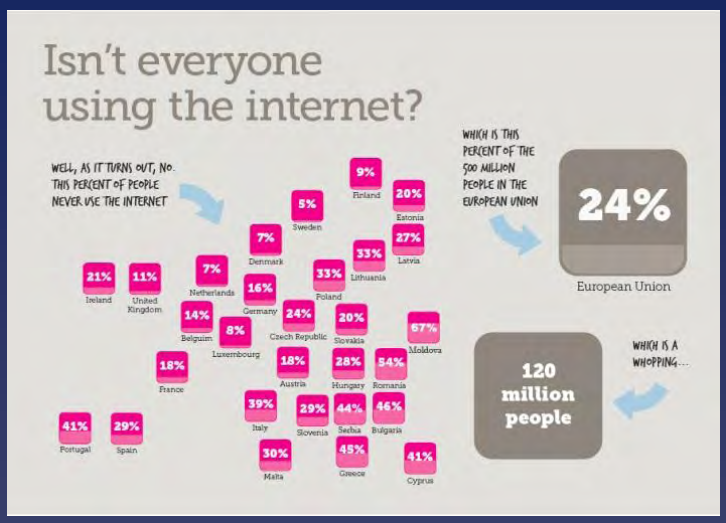
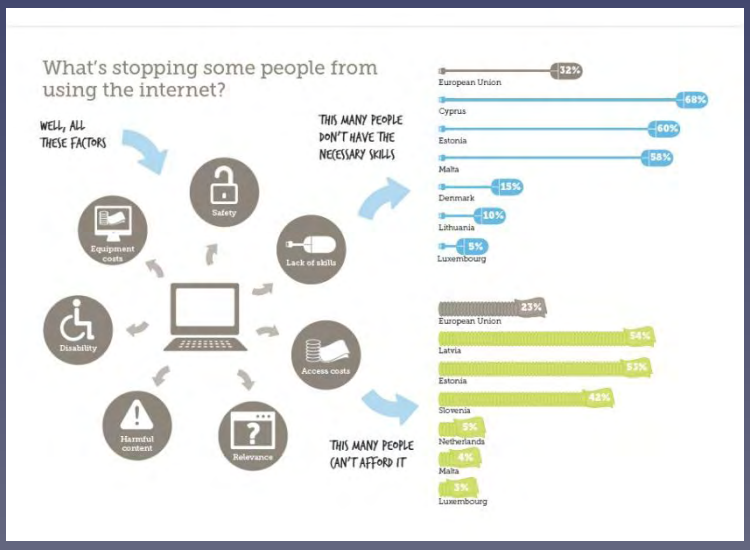
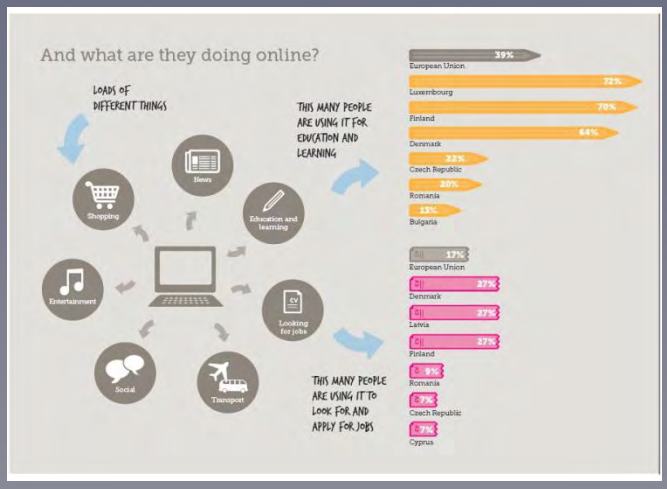


Shared Learning and Community



Digital Inclusion through telecentre services



Best Practice Guide

*This **Best Practice Guide** was realized within the project "**Shared Learning and Community Digital Inclusion through telecentre services**" project financially supported by the Soros Foundation Romania through the **East East: Partnership Beyond Borders Program.***

East East – Partnership Beyond Borders Program** supports international collaboration among civil society and nongovernmental organizations to share experiences, expertise, and knowledge to advance principles of open society internationally**.

*The material is developed with the involvement and support from all the organizations in the project and is an result of their long experience: **EOS** Foundation Educating for an Open Society **Romania** – Applicant/Coordinator and the partners International Aid Network **IAN – Serbia**, Latvian Information and Communications Technology Association **LIKTA – Latvia** and Alliance community centers for access to information and training **CCAI – Moldova**.*

The guide is an example of best practices and activities developed in the telecenters network in Romania, Serbia, Latvia and Moldova and it's addressed to all coordinators of telecenters.

Educating for an Open Society Romania (EOS) is a private, non-profit organization, established in 1998. EOS Romania is now regarded as one of the most active organizations supporting the development of the Information Society and new Knowledge Economy in Romania.

EOS Romania now has over 10 years of experience in the development of programs and projects related to ICT for development for the public and private sectors.

EOS started its work in Romania with the main objective to promote and support any activities related to the use of new Information and Communications Technologies in the field of education, with a particular focus on primary and secondary teachers.

FUNDAȚIA EOS ROMÂNIA

At present, EOS Romania develops key projects leading to the promotion of the Information and Knowledge Society across the wider community in the region. EOS work extends now beyond mainframe education projects, serving and supporting communities in Western Romania to bridge the digital divide and overcome their social, geographic, economic or cultural disadvantage by exploiting the potential of new technologies.

EOS manages a network of 28 e-centres across Romania. www.ecentre.ro

Latvian Information and Communications Technology Association LIKTA - is a professional NGO that encompasses the ICT industry and ICT professionals. Established in 1998, LIKTA works to promote the development of the information society, ICT education and e-skills, and to encourage the growth of the ICT industry. LIKTA represents over 80 organizations from the ICT industry, research, and educational institutions.

LIKTA is the kind of NGO since through their work the organization is able to reach and bring together three different spheres that affect significantly e-inclusion initiatives:

LIKTA
Latvian Information and Communications Technology Association

- The social organizations or NGOs sphere;
- The private sector sphere; and
- The government sphere. Finding ways in which these three spheres intersect is very unique of the work LIKTA does.

International Aid Network - IAN is a local non-governmental organization established in 1997 during the war territory of the former Yugoslavia. IAN wants the region of South Eastern Europe to be healed from the consequences of war and political violence and to become a civil society where human rights and wellbeing of all are respected.

IAN - supports the human rights violation survivors and other marginalized and vulnerable groups in development of their own potential for decent life in peace.

