Telecentre Europe
Annual Conference 2014
(TEAC14)

Conference Report | October 2014

Telecentre Europe is a Europe-wide network and non-for-profit association that represents public centres (telecentres) providing people with training, certification and employment opportunities through the use of Information and Communication Technologies. These centres play a crucial role in the digital empowerment of individuals and communities. Our members are organisations working with telecentres, including Public Internet Access Points, Public libraries, and Third Sector organisations such as NGOs.

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Introduction and background

Telecentre Europe organises two annual events every year, one dedicated exclusively to our members (General Assembly) and another open to our wider audience of stakeholders: Telecentre Europe Annual Conference (TEAC14).

In its 7th year, for the first time in its history, the TEAC14 took the structure of a three-day event, each day hosted by a different European funded project: Unite-IT, Trans e-facilitator and Telecentre Multimedia Academy. Telecentre Europe is directly or indirectly involved in these projects, either as a project partner or stakeholder with interest in the project outcomes.

Also for the first time, the Annual Conference was held this year in Zagreb (Croatia) and was hosted by TE's Croatian member Telecentar Zagreb. This gave us an opportunity to tap into local knowledge through a selection of expert speakers from Croatia and to get young Croatians involved through a media partnership with the well-known Student TV (Televizija Student).

The event gathered a number of stakeholders, the majority being members of TE and non-governmental organisations active in the field of digital inclusion and empowerment. Altogether there were 110 participants from 28 countries including also representatives from the European Commission (DG EAC and DG CONNECT), the private sector (Cisco), public and private universities and ministries (e.g. from Serbia and Slovenia).

The theme that united the three days and the three projects was "eSkills for the 21st century". The policy framework was provided by European Commission's ongoing campaign eSkills for Jobs and its sister Grand Coalition for Digital Jobs initiative.

The aim was to reflect the journey in policy from digital inclusion (Day 1) to the more advanced digital skills (also referred to as eSkills) needed for employment (Day 2), and ending with a focus on the skills of Media and Information Literacy that are being discussed in UNESCO proceedings these last years (Day 3).

DAY 1: Digital inclusion and empowerment as means to fight social exclusion

Unite-IT is an EU funded project and an online platform for professionals in the area of digital inclusion and empowerment. It represents the effort of Telecentre Europe to create an informal and wide network of stakeholders in the field of digital inclusion and empowerment.

Peter Palvolgyi from Telecentre Europe and the project manager of Unite-IT opened the conference and walked the audience through the main milestones and objectives of the Unite-IT project and network. Since November 2012 project partners established its online presence, recruited new members, created the good practice database and developed the working groups. The online network counts today with more than 600 members from all over Europe and the database of good practice already has 76 entries. The first Unite-IT award would be given that same evening to the best practice within four categories. The challenges remaining now are the further growth of the database and the relevance of the working group discussions to policy makers at all levels. P. Palvolgyi announced that the 3rd Unite-IT conference would be held in Belgrade, Serbia in 2015, once again within the TE annual conference.

Gabriela Barna, the director of Romanian organisation EOS, and project partner in charge of coordinating the operations of the Unite-IT network, agreed that the network has the potential to reach out to policy makers on a national level (local and national governments). She invited those present to therefore promote the network and make sure other professionals are invited to join and submit their good practice. She reminded the audience that only with *concrete examples and clear numbers* can telecentres and other digital inclusion intermediaries talk to national governments and advocate for the implementation of certain social inclusion policies or the creation of new ones. G. Barna mentioned the successful Spanish example where due to lack of funding some years ago telecentres around the country began closing down. But telecentres fought back by getting together in a common platform/organisation and they put forward a strong united telecentre movement (e.g. Guadalinfo network of Spanish telecentres) that had the needed critical mass to convince governments to continue investing in telecentres.

After the introductory presentations by project partners, the floor was given to working group speakers in order to introduce the themes and open the discussions of the four working groups that would meet in the afternoon.

Angela Andersson, Seconded National Expert from Sweden at the Directorate-General for Education and Culture (European Commission) was the speaker for working group *Education, training and certification*. She spoke about her Directorate's new online platform EPALE that responds to the efforts by DG Education and Culture to increase the impact and recognition of adult education for growth and inclusion in Europe. The platform is also a way to recognise publicly the need for retraining and up-skilling of adults as one way to fight unemployment. A. Andersson invited members of telecentres and those present to join the platform. →

Renata Danieliene, Deputy Director at the Information Technologies Institute in Lithuania introduced the themes for the working group *Youth employability*. She started with the good news: employment is clearly increasing in the professional, knowledge, service and information sectors. It is a well-known fact that there is a persistent mismatch between skills available and the needs of the labour markets. At the moment there are 5.2 million unemployed young people in the EU (22.2% unemployment rate among young people) and even more youngsters (7.5 million), between the ages of 15 and 24 are currently in the so-called NEET group (neither in education nor in employment).

