38
4.2.1	Access statistics for the 1st Polish Pilot	38
4.2.2	Access statistics for the 1 st UK pilot	40
4.2.3	Summary of access statistics	42
4.3	Findings derived from participators user-involvement methods - Poland	42
4.3.1	Problems and difficulties with the Go-myLife services - Poland	42
4.3.2	Errors on the Go-myLife platform - Poland.....	44
4.3.3	Expectations and suggestions: usability issues - Poland.....	44
4.3.4	Expectations and suggestions: content and information issues - Poland	45

4.3.5	Reliability and privacy - Poland.....	46
4.3.6	Summary of findings from pilot 1 - Poland	46
4.3.7	Recommendations related to the training methodology – Poland.....	48
4.3.8	Recommendations related to policy – Poland	48
4.4	Findings derived from participators user-involvement methods - UK	49
4.4.1	Problems and difficulties with the Go-myLife services - UK.....	49
4.4.2	Barriers to the Go-myLife platform – UK	50
4.4.3	Perceived benefit of the Go-myLife Platform- UK.....	50
4.4.4	Expectations and suggestions: content and information issues - UK.....	54
4.4.5	Suggested facilitation activities – UK.....	54
4.4.6	Summary of findings from pilot 1 - UK.....	56
5	Summary and recommendations – derived from all evaluation instruments	57
5.1	Issues concerning the technical devices and the Go-myLife services.....	57
5.1.1	Internet coverage for mobile phones	57
5.1.2	Usage of smart phones	57
5.1.3	Design and terminology of the Go-myLife services	57
5.1.4	Comparison to Facebook.....	58
5.1.5	Suggestions for new/improved functions	58
5.1.6	Suggestions for new content	59
5.2	Go-myLife’s impact on older peoples’ social lives.....	59
5.3	Next evaluation steps	60
6	Bibliography.....	61
	Annex 1	62

Table of figures

Figure 1: User-involvement timeline, activities and responsibilities	13
Figure 2: Samsung Galaxy S II	27
Figure 3: Access statistics during the Polish pilot (1)	38
Figure 4: Access statistics during the Polish pilot (2)	38
Figure 5: Most used browsers in Polish pilot	39
Figure 6: Most used operating systems in Polish pilot.....	39
Figure 7: Access statistics during the UK pilot (1)	40

Figure 8: Access statistics during the UK pilot (2)	40
Figure 9: Most used browsers in UK pilot	41
Figure 10: Most used operating system in UK pilot.....	41
Figure 11: Most common error messages	42

Table of tables

Table 1 Prioritization of project goals	11
Table 2 Overview of data collection and analysis methods applied in Go-myLife.....	12
Table 3 On average, I participate in organised group events ...N= 20	14
Table 4 On average I get out of the house to meet friends, family members and neighbours? N=20...	15
Table 5 How far do most of your friends and family members live from your home? N=20.....	15
Table 6 Perceived skills and attitudes towards ICT	16
Table 7 Face-to-face events with participants in Poland.....	17
Table 8 On average, I participate in organised group events? N=17	20
Table 9 On average I get out of the house to meet friends, family members and neighbours? N=15...	20
Table 10 How far do your friends and family members live from your home? N=15.....	21
Table 11 Perceived skills and attitudes towards ICT – UK.....	21
Table 12 Face-to-face events with participants in UK	22
Table 13 Who can take care of you in the case of serious health problems?	28
Table 14 Whom could you rely on to give you significant practical help?.....	29
Table 15 Whom do you know who would lend/give you small household items?	30
Table 16 Who helps you with small services in the household or garden?.....	31
Table 17 Who gives you comfort in difficult situations?	32
Table 18 Whom can you turn to for advice about personal problems?.....	33
Table 19 Who do you chat with and exchange the latest news and gossip with?	34
Table 20 Whom do you enjoy discussing ideas with?.....	35
Table 21 Whom can you get together with for relaxation and fun?	36

List of Abbreviations

AAL	Ambient Assisting Living
ICT	Information Communication Technology
IDI	In-Depth Interview
SN	Social Network
UI	User Interface
UX	User Experience
WP	Work Package

1 Introduction

This document presents the results of the pilot-testing phase 1 of the Go-myLife service platform within workpackage 6. Pilot testing has been conducted in Poland and in the UK, during November 2011 and May 2012.

1.1 About the Go-myLife project

Go-myLife (full title: “Going on line: my social life”) is an AAL2 project aiming to improve the quality of life for older people through the use of online social networks combined with mobile technologies. Go-myLife is developing a mobile social networking platform customised to the needs of older people, supporting interactions with their peers and families, as well as easy access to information.

Start date: 1 July, 2010 End date: 31 December, 2012

Website: www.gomylife-project.eu

1.2 About this deliverable

This deliverable is prepared within the sixth Workpackage (WP) of the Go-myLife project, namely WP6 “Evaluation and validation through scenarios” aiming to analyse and discuss the quantitative and qualitative results of the pilot testing No1 on three sites: Warsaw (PL), Newmarket (UK) and Bexleyheath (UK).

The findings of this deliverable will feed into the optimisation of the Go-myLife services, which will be re-evaluated in a second loop.

Target audience of the deliverable

This document is a public deliverable. However, given that it is mainly intended for the project partners and the European Commission services, the document will be made public, but not specifically disseminated on a wider scale.

Research approach in WP6

The main aim of WP6 is to ensure that the Go-myLife services are consistent with the planned objectives set out by the project and according to real end-users’ needs as explored and defined in WP2. The objectives of testing and evaluation approaches are twofold:

- to ensure that the generated platform is designed and implemented in a way as to satisfy the requirements and needs of the end-users. Therefore, we need to detect any non-conformances that may occur during the lifetime of Go-myLife and lead to unexpected consequences.
- to evaluate the research results in relation to the general objectives set up by the project. This task deals with the evaluation from a legal and socio-economic perspective.

Therefore, evaluation will be completed on two levels:

- first by providing the end-user input when the platform design documents, the platform itself and the prototypes are being created, and
- second by performing a general, legal, technical and economic evaluation after the first platforms and community prototypes have been designed, built and put to trial.

Both activities aim to identify the strengths and the weaknesses according to the goals set up

by the project and to learn from these evaluations of pilot phase 1 for the second iteration.

The interim findings from both pilot testings (phase 1 and phase 2) are described in the interim reports: D6.3 V1 is this report, D6.3 V2 will be delivered in month 24. The summary of the results from D6.3 V1 and V2 will be documented in a synthesis report D6.4 in month 27. The user-involvement activities and data collection in the two pilot sites will also feed the legal, economic and technical evaluation of the platform (D6.2 due in month 29).

The structure of this deliverable

The information in this deliverable is covered in three chapters:

After this introduction **Chapter 2** presents the goals and criteria of the pilot testing; it replicates shortly the methodology (as described in detail in D6.1) and provides the timeline for the pilot testing.

Chapter 3 introduces the setting of the two pilot sites, including a description of the participants and the framework for facilitation and training.

Chapter 4 presents the main findings from the questionnaires, focus groups and interviews with participants in UK and Poland.

Chapter 5 concludes this report with a summary of the most important results from the testing phase 1 and recommendations for the development of the second Go-myLife technical pilot.

2 The pilot testing concept of the Go-myLife services

In Deliverable 6.1 “Methodology of pilot testing and evaluation” the project developed a detailed evaluation strategy including measurement criteria, quantitative and qualitative evaluation instruments and the setting of the pilot sites.

In the following chapter, the main aspects of this evaluation concept, which are relevant for the pilot 1 testing will be summarized and introduced. More detailed descriptions and background information can be found in D6.1 of the Go-myLife project.

2.1 *Criteria for the pilot testing and evaluation*

The pilot testing and evaluation of the Go-myLife platform in two pilot sites has two main objectives:

1. The main objective of the testing activities in WP6 is to investigate the user experience (UX) with the Go-myLife platform, to gain insights on how older people in two different geographic European regions feel about using Go-myLife during and after the testing period. The UX evaluation investigates and measures utility, usability, aesthetics and value of the Go-myLife system. Thus it will allow conclusions to be drawn on the user acceptance of Go-myLife by analysing the main determinants of technology acceptance (Davis 1989) – the perceived usefulness (=value in UX measurement), and ease of use (=usability in UX measurement).
2. The second objective of the project is to validate the strengths and weaknesses of the Go-myLife platform according to the initial goals set by the project. The pilot testing provides insights in how far using the Go-myLife platform impacts the communication patterns of older peoples’ social networks.

The starting point for the impact analysis was the list of defined goals in the Go-myLife’s Description of Work (DoW), which were prioritised based on the user requirements elicitation in WP2.

The project decided to focus on two main aspects during the pilot phases. The first aspect is related to the objective to **enhance and deepen the participants’ relationships with friends and family, especially in the local community**. The second aspect is related to the objective of **supporting older people in getting out of their houses**, providing better information about locations around them and giving them the feeling of a higher security when being out and about. Table 1 shows the project’s prioritization of goals which we aim to reach during the two trial phases in the two pilot sites (more details can be found in the Annex):

Goal	Goal description	Priority
1	<i>My interactions with family and friends will be facilitated</i>	1
1.1	Easier to update friends/family with my news, share in activities etc	1
1.2	Easier to meet up with friends and family while out and about	2
2	<i>My circle of relevant persons and groups will grow/deepen, I will be able to gain new perspectives and support</i>	1 (local)
2.1	Growing or deepening relationships with local friends/family, easier to find people sharing the same interest locally	1
2.2	Growing or deepening relationships with country-/European-wide circle of friends/family, easier to find people sharing the same interest country-/European-wide	3
3	<i>I will be more interested to get out of my house</i>	1
3.1	Easier to find out useful facts about locations, buildings and services in my region	1
4	<i>I will feel more secure and safe to get out of my house</i>	2
4.1	Being able to call on help and find nearby toilets and places to rest	2
5	<i>It will be easy for me to play an active role in my community and to be valued for the contribution I make</i>	2
5.1	Easier to find out what is happening in my neighbourhood (via friends)	1
5.2	Easier to collaborate, organise meetings and make neighbourhood a better place	1
5.3	Being acknowledged in the community via a trust and reliability system	2
5.4	Easier to find out which volunteering opportunities are nearby	3
6	<i>I will be more stimulated to keep my mind fit, to learn customised to my interests and to enhance my knowledge</i>	3
6.1	Easier to get and exchange knowledge, such as gardening, cooking, healthy life style between individuals	2
6.2	Easier to find out about cultural, political and social events and learning opportunities	3

Table 1 Prioritization of project goals

2.2 Go-myLife methodology for the pilot testing

Existing research studies confirm that the usage of the internet helps in improving the quality and quantity of the activities undertaken by seniors. Those still at work look into the future with great hope, planning to use the internet in various ways, including making some extra profit. The internet influences also the mental and psychological wellbeing, especially among the seniors, who often suffer from loneliness. Indeed, it is an invaluable tool in many cases, which enables and enhances communication with others – friends, peers and family - and prevents from feeling left and alone, especially in the situations where most of the loved ones live far away.

The Go-myLife social networking platform was designed with the needs of older people in mind in order to support interactions, as well as provide an easy access to information and hence - improve the quality of life for older people through the use of online social networks combined with mobile technologies.

The testing activities in WP6 during the pilot 1 involved 37 older people from the UK and Poland. To investigate user experience and understand the potential impact of Go-myLife pilot 1 a mixed evaluation approach using both quantitative and qualitative data was applied.

In pilot phase 1 the end-users were provided with training and access to a first version of the Go-myLife internet and mobile platform for a period of two months. The focus of this evaluation was on the collection of formative data for the refinement and adaption of the prototypes for the pilot phase 2. In addition, pilot phase 1 served to introduce specific Go-myLife features to the end-user community and collect insights on motivations and barriers of using these features in bi-weekly jour-fixes. To understand the potential impact and aspects on how to make Go-myLife more useful for older people in pilot 2, individual interviews were conducted at the end of pilot 1. Continuous information about usage patterns of Go-myLife were collected via self-reporting in user-diaries and via logging interaction data of users with the platforms.

Table 2 provides an overview of the evaluation measures and applied methods in pilot 1.

Measures	Analysis methods
Validation of project objectives	
New perspectives and support in tackling challenges I face	Focus group, interviews
More interest to get out of my house, more safe and secure when getting out of the house	Focus group, interviews
Play an active, positive and helpful role in the community	Focus group, interviews
Stimulated to keep the mind fit	Focus group, interviews
User experience (UX) analysis	
Ease of use/Usability	Diaries, Focus group, Interviews
Utility	Diaries, Focus group, Interviews
Aesthetics	Diaries, Focus group, Interviews
Value/perceived usefulness	Diaries, Focus group, Interviews, Logging

Table 2 Overview of data collection and analysis methods applied in Go-myLife

An overview of the timing of the pilot phases and applied methodologies is provided in figure 1.

Go-myLife Pilot 1 and Pilot 2 – Timeline, activities, responsibilities

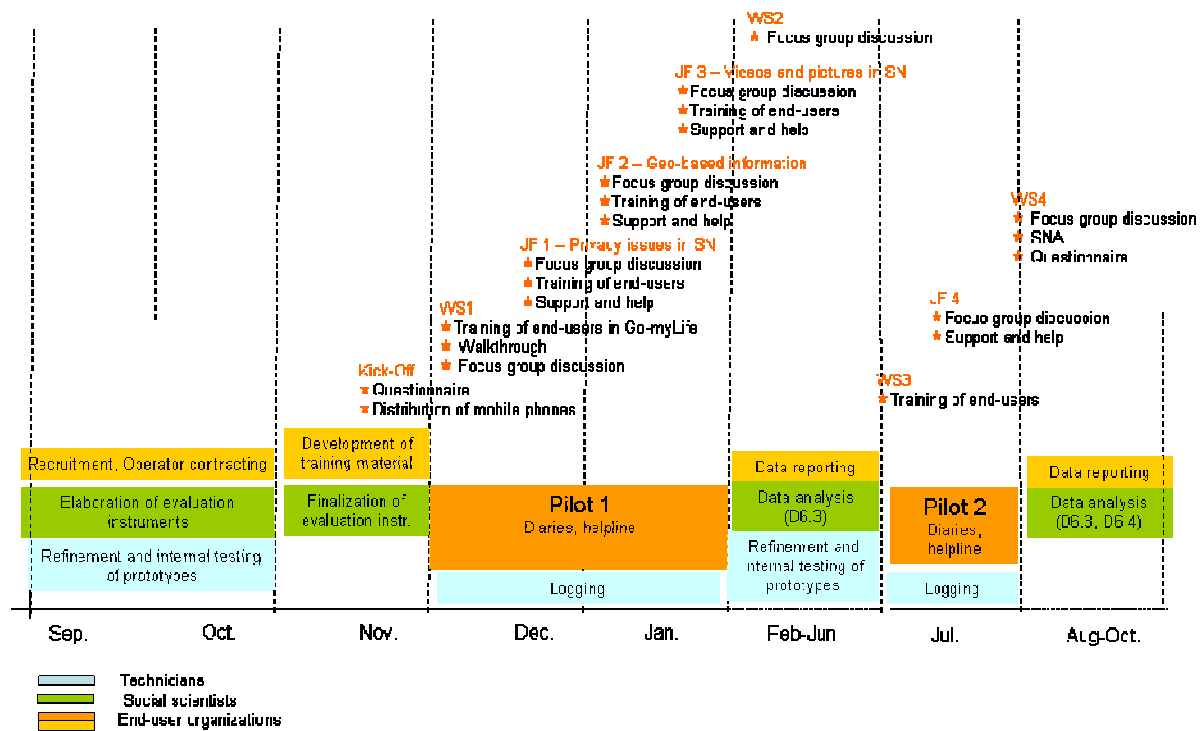


Figure 1: User-involvement timeline, activities and responsibilities

3 Setting of the pilot sites

The Go-myLife pilot 1 was conducted in two pilot sites, one in Poland and one in UK.

