Project acronym: **Go-myLife**

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

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D6.4 Final Evaluation Report

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Abstract

This document presents the final evaluation results from pilot 1 and pilot 2 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.

This report comes up with the summative evaluation of Go-myLife and is based on the findings from pilot phase No1, which involved 37 older people in the testing of the first Go-myLife prototype on PC and smartphone during two months; and the findings from pilot phase No2, which involved 32 older people in another evaluation round during one month.

The deliverable shortly introduces the involved pilot sites in UK and Poland, number and profiles of test users (a detailed socio-demographic description can be found in D6.3 V1), as well as the introduction and facilitation processes for the acquisition, training and support of end-users during the pilot phases (again detailed descriptions of this facilitation process can be found in D6.3 V1 and V2).

The main purpose of this document is to summarize the main findings from both pilot phases and both pilot sites and to conclude in how far the Go-myLife services helped to reach the project objectives.

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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 final evaluation results of the pilot-testing phase 1 and 2 of the Go-myLife service platform within workpackage 6. The pilot 1 testing was conducted in November 2011 in Poland and in May 2012. The pilot 2 testing took place in August 2012 in the UK and September 2012 in Poland.

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 evaluation on three sites: Warsaw (PL), Newmarket (UK) and Bexleyheath (UK).

Target audience of the deliverable

This document is a restricted deliverable.

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 were 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 needed to detect any non-conformances that occurred during the lifetime of Go-myLife and led to unexpected consequences.
- to evaluate the research results in relation to the general objectives set up by the project.

Therefore, evaluation was completed on two levels:

- first by providing the end-user input when the platform design documents, the platform itself and the prototypes were 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 aimed to identify the strengths and the weaknesses according to the goals set up by the project.

The interim findings from both pilot testings (phase 1 and phase 2) and a detailed description of the formative feedback were described in the interim reports D6.3 V1 and V2. The summative evaluation results is documented in this synthesis report D6.4. The user-

involvement activities and data collection in the two pilot sites also fed the legal, economic and technical evaluation of the platform (D6.2).

The structure of this deliverable

The information in this deliverable is covered in three chapters:

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

Chapter 3 shortly introduces the setting of the two pilot sites.

Chapter 4 presents the main findings from the questionnaires, focus groups and interviews with participants in UK and Poland and summarizes the most important results from the overall Go-myLife evaluation.

This document is created as summary of the two pilot evaluations. Thus it aims to analyse and present the outcomes of the whole evaluation, while all details of each pilot phase are presented in the interim evaluation reports which are available to the public as well.

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 will be shortly summarized and introduced. More detailed descriptions and back-ground 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 had two main objectives:

1. The main objective of the testing activities in WP6 was to investigate the user experience (UX) with the Go-myLife platform, to gain insights on how older people in two different geographic European regions felt about using Go-myLife during and after the testing period. The UX evaluation investigated and measures utility, usability, aesthetics and value of the Go-myLife system. Thus it allows 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 was to validate the strengths and weaknesses of the Go-myLife platform according to the initial goals set by the project. The pilot testing provided 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 aimed to reach during the two trial phases in the two pilot sites:

Goal	Goal description	Priority
1	*My interactions with family and friends will be facilitated*	*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	*My circle of relevant persons and groups will grow/deepen, I will be able to gain new perspectives and support*	*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 will be more interested to get out of my house*	*1*
3.1	Easier to find out useful facts about locations, buildings and services in my region	1
4	*I will feel more secure and safe to get out of my house*	*2*
4.1	Being able to call on help and find nearby toilets and places to rest	2
5	*It will be easy for me to play an active role in my community and to be valued for the contribution I make*	*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 will be more stimulated to keep my mind fit, to learn customised to my interests and to enhance my knowledge*	*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 involved 36 older people from UK and Poland during the pilot 1 and 32 older people during pilot 2. To investigate user experience and understand the potential impact of Go-myLife a mixed evaluation approach using both quantitative and qualitative data was applied.