The gap between the countries with the highest and the lowest jobless rates for young people remains extremely high. In her view the potential of job mobility in the EU is thus enormous and it could help tackle youth unemployment. She invited her working group to answer questions such as how to motivate people and to ensure they have the right skills, and what are the tools to help them enter the labour market. ↑

Magdalena Dimkovska from Open the Windows, a Macedonian NGO active in the field of digital inclusion for disabled people and active member of Telecentre Europe, introduced the working group *Vulnerable groups at risk of exclusion* by reminding the audience that most of us take for granted that the computer or any other device is a window into the information world. For those that are at risk of exclusion due to their disabilities, this window is only made possible due to the achievements of assistive technology. There are many challenges for the development of this type of technology, often related to prejudice and lack of funding or motivation. ↓

Adriana Gil-Juárez (Universitat Rovira i Virgili) and **Joel Feliu** (Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona) introduced the *Gender Equality* working group. They used the metaphor of the leaky pipeline to show that girls and women are indeed underrepresented in the fields of science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) where they drop out of these fields in all stages of their studies and careers. In their academic work A. Gil-Juárez and J. Feliu are exploring the various reasons for the existence of this gender gap in STEM fields.

There is a high number of initiatives, especially in the US, that attempt to get girls interested in coding, gaming and similar pursuits traditionally seen as male interests. As we live in a society so dependent on science and technology, this phenomenon is taking a wider social dimension and leads to inequality on all levels. The speakers showed the audience a video from a Spanish theater play "M'agrada" on theme of gender stereotypes.

Working groups: Discussing good practice in digital inclusion and empowerment

After the morning presentations, participants broke into four working groups according to the ones they signed up for previously. The discussions and topics were preceded in each group by presentations and case studies showcasing concrete concerns and obstacles that digital inclusion actors are facing. Participants discussed what is needed from policy and decision makers and what they can provide in turn (expertise, knowledge, links with the citizens, etc.).

The Unite-IT online network and database is also organised through Working Groups and TEAC14 was seen as an excellent opportunity to get network members to meet face to face after having already interacted online for more than a year. Some of the good practices that were mentioned are already part of the existing online database of good practice and some of them went on to win the Unite-IT eInclusion award in their respective categories (the Award ceremony was held in the evening of the same day). Below is a summary of the main discussion points in each group.

Working group 1

Education, Training and Certification
Moderated by Gabriela Barna (EOS, Romania)

Highlights:

- **Ioana Crihana** who presides the Romanian association of public libraries (ANBPR) - an association with 41 branches and over 3,300 members - said that thanks to the Microsoft voucher campaign led by Telecentre Europe many Romanian librarians offered young people the possibility to course the Microsoft Office Specialist (MOS) certificate.

- Within the **Latvian National Coalition for Digital Jobs**, memorandums were signed with Ministries of Education to secure funds for universities on digital skills education. A suggestion was made that

EU appointed Digital champions could work to get funding for the various national and local coalitions for digital jobs pledges.

- Examples of training from the industry side were shown by a representative from Cisco. The Bulgarian National Coalition for Digital Jobs is closely tied to [Cisco Networking Academy](). Another example is an apprenticeship scheme in UK run by Cisco where the government pays for the training for each trainee that has been employed at Cisco after the training.

- Some suggestions were offered for improvement of the Unite-IT network: e.g. the community may work more on finding out what its users expect to find there, make some clear difference between informal and formal learning, and use key words on topics that can then be used in community discussions so that people can follow their topics of interest easily.

- There are two upcoming webinars planned in this WG. The first is on clarifying the e-Competence framework, its importance and mapping of courses to the framework. The second seminar will be dedicated to business driven training programs, which provide free learning resources for young people and the wider community. Companies like Microsoft, HP, Cisco and Autodesk, but also others will be invited to present their free learning opportunities to the Unite-IT group members.

- There was an interesting discussion regarding the support of the European Commission towards open source, free technology environments. However, participants agreed that most technology jobs over the next few years will be created within the industry which uses proprietory technology. Since these businesses will be creating the future jobs, people need to be trained in developing competences within this sector, rather than general open source technology.