In Poland, 20 participants were involved in the testing which lasted from 21st of November 2011 to 1st of February 2012. In UK, pilot 1 was conducted from 31st of January to 8th of May 2012 with 17 participants. All users received an initial training on the provided smartphones and an introduction to the Go-myLife services. After this introduction biweekly jour-fixes were held with the participants to discuss encountered problems and barriers as well as to introduce new features.

- In Poland a telephone and e-mail helpdesk of three people provided technical and psychological support for the participants for fixed 2-3 hours per day on 4-5 days a week.
- In the UK one facilitator was there to answer the participants' questions via e-mail and phone as well.

During the first workshop questionnaires were filled in by participants in both countries to collect socio-demographic data and learn about the older peoples' current social network structures.

At the end of pilot 1 individual interviews were held with all participants to provide room for a detailed discussion of the experiences made during the Go-myLife pilot 1 and also

investigate concrete suggestions for improvement, technical and content wise for pilot 2.

3.1 Overview of the pilot setting in Poland

3.1.1 Socio-demographics of participants - Poland

The recruitment of the participants was organized by using the existing network connections we had with senior organizations in Poland. We also got in touch with some of the people who had already cooperated with JaKobieta (*MeWoman*) Foundation for other projects. The main criterion used to select the end-users was - age should be over 60 years, and the knowledge of basic computer skills, including the usage of electronic mail.

The testing group consisted of 20 users with the following profile:

- 9 women and 11 men, inhabitants of Warsaw city;
- Average age: 64.82 years old;
- 50% are married, 3 persons are widowed;
- 80% have a university degree;
- 18 persons have children and 14 persons have grandchildren;
- On average the participants have been retired for 7.69 years and 9 persons are continuing either with part-time work or volunteer both by 11.55 hours on average per week; all declare to devote a significant part of their time to their hobbies, which range from painting, playing music, travelling, sailing, hiking to volunteering at various charity organizations and local activities.

This does not mean, however, that they are socially very active. The great majority go out once or twice a week, which is not much taking into account the amount of free time they have at hand. Only four of the participants said they leave the house every day to socialize in one way or another.

Table 3 On average, I participate in organised group events ...N= 20

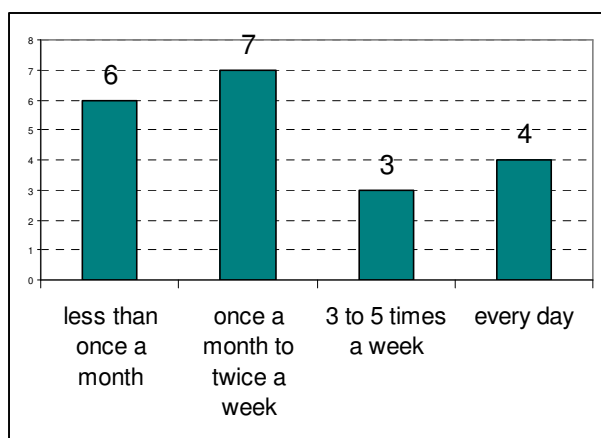
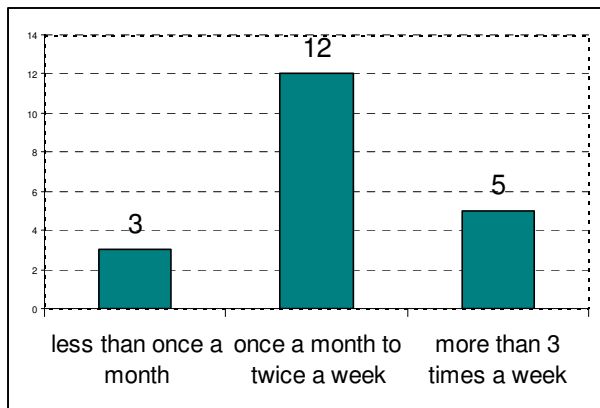
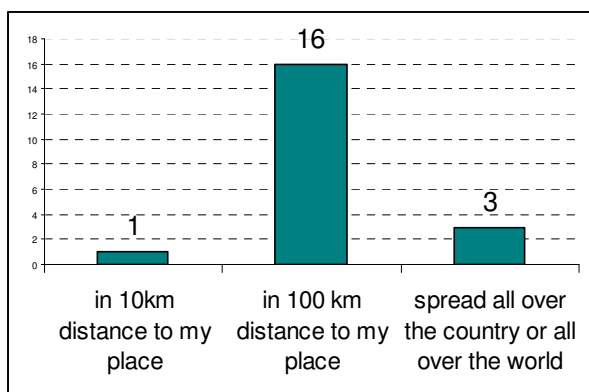


Table 4 On average I get out of the house to meet friends, family members and neighbours? N=20



Almost nobody mentioned that there aren't any issues that make going out of the house difficult to them. However, an explanation for the low frequency of going out for meeting friends, family members and/or neighbours may be explained by the fact that the majority of the participants' social network members lives at least 100 km off from where the participants live (see Table 5). Another explanation is that the participants feel only “medium” part of the local community around them.

Table 5 How far do most of your friends and family members live from your home? N=20



Computer skills and attitudes towards the new technologies

More than a half of the users rate their computer skills as good or very good, two people rate them as low and the rest - as average (we did not try to verify the meaning of “average” in this instance but we assume they mean ‘average for my age-group’). There are, however, findings from other research based on objective criteria, which shows that the seniors tend to overrate their computers skills. They claim to be fairly advanced in this area when in fact they often have problems with basic operations, such as using a mouse and a keyboard (Kolesiński A. et al., 2008).

A similar situation has been recorded in relation to the usage of the mobile phones, but, surprisingly perhaps – the users rate their internet experience rather high (mainly good or very good). Even those who do not feel very confident about their computer skills seem to be quite enthusiastic about their internet experience. This is also illustrated in the participants' positive attitude towards the new technology. An exceptional willingness to get familiar with the new technologies was the most striking feature of the participants, recorded in the questionnaires. That was common to all the users, regardless from age, education or occupation.

Such attitude, however, is hardly typical for an average Polish senior. Most of the research concerning digital exclusion of the elders, point out that the main difficulties when tackling the problem are connected to so called “soft obstacles”, that is – a lack of skills and motivation (Batorski, 2009), which is often a result of psychological barriers, mainly low confidence illustrated by the feeling of inappropriateness (“*I’m too old for this*” is a typical response if asked about the reasons for their scepticism about the new forms of communication via the Internet). The seniors are also much more afraid of using the equipment than the younger users. They fear they might break something and not be able to fix it or pay for the breakage. Due to the lacking support from relatives – children and grandchildren – it seems to be difficult to overcome such anxieties (Kolesiński A. et al. 2008).

These discrepancies – between the general findings and our testing group – can be explained by the fact that the users live in the capital (the highest number of the Internet users is in big cities - 65% of them come from cities with over 200 thousand inhabitants) (Batorski, 2009), most of them are very well educated, they are active and have multiple local connections. These are all not insignificant factors when it comes to seniors’ attitudes towards new technologies.

Table 6 Perceived skills and attitudes towards ICT

	Mean
Compared to my friends, I would rate my computer skills <i>(1-5, very low - excellent)</i>	3.50
Compared to my friends, I would rate my openness towards new technologies <i>(1-5, very low - very open)</i>	4.21
Compared to my friends, I would rate my experience with mobile phones <i>(1-5, very low - very experienced)</i>	3.45
Compared to my friends, I would rate my experience with the Internet <i>(1-5, very low - very experienced)</i>	3.75

3.1.2 Framework of the pilot testing - Poland

In Poland the pilot testing comprised a series of workshops aiming at transferring the knowledge about the Go-myLife project (idea, goals, perceived results), technical details of the usage of the platform as well as dealing with any problems that had occurred during the testing at home, such as uploading and downloading pictures, inviting friends, creating a new group (details of the problems faced by the users are listed below).

The added valued of the meetings, which should not be ignored, was the natural and spontaneous creation of a special bond between the users, socializing and building up trust. We also noticed that those more advanced in new technologies often took the role of the experts and helped out those less advanced in new technologies. Such shift – from a training receiver to training giver – might be used in further pilot testing and workshops.

The presentation of the Go-myLife application was organised during the first workshop set on the 30th November 2011. The users were taken step-by-step through the usage of the application, beginning with setting up a profile and then explaining each of the tabs and icons and tasks attached to them and allowing time for familiarising themselves with the design of the programme. Additionally, each of the participants received a 43-page manual for a PC application to follow the training during the workshop and to use it/ go back to it at home in case they need to.

The manual comprised of screenshots of the application with clear instructions in Polish, attached to them. We felt this would be of particular help as the instructions on the website are poorly translated into Polish language which was immediately noticed by the users and resulted in much confusion (see list of problems below).

The manual begins with explaining how to register and log in to the system, and is organised as follows:

- Adding Go-myLife to favourite list
- Creating a profile
- Editing profile/ adding information (occupation, personality, hobbies, contact details etc.)
- Uploading a photo
- Finding and inviting friends/ accepting invitations
- Creating a new group (travel, photo, etc)
- Adding comments/ posting
- Creating events & inviting friends
- Using media (videos)

During the first workshop the participants received Samsung mobile phones - *Galaxy S Plus* - to test the application, starting on 1st of December. The users were in charge of the phones until 14 February 2012. As the majority of the users had not been familiar with the usage of Smartphones, brief instructions were necessary to enable an appropriate handling of the phones. The next trainings and meetings focused on solving the problems raised by the users and practising particular skills such as geolocation, picture managing. The schedule of the testing was planned as follows:

Table 7 Face-to-face events with participants in Poland

No.	date	content
1.	21.11. 2011	Kick-Off - presentation of the training schedule - formal issues (contracts, personal data, etc.) - display of the mobile phones along with the manuals
2.	30.11. 2011	Training WS - presentation and training on the usage of the applications - information about the technical support - distribution of the diaries and instructions to complete them - discussion

3.	Jour-fixe 1 16.12. 2011	Jour-fixe 1: Go-myLife - individual trainings - support and help - problematic issues – discussion - collection of the diaries
4.	02.01.2012	Jour-fixe 2: Geolocation - geolocalization – training - technical support and problem solving - diary collection
5.	17.01.2012	Jour-fixe 3: Media - management of pictures and videos – training - technical support -problematic issues – discussion - diaries collection
6.	01.02.2012	Review - presentation of the summary of the tests - discussion - mobile phones collection - diaries collection - individual interviews on SN and possible improvements to the platform - satisfaction questionnaire

3.1.3 Sources of information collected - Poland

The evaluation of the testing was conducted on the base of four main sources of data: a questionnaire, user-diaries, focus group discussions and in-depth-interviews.

- **The questionnaires** allowed us to gather general information on each participant – such as age, occupation and the attitudes towards the new technology. The information was supplemented by short self-descriptions in which the participants provided information on their hobbies, which make for a significant part of their time. Both types of data were collected during the workshops.
- **User-diaries** are designed as one of the self-reporting methods used often in the Human Computer Interaction research to allow for thorough and complete recording of the sequences of events undertaken at a specific session, tasks completion and problems encountered.

The diaries were distributed during the first meeting, along with the instructions on the frequency of records (ideally once a day) performed after undertaken activities. Both computer and mobile phones activities included: checking news, adding new friends, posting

and commenting, managing the contacts and groups, editing the profile, uploading films and photos. Although most of the users reported in their diaries attempts to perform these tasks, in great majority of cases their efforts failed due to the poor reception of signal (phones) or some other technical issues (see Chapter 4.3 for a full list of problems). The main problem with testing the application on mobile phones was poor connection with the Internet most of the time. As one of the users noted down in his diary:

“Despite growing discouragement I did try to use the applications a few times a day and whenever 3G symbol appeared I immediately opened Go-myLife application. But any further actions always resulted in breaking the connection with the platform and 3G quickly disappeared. Next attempts met with complete failure; I kept receiving information that ‘the address could not be found’, I would try to reset the phone and the whole procedure would start all over again...”

The few lucky ones who did manage to log in to the platform via the phone soon faced another problem – the application hung up after just a few minutes of using it. The few successful task completions included merely login in and out. The more advanced activities - uploading the pictures, creating a new group (Photography), browsing through the pictures – were all performed on the computer-based usage of the platform.

Overall, the user-diaries did not prove, in our case, to be a very effective method of gathering the information. One of the major problems was irregularity. Very few users kept the diary on regular basis, the majority completed the forms only once, in a form of ‘a summary of the testing’, highlighting that *“this is a ‘collection’ of remarks from various testing dates”*. In other cases the information gathered was scarce and repetitive: the users kept complaining about too many technical problems.

To sum up, the information we gathered through the diaries is hardly valuable and does not help much in assessing the platform. We believe this was caused by the far too many problems the users came across when testing the application on their own, which had a very disheartening effect on them and they simply gave up on repeating the same information (*“no connection, the system keeps hanging up”*) over and over again. When asked about the general impression of using the platform most of the participants described the platform as rather simple to use but at the same time they said it was inefficient and describe their experience as daunting, demotivating and simply boring.