Also IAN has an Educational Department (IAN Telecentar) - the aim of telecentre is to develop competencies required for active participation in the knowledge economy, for finding a new/better job and adjustment to the needs of labor market through:

- Promotion of lifelong learning as a development tool for all the citizens;
- Stimulation of social inclusion of marginalized groups in the life learning process;
- Searching for the best teaching and learning practices worldwide;
- Development and implementation of the program according to labor market demands;

Alliance community centres for access to information and training (CCAI) - Moldova

The AAITCC includes 102 Access to Information and Training Community Centres which were created over the last 5-6 years due to the financial support of the Soros Foundation Moldova (761,672 dollars) and the contribution of communities (395,000 dollars). The centres offer access to Internet, provide services of training and consultancy for about 300 settlements all over Moldova.

The consolidation of organizational capacities, process that ended in December 2007, when the Alliance of Access to Information and Training Community Centres of Moldova was set up, comes to contribute and to strengthen information society and sustainable development of civil society. The Moldovan AAITCC is a public association with national coverage that aims:

- To support and promote activities of the Information and Training Community Centres through the development of professional services of information; consultancy, assistance and training;
- To step up the organizational capacities of the Information and Training Community Centres and their beneficiaries;
- To optimize the activity of AITCC;
- To enhance their contribution to the development of communities in order to ease active participation in community life, in the decision-making process alongside and jointly with public authorities and enterprises;
- To contribute to the development of informational society by reducing the digital divide phenomenon in Moldova;
- To assist the development of Moldovan communities in order to capitalize their economic, cultural and social potential by informing them about opportunities offered by the informational society tools on the basis of free access to public information;
- To represent more effectively the interests of the Information and Training Community Centres at the national and international levels;
- To facilitate exchange of information, to encourage the exchange of information between the Information and Training Community Centres.

On 22-25 May 2008, the AAITCC participated in the General Assembly of the European Union of Telecottage Associations, being accepted as the 11th member association.

Cuprins

Best Practice Guide

Shared Learning and Community Digital Inclusion through telecentre services

Background

The digital revolution that swept the world at the dawn of the 20th century marked the onset of the information era, paving the way for the creation of public access hubs to digital technology known as telecentres. These telecentres first appeared in Europe and North America in the mid-1980s and in a span of a single generation, have emerged and spread to core areas of the developing world.

This phenomenon has given rise to an international telecentre movement committed to giving more people access to the world's knowledge through information and communication technologies (ICTs), and the ability to harness that knowledge to improve their lives.

People within the telecentre movement realized that early investments had focused too narrowly on infrastructure: computers, Internet access, software, electricity. They called for more resources dedicated to networks that supported the work of telecentres on the ground.

They emphasized the need to build the skills of telecentre managers, to develop more and better back-end services, to connect people and facilitate sharing and collaboration, and create high-value content and services to offer through telecentres.

Across the wider European region, almost **300 million people live in digital exclusion**. We all know someone who is not connected to our information society. Yet, without strong action, this situation is seemingly accepted, since it is not 'life-threatening' and doesn't impact negatively on their life in any immediately noticeable way.

Some may even be happy to be disconnected, and relish the freedom from the modern world that their disjuncture from technology provides for them. In today's knowledge based society however, **digital technologies represent a gateway to economic and social development**, and without it their future potential is limited.

A failure to act strongly is a failure to take the problem seriously. These people are missing out on a wide range of life chances, employment opportunities, education choices, economic advantages, and social and community benefits. Accepting that some people will never be able to access technology, and that this is "just the way things are", is doing these people a great disservice.

It is accepting that they cannot have wider life chances - accepting that they do not have better employment opportunities or economic advantages, accepting that their education choices are limited, and that their community is no worse off without their full engagement.

We know, as grassroots organizations at the forefront of digital inclusion, that these kinds of outcomes are not inevitable – and to us they are not acceptable either.

Telecentres often work with people who are on the margins of society. While 40% of Europeans still gain none of the benefits related to ICT use, the percentage will grow higher if we include those who are online, but not a confident technology user. They are often the learners in telecentres, and although they don't register as offline, they still need support to become self- sufficient users.

It is important that Telecentres support groups, those people who are completely new to technology, and those who need support to stay in touch with the ever changing world of technology.

The 40% from the wider Europe who are still disconnected from it become increasingly difficult to reach. Reaching homeless, rurally isolated, migrant, and economically separated people can be very difficult, costly and time-consuming.

Telecentres aspire to play a prominent role in the development of a Europe-wide movement for change that will help us bring digital opportunity and equity to all European citizens. The network exists to provide the next 292m Europeans with the information skills, motivation and access that they need to benefit from, and contribute to, the knowledge economy.

In this context Telecentres become publicly accessible places where people can get help to access computers, the Internet and other digital technologies that enable them to gather information, create, learn, and communicate with others. Typically they are Public Libraries, Education Centres and Voluntary or Community Organizations.

Telecentres promote e-inclusion, serving a broad clientele, including the elderly, disabled and immigrant or other challenged communities; provide support services or advice to SMEs and the community.

Overview of the European continent

In Europe the e-Inclusion policies are different from country to country, with significant differences between countries with distinct economic development levels, as a consequence of the digital divide, distinctive manifested in every context. First, we observe differences in the conceptualization of "universal access" in social policy regulations. Thus, in developed countries, universal access means access for all households / dwellings. For those who are not connected at home telecentres are the second option.

According to Norris, 2001, categories systematically excluded from Digital technologies are those in poor neighborhoods, unskilled workers or from rural communities. Also, older people, with low level of education, outside the labor market or educational institutions, women and ethnic minorities are more likely to have poor access, physical and material to computers and the Internet. When the countries have a lower economic level, the e-excluded category presents most of the features listed above.

Depending on the levels of e-Inclusion there are some features designed to make the difference between countries:

a) Availability and cost of digital technology in the country;

b) The general level of literacy and education;

c) Language skills of the population, specifically, the knowledge English (because most information on the Internet are Available in English, a language global, cosmopolitan);