Keywords: skills mismatch, employers' training programmes, GC4DJ, adult education, libraries

Youth Employability
Moderated by Dr. Mara Jakobsone (LIKTA, Latvia)

Working group 2

Highlights:

- The WG participants generated some ideas for campaigns that TE members or the Unite-IT members can do at pan-European level. One example would be a campaign targeting parents' lack of information about ICT careers.

- Some participants shared their country's experience with the [Youth guarantee]() as different approaches and uses of the fund exist. Participants motivated those present to advocate with national governments that these funds are spent for training programmes for young people.

- Telecentre Europe member organisation "Maks vwz" (Belgium) talked about the "Game Lab" initiative through which children play games and are then asked if they wish to learn more about programming them. Gaming provides a powerful motivator for children and young people to look into programming and start seeing it as potential career choice.

- TE Latvian member "LIKTA" talked about a large public relations campaign in the country that presents ICT jobs to young people in a positive light with programmers serving as campaign ambassadors.

- In Ireland, TE member "FIT Ltd" trains young people, especially those that are long-term unemployed. Their courses are designed so that young people get continuous advice and support as to prevent early dropping out of the trainings. Their success rate is 75% of people that after training go into employment.

- TE's Greek member "HePIS" presented the Getbusy.gr website which encourages youth (16 to 27 year olds) to get education guidance and skills. Online quizzes are used to encourage youth to take courses, to learn and finally get a prize from private supporters.

- TE's Lithuanian member "Langas i Ateiti" talked about the EU funded Trans e-scouts project based on the intergenerational learning method. Activities with young people teaching ICT skills to the elderly will soon take place in libraries and ICT centres/telecentres around the country. The project has also created a set of guidelines with modules on how intergenerational learning works in practice.

- Another interesting initiative to watch, that is still in development but is well-known to most participants, is the YouRock.Jobs platform that allows young people to self-assess and highlight skills and gain confidence while at the same time being present in database that is accessible to potential employers. The platform has been translated to 15 languages and a user guide on how to use this tool for telecentres will soon be shared. The platform already counts with 1,500 user profiles. The next challenge is to get employers on board and possibly transfer or integrate the YouRock skills portfolio with the existing and widely used EuroPass.

Keywords: games, coding, awareness-raising, jobs, skills mismatch

Working group 3

Gender Equality
Moderated by Laurence Leseigneur (Interface3, Belgium)

Highlights:

- **Gabriela Rosca**, librarian at the Pontus Euxinus Library in Navodari (Romania), presented the project titled "Handmade and IT for women". The library attracts unemployed women through a creative course in decorative objects and paintings. It first creates a comfortable place for them to meet and create, and then goes on to train them in ICT skills according to their needs and interests.

- The WG participants were asked by the speakers to analyse a series of projects and good practices, and to discuss the positive and negative aspects of each initiative or case study. The projects discussed included websites or campaigns intended to close the gender gap existing in STEM. The objective of the discussion was to find a "formula that works" in raising awareness amongst women and girls about the importance of learning how to code.

- Participants agreed on the usefulness of most of the approaches presented but had some comments regarding the fact that at times the initiatives themselves were reproducing gender stereotypes by using stereotypical images or ways to attract girls. In addition they questioned whether teachers in

schools have the time to implement these worthy initiatives, since some are quite time consuming.

Working group 4

Vulnerable Groups at Risk of Exclusion
Moderated by Ivan Stojilovic (IAN, Serbia)

Highlights:

• Representatives of the Macedonian organization Open the Windows presented their experience in the use of assistive technology for supporting social inclusion of persons with disabilities.

• Interesting research findings and use of technology for supporting elderly people with dementia were shared by the participants.

• Awareness raising is a pending issue as there is still prejudice regarding use of ICT by persons with disabilities, so role models and campaigns are needed in this area as well. Participants all agreed that another step in the expansion of assistive technology should be its promotion in primary and secondary schools, and introducing it to teachers.

• Another topic discussed at the working group was the motivation of vulnerable groups for using ICT. The participants agreed that low motivation is one of the greatest challenges in digital inclusion of vulnerable groups.

• During the discussion the question was raised on the telecentres' staff knowledge of assistive technology. Group members highlighted the necessity to follow the development of assistive technology, training and informing staff on advancements in the field, but also raising knowledge and understanding of problems people with disabilities have.