- **Focus group discussion.** During this part of the evaluation various skills were tested in order to assess the level of difficulty. In addition to the diaries collection and analysis, during each workshop the problems encountered by the testing users were expressed orally (and noted down). This method allowed for expressing a more spontaneous reaction to the usage of application.
- **In Depth Interviews (IDIs)** are designed to allow for a more private contact and therefore for a richer and deeper feedback on the tested product as well as for suggestions regarding improvements and changes which could be done to the product to make it more user-friendly. The average interview lasted about 20 minutes and focused mainly on the suggestions, for incorporating into Go-myLife to improve its effectiveness. This method proved to be very informative and resulted in a rich material regarding the expectations of the users, both real and potential. The results are described in the next section.

3.2 Overview of the pilot setting in the UK

3.2.1 Socio-demographics of participants – UK

The UK pilot consisted of two groups of older people; a group of 11 participants in Bexleyheath in South East London and a group of 6 participants in Newmarket in Suffolk.

In total, the testing group consists of 17 users with the following profile:

- 8 women and 9 men;
- Average age: 69.18 years old;
- More than 50% are married, 4 persons are widowed;
- 35% have a university degree;
- 14 persons have children and 14 persons have grandchildren;
- On average the participants have been retired for 9.12 years and (compared to Poland, only) 2 persons are continuing either with part-time work or volunteer both by 11.90 hours on average per week.

Compared to the Polish participants, they are more socially active: 65% of the participants go out more than three times a week and they participate in organized group events more frequently than their counterparts in Poland.

Table 8 On average, I participate in organised group events? N=17

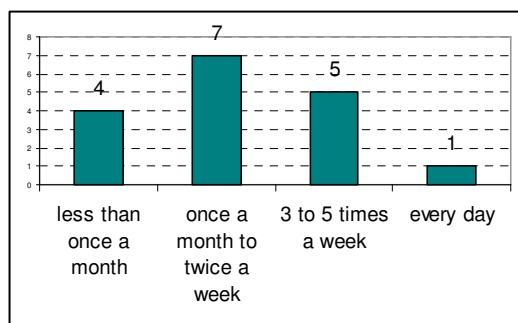
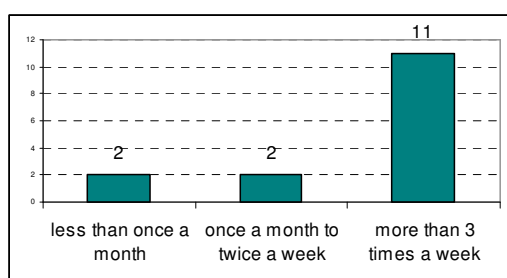
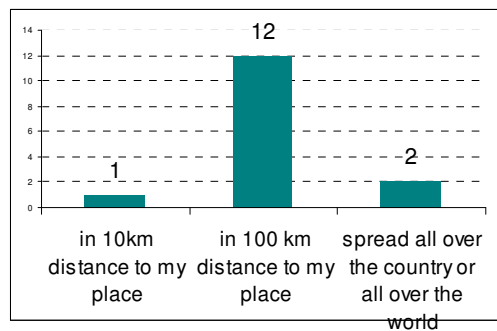


Table 9 On average I get out of the house to meet friends, family members and neighbours? N=15



Almost nobody mentioned that there aren't any issues that make going out of the house difficult to them. Similar to Poland, the overwhelming majority of the social network lives geographically in more than 100 km distance to the participants' places and they feel even less well integrated in their local community around them than the Polish counterparts. However, both these factors don't refrain from being socially active.

Table 10 How far do your friends and family members live from your home? N=15



Computer skills and attitudes towards the new technologies

The UK participants rate their computer skills less good than “their friends” and they perceive themselves as less open towards new technology than their Polish counterparts. The same refers to their experiences with mobile phones and they also rate their experiences with the Internet significantly lower.

Table 11 Perceived skills and attitudes towards ICT – UK

	Mean
Compared to my friends, I would rate my computer skills (1-5, very low - excellent)	2.41
Compared to my friends, I would rate my openness towards new technologies (1-5, very low - very open)	3.06
Compared to my friends, I would rate my experience with mobile phones (1-5, very low - very experienced)	2.76
Compared to my friends, I would rate my experience with the Internet (1-5, very low - very experienced)	2.59

3.2.2 Framework of the pilot testing - UK

Both groups met for a total of 11 weekly sessions. The sessions consisted of a one hour “clinic” to help individuals with specific issues about the service or the phone and a one and a half hour workshop. In both cases the group sessions were run in the local sports centre, which many of the participants attend as part of their leisure activities.

It was felt that it would be helpful to focus the testing on the smartphone version as the Polish group had mainly tested the PC version. In order to make this work, it was decided to give all participants a new Samsung Galaxy 2 smartphone, which would be theirs to keep at the end of the project, along with a free 12 months voice and data contract. In this way participants would be fully incentivised to learn how to use the smartphone and, because it would replace their own mobile phone, to take it with them wherever they might go.

Another aspect was that participants were chosen to show a range of levels of experience with technology and so some of them had little or no experience with computers. In fact most of the participants did not have a computer at home and so the smartphone was the only way that they would be able to use Go-myLife.

The programme was therefore designed to give participants full training on the use of the phone before starting them on using Go-myLife. We were also able to get trainers from

Samsung UK to provide one further training session on the phone towards the end of the process, which was greatly appreciated.

Issues with smartphone procurement

The pilot was started in Bexleyheath at the end of January on the basis of being able to get the Galaxy 2 smartphones within a few days. However, this in the end turned out to be impossible. We tried to get the phones through a number of different companies and channels and each was confident that the phones could be supplied immediately. However we were only able to get the phones on 29th February. This made it very difficult to plan the schedule.

An additional problem was that, even after getting the phones there were issues about the contracts we could offer and the Bexleyheath group therefore had to start with a pay as you go contract and then move to a 12 month contract on 3rd April, which necessitated changing the Sim cards. Even here, one problem was that one of the Sim cards was not working and had to be replaced.

One specific issue was that some of the functionalities of Go-myLife in phase 1 could only be utilised via the PC. In particular, the users could only fill out their profile, send friend requests and invite people to events, on the PC. Because of this four PCs were made available for the early Go-myLife workshops to allow these activities to be undertaken.

Programme

It should be noted that because of the difficulties about sourcing the phones, it was only after the first four sessions that we were able to align the programme for each group.

Once the groups were running on a regular basis, there was one gap of a week with no classes at the end of March, due to the pilot leader attending the Go-myLife General Assembly meeting in Barcelona.

It should also be noted that the service was not working from early afternoon on Thursday 26th April to Sunday 6th May, due to technical issues.

Table 12 Face-to-face events with participants in UK

No.	B'Heath date	NMrkt date	content
1	31 st Jan	22 nd Feb	<p>Introductory session</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introductions • Purpose of the session • “Who wants to be a millionaire” game • Introduction to smart phones • Introduction to Online Social Networks • Introduction to Go-myLife • Introduction to the pilot • Filling out Participant consent forms

2	7 th Feb		My social networks <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social networks • Task: Portraying my social networks as islands • Filling out user questionnaires
		29 th Feb	Introduction to the Samsung Galaxy 2 Handing out the smartphones and basic introduction to the functionalities and controls of the phone
3	6 th Mar		Introduction to the Samsung Galaxy 2 Handing out the smartphones and basic introduction to the functionalities and controls of the phone
		7 th Mar	More detail on the Samsung Galaxy2 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Taking photographs • Setting up contacts lists • Messaging • Setting up Googlemail account
4	13 th Mar		More detail on the Samsung Galaxy2 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Taking photographs • Setting up contacts lists • Messaging • Setting up Googlemail account
		14 th Mar	My social networks <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social networks • Task: Portraying my social networks as islands • Filling out user questionnaires
5	20 th Mar	21 st Mar	Introduction to Go-myLife <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review of people's experience in using the smartphones • Review of use of user diaries • Basic training on Go-myLife – register, set up a profile, navigate around the site, add friends, post news • Homework for next 2 weeks

6	3 rd April	4 th April	<p>Review of Go-myLife</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Take photos of oneself to use for profile picture on Go-myLife • (In Bexleyheath Change the sim card and make sure that telephone number is still the same) • Make sure everyone can log in on Go-myLife on the computer • Everyone searches for 5 friends • Everyone accepts friends' requests • People log into Go-myLife on their phone • Everyone posts one item of news and comments on someone else's news and fills out sheet
7	10 th Apr	11 th Apr	<p>Profiles and News</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Making sure everyone is friends with everyone • Using the computer to fill out the profile page • Reviewing Facebook to give an overview of the sort of posts that people make to give an idea of what they might post on Go-myLife • Getting people posting comments on each other's posts on News
8	17 th Apr	18 th Apr	<p>Community participation and photos</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Feedback and review of last week's diaries and experience of Go-myLife • Profile and more practice with News • Providing remaining participants with the chance to fill out their profile while others post News and comments. See who can post the most news and comments. • Discussion on how the tasks went using our feedback sheets • Questions regarding the smartphone and making a list of the issues the group wants the Samsung trainer to cover • More practice on taking photos and then posting photos on Go-myLife
9	24 th Apr	25 th Apr	<p>Other issues</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Using the computer to organise and invite participants to Events and then using the smartphone for them to reply • Reviewing the purpose and capability of Local Life • Discussion about how Go-myLife could be used in other groups they belong to and potential content from other providers that they would be interested in
10	1 st May	2 nd May	<p>Training by Samsung trainers</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Opportunity for everyone to ask specific questions about the use of the Galaxy S2 • The trainers covered other key aspects of the phone that the users might not be aware of

11	8 th May	9 th May	Review <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Listing all the aspects of the service that need to be improved – both in terms of the technology/interface and in terms of what other features would be useful
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3.2.3 Sources of information collected – UK

There were six sources of information that were gathered for the pilot: the questionnaire, a relationship mapping exercise, user-diaries, weekly clinics, focus group discussions and in-depth interviews.

The questionnaires

These provided us with general information on each participant – such as age, occupation and attitudes and experience with new technology. They also provided us with information about their sources of social support – in other words, whom they could turn to for help in a variety of situations and how well they felt supported within their social community generally.

Relationship mapping exercise

This was an exercise in which participants mapped out the different groups of people with whom they interacted, how they interacted with them and how much they gained and how much they gave to each set of relationships.

User diaries

These were the same as used with the Polish pilot participants. One key difference with the Polish pilot was that the participants almost entirely used the smartphone to access Go-myLife. This was because most of the participants didn't have a computer at home and because the focus of all of the workshop sessions was on the smartphone. A few members of the Bexleyheath pilot used the computer one or two times, mainly to do things that were not possible over the smartphone, such as setting up events.

The other difference was that, because the first few group sessions were used to help participants become confident users of the smartphone, the diaries were also used to record participants' experiences with other aspects of the smartphone so that they could be used as an aide memoire for the weekly pre-session clinics. This fulfilled its purpose, however, this meant that when it came to the weeks when participants were using Go-myLife, some participants had lost interest in keeping the diaries and there was also the problem that those who did continue to fill out the diaries often filled in details about their general experience with the phone as well as their experience with Go-myLife.

The main value of the user diaries was to help in the discussions during the weekly pre-session clinics, as this gave participants a chance to explain in more detail the issues that they faced.

Pre-session clinics

Before each of the weekly group sessions, a one-hour optional clinic session was held to allow participants to get help on problems that they were having. Although it was option, almost everyone attended and it provided a useful opportunity to talk through common problems and identify suggestions as to how these might be solved. All of these issues were

noted and were covered again at the final focus group session of the phase 1 pilot.

Even though the first few clinic sessions covered smartphone issues, rather than focusing on the Go-myLife service, they were still useful in identifying some of the issues that might face people who used smartphones on a day to day basis, when trying to use the Go-myLife service. For instance, for Go-myLife to work properly, there was the need not only for people to download the Firefox browser, but also to ensure that they had it set up to download new versions of the browser as they were released.

Final focus group

This took place as the last session of the phase 1 of the pilot and was used to review all of the issues that had come up over the previous sessions in order to gain a final set of suggestions for improvement, as well as providing participants with the opportunity to consider the overall value of Go-myLife to themselves.

Final interviews

In the week following the final session, all participants had a half hour interview to give them the opportunity to talk at length about their own personal experience and views on Go-myLife, which was used to supplement the information gained from the final focus group.

3.3 Technical devices for the pilot participants

Concerning the mobile phone for the pilots the project chose between three different models: Samsung Galaxy S II, Samsung Galaxy S I and Samsung Galaxy S I plus.

The mobile phone chosen for the testing and validation is the Samsung Galaxy S II (Figure 3).

The main selection criteria for this mobile phone were:

- Big display for easy handling: 4.3” display and TouchWiz 4.0 UI
- Platform Android 2.3 Gingerbread OS
- 8MP camera and LED flash, 1080p video recording
- 1.2GHz dual-core chipset, 1GB of RAM, 16 or 32GB of internal storage, microSD-support
- GPS for location information¹

¹ <http://www.samsung.com/global/microsite/galaxys2/html/>



Figure 2: Samsung Galaxy S II

For accessing the Go-myLife Social Network, the test participants only needed to have a browser installed on their desktop and mobile device. The workshops and evaluation of the Go-myLife platform were carried out using Firefox browser version 5.0 or higher. These versions of Firefox contain support for a high number of features of HTML5 in which Go-myLife bases some of its functionalities.

3.4 Ethical considerations

In order to achieve the goals defined within our research task in WP 6 we needed to collect personal data from Go-myLife users, such as interaction data with the system, basic demographic data and responses to questionnaires. This data is essential for validating the project's impact and to improve the development of the technology.

During the data collection, the data protection issues involved with handling of personal data were addressed by the following strategies:

Volunteers to be enrolled were given comprehensive information, so that they were able to autonomously decide whether they consent to participate or not. In an informed consent process, the purposes of the research, the procedures, potential inconvenience or benefits as well as the handling of their data (protection, storage) were explained. In order to make the research transparent, potential participants needed to sign this consent form before taking part in the pilots.

The data exploitation is in line with the respective national data protection acts.

The data gathered through logging, questionnaires, interviews and focus groups during this work package were anonymised and therefore the data would not be able to be traced back to the individual. Data are stored only in anonymous form so the identities of the participants are only known by the partners involved and will not even be communicated to the whole consortium. Reports based on the interviews and focus group use aggregated information and comprise anonymous quotations respectively.

4 Main Findings from Go-myLife Pilot 1

4.1 Social support and social networks - Findings derived from questionnaires

Social networks have a dual function: the provision of social support and social connectedness². The questionnaire used for the Go-myLife pilot testing & evaluation covered questions related to material/instrumental support and emotional/appraisal support, both generally acknowledged categories for social support. The aim is to analyse the participants' a) network structure, b) the network effects related to exchange of social support and its subjective satisfaction. The comparison between the start of the pilot phase with its end shall allow an analysis of the Go-myLife services' effects on receiving and giving social support.