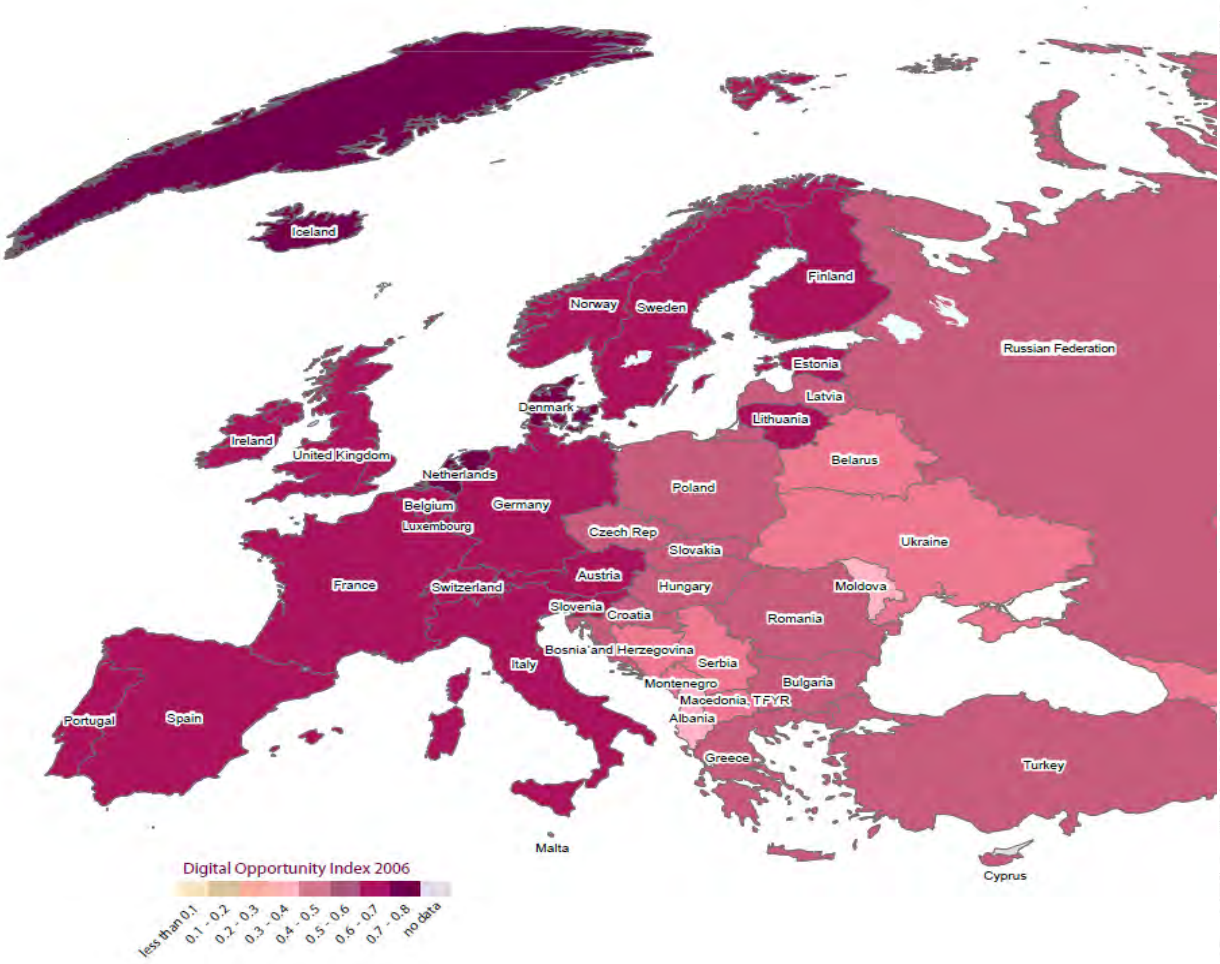
d) The level of democracy (freedom of expression);

e) Power to promote the information society policies in general and access to information technology in particular.

As a consequence of differential economic development, resources implementation and development of new technologies are much higher in regions economically, such as North America and Western Europe. Thus, economic development in the digital reproduces inequalities between rich and poor regions.

A comprehensive and accurate measure of influence and diffusion of new technology and size of digital divide, is the concept presented above, the digital opportunities.

Figure 1 Map of digital opportunity in Europe, 2006



This index of the digital opportunities is a measure for the concepts that we described; where the values of the index are large, the access to new information technology is higher and the digital divide is lower. Significant differences are between Western Europe and Eastern Europe, and also from urban areas to rural areas. Although some countries from Eastern Europe as Romania or Serbia have an IOD (Index of Opportunity Digital) higher than other countries situated in the same region (from 0.5 to 0.6), we see, however, the Figure 1 that Internet access is significantly reduced compared to other EU countries.

Take a look at the figures that represent the usage of Internet in European Union countries and other countries from Europe.