First e-Inclusion Awards

Day 1 of TEAC 2014 ended on a high note with the first Unite-IT e-Inclusion awards in four categories corresponding to the four thematic groups. **Dr. Mara Jakobsone**, Chair of Telecentre Europe's Board, opened the ceremony and **Ivan Stojilovic**, Vice Chair of the Board, explained the selection process.

With the Unite-IT Awards Telecentre Europe renewed its tradition to acknowledge the work of grass-root organisations working on the field and to recognise their efforts on the international level. It also confirmed its commitment to provide opportunities for collaboration and exchange for different organisations, regardless the scale or budget of their project.

The awards were handed to the winners by the honorary guests: **Dr. Christoph Kaletka** from the Technical University of Dortmund; **Renata Danieliene** (Young Advisor to Neelie Kroes); Austrian Digital Champion **Meral Akin-Hecke**; and **Ilona Kish** from the Reading & Writing Foundation.

The Winners

» *Education and training* award went to Hungarian organisation **Regional Telecottages Public Association of South Hungarian Plain** for their project Telecottage Katedra - Smartphones.

» *Youth employability* was won by INN&CIA: Social Innovation Environment project from **Consorcio Fernando De Los Ríos**, Spain.

» *Vulnerable groups at risk of exclusion* was best addressed by **Open the Windows,** Macedonia in their Project for e- Accessible Education.

» The winner of *Gender equality* category was the project Handmade and IT for women implemented by **Pontus Euxinus Library** in Navodari in Romania.

DAY 2: eSkills and Jobs for the 21ˢᵗ century

While the objective of the first day was to provide a space where participants could meet and continue the thematic discussions often initiated on-line, the second day was dedicated to set up the scene in terms of the European eSkills gap. Speakers were invited to share with the audience how private companies, universities and governments deal with the issue. The day was also dedicated to promoting the role of the e-Facilitator as a multiplier of digital skills in telecentres, their professional qualification and capacity building.

The day was opened by Telecentre Europe Board Chair **Dr. Mara Jakobsone** and TE's Managing Director **Gabriel Rissola**. They each welcomed the audience to the 7ᵗʰ edition of the TE annual conference and then explained the background history of the conference and the current state of TE as an organisation. Mara Jakobsone explained that TE membership has grown in size and kind, currently representing a wide array of digital empowerment and e-inclusion intermediaries and encompassing organisations such as telecentres, libraries and other publicly funded ICT learning centres. At the moment there are 43 member organisations from 29 countries.

In addition to formal members, TE has also established a fully active informal community of organisations and individuals known as Unite-IT, some of who met and networked already on the first day of TEAC14. The objectives of the Annual Conference have always been to share and multiply the effort of the network, evaluate the challenges ahead, promote messages and policies and support our network in their endeavours. Before Zagreb many other European capitals hosted the conference: more recently Malta and Warsaw, and previously Budapest, Riga, Brussels and Istanbul.

The first introductory speech was made by the host country (Croatia) representative **Hrvoje Balen**, Coordinator of the eSkills for Jobs campaign in Croatia and member of the Managing board at Algebra University (College for Applied Computer Engineering). He made a comprehensive overview of the state of affairs in the Croatian ICT sector. With an ICT market value of more than 820 million euro per year and almost 30,000 employees in the field, the salaries in the sector are nowhere as high as the EU neighbours' salaries but higher than its non-EU members such as Serbia or Bosnia. Croatia is known for its high labour productivity in the ICT sector compared to the EU average. The ICT job profiles with the highest demand in 2014 was without a doubt that of software developer (61%).

The main question remains where the needed IT engineers will come from in the future. A nationwide survey taken in 2013 and 2014 asked 5,000 high-school students about their preferred study options. The majority of students continue to favour the Faculty of Philosophy (Humanities) in Zagreb, followed by the Faculties of Economics and in third place, the Faculty of Electrical Engineering and Computing. Young people are therefore increasingly not choosing STEM careers and what prevents them is a variety of factors often related to wrong perceptions about the field of study and their own capacities ("I am not capable" mentality) but also the fact that these careers are not easy and take time and effort to complete. H. Balen then described the eSkills Campaign activities in Croatia: the events, projects and research carried out in close collaboration with big and mid-size ICT companies. The pending tasks are the Croatian site dedicated to the e-Competencies framework, a citizen workshop and more career guidance activities for youth. The campaign results

so far are promising: the youth guarantee is being implemented with ICT and e-skills in mind and there will be changes to the employment taxation, which may reduce the heavy tax burden for salaries in the sector. In addition, a steady rise in the interest among young people to enrol in ICT studies has been observed.