4.1.1 Material and instrumental support

Examples of this type of social support are giving and receiving information and practical support related to social and cultural life, learning, travelling, games, spirituality, volunteering (babysitting, parents care etc.), allowances in kind (lend, spend, give etc.), keeping healthy (nutrition, sleep, sexuality etc.) and to money.

Generally, with all types of support, the data show a slightly higher satisfaction level on the UK site.

In cases of health problems, the UK participants rely more on the partners while the Polish participants tend to receive more help from child/children (table 13). If general practical help (table 14) is needed, the participants from both sites rely mainly on the child/children and on friends.

Table 13 Who can take care of you in the case of serious health problems?

	no one	at least one person	N	Missing		Mean
					Satisfaction with this type of social support	(1=very dissatisfied, 6= very satisfied)
UK	4	12	16	1	UK	4.62
Poland	5	15	20	0	Poland	4.11
TOTAL	9	27	36	1	TOTAL	4.32

² See Deliverable 2.3

		partn er	paren t ³	child ⁴	siblin g ⁵	grand child	family other	friend	labour er	neigh bour
<i>first pos itio n</i>	UK	8	0	2	0	0	1	0	0	0
	Poland	4	0	5	2	0	0	2	0	0
	TOTAL	12	0	7	2	0	1	2	0	0
<i>sec ond p.</i>	UK	0	0	4	0	0	0	1	0	0
	Poland	1	1	4	1	0	0	1	0	0
	TOTAL	1	1	8	1	0	0	2	0	0

Table 14 Whom could you rely on to give you significant practical help?

	no one	at least one person	N	Missing		Mean
					Satisfaction with this type of social support	(1=very dissatisfied, 6= very satisfied)
UK	3	14	17	0	UK	4.62
Poland	6	13	19	1	Poland	3.89
TOTAL	9	27	36	1	TOTAL	4.19

3 + in law

4 + in law

5 + in law

		partn er	paren t ⁶	child ⁷	siblin g ⁸	grand child	family other	friend	labour er	neigh bour
<i>first pos itio n</i>	UK	4	0	3	0	0	0	2	1	0
	Poland	1	0	6	1	0	0	5	0	0
	TOTAL	5	0	9	1	0	0	7	1	0
<i>sec ond p.</i>	UK	0	0	3	0	1	0	2	1	0
	Poland	1	0	4	0	0	0	1	0	0
	TOTAL	1	0	7	0	1	0	3	1	0

Supportive neighbourhood seems to be in the UK a better functioning concept than in Poland. The UK participants tend to receive support from their neighbours with “small household items” while the Polish participants rely mainly on their siblings and friends (table 15).

Table 15 Whom do you know who would lend/give you small household items?

	no one	at least one person	N	Missing		Mean
					Satisfaction with this type of social support	(1=very dissatisfied, 6= very satisfied)
UK	4	13	17	0	UK	4.50
Poland	7	12	19	1	Poland	3.94
TOTAL	11	25	36	1	TOTAL	4.21

6 + in law

7 + in law

8 + in law

		partn er	paren t ⁹	child ¹⁰	siblin g ¹¹	grand child	family other	friend	labour er	neigh bour
<i>first pos itio n</i>	UK	1	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	5
	Poland	1	2	0	4	0	0	3	0	2
	TOTAL	2	2	0	4	0	0	5	0	7
<i>sec ond p.</i>	UK	0	0	0	0	0	1	2	0	1
	Poland	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	1
	TOTAL	0	0	1	0	0	1	3	0	2

Requests to “small services in the household and garden” are mainly addressed to child/children as well to friends in both pilot sites (table 16).

Table 16 Who helps you with small services in the household or garden?

	no one	at least one person	N	Missing		Mean
					Satisfaction with this type of social support	(1=very dissatisfied, 6= very satisfied)
UK	6	11	17	0	UK	5.07
Poland	7	12	19	1	Poland	3.84
TOTAL	13	23	36	1	TOTAL	4.36

9 + in law

10 + in law

11 + in law

		partn er	paren t ¹²	child ¹³	siblin g ¹⁴	grand child	family other	friend	labour er	neigh bour
<i>first pos itio n</i>	UK	1	0	4	0	0	1	3	0	0
	Poland	2	1	2	3	0	1	3	0	0
	TOTAL	3	1	6	3	0	2	6	0	0
<i>sec ond p.</i>	UK	0	0	2	1	0	0	2	0	1
	Poland	0	0	5	0	0	0	1	0	0
	TOTAL	0	0	7	1	0	0	3	0	1

4.1.2 Emotional and appraisal support

Emotional and appraisal support are essential to one's subjective feeling of belonging, of being accepted or being loved, of being needed all for oneself and for what one can do; further, it helps to cope with life crisis (e.g. bereavements), transition phases (e.g. from gainful work to retirement), loneliness, and other problems.

Again, with all types of support, the data show also in this type of social support a slightly higher satisfaction level on the UK site than on the Polish site.

Data related to "receiving comfort in difficult situations" (table 17) demonstrate significant differences between the pilot sites. The UK participants can count mainly on their partners and child/children, while on the Polish site the participants rely mainly on their siblings and friends.

Table 17 Who gives you comfort in difficult situations?

	no one	at least one person	N	Missing		Mean
					Satisfaction with this type of social support	(1=very dissatisfied, 6= very satisfied)
UK	2	15	17	0	UK	4.87
Poland	2	17	19	1	Poland	4.35

12 + in law

13 + in law

14 + in law

TOTAL	4	32	36	1	TOTAL	4.61
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		partn er	paren t ¹⁵	child ¹⁶	siblin g ¹⁷	grand child	family other	friend	labour er	neigh bour
1 st pos 18	UK	7	0	3	1	1	0	1	0	0
	Poland	2	0	3	5	1	0	4	0	0
	TOTAL	9	0	6	6	2	0	5	0	0
2 nd pos 19	UK	0	0	7	2	0	0	1	0	0
	Poland	0	0	5	0	0	0	5	0	0
	TOTAL	0	0	12	2	0	0	6	0	0

Also when it comes to receive “advice about personal problems” (table 18) substantial country differences turned out: the UK participants refer mainly to their partners, while the polish participants more to their child/children, sibling(s) as well to friends.

Table 18 Whom can you turn to for advice about personal problems?

	no one	at least one person	N	Missing		Mean
					Satisfaction with this type of social support	(1=very dissatisfied, 6= very satisfied)
UK	2	14	16	1	UK	4.63
Poland	4	16	20	0	Poland	4.28
TOTAL	6	30	36	1	TOTAL	4.44

¹⁵ + in law

¹⁶ + in law

¹⁷ + in law

¹⁸ Mentioned as being the most important social network member to address the question

¹⁹ Mentioned as being the second most important social network member to address the question

		partn er	paren t ²⁰	child ²¹	siblin g ²²	grand child	family other	friend	labour er	neigh bour
1 st pos	UK	6	1	1	0	1	0	2	1	0
	Poland	1	1	4	4	0	0	4	0	0
	TOTAL	7	2	5	4	1	0	6	1	0
2 nd pos	UK	0	0	1	3	0	0	2	0	1
	Poland	0	1	4	0	0	0	3	0	0
	TOTAL	0	1	5	3	0	0	5	0	1

The high relevance of the UK participants' partners is also evident in case of exchanging latest news and gossiping, which is equally practiced with friends. However, the polish participants refer more often to their friends when they want to chat (table 19).

Table 19 Who do you chat with and exchange the latest news and gossip with?

	no one	at least one person	N	Missing		Mean
					Satisfaction with this type of social support	(1=very dissatisfied, 6= very satisfied)
UK	1	16	17	0	UK	4.94
Poland	1	18	19	1	Poland	4.44
TOTAL	2	34	36	1	TOTAL	4.68

20 + in law

21 + in law

22 + in law

		part ner	pare nt ²³	child ²⁴	sibli ng ²⁵	gran dchil d	fami ly othe r	frien d	labo urer	neig hbo ur	acqu aint ance ²⁶	colle agu e ²⁷
1 st pos	UK	5	1	0	1	0	0	7	0	0	0	0
	Poland	2	0	1	0	0	1	11	0	0	0	1
	TOTAL	7	1	1	1	0	1	18	0	0	0	1
2 nd pos	UK	0	0	2	2	0	0	5	0	0	0	0
	Poland	0	0	1	0	0	0	7	0	0	0	1
	TOTAL	0	0	3	2	0	0	12	0	0	0	1

When discussing ideas (table 20) the UK participants turn slightly more frequently to relatives while the polish tendentially to their friends.

Table 20 Whom do you enjoy discussing ideas with?

	no one	at least one person	N	Missing		Mean
					Satisfaction with this type of social support	(1=very dissatisfied, 6= very satisfied)
UK	3	14	17	0	UK	4.92
Poland	2	16	18	2	Poland	4.16
TOTAL	5	30	35	2	TOTAL	4.47

23 + in law

24 + in law

25 + in law

26 club member, work colleague...

27 In Poland only

		part ner	pare nt ²⁸	chil d ²⁹	sibli ng ³⁰	gran dchi ld	fami ly othe r	frien d	labo urer	neig hbo ur	acq uain tanc e ³¹	collea gue ³²
1 st pos	UK	3	0	3	1	0	0	5	0	0	0	0
	Poland	2	0	2	0	0	1	10	0	0	0	0
	TOTAL	5	0	5	1	0	1	15	0	0	0	0
2 nd pos	UK	0	0	1	1	0	0	5	0	0	0	0
	Poland	0	0	3	1	0	0	3	0	0	0	0
	TOTAL	0	0	4	2	0	0	8	0	0	0	0

The item “sharing relaxing activities and fun” (table 21) doesn’t show any substantial country differences, participants from both sites turn to their friends.

Table 21 Whom can you get together with for relaxation and fun?

	no one	at least one person	N	Missing		Mean
					Satisfaction with this type of social support	(1=very dissatisfied, 6= very satisfied)
UK					UK	5.36
Poland					Poland	4.50
TOTAL					TOTAL	4.88

28 + in law

29 + in law

30 + in law

31 club member, work colleague...

32 In Poland only

		part ner	pare nt ³³	chil d ³⁴	sibli ng ³⁵	gran dchi ld	fami ly othe r	frien d	labo urer	neig hbo ur	acq uain tanc e ³⁶	colle agu e ³⁷
1 st pos	UK	2	0	0	0	0	2	6	0	0	0	0
	Poland	2	0	1	0	0	0	8	0	0	0	3
	TOTAL	4	0	1	0	0	2	14	0	0	0	3
2 nd pos	UK	0	0	1	0	0	0	10	0	0	0	0
	Poland	0	0	3	0	0	0	4	0	0	0	1
	TOTAL	0	0	4	0	0	0	14	0	0	0	1

4.1.3 Summary

The exchange of material and instrumental support is mainly provided by child/children, particularly when significant practical help is needed both in household and garden. In Poland, child/children are also the main supporters in case of health problems, while in the UK the partner is the main care taker (although the same number of participants in both countries is married). On the second position as support providers are friends when practical help is needed. When small household items are needed, neighbours are the most important social group in UK and siblings in Poland.

For the exchange of emotional/appraisal support the social network is more diverse, the participants rely on a greater number of different groups. Particularly when advices are needed about personal problems and difficult situations need to be managed. The main groups are child/children, siblings and friends, however, in UK the partner is main support provider in such cases. Friends are clearly the main group for discussing ideas, to have fun and to relax together with in both countries.

In all kinds of social support, the UK participants are slightly more satisfied than the Polish counterparts.

33 + in law

34 + in law

35 + in law

36 club member, work colleague...

37 In Poland only

4.2 Access to the Go-myLife platform – derived from the analysis of log files

This chapter represents the analysis of the logs during the testing phases in Poland and in UK. In this analysis data about the users' visits, users' average time in the platform, most used browsers, most accessed days are provided.

4.2.1 Access statistics for the 1st Polish Pilot

The following two charts show the access statics to the Go-myLife services during the 1st pilot in Poland, from 21st of November to 1st of February:

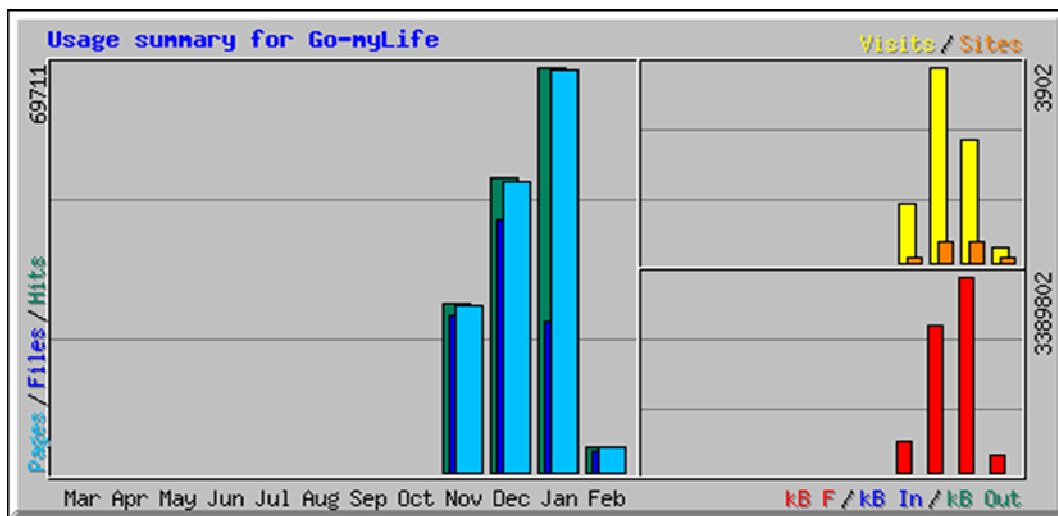


Figure 3: Access statistics during the Polish pilot (1)

Summary by Month												
Month	Daily Avg				Monthly Totals							
	Hits	Files	Pages	Visits	Sites	kB F	kB In	kB Out	Visits	Pages	Files	Hits
Feb 2012	838	688	825	57	87	286585	0	0	286	4127	3440	4192
Jan 2012	2248	839	2229	78	402	3389802	0	0	2438	69121	26036	69711
Dec 2011	1631	1406	1615	125	424	2527143	0	0	3902	50081	43587	50573
Nov 2011	2632	2445	2600	107	95	528927	0	0	1179	28600	26896	28952
Totals						6732455	0	0	7805	151929	99959	153428

Figure 4: Access statistics during the Polish pilot (2)

- **Total visits**
 - November (from 21st): 1179
 - December: 3902
 - January: 2438
 - February: 286