Figure 2 Percentage of Internet users in Europe, 2011

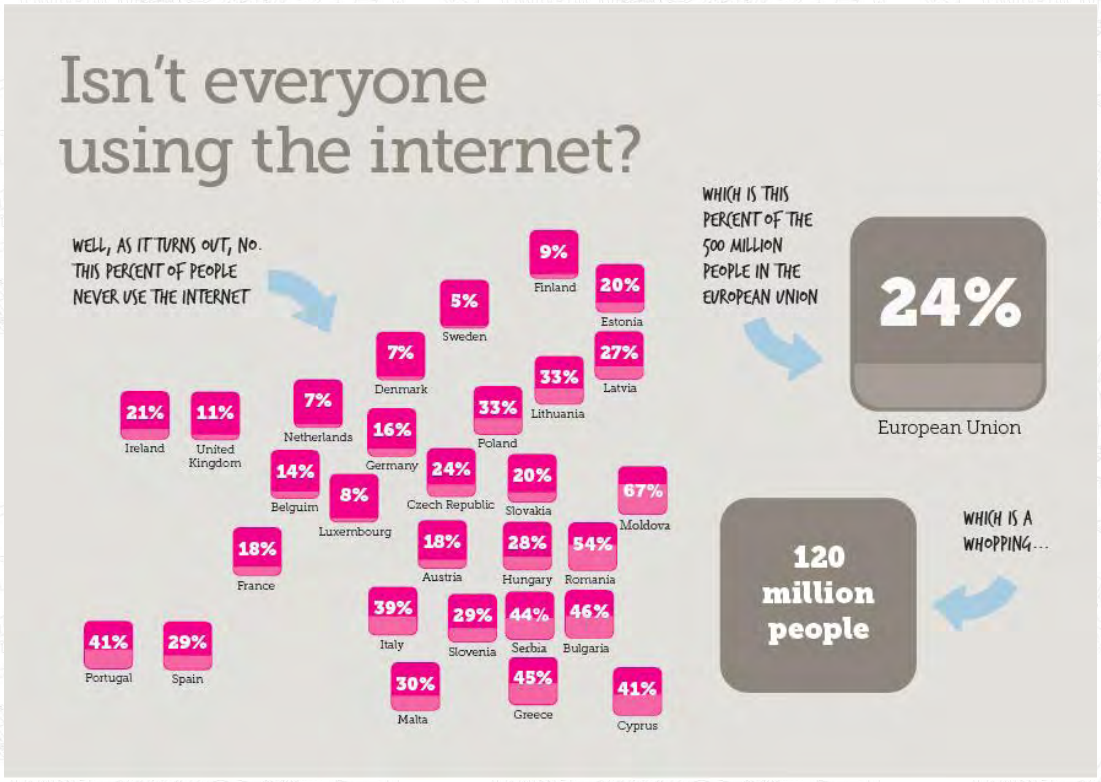
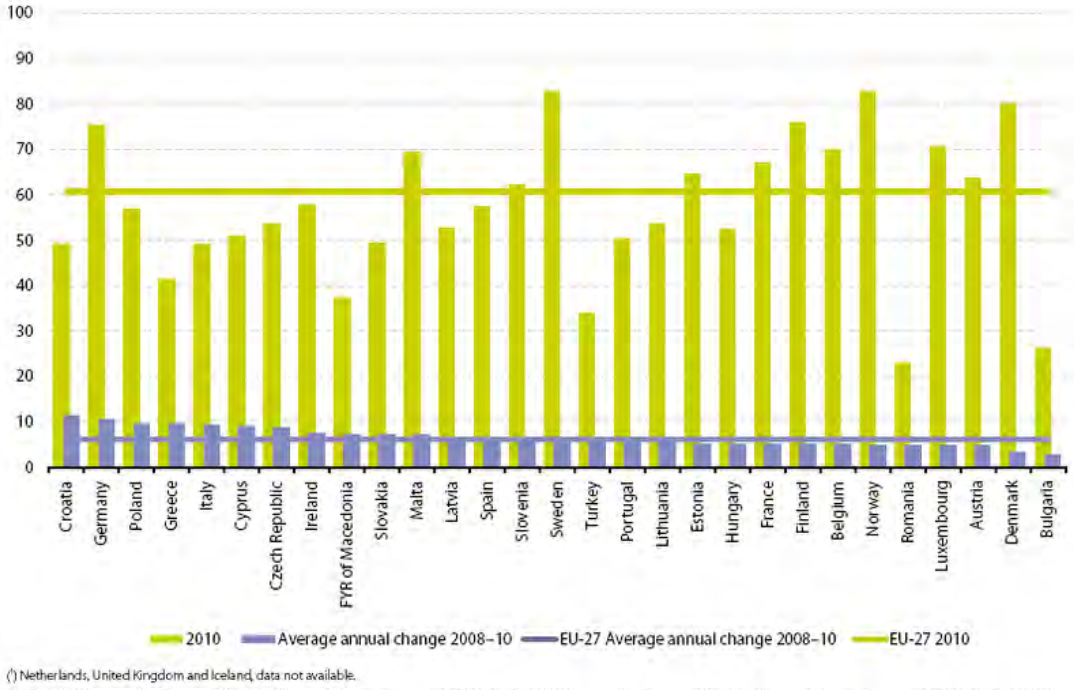


Figure 3 Broadband connections in households, 2008–2010



(') Netherlands, United Kingdom and Iceland, data not available.

Shared Learning and Community Digital Inclusion through telecentre services ROMANIA

Context

EOS Foundation Romania was established in 1999. We do not have clear dates since that year regarding the usage of computers, Internet access, in rural or urban areas, but the statistics become more clearly since 2008 (Romania joins the European Union in 2007).

Source regarding the statistics can be found on Eurostat page:

http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/statistics_explained/index.php?title=File:Use_of_ICTs_and_use_of_on-line_services,_2008-2010_(%25_of_individuals_aged_16_to_74).png&filetimestamp=20111117095543.

In the table below you can find the dates about the usage of ICTs and on-line services, from 2008 till 2010 in Romania.

Figure 4 Computer & Internet usage from 2008-2010

	Computer use			Internet use			Used internet for finding information on goods or services		
	2008	2009	2010	2008	2009	2010	2008	2009	2010
EU-27	66	68	71	62	65	69	50	51	56
Euro area (EA-16) (1)	66	68	72	63	65	70	52	55	59
Belgium	71	76	79	69	75	78	58	59	62
Bulgaria	40	44	45	35	42	43	22	17	26
Czech Republic	63	64	69	58	60	66	45	50	53
Denmark	86	87	89	84	86	88	73	74	78
Germany	80	81	83	75	77	80	66	69	72
Estonia	66	71	75	66	71	74	53	54	61
Ireland	67	68	70	63	65	67	46	54	57
Greece	44	47	48	38	42	44	31	33	36
Spain	61	63	67	57	60	64	46	47	54
France	71	72	79	68	69	79	57	60	65
Italy	46	49	53	42	46	51	30	33	35
Cyprus	47	53	57	39	48	52	32	39	47
Latvia	63	65	67	61	64	66	49	50	57
Lithuania	56	60	62	53	58	60	37	44	48
Luxembourg	83	88	90	81	86	90	69	75	78
Hungary	63	63	64	59	59	62	49	48	55
Malta	51	60	64	49	58	62	42	48	52
Netherlands	88	90	91	87	89	90	76	79	82
Austria	76	75	77	71	72	74	51	54	58
Poland	55	59	62	49	56	59	33	29	39
Portugal	46	51	55	42	46	51	34	40	44
Romania	35	42	41	29	33	36	17	12	26
Slovenia	60	65	70	56	62	68	48	49	57
Slovakia	72	74	78	66	70	76	49	50	62
Finland	84	84	88	83	82	86	73	73	74
Sweden	89	91	92	88	90	91	75	77	82
United Kingdom	80	84	86	76	82	83	64	64	63
Iceland	92	93	95	91	93	93	78	80	84
Norway	90	91	93	89	91	93	80	83	82
Croatia	46	50	56	42	47	54	33	33	43
FYR of Macedonia	50	55	56	42	50	52	22	26	30
Turkey	34	36	39	32	34	38	14	18	21

(1) 2008: EA-15 instead of EA-16.
Source: Eurostat (online data codes: isoc_ci_cfp_cu, isoc_ci_ifp_iu and isoc_ci_ac_i)

In 2008 only 35% of total population of Romania was using a PC and only 29% the Internet. The percentage is increasing over the next two years, but with small values, and in 2010 Romania remains one of the countries with the lowest computer & Internet use, and with just 30% of households Internet access from which 17% bandwidth and 13% broadband. In terms of frequency of use, Romania is the last among countries analyzed by Eurostat, 15% use frequent and 26% use regularly. According to statistics from **2011** over 50% of the Romanian citizens have never used the Internet and only 19% of broadband connections were in rural areas.

Telecentres network in ROMANIA

Telecentre network in Romania is a national alliance of community technological centres united by the desire to offer access to technology and educational opportunities to the members of the community in which they operate.

The network is opened to any nongovernmental organization, the business sector and to the state institutions that wish to contribute to the decrease of digital division and to the Romanian Society development based on knowledge.