End-users were provided with an initial training to the functions of the Go-myLife internet and mobile platform and then bi-weekly jour-fixes during both pilot phases were organised to collect the end-users experiences and discuss issues relevant for the evaluation of the project. To understand the potential impact of Go-myLife individual interviews were conducted at the end of pilot 1 and 2. Questionnaires were distributed to the participants at the beginning of the pilot testing to learn about the participants' socio-demographic backgrounds. At the end of the testing period a final questionnaire helped to collect the older people's feedback on the platform and the perceived impact. 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 and 2.

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

Value/perceived usefulness	Diaries, Questionnaire, Interviews

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

3   Setting of the pilot sites

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

The **UK** pilot consisted of two groups of older people; a group in Bexleyheath in South East London and a group in Newmarket in Suffolk. Pilot 1 was conducted from 31st of January to 8th of May 2012 with 17 people (8 women, 9 men) and Pilot 2 from 10th of July to 2nd of August 2012 with 16 participants (8 women, 9 men).

In **Poland**, 20 participants (9 women, 11 men) participated in Pilot 1 from 21st of November 2011 to 1st of February 2012, and 16 participants (8 male and 8 female), were involved in the Pilot 2, which lasted from 28th of August to 25th of September 2012 (all inhabitants of the Warsaw city).

So between pilot 1 and pilot 2 some of the initial participants left the Go-myLife evaluation group. This has been foreseen by the project. Therefore more participants were recruited initially.

After an initial training to the new services of the platform, 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 last workshop participants in both countries filled in questionnaires, to collect feedback on usability and usefulness of Go-myLife and understand in how far Go-myLife influenced the social networks of older people. In addition individual interviews were held with all participants to provide room for a detailed discussion of the experiences made during the Go-myLife pilot 2. The timetable of two pilot phases is provided in the following chart:
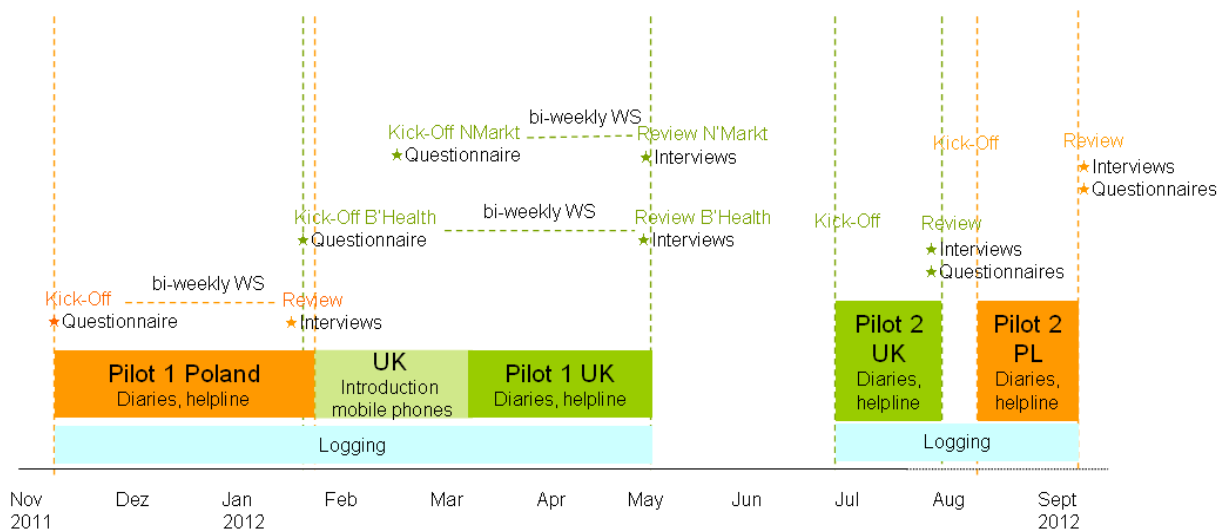
Figure 1: Timeline of pilot testing in UK and Poland

More details on the socio-demographic characteristics, the facilitation activities and the timetables can be found in D6.3. V1 and V2.