The Internet pioneer in Croatia, ICT researcher and professor at the [Faculty of Electrical Engineering and Computing](#) at the University of Zagreb, **Predrag Pale** was provocative in his keynote speech addressing different aspects of eSkills for jobs and ICT developments both in Croatia and in Europe. As he pointed out, every profession has a buzzword, and in ICT that word is a number: 900,000. We have all heard it before, and although the estimate may be conservative the actual question to ask, as P. Pale suggests, is what *types* of jobs there will be available.

After comparing various ways of defining and categorising ICT jobs, P. Pale proposed his own division. The four categories of ICT jobs according to him would be: 1) ICT creators and producers 2) ICT implementers and supporters 3) ICT applicators and, finally 4) ICT users. The first group requires in-depth technical background, complex lab equipment and practical experience. In his view this job type is best left for universities to train for. The second group is also best left to university education and professional trainings. ICT implementers need to understand the environment they work and should either be specialized in ICT or in the environment itself, for example the field of economics or law. ICT supporters, however, do not always need a university education and can learn their work in a variety of courses (e.g. also in telecentres). The third group, ICT applicators, are basically inventing new ways of doing old things and sometimes inventing completely new things. They require creativity; some ICT competence and their education may be provided by telecentres with trainers who understand the domain where ICT is applied. The last group (ICT users) use ICT as a tool but to perform other "everyday" tasks such as communicating with others, build their social capital, find jobs, etc. Their goal is to become a fluent user and to use ICT in their everyday needs as a citizen, a consumer or entrepreneur for example.

P. Pale also mentioned the importance of raising awareness (5th pillar in the Grand Coalition for Digital Jobs). He sees telecentres as crucial for reaching out to certain groups, especially the unemployed, who are not only looking for work but are also interested in ways to become self-employed and create their own opportunities. But for the awareness raising programmes to be effective, they need to start from the user's own needs and then build up the skills and offer further training possibilities. The learning needs to be user-based and context oriented, with a way to follow up so that when the person has any question they know who to ask. Courses need to involve a variety of stakeholders within the community, such as schools, academia, companies, etc. Universities may also be well suited to train the trainers (e-facilitators) of telecentres and can support them by developing syllabus, curricula and educational materials. Schools have the contact with local community, and can provide space, equipment and trainers. Companies can

also provide equipment and trainers/mentors, and more importantly provide jobs and skill descriptions so that unemployed people know what they are looking for. According to P. Pale telecentres are in an excellent position to teach ICT users and he says:

"Telecentres have this unique and very important role at getting to all types of people in their communities and raising awareness based on their needs."

First panel: Digital skills for digital jobs, EC programmes, coding in education and NGO based initiatives

The first panel on digital skills for digital jobs was moderated by **Andrea Parola** (European e-Skills Association) and included representatives from the European Commission, DG Connect (**Alexander Riedl**), private sector (**Gert De Laet**, Cisco), academia (keynote speaker **Predrag Pale**) and Lithuanian National Coalition (**Renata Danieliene**, Young advisor to Neelie Kroes).

Highlights:

• The panel talked about the Grand Coalition for Digital Jobs that made it possible for already existing initiatives such as Local Coalitions to continue and extend their impact while receiving institutional support. What comes next will depend not only on the EC as initiator but all the stakeholders and their pledges.

• The programme of ERASMUS+ was highlighted by the EC representative as a success and a role model for other programmes, e.g. ones where universities and businesses work together, and job mobility for young people is ensured.

• ICT professionals need a broad range of employment skills and NGOs and telecentres have the key task of reducing the barrier in learning ICT skills and understanding what opportunities exist.

• **P. Pale** made the point that coding should be taught in schools as a sort of obligatory general culture just like the subject of music. Although not everyone may become a programmer but to learn the basics of how the world works will give students an important advantage later on in the job market.

• The most urgent issue to address, according to **Alexander Riedl** and the European Commission, is the skills mismatch: 25 million people unemployed and 2 million job posts. "Here the role of NGOs is essential", he says "because NGOs can guerrilla and transform the system." One successful example is the Get Online Week led by Telecentre Europe and the EU Code Week.

• **Gert De Laet** talked about the next industrial revolution – the Internet of things and that around 7,000 people at Cisco will be re-trained to support new technological needs in the job market as well as consumer market.