In Romania, telecentres are situated all over the country and although the activities developed by them are almost the same, they are very different structures. Telecentres in Romania were established by different actors and through various programs.

Therefore, there are many types of telecentres as:

E-centres network was established by EOS Foundation with the support of the Microsoft Unlimited Potential Program since 2007 until present. Today the e-center network contains a total number of 40 active centres and it is developing constantly (www.ecentre.ro). The e-centres are educational centres, non-profit or community organizations.

Public Access Points to Information – these centres were created through the "Knowledge- based Economy" project, initiated by the Romanian Government through the Communications and Information Society Ministry supported by the World Bank (www.ecomunitate.ro).

Libraries with free access to Internet and IT trainings - telecentres that were equipped with computers for the public through the Biblionet project, funded by the Foundation Bill and Melinda Gates (www.biblionet.ro).

Best services provided by the ROMANIAN network of telecentres

In 1999 when EOS Foundation was established, the first activity undertaken was to donate computers to schools – and was because in 1999 the level of technology and access to Internet in Romania was very low, since it was at the beginning.

Since then, EOS developed different services focused on 2 directions: introduction and development of ICT training programs for the teachers from the pre-university sector and developing programs for the broader community, with focus on using the new technologies. In the present, EOS offers to the larger community three types of services:

- Training (ICT and soft skills development)
- Events
- Other services (fundraising, scanning, renting, etc.)

TRAINING is one of the major services provided through the telecenter network that are supporting the skills development.

The reason for that is that skills are the key to the prosperity of nations and to better lives for individuals in the next centuries. They contribute to economic growth both directly, through increased productivity, and indirectly, by creating greater capacity to adopt new technologies and ways of working and to spur innovation.

Two main types of training:

1. ICT training
2. Personal and professional courses – soft skills development

1. ***Personal and professional courses – soft skills development***

- **Train of Trainers Course**

A training needs analysis realized by EOS revealed that telecentres staff needs to receive ToT course in order to increase their professional abilities so that they could provide quality training at local level for their community members. Also, starting 2010, EC regulation states that trainers working with adults need to have official accreditation of the National Centre for Adult Training in order to deliver any type of courses. Also, this accreditation, certified by the Romanian Ministry of Labor, gives them the opportunity to design and to develop training courses and to certify the participants with the level of skills gained. These courses

can be offered by the telecentres for free or rewarded with some fee – depending on their capacity and long term strategy.

- **Be a Successful Manager – Leadership**

Because of the gap between the laws implemented during the communist period in Romania (1949 -1989) and the democratic laws implemented after the Revolution in 1989, Romanians confronted a big change of mentality which was felt in all sectors. After 1989 and still nowadays the population is improving their management or leadership skills, both in public and private sector, as they aim to achieve good results in the field that they are practicing – communication skills, interpersonal abilities, teams efficiency, strategic thinking and planning a long term sustainability.

In order to raise capacity building of the telecentres and of the networks, it's needed that they are coordinated by a strong Manager that has all the abilities above. This service was replicate to other members of community for free or rewarded with some fee.

2. ICT Training

More than 50% of today's jobs require some technology skills, and experts say that percentage will increase to 77% in the next decade.

There are several studies that suggest that in the next 5 to 10 years there will be a significant gap between the demand for and supply of IT professionals with the right technical skills. According to Certification Magazine, an IDC study places that gap at 40%.

- **IT employment**

IT employment will rise by 5.8 million jobs in 4 years; and 51% of total IT employment will be software related; creating 75K new businesses.

Employability in Romania is known to be related with two major issues: first, the ability to use ICT with competence and confidence, and second the ability to speak a foreign language.

Some private initiatives have attempted to tackle the issue of accessibility and lifelong learning through community technology centres but activities are fragmented and pilot-based, and overall, lack a systemic, cross sectorial approach. These initiatives will ensure a cost-effective and demand-driven way ahead to promote long-term community sustainability.

Through investments in supporting the telecentres to develop relevant activities and programs dedicated to their community members will result the increase of ICT skills among community members, more responsive, innovative, flexible and adaptable community, better employability, increased entrepreneurship and the development of the SME sector at local level.

In this context, EOS in partnership with other four other organizations from Belgium, Spain, United Kingdom and Latvia developed an **Employment Toolkit – Key Competences for All**, for persons that are unemployed or are looking for better jobs. The toolkit is translated in every one of the partners language and is available for free at http://www.keycompetences.eu/wordpress/ .

This tool called Employability Toolkit includes three steps that you have to do when you are looking for a job, namely: Choose it, Get ready and Go for it. Each step of this guide is made by two parts: the first part includes a lot of online resources and the second is made by practical workshops were can be found a big number of practical exercises.

The Toolkit offers guidance in learning how to use a computer, gain ICT skills, making all the documents needed to apply for a job (CV, Letter of intention, even the route to work, so on) through a series of practical exercises that in the end makes the participant be more employable, and to learn what job matches with his competences.

As a result of introducing this service in the Romanian network 20% of the participants that attended this training course increased their employability chances on labor market, gained ICT skills and found a job in the first 2 months.

This caused changes in the two plans:

- Once people have become more confident in their own strengths,
- And secondly, in terms of labor market, their status changed and they become from unemployed persons that were receiving unemployment benefits, in contributors to the state budget.

- **Accredited ICT Courses**

As a result of raising demands of the employers regarding the certified level of ICT skills of their future employees, telecentre staff accredited a range of ICT courses. These courses – for example Operator text and image processing; Entry operator, data processing and validation; Electronic Computer and Network Operator – are certified by Romanian Ministry of Labor and increase the chances of employability because, first of all, the participant gains ICT skills and second of all, these kind of courses finalizes with an Accredited Certificate recognized at national level and brings a great value in the participant portfolio.

In this context and in order to attract more community members that need such training, telecentres signed partnerships and cooperation protocols with Local Employment Agencies. These protocols were a support for both of the parties: in this way the telecenter had access to the data base of the unemployed people in the region and for the Employment Agencies was much easier to find jobs and to qualify these persons, since the telecenter staff trained and certified them. The courses developed in partnership with

the Local Employment Agencies are free of charge, but for the rest of the community members the telecenter receives a fee.

- **ICT Courses**

In Romania the law requires that in order to attend to an Accredited ICT Course, the participant must have minimum 10 classes of education.

This is why for those who do not meet this requirement, telecentres are providing basic ICT Courses. These courses respond to different needs, can have different thematic and objectives, can be addresses to only one category of the community or more. The duration of these courses is depending on the objective of the course.