3.1 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 was 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 information[1]

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[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.

4 Summary and recommendations – derived from all evaluation instruments

The following summary of evaluation outcomes is structured in three parts: First the identified problems and barriers are discussed, then the benefits of Go-myLife are introduced and finally issues concerning facilitation are.

4.1 Identified problems and barriers

4.1.1 Internet coverage for mobile phones

The objective of Go-myLife is to offer a mobile social networking platform customized to the needs of the elderly, allowing interactions with their peers and families, as well as easy access to relevant geographically based information when they are at home and out and about. The underlying assumption of this idea was that the internet coverage for mobile applications would be well enough to access this mobile social networking platform whenever and wherever one would feel the desire for it.

But especially in Poland we learned that the internet coverage for mobile phones is still a barrier which makes the regular usage of a mobile social networking platform difficult. Although the pilot was situated in the capital Warsaw, many polish participants reported having problems with accessing the mobile version of Go-myLife in their living areas due to the limited internet coverage. Also internet access for mobile phones via WIFI is not commonly accessible yet, as many participants just had a LAN- internet connection for their PC at home.

In the UK pilot the internet coverage was much better and participants rather reported about performance issues, like the long download times for Go-myLife on the mobile applications.

4.1.2 Access with Firefox

Go-myLife was developed as a platform which is accessible via PCs and Smartphones over the internet. Thus the participants needed a Browser, more specifically the latest version of Firefox, to access Go-myLife. Other browsers were not supported.

The decision to develop a platform offered via the internet rather than an App was certainly reasonable from a technical point of view but resulted in usability issues for the older participants.

First participants struggled with the task to download Firefox to their Smartphones and also PCs. An activity which is perceived as rather normal from a younger users' point of view seems still to be quite challenging for older people.

Having to type in or bookmark the Go-myLife URL, open the website, log-in to Go-myLife, whenever one would only like to know if something new was going on, was perceived as quite inefficient. This was even more annoying when the connection on the Smartphones was lost and one had to start the whole process all over again to make it work.

So for some of the users, the development of an Smartphone App, which - once installed - would be simpler to open and would indicated new contributions directly, seemed to be more user-friendly.

4.1.3 Quality and performance of Go-myLife

Another common complaint was the inability to operate Go-myLife smoothly. During the two pilot testing phases, the technical Go-myLife team was continually working on the improvements, which lasted temporarily into pilot phase No2. During these updates the system was regularly not working, which had a significant impact on the frequency of use. Although users recognised that the functionality and also stability of Go-myLife was improving between pilot 1 and pilot 2, a large majority of users reported still having technical problems with the Go-myLife services during pilot phase No2. Some persons enjoyed the participation at the beginning of the overall pilot testing, but they were more and more de-motivated as the Go-myLife services didn't work. All in all, the participants assessed the quality of Go-myLife platform only on a medium level with a mean value of 5,31 on a scale of 0, not user-friendly at all - 10, extremely user-friendly and a mean value of 5,46 on a scale of 0, extremely useless – 10, extremely useful (more details see table 3 and 4). Ten participants out of the 26 respondents would not recommend Go-myLife to others due to its technical instability.

The low data processing speed was another reason why participants were reluctant to use the Go-myLife service more frequently. The Smartphone version seemed to provide more functional problems than the PC version did.