- **Average visits per day**
 - November (from 21st): 107
 - December: 125
 - January: 78
 - February: 57
- **Activity by hour of day**
 - High activity between 10:00-12:00
 - Normal activity between 14:00-17:00 and 22:00-23:00
- **Activity by days of the week**
 - Less activity during weekends
 - More activity during the week and the days of the pilots
- **Average Visit Length:** 9 minutes 12 seconds
- **Most used browsers by the users** (note: Internet Explorer – IE - is not working, but many users tried to access from it)

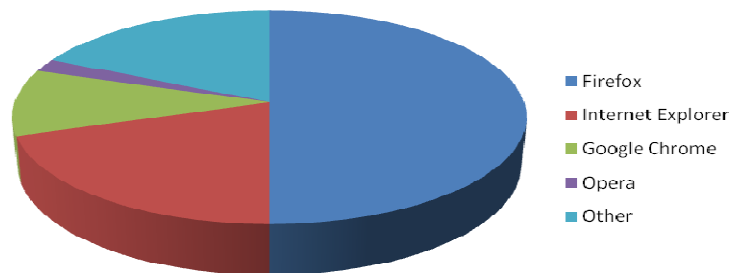


Figure 5: Most used browsers in Polish pilot

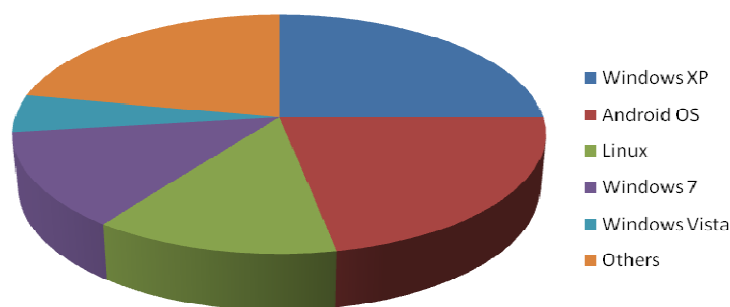


Figure 6: Most used operating systems in Polish pilot

- **Most used Go-myLife section**
 1. Me
 2. My network
 3. News

4. Media

4.2.2 Access statistics for the 1st UK pilot

The following two charts show the access statistics to the Go-myLife services during the 1st pilot in UK, from 20th of March to 9th of May:

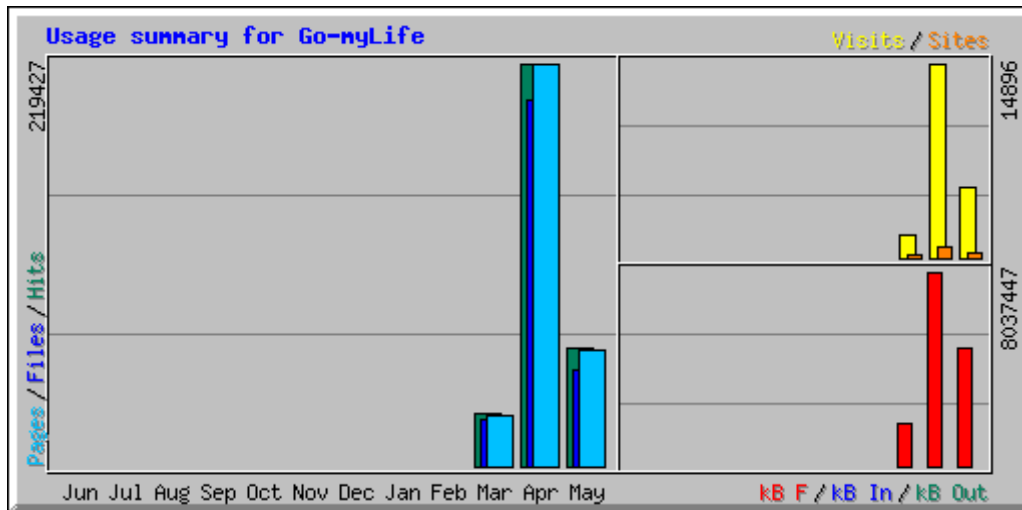


Figure 7: Access statistics during the UK pilot (1)

Summary by Month												
Month	Daily Avg				Monthly Totals							
	Hits	Files	Pages	Visits	Sites	kB F	kB In	kB Out	Visits	Pages	Files	Hits
May 2012	5868	4802	5775	485	333	4892765	0	0	5341	63535	52832	64550
Apr 2012	7314	6633	7286	496	776	8037447	0	0	14896	218583	199011	219427
Mar 2012	2017	1834	1990	128	245	1794513	0	0	1804	27871	25683	28238
Totals						14724724	0	0	22041	309989	277526	312215

Figure 8: Access statistics during the UK pilot (2)

- **Total visits**
 - March (from 20th): 1804
 - April: 14896
 - May (until 9th): 5341
- **Average visits per day**
 - March (from 20th): 128
 - April: 496
 - May (until 9th): 485
- **Activity by hour of day**

- High activity between 10:00-12:00 and 16:00-17:00
- Normal activity between 13:00-14:00 and 18:00-20:00
- **Activity by days of the week**
 - Less activity during weekends
 - More activity during the week and the days of the pilots
 - Visits increased compare to previous months
- **Average Visit Length:** 14 minutes 57 seconds
- **Most used browsers by the users** (note IE is not working, but many users tried to access from it)

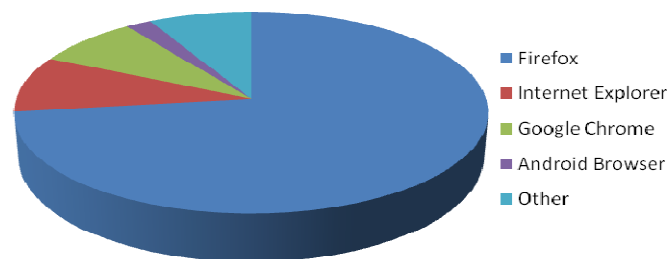


Figure 9: Most used browsers in UK pilot

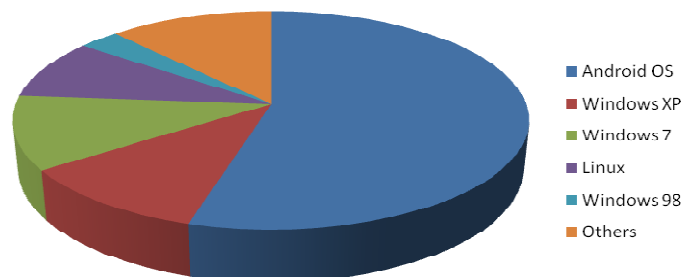


Figure 10: Most used operating system in UK pilot

- **Most used Go-myLife section**
 1. News
 2. Me
 3. My Network
 4. Media
- **Accessed from**
 1. Great Britain
 2. Spain
 3. Other

Errors

In this section, the most common errors that happened when the users' tried to access Go-myLife in the commented periods of time are presented. The most important problem they experienced was the "server down" during some pilots and during some isolated periods of time. Detected error types are:

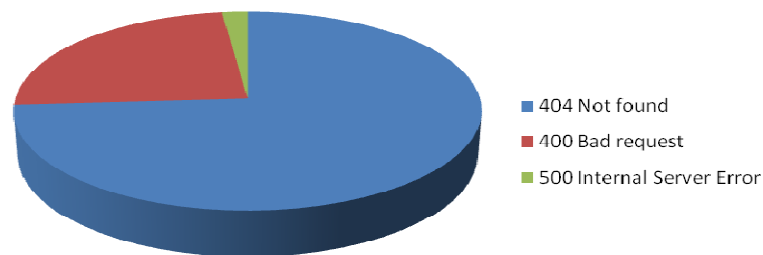


Figure 11: Most common error messages

4.2.3 Summary of access statistics

The access statistics show that the Go-myLife platform was more frequently used by the UK participants with 496 average day visits compared to 125 average day visits in Poland. In UK participants also stayed longer on the Go-myLife platform with an average visit length of 14 minutes compared to 9 minutes in Poland. Polish participants had to struggle with technical difficulties and access problems and thus the initial interest decreased which is also shown by decreasing site visits. The internet connectivity and technical problems were a smaller barrier in the UK pilot site where site visits increased over the testing period. Concerning the most frequently used functionalities in Go-myLife, Polish participants accessed mostly those functionalities which allowed to set-up one's own profile and manage the social network contacts, while UK participants used the service to exchange news with their social network members most frequently.

4.3 Findings derived from participators user-involvement methods - Poland

4.3.1 Problems and difficulties with the Go-myLife services - Poland

Throughout the whole testing period we had several means and chances to obtain feedback from the participants of the Go-myLife platform as well as other information related to the project. The problems related to the technical aspects of the tool (both in the computer and smartphone version) were usually gathered and discussed during the trainings and jour-fixes, whereas the suggestions as to the possible changes to the platform were collected during the personal interviews.

It is important to say that the more experienced internet users differed greatly in their opinions on the platform from the inexperienced ones. The former would often compare the platform to other social networks such as Facebook or Nasza Klasa – the most popular Polish social network - pointing often out to many shortages that Go-myLife suffers from.

- It is interesting to notice that the more advanced the user is the more difficult he or she finds the tool to use it. As one of them said, they are already “infected” by the usage of other social networks. Someone else added that the interface should be much more intuitive – it only looks easy but it’s not so much. The less advanced users, on the other hand, were more open and willing to learn to use the platform, but both groups complained about the difficulty with accessing the platform, which prevented them from a proper, intensive testing from their own homes.
- The access to the platform via the Firefox browser, which kept showing up „safety warning” – both in the computer, and mobile version (the users pointed out that it was freighting for that to be shown the warning sign about dangerous website at the very beginning)
- Surprisingly perhaps, one of the main issues reported by the users was lack of a very detailed “**paper**” **manual**, written and presented in a more traditional manner, accompanying the slide-show presented during the workshops. The participants, although eager to learn new computer and Internet skills, expect to have the knowledge and information transmitted in a way they associate learning with, that is written on a paper. With no paper manual, it was really hard for the users. Most of them kept forgetting what is where and how to find it, some kept asking for a step-by-step manual operations and would love to have a description at hand. That was later confirmed in one of the interviews where the user stated that the information uploaded on the platform should be presented in a linear (not “cartoon-like”) form.
- The **appearance** of the website is one of the most often criticized features. None of the interviewees said they liked it, few remained indifferent and one went even so far as to call it “*awful and repulsive*”. The users complained that the portal was too plain and they did not like the colours used. “*Black is not the best colour for a background; the same goes with white*”, says Anna. “*They are too aggressive*”. They would rather see more usage of warm, gentle, pastel-like shades. Some other people pointed that it was not so much the colours but the aesthetic side of the portal in general, making the current design rather unattractive. The users also noticed several spelling mistakes in Polish language and call for immediate corrections and the standardization of expressions commonly used in other social networks (ie. “znajomi” instead of “Wszyscy przyjaciele”).
- The usage of the platform requires a certain pre-existing level of knowledge of computer and Internet-related terminology, such as “user’s profile”, “applications”, “message board” etc. This **pre-knowledge** provides a starting point for the next bunch of information delivered during workshops and training aiming at introducing Go-myLife portal. It turned out, however, that such an approach might not be always legitimate as in three cases the participants were simply confused with the meaning of a word, ascribed to the Internet realm (ie. ‘profile’), which was totally new to them and very different from the literal meaning they were accustomed to (“*a profile to me is a face seen from a side*” – said one of the interviewees). This suggests that teaching people who are computer illiterate how to use a new portal, even such a simple one as Go-myLife aspires to be, might be a little bit too challenging and, despite the simplicity of the navigation, a basic knowledge is indispensable, otherwise the user will get easily put off. That was even

noticed by the users themselves who often mentioned that in order to “grab the idea” of the platform a thorough system of workshops is needed, starting with the very basic information and gradually moving on to more advance things.

4.3.2 Errors on the Go-myLife platform - Poland

Most of the users admit to not using the platform on regular basis due to many technical problems. One participant for example, said: *“I use Firefox browser at home, which is set up in such a way as to block pop-ups, including the platform. So there was nothing I could do from home”*. A couple participating in the testing were not able to reach the platform with the Smartphones (technical problems are described in detail in other part of the report). As a result, many of the users were unable to test the platform from home and the only opportunity they had to use the application was during the workshops, hence their experience is still rather limited.

Much of the information gathered during the individual interviews have confirmed the technical issues we were faced with during and after each workshop, such as the problem with accessing the platform via Firefox browser, the problem with signal reception in the mobile phones, which result in inability to access the platform, the complains about the size of the phone in general and size of the screen in particular and so on.

Further errors, detected are:

- The need for a possibility to have the login and password backup in case someone forgets it
- Mobile version of the platform is not as stable as the computer one; it crashes more often.
- Problems with uploading photos, at least for some.
- Problem with “enter” used for accepting the action
- Problem with “deleting” information and/or uploads

4.3.3 Expectations and suggestions: usability issues - Poland

Now we would like to focus merely on the improvements and changes suggested by the participants during the interviews.

The **information** which would appear on the website should be approachable, written in a **“book-like” manner**, presented in longer chunks, rather than in fragmented, scattered pieces (as one of the participants says: *“We are an old school and we expect to see a more traditional way of transmitting information”*).

- Most of the users, however, liked the font size and appreciated the general “clarity” of the design.

Further improvement issues regarding technical or usability issues can be deduced from this list of critics:

- No possibility to remove members once a group is created
- The search tool is limited to finding names/ logins of the users but fails to find a particular word in text
- The need to receive confirmation of the invitations sent/ accepted

- No possibility to change the language after logging in
- The names of groups created by the users overlap with the other names of applications, which results in difficulty to recognize what is what
- Searching for a friend – too complicated – many people did not like the pop-up windows
- No instruction provided on the site as – for example - on Facebook, where they give this step-by-step manual on “how and why”
- No one really knows how to use the “location” application

4.3.4 Expectations and suggestions: content and information issues - Poland

Unlike on Facebook, or Twitter, the users expect the platform to be a medium not only for entertaining or communicating purposes but rather a platform which would provide information and enable help exchange services. This is in line with other findings which show the difference between those internet users who are still at work and those over 55 in the way they use the Internet. In the younger group half of the users concentrate on work-related issues (over 45%), 1/3 on news and 1/5 on entertainment. Perhaps not surprisingly, in the older group of Internet users the main interests revolve around news (45%), whereas work and entertainment seems to be of similar importance (around 28%). Less than 10 per cent of the internet users from both groups use the Net for social contacts.