Second panel: E-facilitators as multipliers of digital skills, place of libraries and telecentres in a changing world

The second panel of the day was moderated by TE's Managing Director **Gabriel Rissola**. Four speakers joined the discussion: **Ilona Kish** ([Reading & Writing Foundation](#)) representing the role of libraries, **Pedro Aguilera** from [Spanish Association of Telecentre Networks](#) (Member of TE), **Christoph Kaletka** ([Technical University of Dortmund](#)), and [Digital Champion](#) in Austria **Meral Akin-Hecke**.

Highlights:

- **G. Rissola**, Managing Director of Telecentre Europe, said that with the economic downturn more people approached telecentres looking for employment opportunities and information resources. Many telecentres, for example in Spain, have therefore moved on to specialise in social inclusion and social innovation and have partnered with various networks of knowledge and entrepreneurship to promote self employment and business amongst the public.

- The audience asked questions regarding the capacity of telecentres to serve different users with specific needs: e.g. are telecentres capable to help immigrants get an appointment with a doctor speaking their language? This adaptability and user orientation should be a priority for telecentres, argued some audience members. Telecentres are much more flexible than other institutions (e.g. schools or employment offices) and they do not abide by established curricula. The focus of telecentres should therefore not be on coding but to find ways to help users improve their overall ICT skills according to their needs (employability, how to make the best use of a device they bought, information and leisure time, etc.)

- The advantage of e-facilitators is that it is a figure people can trust. Citizens are not as eager to trust a national employment agency or ministry to help them increase their skills, but they put the trust in people and telecentres can offer this through e-facilitators.

- Panelist **I. Kish** stressed the fact that more than 60,000 European libraries are still being used and they serve over one million visitors each year. Today libraries serve additional functions such as community hubs and training points. She also explained the connection between basic literacy, affecting 1 in 5 EU citizens, and how this is directly affecting digital literacy. Therefore libraries can serve as a place to implement digital literacy programmes as well.

- Panelist **P. Aguilera** said that at present 14 EU countries still haven't recognized the e-facilitator as a profession. Therefore, a common EU understanding of what an e-facilitator is, needs to be available in all EU countries. Some years ago politicians were mainly interested in ensuring that equipment was available in telecentres but they forgot about sustainability and the fact that e-facilitators need a formal recognition and continuous training to serve their users.

- **Ch. Kaletka** highlighted the fact that telecentres are a new way of dealing with old social problems, and that awareness raising, social recognition and more formalized work are the challenges telecentres should act on.

Get Online Week 2015: Informal lunch session with campaign partners

A lunchtime session on the Get Online Week (GOW) was led by the Campaign's Manager **Laurentiu Bunescu** and saw a large number of Campaign national partners and new TE members interested in next year's activities. The popular Campaign takes place each year (5th edition) in all the participating countries and is mostly led by TE's members with a national and/or local outreach. The dates of the GOW were discussed and a survey would later be launched to decide the exact dates at the end of March 2015. L. Bunescu also told partners that TE would send them a campaign concept that they could then give feedback for.

Members talked about the campaign themes that they wanted to focus on next year: e-skills for jobs, e-accessibility, employability, empowerment, etc. The topic of coding would also be part of it but not as a focal point as already many activities are taking place on coding in Europe. Each member would have the freedom to define the events to organise under the thematic chapters.

A proposal was also made to have one day thematically designated for young people, another for the unemployed, for the elderly, for people with disabilities, etc. Members also said that the messages and branding need to be very clear and simple and they should always have the option to translate their material. They should also have access to an online tool allowing them to register participants and later assess impact of their activities. This could be done through a mini-survey (SurveyMonkey application was suggested). There should also be an online system to report on events and activities, as well as for media coverage and other quantitative data.

Partners expressed the need to receive funding before the start of the week rather than after so that they can better plan the allocation of funds, and, for example, purchase some promotional tools they can use to attract more participants.

Afternoon informative session: Building the capacities of e-facilitators

The session moderator **Christoph Kaletka**, project coordinator from [Technical University of Dortmund](#), introduced the [Trans e-facilitator project](#) and its consortium to the audience, explaining its objectives and the results achieved. The project Trans e-facilitator has developed a curriculum for facilitators of digital competences ("e-facilitators"), based on a set of learning modules that were adapted to the specific national needs of facilitators in Latvia, Portugal and Germany. These needs have been identified in national surveys analyzing e-facilitators' tasks and competence gaps. In addition to these curricula for the three countries involved, a generic curriculum will also be available in the near future. The Trans e-facilitator consortium invited all TEAC participants to use and promote this new learning opportunity it in their home countries. The curriculum is available for free.