Table 3 Overall, how would you assess Go-myLife? (n=26)

	UK (mean)	Poland (mean)	Total (mean)
0 - 10; extremely dissatisfied - extremely **satisfied**	5,93	4	5,04

0 - 10; not user-friendly at all - extremely **user-friendly**	6,29	4,17	5,31
0 - 10; extremely useless - extremely **useful**	6,21	4,58	5,46
0 - 10; extremely unpleasant - extremely **pleasant**	6,86	5,25	6,12
			5,48

Table 4 Likeliness to continue and recommend Go-myLife (n=26)

How likely is it that you will continue using Go-myLife	UK (mean)	Poland (mean)	Total (mean)
0 - 10; very unlikely - very likely	6,71	3,17	**5,08**
Would you recommend Go-myLife?	**UK**	**Poland**	**Total**
yes	9	7	**16**
no	5	5	**10**
If yes, whom would you recommend it to?	**UK**	**Poland**	**Total**
friends	8	4	**12**
family	6	4	**10**
neighbours	4	3	**7**
other: hobby associates	1	0	**1**

4.1.4 Manipulation of Smartphones

Using a Smartphone was on the one hand perceived as very interesting and attractive for participants in both pilot sites. It provided them with the feeling to take part in "modern" life and made them proud to be able to use a device which was even attractive to their grand children. Smartphones were especially attractive for those participants, who have never used a computer before, as the navigation concept itself was completely different to PCs and perceived as easier and intuitive for total beginners.

On the other hand, using the Smartphone for such complex actions like typing messages to friends and navigating through a map posed difficulties to users, especially those with senso-motoric difficulties. Users reported having problems with the screen, which was either too small or too sensitive and thus resulted in unwanted actions. They stressed that while they did not have any major problem using the platform on a PC, the telephone is a different matter and they simply cannot overcome the difficulties, caused often by their physical limitations, like short-sightedness or shaky hands.

For instance the correction of spelling mistakes requires senso-motor skills, which may decrease in older age and thus are difficult to perform. Especially the map was reported being too small to be of real value when being out and about. It was too small to properly navigate in it and also too small to properly see it.

Thus the interest in tablet PCs with 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.

4.1.5 Design and terminology of the Go-myLife services

The design of Go-myLife was considered of having improved between the two pilot phases. The change from a black to a white background colour was appreciated and also the further improvement of the platform with regard to the size of icons and text was positively mentioned. In general, the big typo and the big icons of Go-myLife were perceived as advantage and whenever these rules were broken in the application (e.g. we used too small buttons on some of the pages) the feedback from the users was immediate.

Concerning the terminology there were continues remarks from the polish participants that the polish wording has to be further improved.

What was interesting to observe is that during the overall evaluation the participants learned to better deal with the internet terminology in general. While expressions like "profile" posed difficulties of understanding at the beginning, the "computer jargon" was quickly learned and applied by participants and thus not mentioned as being a problem any more in pilot phase 2.

4.1.6 Go-myLife compared to Facebook

Comparing Go-myLife to Facebook, it turned out that regular Facebook users (a very small portion of Go-myLife participants) were already used to the wording and interface of Facebook and thus Go-myLife was difficult for them to handle.

Those users, who have never used a social networking platform before, perceived the idea of Go-myLife as being attractive. First, older people tend to have resentments towards Facebook with regard to trust and privacy issues and Go-myLife was perceived as much more trustworthy in this context. Second, a majority of participants felt that participating in a social network with peers from the same local region made them feel secure and comfortable. They appreciated the fact to connect mainly with friends at the same age. Participants mentioned that 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. There were only view voices who argued that having a social network for older people only would make them feel isolated and excluded.

But becoming acquainted with one social network platform, namely with Go-myLife, evoked also the curiosity to learn also about mainstream social network platforms.

4.1.7 Psycho-mental barriers

4.1.7.1 Missing activity and critical mass

One psycho-mental barrier was related to the low activity on the platform. In such a small testing group, users often had the impression that there was not enough new going on in Go-myLife. When users posted messages on the main board and received very few comments to their posts, this had rather discouraging effect. It thus would need a bigger user-group to successfully address this issue.