- All of the users though, agreed that some kind of a “**notice board**” – where they could ask for/ offer help or advice – would be a very interesting idea. One female participant noticed that with so much time on her hands she would use such notice board to offer some volunteer work. A male participant, on the other hand, would use such message board to ask other users to recommend him a reliable and honest cleaning lady or an experienced plumber. Another female participant suggests it could enable people to find a nurse if needed or search for someone who would help with shopping. The topics should be divided into main categories, such as “housework” or “health”, and sub-categories to keep the board at order. A few people see the board as a place where they would also find some other seniors with similar interests and match-up. The question remains though, if the users would be ready to trust in the messages uploaded by others on such board?
- Indeed, there is a general expectation from the platform to be much more informative than it is right now. Some of the interviewees suggested including links to cultural websites (cinema shows, museums, theatres), collected under the “culture” tab.
- Others would like to see more ‘practical’, so to say, information, such as the addresses of the local clinics, senior clubs, offices, local weather forecast, etc. This would enable the users to find the essentials on the platform without browsing the whole Internet with Google or other search engines. The idea is to have all the necessary information “in one place”, as one of the respondent put it. The information should also be adjusted locally. This, however, might be technically more challenging.
- One female participant expected to find on the platform some information related to health, such as diets, examples of exercises designed to strengthen spine and pelvic muscles, clothes’ shops for larger ladies and so on.
- Her husband, on the other hand, would be pleased to find some advice on how to choose a good mobile phone or a laptop, presented in a comprehensive way. He imagines that the users would signal a problem or a need for a particular topic, subject, such as the one

abovementioned, and someone else - “an editor of the website” - would prepare a professional feature on the subject and put it up on the platform’s website.

- Other seniors suggested a need for information on cultural events, entertainments, meetings for seniors. *“This would be something which would really attract the seniors”*. Such opinions indicate, of course, a slight misunderstanding as to the purpose of the platform, which is supposed to be created by the users *themselves* sharing information among each other, rather than being provided a top-down information by an administrator.

4.3.5 Reliability and privacy - Poland

Despite the common claims that the senior users are much more suspicious towards the information put up on the Internet than their younger counterparts, our participants showed a rather surprising level of trust towards the potential content added by other users on the Go-myLife portal. Their approach might be called as sensible. It’s possible that the age factor plays here a decisive role. The users are more trustful towards the other users from similar age group (which is in accordance with the targeted users). When asked how the reliability of information can be checked, they pointed out, quite logically, that after a while they would know each other’s tastes and preferences. Such knowledge would serve as a base for verification of information and would solidify the level of trust towards the opinions and recommendations expressed on the board or forum.

The users simply say that same rules apply to social networks as to “real” life. *“I double check- says a female participant - that is, if somebody recommends something I try to find some other opinions and not just go by one”*. A male participant concluded that *“in such platform the same rules apply as in real life: different people have different expectations so we’d always get different opinions on the same subject”*. In other words, reliability does not seem to be the biggest concern. This, however, do not apply to the issue of privacy.

Our interviews confirmed what has been noted in many other senior-oriented programs. Unlike the younger, digital generation, the seniors are rather unwilling to reveal and discuss any information which is regarded as more private and intimate (relationships, sex, personal problems, etc.) and would not like to share their personal data over the Internet (Czerniawska D et al. 2001). Our participants felt very indignant over the fact that after setting up a profile on the platform all their contacts from the email box were automatically added to their Go-myLife profile. A male participant says: *“I want to be able to decide with whom I want to share my information. But instead, I feel pressured to open up, to tell everything about myself. And this is not good at all.”* The users often talk about lack of control over this. There is a need to be able to decide if they want to reveal their private information or not and many complained that they do not have any power over this on the platform. And female participant adds: *“Suddenly [after registering] I had access to various people’s data and they had mine – my e-mail address, telephone number, even my picture! It is totally unacceptable for me. I quit using the phone immediately”*.

4.3.6 Summary of findings from pilot 1 - Poland

Overall, the conclusions regarding the main problems encountered by the Polish testing group confirmed the findings presented in the field tests, particularly that:

- Providing a social networking platform via mobile technology access problems occur

due to the bad internet connectivity on mobile devices.

- Polish participants preferred a “book-like” manner of presenting content, rather than fragmenting information in smaller, scattered pieces.
- Such complaints as “*too small a font; invisible icons on the Smartphone’s screen or - my fingers are too fat to navigate this keyboard (Smartphone)*” confirm the cognitive and physical limitations the older people face. This has to be taken into account when designing a program or a piece of new technology, especially aimed at senior users.
- There is a fear of approaching the new technology and a feeling of inappropriateness, especially among those with low computer skills (the feeling quickly fades away once several successful attempts were made, which results in a noticeable increase in self confidence).
- Older people are much more reluctant to talk about their private matters online than the younger generation. Instead they chose to talk about hobbies, interests or health.

As to the issue of communication, it seems that the problem lies not so much in the fact that older people find it difficult to communicate clearly but that they use different ways to communicate, deeply rooted in the pre-technology era. This was clearly visible in the difference some users (mis)understand social network terminology, (like in the case of ‘profile’). This needs to be respected and taken into account if the message (information, knowledge) is to be conveyed successfully.

Despite all the problems and difficulties the users encountered during the testing period, they all agree that the idea itself is very interesting and the tool would be useful, provided it operates smoothly. Most of them see the platform as a potentially useful tool for receiving, obtaining and exchanging information but not necessarily for staying in touch with their family and friends. For this particular purpose, a more traditional way seem to dominate among the senior Internet users, such as telephone and face-to face contacts, which is in line with other similar findings. If they use online social networks, such as Facebook or NK, then they do it to get in touch with friends they haven’t seen for a long time. But once the contact is established they tend to switch to telephone (or Skype, alternatively), mail and personal contact. This suggests that Go-myLife might be used in a similar manner.

The more advanced users from our group (still a minority) often referred to Facebook as an ideal tool for social networking and stated openly that Go-myLife has nothing better or more interesting to offer them. Others though (less experienced with the Internet usage), enjoyed the workshops and training and seemed to be genuinely interested in learning the new skills. They even spontaneously came up with some ideas for promoting the portal. A word-of-mouth, would be very effective, in their opinion, if more elderly users were logged in to the portal. Otherwise a TV campaign would attract seniors’ attention. The users also noticed that the platform might play a significant role in stimulating elder people into taking part in local, neighbourhood activities by, for example, meeting together, skills exchange, providing information on local events etc. But, as somebody rightly noticed – the usage of the platform itself plays a huge stimulating role and that is already a big change.

To sum up, although, due to technical problems, the testing did not result in realizing these goals of the project, which aimed at enriching the senior life by using technology – such as updating and contacting friends and family using the application (see: D6.1 Methodology of Pilot testing and Evaluation, page 15, 3.1.1) –, the very participation in the testing pilot resulted in many other benefits, such as: meeting up new people, making new friends, getting out of the house, learning new skills, keeping the mind fit, encouraging active life. This is in

line with the 'social' aims of the project.

The most **negative feature** of the testing period was the change of attitudes towards the new tool. At the beginning the participants were very curious and eager to learn to operate the system and to share their impression. During the first two meetings – the kick off and the first workshop – the users were very positive and interested in the product. Unfortunately, the growing number of technical problems and other issues resulted in growing indifference towards the application, which had turned into frustration later on. This trend can also be seen via the decreasing site-visits in January 2012. This could have been prevented if the main problems (that is poor connection with the internet via the phones and frequent crashing) had been solved immediately after being reported. But there was nothing which could have been done at that time.

Despite the general low feelings however, the testing period provided invaluable lessons in terms of information we have managed to collect on the real and potential problems as well as expectations and suggestions on how to improve the final product.

4.3.7 Recommendations related to the training methodology – Poland

The pilot testing confirms some of the problems described in other research studies and articles on the usage of computer technology among the elderly: the language and means of training have to be different than those used in younger users groups, who, being surrounded by technology from early years - often use new application in an intuitive way. The seniors, especially those less advanced in computer skills, are used to obtaining new information from written documents in a linear way (they often make notes during training). All too often this difference is overlooked by the organizations providing training for the seniors, which results in frustration and decrease of the initial enthusiasm among some seniors. One of the best ways to overcome this problem is to employ more senior experts who would easily sympathize with their peers, in order to transfer the knowledge and skills or-alternatively- the teachers should consider the seniors' needs regarding the training.

4.3.8 Recommendations related to policy – Poland

Apart from the problems mentioned in the report, the successful introduction of the Go-myLife platform into the Polish cyber scene relies on several other factors, independent from the project-related activities, such as hard and soft obstacles related to the psychological boundaries and limitations. The plan is, however, that by 2015 every Pole will have access to the broadband connection³⁸, so the first step is to convince all the sectors of the society, especially those over 50 year old, to make use of this opportunity. In order to obtain this goal it is necessary to involve all the agencies – business, civil services and third sector agencies alike to organize a series of workshops and trainings all over Poland. It seems that a very rich network of Third Age Universities and Seniors' organizations could be involved in carrying out such a project. There are already positive signs. In 2008 a new initiative called: M@turity in the Net was created by joining forces between the commercial actors (IBM, Microsoft,

³⁸ <http://www.polskieradio.pl/7/159/Artykul/460294,W-2015-szerokopasmowy-internet-bedzie-dostepny-dla-kazdego>

UPC Internet provider) with government and non-government organizations and participation of academic institutions. Another study shows that although 49 per cent of all Facebook users and 35 of MySpace want to use the social network to strengthen their existing relationships or meet new people, this goal seems to be less important among the group of elderly who often have a stable group of contacts and may use the Internet rather to stay in touch with their friends than meet new ones. Those over 50 and 60 year old look more often for exchanging information on the subject that interests them, such as medical care, gardening or health and beauty, which explains the popularity of thematic social networks among them.

The aim of coalition approaches, like mentioned above, is to encourage various areas, groups, agendas – such as business, public sector, government agendas, NGOs to cooperate towards - firstly- the increase of awareness of the benefits of the participation in the cyber sphere and - secondly- the gain in knowledge and skills provided for seniors, necessary to make the participation real³⁹. Needless to say that a stronger representative of the seniors groups in the Internet would greatly enrich the cyber life drawing from their great wisdom and great experiences. Right now their voice is still barely heard in the cyber sphere.

4.4 Findings derived from participators user-involvement methods - UK

4.4.1 Problems and difficulties with the Go-myLife services - UK

During the testing period the majority of participants got enthusiastic about the use of the platform. Because the platform is still in the pilot phase, the participants suffered from technical problems and complained that patience and persistence was needed.

- *“For me another problem has been that the service has not always worked. It is important to have the service always available so that I don’t lose the habit of logging on, posting news and photos and reading what my friends have written. (LI 41⁴⁰)”*
- *“It is a pain when the service doesn’t work. I don’t always get very good mobile reception in my house, so that doesn’t help, but it doesn’t always work properly even when reception is good. I’m a bit impatient and often if I don’t see anything happening on the screen, I tap the button again, which means that sometimes I post the same message several times. I do feel a bit silly when I do this. (JO 38)”*
- *“It is still not working very well all of the time, so you need patience and persistence. (HA45)”*
 - The facilitator of the UK pilot sites elaborated a very detailed description of technical and usability problems from a user-perspective which is part of Annex 1 of this document.

³⁹ <http://dojrzaloscwsieci.pl/>

⁴⁰ In the following section unique codes are used for each user.

4.4.2 Barriers to the Go-myLife platform – UK

Psychological barriers

Although the majority of participants expressed their enthusiasms about the lively interaction manners on the platform, few participants seem to have psychological problems with the extroverted and self-exposing communication norms. They don't want to share everyday experiences and refuse to show others family photos.

- *“The problem for me is that it is difficult to get into the habit of telling “trivia”. I can understand why this is valuable. But it is just difficult to actually tell people about the things that happen in my everyday life or to post up photos of family events. (LI41)”*
- *“Maybe it is one of those things that you have to get into the habit of doing it. It is not natural for me to interact with people and wear my heart on my sleeve. (BR39)”*
- *“I do a lot of messaging, but that is very practical, about organising things and so on. I still don't feel comfortable just talking about my everyday life with people. (MO 50)”*

ICT skills and access to ICT

The use of the Go-myLife platform depends of course on the access to internet and/or smart phones. However, there is still a digital divide observable in this age cohort, which prevent them from the benefits of ICT. Older people still may don't have access to PCs or smartphones. *“The problem is that I don't know if any of my friends has a computer and I don't think any of them have a smartphone. (JO38)”*

Another group of participants lack of ICT skills which provides a fundamental barrier to take use of the Go-myLife platform. *“Maybe half the people I know can use the internet (PY23)”* *“I enjoy it when I can, but it is frustrating that mostly I have only been able to post messages when I am with the group and someone can help me. (WE42)”*

4.4.3 Perceived benefit of the Go-myLife Platform- UK

In general the large majority of the 17 UK participants highlighted the positive feelings experienced through the facilitated and deepened relationship with friends due to Go-myLife. Only two participants stated that they could not grasp the benefits of Go-myLife yet and argued that they would probably need to get more into the habit of doing it, to better understand the gains of online social networks.

Goal 1⁴¹: Facilitated interaction

Participants stated that Go-myLife would make it easier to keep in touch with friends – especially on a day-to-day basis. With regard to the facilitated communication participants mentioned *“It is better than phoning or texting, and it is easy to post up news once so that everyone can see it. (SS48)”* or *“It is much easier than phoning because people are often busy or doing something else when I phone. (PY23)”*. The identified differences to common communication means, like telephone and SMS, were that the communication via Go-myLife is media-enriched, takes place on a regular (daily) basis and reaches a larger group of friends when they have time to look into it. *“It is a matter of getting into a routine of logging on and looking at what other people have said and the pictures that they have posted up and making your own comments and posting your own pictures. (MI51)”* explained a participant.

⁴¹ More about the Go-myLife goals see Chapter 2.1

According to the participants, Go-myLife is considered as an environment that actively supports the dialogues and mediates communication. Posting messages and receiving responses / feedbacks facilitate a lively and fluent communication which is appreciated by the majority of participants. *“I like posting on Go-myLife and it has been good to see other people commenting on what I have said.”* (CH44) and *“I really appreciated getting feedback – more positive than negative. It shows that someone has looked at what I have said and the photos that I have put up and thought about them.”* (HA45) It is even fascinating to give communication inputs and to observe others comments and their inputs. *“It is addictive – both looking at what other people have said and posting messages myself. I also enjoy commenting on what others have said.”* (HI47)

Interaction in a joyful way is – no surprise – very much appreciated by number of participants. *“We have had a lot of fun in the groups and it has been nice to see people’s comments and photos in between the meetings. I enjoy the jokes and funny comments that people post up.”* (GO38)

This statement stresses also the importance of sharing photos as accompanying facilitation for deepening the online interactions.