The first presentation was made by **Nenja Wolbers** from Telecentre Europe's member organisation [Stiftung Digitale Chancen](#) (Germany). She talked about the training curriculum for e-facilitators,

its modular structure and the specific contents. During the project trainers were trained in the locally relevant modules and then passed on their knowledge to other e-facilitators. The project aims at a nationally standardized and recognized training for e-facilitators. The modular training curriculum contains eleven modules within four categories: how to address certain target groups, how to promote technical skills, how to work in a telecentre, and how to teach a certain subject. The advantage of the course is that the curriculum is modular and, therefore, trainees do not have to attend all modules but can choose those that are most important for them, which makes it highly responsive and adaptable to individual training needs.

The second presentation focused on the 2-tiers approach and was made by **Raquel Costa** ([FCT](#), Portugal). The 2-tiers approach taken by the project includes an initial training of so-called "1st tier facilitators" by the consortium and a following piloting phase in which these 1st tier trainers teach and implement the curriculum with a larger group of "2nd tier trainers". The third presentation (by **Reinis Rukmanis**, [LIKTA](#)) was focused on concrete pilot experiences made throughout the project, including feedback received from the trainers. **Gabriel Rissola**, Managing Director of Telecentre Europe, concluded the session, after which many attendees approached the consortium partners of Trans e-facilitator to discuss how the new learning materials can be used in their home countries.

At the end of the day an informal networking session was moderated by TE's board member **Sven Weber**. The session had the concept of a fair, in which the participants gathered around a session owner and then exchanged about certain topics such as future projects of Telecentre Europe and possibilities of partnerships, the Trans e-facilitator project and how to further exploit its curriculum and profile, the YouRock.jobs platform for young people and the National and Local Coalitions for Digital Jobs.

DAY 3: Media and Information literacy, TMA project and a focus on Croatia

The third day of conference was addressed to relevant actors in the field of media literacy as well as European telecentres. It helped to raise awareness on the Telecentre Multimedia Academy (TMA) project, to establish new links and connections among the participants, and to identify future joint actions. Several conference participants representing individual telecentres or telecentre networks expressed their interest in establishing Telecentre Multimedia Academies in their countries as reference points for media literacy. Organisations that meet the requirements will be able to use the TMA label, certificates and all available learning resources (books, curriculum and CDs) for free.

The day featured invited guest speakers from Belgium, Ireland and a number of TMA project piloting partners as well as three local experts in the field of media and digital skills from Croatia. Croatian member representative **Zarko Cizmar** moderated the day. Firstly, **Sally Reynolds** (Belgium) presented the Media & Learning Association she presides and invited TE members and other organisations in the audience to explore collaboration opportunities such as common EU projects and sector specific know-how for training provision. She presented the association's online database of good practice, website, workshops, yearly conference and free webinars and campaigns. Their flagship project is the MEDEA Annual Awards, set up to encourage innovation and good practice in the use of media (audio, video, graphics and animation) in education and to recognise and promote excellence in the production and pedagogical design of media-rich learning resources. She announced that her association will soon sign a collaboration agreement with Telecentre Europe and have a mutual exchange of membership.

Secondly, **Philip Penny** from Dun Laoghaire Institute of Art, Design and Technology presented the EU funded iPro project that aims to enhance the performance of education systems through media education. The project partners have built, tested and distributed a research based model framework. They plan to support the education sector (vocational education and higher education institutions) to match the curriculum of their students in (digital) Media and Arts Studies with the professional requirements expressed by the international community of media and arts businesses.

Igor Kanizaj, professor at the Faculty of Political Sciences at the University of Zagreb gave an inspiring talk on the importance of Media and Information Literacy (MIL) and the efforts of volunteers working on the ground to implement it through workshops in schools. He made a strong argument for teaching media literacy instead of focusing solely on digital skills. In his view purely ICT learning is only a small percentage of ICT consumption as most children and young people spend a large portion of their time consuming and creating various types of media on the Internet. The problem lies in the fact that they lack the deeper understanding and analytical skills of what they consume. MIL is in this sense not only a set of skills but also a new platform for citizenship.