4.1.7.2 Having something valuable to say

Some participants had the feeling their contributions might not be interesting enough for other people, or they felt reluctant to talk about something "not so important" like the weather or

one's activities. This issue was specifically reported from UK, and more it were rather men who belonged to this group. But also in Poland people were hesitating to communicate gossip via an online platform and would rather refer to telephone conversations to exchange "not-so-important things" with friends.

This behaviour about sharing chat and gossip with other people on an online platform seems to be something that some of the older people need to get used to. This does not mean that those participants, who felt reluctant to share their personal news, didn't like to look at others' contributions. Some of them found it easier to comment to others' contributions rather than to post their own news, and others thought that sharing pictures would make it easier to contribute to the social network than writing messages.

4.2 Identified benefits

Generally the seniors see the potential of Go-myLife, but point to the necessary improvements concerning stability and user-friendliness in order to bring real benefits. The perceptions about the main benefits of Go-myLife are slightly different between the two pilot sites (more details can be seen in table 5). An overview of how the main objectives of Go-myLife could be reached can be found in the following chart:
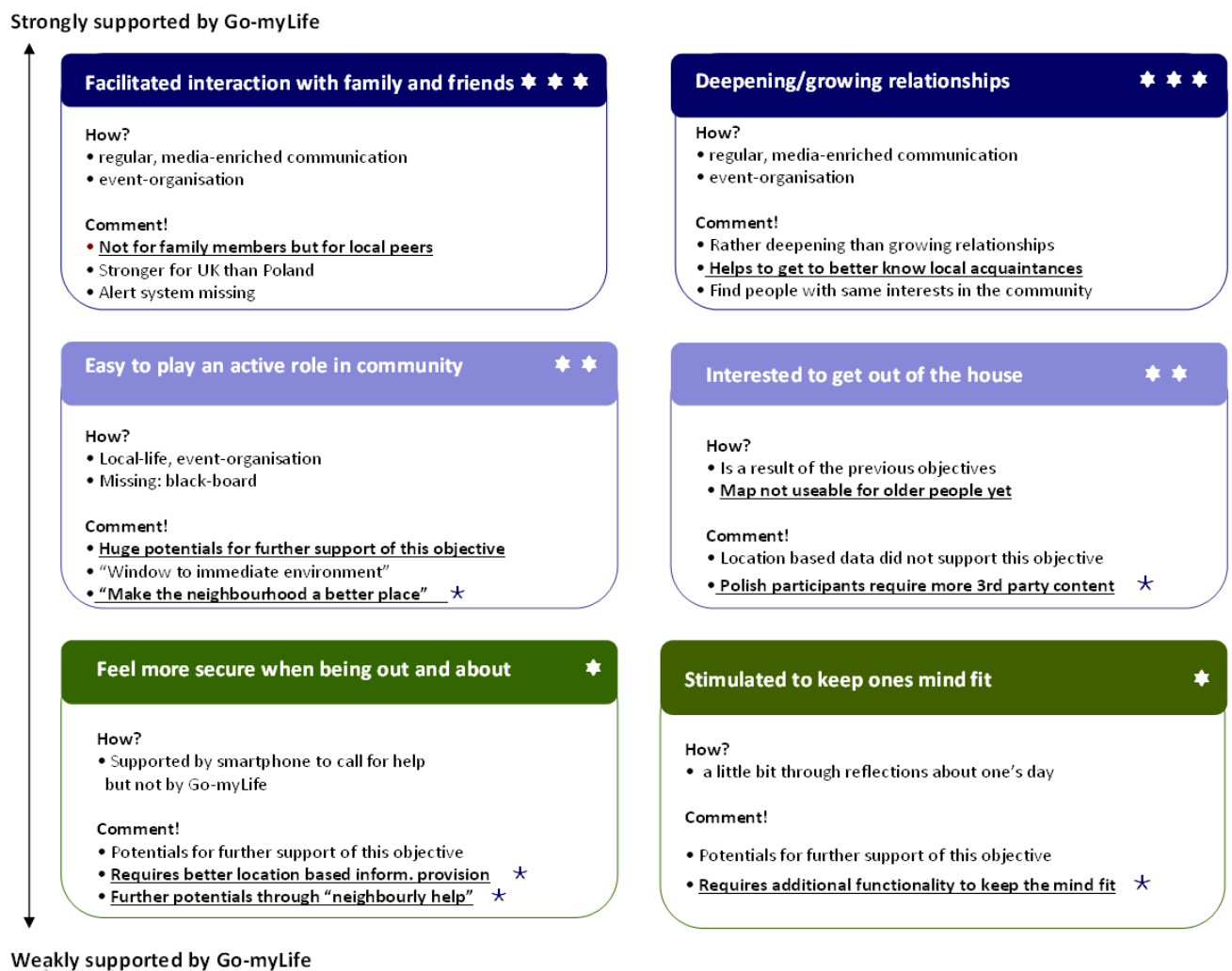