Depending on community needs, telecentres staffs designed and implement different ICT courses, from the most requested, we mention "**Save time! Use Internet banking", "Grandparents online"** and for companies **"Balance cost – efficiency"** or more recently **"Social media – promote your business for free".**

Save time! Use Internet banking – Even though some part of the population is familiar to computer, mobile phone, digital camera, etc. they do not integrate electronic tools in daily life, because, often, do not know their direct benefits. Most factories and institutions in Romania make salary payments to credit cards. Unfortunately, it appears that on the salary day, endless queues are formed at the ATMs, employee's fully withdrawing money. Facilities like card payments, direct debits for utilities; electronic payment of taxes, online shopping is used by a very small percentage of the population. Thus, in the digital age, although most of the population has access to new technologies (computer and Internet connection, credit card) and has basic knowledge in utilization of electronic transactions (card or Internet banking) are used by a small percentage of the population.

During the e-banking month, representatives from various banks came to the telecentres and trained the people about the advantages of Internet payments and how they can make the payments through Internet banking. Through the ICT training people in the communities learned how to pay online bills, a very useful tool for them, mainly because in the small villages doesn't exists banks offices and in the past most them had to walk for a distance of many kilometers in order to pay their utilities or to make bank transfers.

The telecentres came up with the proposal - gathered information and made the training needs analysis – presented to the different banks and signed with them a protocol of collaboration. Telecentres staff designed the curricula, gathered participants; all the costs for implementing these courses were budgeted and supported by the banks.

Skillage http://www.skillage.eu/ has been created by Telecentre-Europe AISBL (www.telecentre-europe.org) a not-for-profit international association of Telecentres across Europe, with the financial support of Microsoft.

Is addressed to teenagers between 16 and 24 years old, that are preparing for the labor market. **Skillage** assesses the understanding of ICT in an employment setting. The categories of the testing are employability, productivity, communications, social media and information literacy, and files and filing. Each question has a number of possible answers that explores a particular ICT skill.

Country	2008	2010
Bulgaria	12,7	23,2
Czech Republic	9,9	18,3
Estonia	12,0	32,9
Greece	22,1	32,9
Cyprus	8,8	17,2
Latvia	13,1	34,5
Lithuania	13,4	35,1
Hungary	19,9	26,6
Malta	11,8	13,1
Poland	17,3	23,7
Romania	18,6	22,1
Slovenia	10,4	14,7
Slovakia	19,0	33,6

At the end each participant that tests his skills gets on his email the Skillage Report that gives the participant more specific advice about his level of competences and where he can get support in order to improve the needed competences on the labor market. Skillage is free, and it is available in 23 languages. In case that the results of the test are not as great, the teenager is guided to one of the courses that it will provide him the required competences needed on the labor market.

Take a look at the table! The level of youth unemployment is alarming in most of the EU countries. According to Eurostat source the percentage of youth unemployed increased in recent years, that is why, telecenters in Romania developed various tools to support the youth in order to be prepared for the labor market. Skillage is one of them and it is strengthen by the possibility to attend to courses in order they develop the skills required by employers nowadays.

ICT for Youngsters

The course designed especially for youth was developed in order to help them to increase their chances of employment through IT training, in order to facilitate a better transition from school into labor market. According to Eurostat (table below) the percentage of unemployed youngsters increased since 2008 till 2010.

During the course they acquire ICT skills and also learn about: working with peripherals, word processing, drawing and image processing, making presentations, data and document security. Also, the trainees have the opportunity to create their own professional accounts through which they have access to free email, chat, blogs, high storage data and a discussion group created during the course in order to access topics and updated information about job vacancies in their region – the office for Employment offers to the telecentres the database with job vacancies.

In the same time the trainers helps them to make their own CV and to discover what steps they have to fallow in order to integrate on the labor market. They receive help to identify the job that suits them, to search online job advertise and to apply for the job they want.

After the final evaluation they received an accredited graduation certificate accompanied by the descriptive skills appendix.

Grandparents online this course rose as a necessity given by two factors: 1. the highest percentage of people that are not online is represented by the seniors, retired members of smaller communities or urban areas, and 2. strengthened by the percentage of emigrants that leave their homes and leave their children in the care of grandparents. Through these courses it was aimed to reconnect families via Internet and to decrease the number of elderly who are not using the computer and enjoying the facilities of new technologies.

- Another type of ICT courses developed through the network of telecentres in Romania are the courses that are aiming to develop the skills of employees that are working in companies, public or private sector. These packages of courses are targeted for employees to perform in terms of quantity and quality their job duties and be more efficient. Here you can diversify as much as you want, for example the telecentres in Romania designed and implemented courses for assistants (Word Processing Programs), financial officer (how to work with data bases, spreadsheet), Project Management Courses, courses for accountants. The important thing is to realize a good training needs analysis on the services provided by the companies, programs that are using, and find communication channels to approach them. Also keep in mind that like a telecenter - that needs to keep up with the development of technology, motivation of the staff and attract beneficiaries – they are also facing these situations and need to find solutions to their problems.
- Telecentres developed besides ICT courses and others courses that are necessary for a part of the community. These courses refers to the **entrepreneurship** and how to set up a business because in this communities many people had the opportunity to attend these courses and after that to set up their business based on the products that they are obtaining from their own household.

In Romania, the disparities between rural and urban areas provide specific social problems of the Romanian rural area. The rural population accounts 45.1% of the total population and represents approximately 9.7 million inhabitants. According to studies conducted, the rural economy is largely dominated by agriculture; rural labor force is engaged mainly in agriculture, which is one of the major constraints in developing the national economy. Because in the rural areas the number of jobs is very low, and the risk of poverty is more than double compared to urban areas: 42% in rural areas compared to 18% in urban and poor population in rural areas is 2/3 of the total poor population.

Therefore, telecentres have identified a major need to realize a training package dedicated to the development of entrepreneurial skills, in order to give another professional orientation for the people in the rural areas or small urban communities, so they can be able to set up their own business in communities where they are living.

These entrepreneurial skills are developed through an innovative system, according particular attention to women, youth, and unemployed, promoting and encouraging entrepreneurship in order to start a business in a non-agricultural area.

This innovative system combines classical courses with teaching methods as e-learning, providing both direct interaction between lectors and students and effective communication through IT & C equipment but also enlarge the access to various useful information that help trainees in the entrepreneurship activities that they will develop.

Each course module has been designed to contain two parts: a theoretical part and a practical one. Theoretical part is delivered based on the "classic" methods – through courses, and the practice through exercises performed by using the page where you can find e-learning applications.

Training modules were developed based on a detailed analysis in urban communities where telecentres activates: - Using the computer, - Be an entrepreneur, Basis of accounting and financial management, Marketing Basics, Business plan development, Communication, How to establish a company.