The need for MIL amongst the general population is high as when asked whether they think media education should be included in the educational system, 62% Croatian respondents in a survey said yes. But the political will is slow to catch up with the need: at the time of the TEAC, there were no policies, no manuals or training materials and no legal definition of media education. There is no inter-ministerial body or committee and overall responsibility of public institution in relation to MIL programs in Croatia. This is why the Association for Communication and Media Culture and the Djeca Medija Foundation (that I. Kanizaj presides) have taken things into their own hands and have implemented 270 workshops to 3,500 children, parents and teachers. Their website has 100,000 monthly visits, and they have been featured in 250 articles and 38 radio programmes. The biggest surprise for the audience was to know that all of this was achieved without any financial resources.

Mislav Balkovic, Dean at Algebra University College for Applied Computer Engineering (Croatia) addressed in his presentation the employment opportunities in the multimedia and ICT sectors. In a world where knowledge has changed its position in economic and social development, the paradigms have also changed. The "job for life" motto and idea should now be replaced by the "knowledge for job" motto. Knowledge is today a key to employment and a generator of competitiveness. However, different people and parts of society have a different understanding of the knowledge and skills needed. In a recent EU wide survey of employers, young people and education providers, both employers and young people thought that young people were not well prepared for the job market, while the education providers were convinced the opposite was true! What we should ask ourselves, says M. Balkovic, is what kind of knowledge we are producing. Knowledge should be applicable, useful, relevant, practical, documented and recognized across labour markets in Europe. Companies and universities can also help to achieve this by fostering stronger connections and sticking

to a clear qualification framework with occupation and qualification standards, study programs and quality evaluation systems. The speaker then presented the exact elements of a qualification framework with details on how occupation and qualification standards are to be developed in the area of digital and media skills.

Nela Gudelj, Chief Learning Officer at the Croatian Radio Television (HRT) addressed the challenge of her station to produce more high quality content with less manpower. The digital environment helps today the TV station to reach audiences in ways they could not imagine before but many employees' skills are lagging behind. The challenge is how to up-skill people used to working in a completely different way. It demands an in-house and tailored approach and a specific curriculum that favours the requirements of digital media.

Peter Palvolgyi, Project manager from Telecentre Europe, explained to those present what the TMA project is about. TE has partnered with seven of its member organizations in order to implement the Telecentre Multimedia Academy, a 24 month-long project aimed at designing, developing and piloting a learning programme on media literacy addressed to adult learners. The TMA project's goal was to provide adult learners with a flexible, easily implementable and modular learning pathway, easily transferable and applicable to a range of diverse contexts and types of organisations. The project aimed to achieve these objectives in collaboration and interaction with stakeholders at the European level.

The objective of TMA multimedia training is to empower citizens with a combination of key competencies, including media, information and digital literacy, required for active participation in today's society. In the initial stage of the project an extensive pan-European background analysis was

carried out. Its objective was to review the present learning offers in Europe in the field of media literacy for adult learners as well as to identify the needs of trainees of adult education centres and education institutions.

After P. Palvolgyi spoke, the seven piloting partners involved presented their experiences in implementing the training programme in their countries. Both basic and advanced level courses were piloted and over 90 adult learners were trained. Participants represented a heterogeneous target group including telecentre operators, NGO activists, librarians, ICT teachers, youths, unemployed, etc. At the end of the conference a demo session "Practical demonstration of multimedia skills" took place presented by participants of the TMA training programme in Croatia that showed the participants an example of media literacy education and got the audience to play interviewers and interviewees. Many members expressed interest to use the course material.

TEAC14 conference evaluation by participants

The results of the posterior conference evaluation (survey was sent to participants immediately after the event) show that conference participants were overall satisfied with both the structure and the content of the TEAC14 conference. Participants expressed an appreciation and further need for community/social events, mainly in informal contexts that could open more space for networking or exchange of information. Some technical and logistical difficulties such as Internet connectivity or food should be improved in the upcoming editions.

In terms of formats, working groups and panel discussions seemed to be the most effective and attractive methods to discuss the main topics. Experts or initiatives outside the membership (such as the Croatian local experts and speakers) are highly appreciated, since they bring new and local approaches and are open to cooperation. Participants seem to be especially interested in good practice from other countries and practical examples from the ground.

With regard to the thematical structure with each day being led by an EU project partner, participants are open to this new format. Most want to continue being an active part of the Telecentre Europe formal and informal networks. Many attendees were interested in seeing how the network can contribute to the sustainability of the telecentres and other local digital empowerment actors in order to meet social and economical challenges of its populations.

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