Figure 3: Supported objectives of Go-myLife

In Poland participants understand Go-myLife as a tool to exchange rather neutral, every-day information between friends. Most of the users expect the platform to be a medium, which would provide useful information and enable help-exchange services, like recommending a movie or exchanging advice about diet or health or good deals. Go-myLife is not so much understood as a tool to exchange very personal issues. In this case the participants refer to more traditional means of communication like telephone or face-to-face meetings. Although also in this pilot participants realized the additional value and joy of enriching traditional means of communication with the possibility to exchange pictures.

To support the help-exchange between participants, all polish users agreed that some kind of a "notice board" would be required. The topics in this board 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.

In general participations expect the platform to be much more informative than it is right now. Some of the interviewees suggested including links to cultural websites, collected under the "Culture" tab so that they can be directed to the type of event they are interested in. Others would like to see more 'practical' 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 engine. The idea is to have all the necessary information "in one place", as one of the respondent puts it. The information should also be adjusted locally.

For the UK participants the central benefit of the platform lies in the functionalities around the "local life". It is not perceived as 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 seems that the platform has a big potential to make the local community moving closer together again. While we expected that a social networking platform for older people of the same neighborhood would have the main benefit to get to know NEW people and thus extend the participants' social networks, we realized that the platform mainly helped to deepen those lose friendships and connections that were already existent. The regular communication via news and messages on Go-myLife was appreciated as a means to get in closer contact with those people whom one would loosely know from weekly activities. 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.

The "Local Life" on Go-myLife was understood as a "window" to the activities of the local community, not only facilitating the communication and organization of local activities and events for those participants who want to play an active part in their community. It was also considered as "window" to the immediate environment, especially for people who are (maybe temporary) house bounded. In the UK pilot one participant was housebound during the testing period and thus the UK community could experience the benefit of Go-myLife in this context already during the testing. They thought that staying in contact with the community when being housebound does not only comfort the ones who have to stay at home but also makes

the re-integration easier at a later stage.

One of the most important objectives for UK participants was to help making the neighborhood a better place (see table 6). If many neighbors meet on a platform like Go-myLife it would support them in exchanging small instrumental support and advice, but also increase the individual feeling of security in the case of absence during holidays or hospital stays. This outcome from the interviews is also covered by the quantitative data on social support types, which show that the neighborhood is the most important source for small instrumental support, like helping each other in the garden or lending small household items. Polish participants identified this benefit as well. Both groups required a blackboard as one of the major features, which would still need to be implemented to facilitate this exchange of instrumental support.

In addition Go-myLife still has some potentials by finding new ways of keeping the mind of older people fit, a benefit which users in both pilot sites strive for as well.