The course module **"Operator text and images"** come to meet the training need of students in computer use. These tools of modern society often serve to reduce the physical effort involved and also to add value to products and services. Students are trained to use applications as drafting texts, to accomplish presentations of their own business in different contexts - building applications that allow dynamic presentations, images and diagrams containing both suggestive and video elements. This ICT training complete the course related to entrepreneurial skills with an essential component: the ability to work on the computer.

The module – **Be entrepreneur** is the introductory module of entrepreneurial skills course. Through this module it is intended to raise the student motivation, which is a very important aspect when you want to set up a business. Through the sequence of chapters, fears and prejudices about the business world are presented and discussed individually, as each being able to objectively evaluate their real capacity to engage in this field.

Communication in business - Through communication module participants can strengthen and develop communication skills but also the negotiation skills, to find and to support influence strategies and those skills needed to convince the others, to identify key people in order to achieve goals, ability to develop and maintain business contacts, control, to be aware and to improve continuously the quality of services or products.

Marketing Basics - aims to familiarize the student with the "art and science of selling." In the marketing process the central place is occupied by the client with his requirements, needs and preferences. People satisfy their needs and desires with products and services.

Module **"Basic Accounting and financial management"**, provides to future entrepreneurs a set of basic information for understanding financial accounting system of a company. In the daily work of a company, knowing the financial documents - accounting and their role is also important.

The module **"Business plan development"** gives students a detailed knowledge of their business planning. The business plan is useful not only for external donors, being for them the main source of knowing their partners, but also for the business owners in order to assist them to obtain a global perspective on real activity.

The module **"How to establish a business"** offers to trainees that are future entrepreneurs the useful information's for registration and start the business. After that the shape of the future legal entity was decided follows the specific route going through the actual establishment.

All these training modules have been accredited by Ministry of Labor and the modular structure of the course allows inserting other course modules according to specific needs identified in the region or area where there will be delivered these courses.

Within each course module, the practical part was based on using computer programs needed and e-learning platform, because only by using these tools we can develop an increased proportion of the relationship cost-effectiveness, the professional skills of students in financial analysis, marketing, business plan development and communication.

Results: Until today, more than 265 people have benefited from this course in the Romanian telecentre network. With the aid of the knowledge acquired they had the opportunity to develop their entrepreneurial skills and to establish a business plan– thing that led to the development of their own business. In the past, more than half of them were involved in subsistence farming and they said that in the present their income has increased significantly and their life become easier given the fact that the standard of living is much higher.

EVENTS are another service provided through the network of telecenters in Romania.

One of the benefits organizing, coordinating an event or just be involved in one, at national or regional level, or perhaps even at an international level, is that, if you are using the PR tools in a proper way, you will manage to make your telecenter more visible and you will raise awareness to a larger mass of community.

- **Employability Campaign/Job Shop** is an event that takes place in the Romanian telecenter network twice per year. These campaigns are organized with the support of different NGO's, institutions in the private and public sector, Agency of Employment. Various activities take place, different guests are invited. The awareness of the importance of e-skills for employability increases in all the telecentres communities

and in a part of the communities where a digital library activates. People who are looking for a job and which need IT training courses are registered to the free courses offered by the telecentres and digital libraries. The training package is designed depending on the level of ICT skills and the requirements of the jobs they want to apply for.

Although the campaign was primarily dedicated to the unemployed and those looking for a job, the seniors were encouraged to use the computer and the Internet for their age-specific activities.

- **Get Online Week/Hai pe Net!**

As part of the awareness raising activities, the most important one is the Get Online Week campaign organized in Romania every year, since 2009. European "**Get Online Week"** in Romania branded as "**Hai pe Net!,** is annually organized and coordinated by **EOS Foundation.** The objective of **"Hai pe Net!"** is to help get people through the doors of their local telecentres, enabling staff to build people's confidence to move on into more structured learning about technology and the benefits it brings to their personal and professional lives.

The event is highly visible and appreciated by stakeholders, government officials and partners, and involves a wide participation of organizations such as: Ministry of Education, Research, Youth and Sports, Microsoft, the National Association of Public Libraries, County Education Authorities, and various NGO's.

EOS, as the training supplier of the IT training within the Biblionet Program in Romania, involves many libraries in the **"Hai pe Net!"** campaign. The campaign is supported by the ANBPR (National Association of Public Libraries) and partnerships are established to continue supporting the digital inclusion efforts in Romania. The Ministry of Communication and IT in Romania, participates and supports **"Hai pe Net!"** encouraging PIAPs to participate and take the inclusion message to as many community members as possible.

EOS's vision regarding the GOW campaign is to make it PUBLIC and RAISE PUBLIC's AWARNESS about the importance of digital skills, on personal and professional lives, on national and European level, and to inform the population about the aim of Digital Agenda for Europe "Every European Digital!" . Therefore, a strong, well-structured and coordinated strategy is developed and implemented, to make the campaign and its objectives, as visible as possible. For this we use all means of communication: mass media coverage, Facebook and blogs, websites.

In 2012, on the last day of registration in the campaign, 576 telecentres had submitted the Application form! During the campaign the 576 coordinators of telecentres along with the staff and volunteers used different activities, materials, tools and methods of training, in order to bring as much people in the telecentres, motivate them in using the technology, to give them confidence regarding ICT's, to show them the benefits provided through technology

- activities – first click, e-Government services, e-Banking, online women, online seniors, intergenerational learning or online services;
- materials – The Guide for Telecentres, The PR Guide, flyers, posters, caps, shirts, badges and banners;
- tools www.skillage.eu/ [1]- for youngsters, www.keycompetences.eu/wordpress/[2] - for unemployed part of the community and for those who are looking for a better job, online safety - http://www.copiidisparuti.ro/

In the last day of the campaign, 15.760 Romanians were registered in "Hai pe Net!" from which 17% were first time online, 48% users of ICT and 35% supporters.

OTHER SERVICES UNDER TELECENTRES NETWORK IN ROMANIA

Since 2007 Romania is part of the **European Union** and has access to European Funds. For this reason, telecentres coordinators came up with the idea to support individuals of the community, who wanted to access these funds. It's not a service provided by all telecentres, but just those who had the human resources available and with the knowledge to do it.

For Farmers that wanted to access funds, telecentres staff helped them to write their application in order to get European funds and to expand their farms from subsistence farms to farms that can deliver BIO products for the marketplaces near their village or for the supermarkets in the area.

In some cases, telecentres offered courses regarding how they can **Access European Funds** focused on different lines of funding, how to write a small project, to draw SMART objectives, how to plan the activities and to initiate them, evaluation of the project and so on.