Goal 2: Deepening and growing relationships

The objective of Go-myLife to support older people in deepening existing relationships with friends and making new friends, met the highest approval amongst UK participants. With regard to deepening existing relationship participants stated that the day-to-day communication via news and photos on Go-myLife brought a new level into existing friendships, which were mainly based on weekly meetings in activity and leisure clubs.

Participants stated that

- *“You find out what your friends are interested in and what they have done, in a way that doesn’t come up in the groups where we meet for our different activities* (DW41)”
- *“I’ve found out more intimate things about the others in the group that we normally wouldn’t have had time to talk about. I’ve got to know them more as people* (HA45)“.
- Thus *“much more about their social life comes out on Go-myLife* (DW41)”
- and *“...Go-myLife could deepen my existing relationships with friends and particularly with acquaintances or people I don’t already know very well.* (SS48)”
- *“So I think it could help me get to know my friends even better.* (JO38)”

The most commonly used functionalities amongst participants, which helped to get to know existing friends better, were news and pictures. The sharing of pictures was mentioned by several participants as an important and joyful added value to existing communication media and it seemed that especially for the male participants who experienced difficulties in talking about *“nothing really relevant”* on Go-myLife, the sharing of pictures was an easier way to contribute to the community.

Participants enjoyed to communicate to a wider group of people, joking with others, *“find out what people are doing (...) how they spend their days, what clubs they belong to, where they go, what their neighbours are like.”* (PY23). *“But I can certainly see how it could be useful to help people get to know their friends better and to find about more activities for older people in the area.”* (MO50)

And this communication also helped *“... in making new friends as I will get to know them*

better and acquaintances might become friends.”(SS48) and “I have made some very good friends through the group. It has given me a wider outlook.” (HA45) is another statement in this regard.

Goal 3: Easier to get out of the house

No data available - participants didn't refer to this goal.

Goal 4: More secure and safe to get out of the house

No data available - participants didn't refer to this goal.

Goal 5: Easier to play an active role in the community (events, reciprocal help)

Starting a regular communication with friends and acquaintances from the local region also fosters participants in becoming more active members in their community. *“I do belong to a local Tai Chi group, but they are closing the sessions in Newmarket because there are not enough members and I am not sure what I should do. (...) If Go-myLife had been running here a bit earlier, it may have helped us recruit a few more members.” (CH44).*

One important aspect is the facilitated organization of real-life encounters amongst participants. UK participants state that *“Go-myLife would also make it easier to meet up with friends. (MI51)”* and *“It would be useful to have the facility of finding out how many people would be interested in a particular activity and what were the best dates and timings for everyone.” (SS48).*

Especially the function **“events”** supports to overcome possible psychological barriers when it comes to the consideration if to attend a particular event or not. It helps to get an insight into the social framework of an event, like how many people and who exactly plans to attend. *“Events” is a very useful function as it allows you to see at a glance how many people are attending.” (SS48).* This person suggests to add to the “event” function a field, where people can state the reason for not attending. *“It might be good to let people have the chance to say why they can't attend.” (SS48).*

Supporting each other in the community and/or neighbourhood is one of the core-goals of Go-myLife services. A number of persons stated that this goal is achieved. *“People have been very helpful to me.” (WE42).* *“...What their neighbours are like. If they are in trouble where I can help them or they can help me. I enjoy commenting on what other people say. It is an opportunity to encourage and help them.” (PY23).*

Goal 6: Easier to keep the mind fit (information, cultural events)

It is widely recognized that keeping up the social life and engaging in stimulating conversations is key for mental fitness. Coming from the Lifelong Learning angle, it is argued that older peoples' brain is best stimulated when “learning” is of practical use, in particular in conjunction with social activities. Key motivating “learning” factor for older people is the possibility to share their life-experiences and knowledge (IANUS project, 2009). In other word, “learning” in later life is best situated, when it is collaborative, unobtrusive, useful, suited to everyday needs. In this sense, the Go-myLife platform provides stimulation for “learning” and keeping the mental fitness. It opens the **intellectual horizon**, such as

- *“It has given me a wider outlook.” (HA45)*

- *“I’m looking for more activities to do all the time and so I would really like it if Go-myLife would help me find other things to do. (...) It has been interesting to find out what other activities the other members of the groups are involved in.” (GO38)*
- *“I was also interested to find out about the fact that there is a branch of the University of the Third Age in Newmarket, and I’d like to find out more about their activities.” (MO50)*
- *“This has been very good for me as I haven’t used a computer, nor had a mobile phone, so now I feel much more understanding of modern life.” (GR42)*

Whenever a break in the flow of daily routine occurs, Go-myLife provides an instrument for filling “free minutes” with meaningful activities and again, with intellectual stimulations. *“It is quite nice not to have to take a book or something around to read in case there is a few minutes with nothing else to do.” (PY23)*

Sharing information and discussing topics of interest within a **peer** group is especially appreciated. *“But it will be enjoyable talking with people who share similar interests.” (SS48).*

Regarding topics of interest, **cultural** issues and **hobbies** are frequently mentioned. *“What is especially useful is the opportunity to tell people, for example, what films we are going to see and then be able to make recommendations about how good the film is.” (SS48)* and *“It has woken up a lot of interests for me, for instance about photography.” (YO41).*

Go-myLife can help to manage **financial** constraints in later life by informing each other about cheap offers. *“It could also be used to let people know about bargains in supermarket etc. I might notice a bargain when I am in the supermarket, or see a petrol station with cheap petrol and I could alert all my friends.”(MI51).*

4.4.3.1 Facebook versus Go-myLife platform – perceived benefits

Older people tend to have some resentment towards Facebook; as our user needs elicitation workshops within WP2 have already turned out⁴². However, compared with Facebook, Go-myLife is considered as a better alternative. *“I wouldn’t go on Facebook, but this is a lot better.” (YO41)* and *“I see this as an older person’s version of Facebook”.* (BR39)

As stated also below, trust and privacy are fundamental issues to get older people involved in online social network platforms. Participants seem to trust Go-myLife more than Facebook in this regard. *“People our age don’t do Facebook because of problems with Facebook. People are worried about privacy” (HI47).*

However, the pilot testing activities had a positive learning effect which goes beyond the Go-myLife platform. *“I’ve also played around with Facebook, but never really got on with it, and so it has been useful to get a sense of the positive value of online social networks.” (NMM⁴³).*

4.4.3.2 PC versus smart phone – perceived benefits

The Go-myLife platform has two versions: a) for the use on PCs and b) on smart-phones. On the UK pilot site, “only” smart phones have been used for the pilot testing. The overwhelming

⁴² Consult D2.3 in the Go-myLife project.

⁴³ No code available, NMM stands for New Market Male

majority of participants was very enthusiastic to get acquaintance with smart-phones and some. E.g. *“I’ve very much enjoyed the sessions and like to use the phone”.* (GO38) *“I have never been able to text because of my arthritis but the much larger keyboard of the smartphone has made this possible.”* (HI47)

Participants may not have PC skills” *I don’t do computers – but I can use this.”* (HA45) or *“I’ve very much enjoyed the smart phone. I haven’t got a computer and haven’t had a smart phone before, but my niece is very impressed with my phone and has helped me a lot in learning how to use it.”* (JO38) or don’t have internet connections at home, however they enjoy to have internet access when they are out and about. *“It is very convenient on the smart phone (...) In some ways, the fact that I can’t get connection at home doesn’t matter because of this. It is quite nice not to have to take a book or something around to read in case there are a few minutes with nothing else to do.”* (PY23)

Some may have PC skills but no smart phone skills. The pilot testing gave them the opportunity to benefit from the smart phone functionalities for the first time. *“I’ve really enjoyed the group. I ‘m very experienced with the computer, but never used a smart phone before and I am enjoying all the things it can do.”* NMM

An important function on smart phones is the camera which is highly appreciated. *“I really appreciate the smart phone. I especially love taking photos with the phone – it is amazing how high quality the photos are and all of the effects that you can do with them.”* (MO50)

4.4.4 Expectations and suggestions: content and information issues - UK

A number of content related suggestions have been provided by the participants, which are set in bold in the two following quotations:

In terms of information that could be provided via a platform like Go-myLife to help me enjoy an active social life, this could maybe include (SS48):

- *a list of **recommendations** e.g. for **restaurants** and so on*
- *Museum pages – describing new **exhibitions** and future plans*
- *a noticeboard to support the exchange of **small practical services** among participants would be good especially if you could post a photo up as well. Similarly with a **calendar** of **events** in your neighbourhood.*

*Go-myLife could provide me with a range of information to help me enjoy an active social life. This could include a feed of **local news** taken from the local paper and information about Jumble sales and other **local activities**. **Organisations** could **advertise** to gain new members or people to attend events.* (MI/SM 51)

4.4.5 Suggested facilitation activities – UK

Number of participants

In order to enhance the information and exchange quantity on the platform, to make it more meaningful and lively, the participants feel that the member number needs to increase substantially.

- *“It will be better when there are more people using it. It will be important that as the*

numbers increase we can continue to maintain privacy. (SS48)”

- *“If groups of people are willing to use it with enthusiasm – then it would be worth doing (DW41)”*
- *“The need is to get a whole group interested to use it together. (DW41)”*
- *“I certainly enjoy using Go-myLife and it would be great if more people I know were on it. (CH44)”*

Frequency of interaction

Crucial in any online interaction is to receive responses at all on one’s postings and in particular in a short time. Otherwise the risk is given, that members get lost if their contributions are not acknowledged in a satisfying manner.

- *“I’m just a bit disappointed that not everyone posts frequently. I feel that everyone should have done it (HA45)”*
- *“You have to contribute to make it work – you need to post at least once a day. And comment on what others have said. (HA45)”*

Aspiration to meet offline friends also online

Social network platforms have the potential to get in contact with people beyond one’s own local social groups. However, a number of participants expressed their aspiration to move existing local groups to the online platform, in other words, to meet those people online with whom they meet offline anyhow.

- *“It would be good if some of the groups in the Leisure Centre might start to use Go-myLife.” (GO39)*
- *“I also am very much involved in Petanque. There are a lot of clubs in this area, with a very active league. While all age groups are represented, most of the people are older. So it might work to get my local club members to sign up to Go-myLife.” (NMM)*
- *I think a number of the people in the rambling group that I help to lead might be interested in taking part in the next phase and I will talk to them about it. I think a number of them have a computer. (GR42)*

Asking the participants which approaches may help to enhance the user-number on the Go-myLife platform, a present introduction group session *“In terms of getting other people to use it, it would be good to ask them to come along to an introductory group session. For instance, my Spanish conversation group might be interested. People are very busy and involved in a lot of different groups.” (HI47)* and in particular in a library. *“It might be possible to run introductory sessions at the local library, because that has computers for public use. The libraries might also be good places to recruit new users. The library staff is there to help people learn to use computers and many of the people who come for help are older people. So the library staff might be interested to find out about Go-myLife and to tell the users about it.” (NMM)* is suggested. A snowball system as another approach is suggested as well. *“In terms of getting more users, I’ll sound out some of my friends. If everyone does it then they are all contributing”.* (HA45)

4.4.6 Summary of findings from pilot 1 - UK

The pilot testing phase 1 in the UK provided a rich source of technical and functional issues for optimising the Go-myLife platform (see section 4.5.1). On the other side, this information pool suggests also that there is still a lot of effort needed to provide a friction-free access: like in the Polish pilot site the participants had to manage with a lot of frustrations regarding technical un-functionalities and errors.

Also the analysis of the group discussion and the interviews at the end of the pilot phase 1 provided a rich insight, particularly into the users view regarding the Go-myLife's goals. Generally, the participants acknowledged the benefits of the Go-myLife platform such as:

- **Communication** via Go-myLife, may be better than traditional phoning and texting and it reaches a larger group of friends;
- **Sharing photos**, which was very popular among the participants because it is perceived as a joyful and easier way of communication;
- Creating and searching for **events**, especially to find out who and how many will attend, is considered as a highly supportive for decision making.
- The opportunity of giving and receiving support in the **neighbourhood**;
- Stimulating the **mind** and widen the **intellectual horizon** by sharing and exchanging relevant information;
- Filling **meaningfully free minutes** with a handy instrument (namely the Go-myLife platform on the mobile phone) when they are out and about.

Contrary to some participants in Poland, the UK people consider Go-myLife as a better alternative to Facebook. It is perceived as the more "secure" place, not only with regard to the applied privacy and security issues, where Facebook seems to have very low confidence from the target group. But also with regard to the fact that Go-myLife is a place to meet local friends and where potential conflicts with distant family members do not become so apparent.

5 Summary and recommendations – derived from all evaluation instruments

5.1 Issues concerning the technical devices and the Go-myLife services

5.1.1 Internet coverage for mobile phones

From a technical side we learned that the internet coverage for mobile phones, especially in Poland, is still a barrier which makes the regular usage of mobile social networks difficult. In Poland many participants did not have internet coverage in their living areas and thus could not access the Go-myLife platform via their mobile phones.

Also internet access for mobile phones via Wifi is not common yet, as many participants just had a LAN- internet connection for their PC at home. Thus the usage of the Go-myLife mobile platform was in many cases in Poland restricted to the live events.

5.1.2 Usage of smart phones

Using a smart phone was perceived as very interesting and attractive for participants in both pilot sites. It provided them the feeling to take part in “modern” life and made them proud to be able to use a device which is even attractive to their grand children. Smart phones were especially easy to use for those participants, who have never used a computer before, as the navigation concept itself is completely different and more intuitive for total beginners. But some of the older people experienced the screens, as well as the icons and letters on the smart phones, as being very small and thus difficult to manipulate. Using the touch screen of the Samsung Galaxy – although it was a big screen – posed difficulties amongst participants, when it came to writing messages or confirming actions in the user interface (UI) which were triggered by too small icons or buttons.

Thus the interest in tablet PCs with their bigger screens was high amongst participants. Another alternative for the usage of online social networks on a mobile device would be the usage of smart phones which allow the manipulation via a stylus.

5.1.3 Design and terminology of the Go-myLife services

Concerning the design of the Go-myLife services the feedback was quite contraire. Some participants mentioned that they would prefer a user-interface with more pastel colours, but other users said that the colours were not the problem as they made the interface very clear.

We learned that the big typo and the big icons of Go-myLife are perceived as advantage and whenever these rules were broken in our application (e.g. we used too small buttons on some of the pages) the feedback from the users was immediate.

So for pilot 2, the continuity of our Go-myLife user-interface design, which was adapted to the needs of older people concerning size and provided quantity of information, will be further improved.