Table 5 Go-myLife would … (1 - 5; disagree strongly - agree strongly) (n=26)

	UK	Poland	Total
Deepen my relationships with family members	3,25	2,80	3,05
Increase my interest to get out of the house	3,45	2,56	3,05
Support my feeling of security and safety when getting out of my house	3,42	2,90	3,18
Stimulate me to keep my mind fit	3,45	3,10	3,29
Make my integration in the local community easier	3,50	3,22	3,38
Make its easier to find relevant places while I am out and about	3,75	2,88	3,40
Deepen my relationships with local friends	3,67	3,18	3,43
Facilitate my interactions with friends and family	3,75	3,10	3,45
Make it easier to get and exchange knowledge, such as gardening, cooking, healthy life style between individuals	3,58	3,30	3,45
Make it easier to find people sharing the same interest locally	3,81	3,10	3,48
Make it easier to call on help when I am out and about	3,90	3,00	3,50
Help me to gain new perspectives and support	3,67	3,36	3,52
Make it easier to find out useful facts about locations, buildings and services in my region	3,81	3,20	3,52
Make it easier to collaborate and organise meetings	3,64	3,38	3,53
Support me to play an active role in my community	3,50	3,60	3,55
Extend my circle if local persons and groups	3,58	3,50	3,55
Support the local community to make the neighbourhood a better place	3,75	3,33	3,57
Make it easier to find out which volunteering opportunities are nearby	3,75	3,38	3,60
Make it easier to update friends and family with my news, share in activities	4,00	3,20	3,65
Facilitate the search for cultural, political and social events and learning opportunities	3,58	3,81	3,70
Make it easier to find out what is happening in my neighbourhood	3,75	3,80	3,77
Mean value	**3,65**	**3,22**	**3,46**

Table 6 Importance of goals in UK (1 - 3; less important - very important) (n=14)

	Importance of goal (1-3; less important – very important)	Potential benefit of Go-myLife (1-5; disagree stronlgy – agree strongly)
Make my integration in the local community easier	1,11	3,5
Support me to play an active role in my community	1,38	3,5
Make it easier to collaborate and organise meetings	1,38	3,64
Make it easier to find out which volunteering opportunities are nearby	1,44	3,75
Deepen my relationships with local friends	1,50	3,67
Make it easier to update friends and family with my news, share in activities	1,56	4
Extend my circle of local persons and groups	1,56	3,58
Help me to gain new perspectives and support	1,56	3,67
Facilitate the search for cultural, political and social events and learning opportunities	1,63	3,58
Deepen my relationships with family members	1,67	3,25
Make its easier to find relevant places while I am out and about	1,67	3,75
Make it easier to find people sharing the same interest locally	1,70	3,81
Increase my interest to get out of the house	1,70	3,45
Make it easier to find out useful facts about locations, buildings and services in my region	1,75	3,81
Support my feeling of security and safety when getting out of my house	1,78	3,42
Make it easier to find out what is happening in my neighbourhood	1,78	3,75
Facilitate my interactions with friends and family	1,89	3,75
Make it easier to get and exchange knowledge, such as gardening, cooking, healthy life style between individuals	1,89	3,58
Stimulate me to keep my mind fit	2,00	3,45
Support the local community to make the neighbourhood a better place	2,11	3,75
Make it easier to call on help when I am out and about	2,20	3,9

4.3 Facilitation issues

4.3.1 Trust and reliability

Despite the common claims that the senior users are much more suspicious towards the information they find on the internet than their younger counterparts, the participants showed a rather surprising level of trust towards the potential content added by other users on the Go-myLife portal. A user from UK mentioned that this trust resulted also from the fact that Go-myLife was a platform between peers (people of older age). The age factor seems to play a decisive role here, as the users are more trustful towards the other users from similar age group, which would give them the feeling of communicating openly in a social network while at the same time not bending out of the window.

The seniors in Poland were rather unwilling to reveal and discuss any information, which is regarded as more private and intimate (relationships, sex, personal problems ect.). Also they

would not like to share their personal data over the Internet, which indicated some fear about lack of control over this area.

4.3.2 Advertisements

Participants from both pilot sites did not generally oppose to the usage of the online advertisement. They did understand the economic reasons behind it and the necessity for the websites to use the commercials as the main source of financing their functioning.

Fears and barriers related to advertisements were first that certain technologies might help our online behavior to be tracked to allow targeted advertising. However participants agreed to receive advertising based on the presupposition that users of the site were all retired and older people.

Some users worried that advertising might be based on stereotypes of older people. They wanted to make sure that it wasn't just about stair lifts or incontinence pads, but also included products and services related to their active and social lives. In other words, it would be good to have most adverts related to activity holidays, sports equipment, technology, newspaper subscription, culture and so on that assumed that older people were open minded, active and willing to try new things.

Another disadvantage the discussants point to is the fact that it takes much longer for a website to open, when it is overloaded with commercials. The last point raised in the discussion was that in the case, when the user has to pay for every kilobyte downloaded during the usage of the mobile Internet (as opposed to broadband connection) it seems only unfair to pay for unwanted information such as commercials.

➢ Pop-ups: these are particularly annoying for the users and users have problems to close them. The seniors see them as "attacking", "aggressive" and "frustrating".
➢ Video commercials or pre-rolls are similar to what the users are used to watching on TV. This type of advertisement does not raise much negative feelings as long as it is funny or enjoyable.
➢ Banners and sliders are the least controversial, out of all the other types of commercials, especially if they are subtle, do not move around and do not obscure the information the senior users look for in the first place.

4.3.3 Workshops and trainings

One important change comparing the two pilot phases is the growing competence of participants, not only in the technology usage but in general knowledge of the internet. This is observable in the way the participants have started using the IT language, as there is a visible growth in the specialized vocabulary (ie. screen shots, applications, intuitive tools, etc). In Poland it was observed that the "more traditional" ways of delivering knowledge and skills to the users (e.g. manuals and clearly written instructions), which was required at the beginning of the testing, was barely noticeable after the second phase of the testing. As if the participants have switched, so to say, into the "new school" without even noticing it. This change is significant for three reasons: a) it means that they have enlarged they areas of everyday competences and gain more confidence, which will result in b) better communication with younger, computer-literate generations (their children, grandchildren and perhaps grand grandchildren) and c) better understanding of the IT language used in the

public discourse (mass media).

Moreover, almost all of the users pointed to the social aspect of the workshops organized within the Go-myLife framework; that is getting to know new people, making friends or just simply – feeling motivated to go out. Many of the participants maintain private contacts, besides participation in the project.

4.4 Summary

The evaluation Go-myLife should provide us with insights on the main factors of technology acceptance: the perceived ease of use and usefulness of the Go-myLife platform.

Having collected input from 36 test participants in UK and Poland during and after a testing period of one month, using qualitative and quantitative data collection instruments, we can say that Go-myLife still has to continue improving its ease of use. The low reliability and performance of the platform, problems with the smart phones itself, and some functionalities of Go-myLife that need further improvement resulted in rather medium ratings concerning the usability of Go-myLife.

For the evaluation of the usefulness of Go-myLife 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. The feedback from end-users shows that the first aspect could well be supported with Go-myLife. The platform shows some important benefits for the social networks of older people, as well as the exchange of instrumental and emotional support. We learned a lot about how these goals can be reached with a mobile social networking platform and which potentials could further improve Go-myLife as main "window" to the local community. Enhancing Go-mylife with a blackboard and a better alert system for new entries and contributions would on the one hand support the local bonding between community members. On the other hand new functionalities which help to keep the mind fit where required by participants.

The second aspect, which aimed to support older people when they are getting out of their houses, had faced technical limitations which were on the one hand problems with internet coverage when being out and about. But on the other hand, and being even more important, older people had problems to use the navigation instrument of a map on their mobile phones due to senso-motoric and sight difficulties that arose with the small size of the map on the smartphone screens. This opens new challenging questions for further research.

5   Bibliography

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