Especially in the Polish version of Go-myLife the terminology needs to be corrected in

accordance with the standards used in other social networks (mainly Facebook and NK) so that the terminology looks familiar.

5.1.4 Comparison to Facebook

We learned that regular Facebook users did not like the Go-myLife platform as they were used to the other wording and interface and any changes were difficult to handle for them. But the group of users, who were completely new to the concept of social network platforms, or who did not like Facebook, perceived Go-myLife platform as being attractive. Older people tend to have some resentments towards Facebook, which was already shown in the Go-myLife user needs elicitation workshops of WP2. Trust and privacy issues are highly important for older people and in this regard Facebook, as a company, has to struggle with a very bad image especially concerning the content rights and privacy issues. Go-myLife was perceived as much more trustworthy in this context. In addition participants mentioned that the fact that Go-myLife is shared amongst friends only, would make it a more comfortable place. In Facebook the whole family could ask to become part of one's social network, but family relations are sometimes problematic and thus adding them to one's social network could result in quite conflicting situations.

5.1.5 Suggestions for new/improved functions

Blackboard/Pin-board

Participants from Poland and UK requested to add a **pin-board to the Go-myLife platform**. A **board** where people can communicate and exchange issues such as practical services and news was highly suggested. It would support the exchange of **small practical services** among participants, promote volunteer work, ask for recommendations and advice.

Events

The functionality "**event**" was highly valued especially among UK participants and there were some considerations how it could be improved. Suggestions were to include a poll function regarding the date and timing as well as regarding who would be interested in an activity at all. Further, to include the opportunity of stating the reasons why not attending a particular event. A calendar of events should be included too.

Pictures

Sharing pictures in one's social network was one of the main advantages expressed in contrast to classical communication means like phone or SMS. To make this an even better experience, users requested functionalities, like the easy deleting and editing pictures, on the PC as well as on the smart phone.

FAQ

Participants from Poland requested to add a "Help" section with FAQ and, ideally, a

possibility to ask a question when struggling with the application.

Around me

Participants don't want only to see the location around themselves, but also local information on places that they enter manually via address-field to plan future activities out of the house.

5.1.6 Suggestions for new content

Especially participants from Poland expected the platform to be a medium not only for entertaining or communicating purposes but rather a platform which would provide information and enable help exchange services. They would appreciate Go-myLife to be the access point to all the relevant information. This is on the one hand the social network, but on the other hand access to:

- practical information from the region (e.g. organisational and administrative issues, best price offers),
- news from local newspapers, local organizations, local activities, sales, etc. ,
- more information and advice on health issues,
- but also information concerning latest technical devices.

5.2 Go-myLife's impact on older peoples' social lives

Concerning Go-myLife's (potential) impact on older peoples' social lives the experiences differed a lot between the two pilot sites.

The polish participants faced greater technical problems and had very limited access to the Go-myLife platform due to low internet coverage. Thus the main project objectives with regard to making new friends, deepening existing relationships, motivating activities outside of the house etc were reached only during live meetings, which accompanied the testing phase. Concerning the platform itself participants seem to be hesitating how useful it would be to stay in contact with friends and family members and rather suggest services which rely less on the social exchange between participants but provide more third party content from outside. But these statements were provided after a testing which offered very limited occasions to experience the potential benefits of linking members of a social network via a mobile platform.

In the UK pilot the testing conditions were better, as the internet coverage for mobile phones is far more developed in UK and the Go-myLife application run with a more stable version already.

But even in this pilot the participants mentioned that Go-myLife is not perceived as a platform which helps to link older people to their existing long-term friends and family members. In UK the Go-myLife platform was experienced as highly useful to deepen the communication with local acquaintances and to make new friends in the local community.

It seems that the platform has a huge potential to make the local community moving closer together again. It is not a platform to connect to old friends who live far away, neither to connect to family members. It is a platform which fosters relationships in a region. It is for

older people who look for interesting contacts and activities in their neighbourhood, who look for deepening relationships with local acquaintances, who are probably not real friends yet. And thus it has a huge potential to integrate older people in local networks and community activities again.

Participants stated that Go-myLife would make it easier to keep in touch with friends – especially on a day-to-day basis. The identified differences to common communication means, like telephone and SMS, were that the communication via Go-myLife is media-enriched, takes place on a regular (daily) basis and reaches a larger group of friends when they have time to look into it. Thus Go-myLife is considered as an environment that actively supports the dialogues and mediates communication. Posting messages and receiving responses / feedbacks facilitate a lively and fluent communication which is appreciated by the majority of participants. It is even fascinating to give communication inputs and to observe others' comments and their inputs. Interaction in a joyful way is – no surprise – very much appreciated by number of participants.

With regard to deepening existing relationships participants stated that the day-to-day communication via news and photos on Go-myLife brought a new level into existing friendships, which were mainly based on weekly meetings in activity and leisure clubs.

The most commonly used functionalities amongst participants, which helped to get to know existing friends better, were news and pictures. The sharing of pictures was mentioned by several participants as an important and joyful added value to existing communication media and it seemed that especially for the male participants who experienced difficulties in talking about “*nothing really relevant*” on Go-myLife, the sharing of pictures was an easier way to contribute to the community.

But Go-myLife platform provides also stimulation for “learning” and keeping the mental fitness. It opens the intellectual horizon, such as giving a wider outlook, find other things to do, finding people who are interested in the same activities. Whenever a break in the flow of daily routine occurs, Go-myLife provides an instrument for filling “free minutes” with meaningful activities and again, with intellectual stimulations. Sharing information and discussing topics of interest within a peer group is especially appreciated. Regarding topics of interest, cultural issues and hobbies are frequently mentioned.

5.3 Next evaluation steps

To further deepen our understanding about the role of Go-myLife in older peoples' social lives, a second pilot will be conducted in UK and Poland for a testing period of one month. The input and recommendations from testing phase 1 will help to further improve the Go-myLife services for pilot phase 2. The results from pilot phase 2 will be summarized and presented in an Interim Evaluation Report V2. An overall analysis of the Go-myLife evaluation will feed the Final Evaluation Report of the Go-myLife project.

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Annex 1

Problems and difficulties with the Go-myLife services - UK

The following section has been elaborated by the facilitator of the UK pilot sites and describes the technical and usability problems from a user-perspective.

General comments

Wherever it occurs on the mobile version of the site, the “getting data” and “Something wrong happened” messages are very small and difficult to read. It is especially a problem with the “Something wrong happened” as there is a little box with “close” in it to get rid of the message, and it is very difficult to see and then to click on the “Close”. Even when the boxes are expanded using the touch screen, it can be difficult to do it in a way that makes the box stay on the screen. **The messages just need to be a lot bigger.**

The **time-stamp** on messages seems to relate to Central European Time, which is confusing for the UK, which is one hour behind. Timings need to relate to the country where the message/photo was sent.

One suggestion about improving the service is that it needs to show that it is “sending” our comments or photos etc.

- *“At the moment it is difficult to know whether or not this is working and it is easy to try several times and post the same photo or comment several times. (SS48)”*
- *“Even the time the service takes to load wouldn’t be so much of a problem if I could be sure that it would work in the end. The difficulty is waiting and waiting and not being sure if the problem is that the service isn’t working or it is just the normal delay. (LI41)”*

Log in page

- Several people have accidentally created more than one account – possibly because they forgot the password. Some users have accepted these dormant accounts as friends. How can these accounts be deleted?
- Make sure that forgotten password help is in English or Polish and not in Spanish.

My Profile

- Editing photos is not just about deleting, but particularly about aligning it – ie getting it the right way up. At the moment, if you upload your profile photo from the phone, it tends to put it in on its side. We need a way of turning the photo by 90 degree angles to get it the right way up. In other words, in the screen that deals with the profile picture, there needs to be an additional button to the “choose picture” and “upload” buttons which would say “turn picture” and which would turn it 90° with each tap.
- We need to be able to edit my profile info on the smartphone

My network

- We need to be able to set up groups on the smartphone, for people who don’t use computers
- There should be a flag or some other notification if we have a friendship request

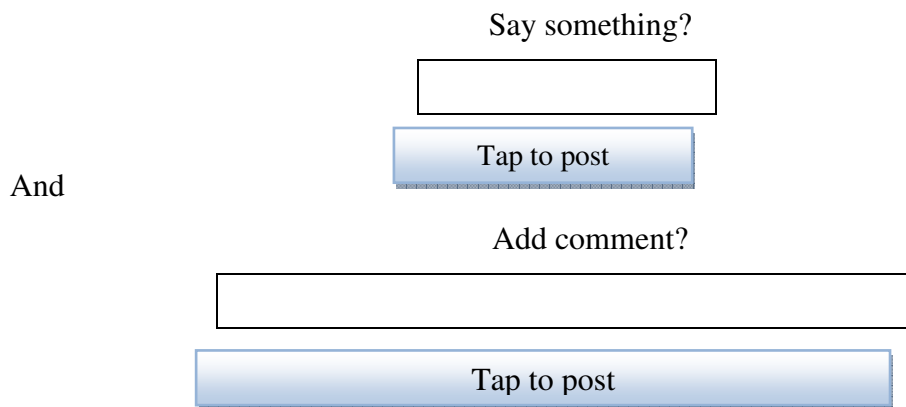
- When you send a friend request it shouldn't be "request sended" but "request sent"

News

- There is too small a gap on the phone between the text box and the "Say Something" button underneath. It is too easy at the moment to accidentally tap on the "Say Something" button when trying to tap in the text box. Similarly with the text box and the comment button
- There is a problem with consistency. On the News pages, you shouldn't first click on the "Say Something" bar or the "Comment" bar, but on the text box above it. .

The suggestion of the group is as follows:

Put an extra line of text in above the text bar to say "Say something?" or "add comment?", and then have the button underneath the text box say "tap to post"



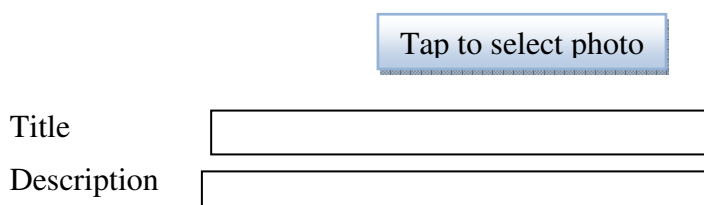
- When entering text in the text box, the text goes right to the end of the box, if it is longer than a few words. This makes it very difficult to edit the last word that you have written. This is because you have to move the cursor using your finger, which is quite wide and it is therefore difficult to position the cursor between the end of the text box and the last character typed. The only way to do it is to delete a word in the middle so as to bring a free space at the end of the line to be able to touch into and get the cursor in that space. There should therefore always be a gap between the last letter typed and the edge of the text box to enable a tap with the finger to position the cursor in it to allow the deletion and editing of the last word.

Media

- Instead of "Upload" on the button, we would suggest "Share a photo?" in text and then below a button saying "Tap to choose photo"



- In the screen where you select the photo and add title and description, we would suggest this is done as follows:



Tap to post photo

- On the screen, where you can look at the photos that have been uploaded, there should be four buttons and not three:

Tap to show location Tap to turn photo

Tap to edit Tap to delete photo

The “tap to turn photo” button should rotate the photo by 90° each tap

Of course, you should only be able to turn photo, edit description or delete the photo if you are the person who uploaded it.

- At the bottom of the screen, where there is the opportunity to comment on the photos, this should be done as with “News”

Add comment?

Tap to post

- We would also suggest that only photos posted over the last seven days should be viewed by default. If people want to view earlier photos, then there should be a **search button** at the bottom of the photos.
- This should lead to another screen, which should look like this:

Tap to see photos of previous 2 weeks

Tap to see photos of previous 4 weeks

Search by name of person posting photo Tap to search

Search by keyword Tap to search

- There should be an “edit photo” button. It is important to be able to turn the photo around, once it has been posted. Very often it goes up sideways or upside down. It is frustrating that you can’t turn it, once it has been posted. At the moment just being able to turn the photos around would make a lot of difference. You can turn photos that you have uploaded around in facebook, at least in the PC version.
- Looking at the suggested interface for the second prototype that you have already sent, on the fourth screen, we would suggest that instead of “choose file” you have “choose photo”
- Just as in News, the text box and the comments bar should be moved a little further

apart.

- When you have pressed upload and the photo is being sent – it would be good to have the message “It’s on its way” or something like that to give feedback that something is happening. All of us kept hitting the upload button several times in the early days and uploaded the same photo several times because there was no indication that the photo was being sent. (Of course the upload bar does get a blue edge when the photo is being sent, but you need to know that is what it means – it is nowhere explained.)

Events

- Looking at the suggested screens on the smartphone for events, it looks as if I could invite friends to events which were not created by me. That would be good if the event is a public one where the more people that are invited, the better. However, it would be useful if the person who created the event could see who had been invited by other people and what their response was, so that they would know how many people were planning to come.
- There should be a way of indicating when I have received an invitation
- For an event that a person is invited to the Go-myLife platform should provide information on how is attending, not attending and maybe attending and there should be the possibility for the user to change his personal choice.

Who is		
attending	not attending	maybe attending

Change my choice

- Also – if I have said that I may be attending, the message on the screen shouldn’t be “Maybe you attend” (It is not good English) but “I may attend”. Similarly for the other choices – I will attend, I will not attend
- Also on that screen the “Title”, “Description”, “Where” and “When” run over the text boxes that provide the information, so it is difficult to read. Also “the text box next to “Description” should be at least two lines deep in order to show enough of the information.

Around me

- I need not only to see what is around me where I am at the moment, but I should be able to put in a post code or some other identifier and find out what is local to that area. For instance, if I live in Newmarket, but am planning a trip to London, it would be very helpful for me to be able to look at the comments and reviews of restaurants, museums etc etc in London, before I go.
- As a general point about location – at the moment this does not work reliably. Is it still true that that to get an updated location in the mobile phones, you need to verify that in Settings -> Location & Security – “Use wireless networks” is checked AND “Use GPS satellites” is unchecked? If so - this is a problem as people would normally want to use GPS and wouldn’t want to have to keep going into settings to change this in order for Go-myLife location services to work.

Local life

- There needs to be a link to a local calendar of events and a local noticeboard. These are both seen as very important additions.

Messages

- There should be a way of indicating when I have received a message

Privacy

Older people are very concerned regarding privacy and security issues; this is already elaborated in D2.3 of this project. Here, the testing participants confirm again the need to put substantial efforts in this area and suggest a statement on the platform how privacy is safeguarded by the Go-myLife operators. *“Trust and privacy are very important for the service. There needs to be a simple and clear explanation of what is done with the data etc. (SS 48)”*