Other types of services provided by telecentres in Romania are

- **Multiplication, scanning** of documents – for a fee;
- **Renting** space or telecentres equipment's – for a fee or for building partnership with the local investors, or economic agents; There are a few exceptions and they concern libraries, for example, that can't carry out economic activities and record income
- **Fundraising.**

[1] Online software application that helps to understand the more sophisticated ICT skills is needed for the job market. Developed by **Telecentre-Europe** with the support of Microsoft, this youth assessment tool is now available in 20 European countries. More then 10 000 Romanians took part at the test.

[2] The project "KC4All" – Key Competences for All – supports the enhancement of the basic key competencies of low qualified adults improving their employability through an alternative learning approach. Key Competences for All Project funded by the European Commission - DG Education and Culture, the Lifelong Learning Program.

Type of beneficiaries:	Services that they can benefit from:	Organizations, partners that can support you:
Teenagers	Skillage Employment Toolkit ICT Courses	*Educational institutions*
Unemployed	Accredited ICT Courses Basic ICT Courses Employment Toolkit Job shop activities	*Unemployed Agencies*
Seniors	Internet Navigation Online communication tools Digital photos	*Homes for the elderly*
Companies employees	Specialized ICT Courses Soft skills training Renting space & equipment	-
All community members	ICT Training basic and accredited	-

Sustainability of telecenters in ROMANIA

In the table below you can find a "recipe" regarding how telecenters in Romania sustainable. The suggestion is of all 4 partners involved in the project, but if you will read the chapter, you will also find some particular cases.

The network of telecentres in Romania consists in different nongovernmental organization, agents from business sector, state institutions, with different structures and that is why the Sustainability plan is different depending on these factors. The types of telecentres in the Romanian network are represented by: e-centres, PAPI's, libraries, schools, NGO's.

For the individual telecentres which generally are **NGO**'s are trying to include telecentre activities in other projects that the organization runs in order to get funds and to continue their activities. The funds for a part of the projects that were written and that are still in the implementation until 2013 are European funds and with the aid of these projects the organizations have the opportunity to offer ICT free courses to a large number of people. Because it is not sure that starting with 2013 these funds will continue to be delivered by the European Commission most of the organizations started to identify other resources.

From their long term strategies the most common are:

- Establishing a small fee for courses offered, especially for those that are accredited; at the end of these courses the beneficiaries are receiving a certified diploma; trying to better marketing the services and the courses offered by telecentres so people in communities to realize the importance of continuous training and ICT and to be make efforts to pay small fees for the training that they will receive.

- Identifying private donors, interested to invest a part of their profit in communities using the CSR activities; in Romania in the past few years the number of the private companies that are developing CSR activities increased very much and also the number of the projects including this activities are growing each year.
- Establishing partnerships with local agencies for employment and other organization which are offering IT training and other type of courses in order to work together and to offer a better support for people in their communities through the telecentres services.

On the other hand we have the public telecentres like **PAPI**'s and **libraries** whose activities are carried out with the support of the town hall because telecentre is a part of the local municipality.

Their situation regarding the long sustainability is quite different because they receive support and funding from the government. Salaries for the telecentres staff, the location for the telecentre, and the utilities are paid by the municipality.

However, each public telecentre has different ways to attract other funds, in order to complete the ones they have from the government and to have the opportunity to run as many activities as possible. Therefore, most of them have some local taxes established for a part of their services. For example, you can access the Internet for a small amount of money (per hour), printing and scanning are also services to be paid. This money is used in order to cover a part of the expenses with the utilities, and also sustain the free courses delivered in the telecentre.

Shared Learning and Community Digital Inclusion through telecentre services SERBIA

Context

Economy + Unemployment

Serbia has a transitional economy mostly dominated by market forces, but the state sector remains large and many institutional reforms are needed. The economy relies on manufacturing and exports, driven largely by foreign investment. Serbia has made some progress towards EU membership, signing a Stabilization and Association Agreement with Brussels in May 2008, and obtaining the candidate status in 2012. Structural economic reforms needed to ensure the country's long-term prosperity have largely stalled since the onset of the global financial crisis. Serbia, however, is slowly recovering from the crisis. Economic growth in 2011 was 2.0%, following a modest 1.0% increase in 2010. High unemployment (23.7% November 2011) and stagnant household incomes are ongoing political and economic problems. Major challenges ahead include: high unemployment rates and the need for job creation; high government expenditures for salaries, pensions and unemployment benefits; a growing need for new government borrowing; rising public and private foreign debt; and attracting new foreign direct investment. Other serious challenges include an inefficient judicial system, high levels of corruption, and an aging population. Factors favorable to Serbia's economic growth include a strategic location, a relatively inexpensive and skilled labor force, free trade agreements with the EU, Russia, Turkey, and Central European Free Trade agreement countries; and a generous package of incentives for foreign investments.

Population

As of January 2011, Serbia (without Kosovo) had an estimated population of 7,276,195 (not including over 200,000 internally displaced persons from Kosovo). Serbs are the largest ethnic group in Serbia, representing 83% of the total population, excluding Kosovo. With a population of 290,000, Hungarians are the second largest ethnic group in Serbia, representing 3.9%. Other minority groups include Bosnians', Roma, Albanians, Croats, Bulgarians, Montenegrins, Macedonians, Slovaks and Romanians. According to UN estimates, around 500,000 Roma live in Serbia.

Serbia has the largest refugee population (number of refugees per capita) in Europe. Refugees and internally displaced persons in Serbia form between 7% and 7.5% of its population – about half a million refugees sought refuge in the country following the series of Yugoslav wars, mainly from Croatia, and to a lesser extent from Bosnia and Herzegovina and the IDPs from Kosovo, which are currently the most numerous at over 200,000.

Meanwhile, it is estimated that 300,000 people left Serbia during the 1990s alone, and around 20% of those had college or higher education. Serbia has a comparatively old overall population (among 10 oldest in the world), mostly due to low birth rates. In addition, Serbia has among the most negative population growth rates in the world, ranking 225th out of 233 countries overall.

Percentage of the digital included population or excluded

More than half of the total population in Serbia (53%) has never used Internet and 40,1% has never used a computer (data from 2011). Results of a survey on Information and Communication Technologies usage in households and by individuals in the EU27 Member States, the candidate countries, Norway, Iceland and Serbia conducted in 2011 show that Serbia is still lagging far behind most of the EU countries. Unlike in some EU countries where the proportion of households with internet access was three quarters or more (in the Netherlands (94%), Luxembourg and Sweden (both 91%) and Denmark (90%), Serbia has one of the lowest registered rates (41.2%).

Broadband

The proportion of households with a broadband connection in EU countries is 68%, while in Serbia it is 28%. Also, certain demographic groups are less likely to access ICT for a variety of reasons. For instance, in Serbia, just as in EU countries, those who are disabled, unemployed, old, have low income, or poor educational attainment are less likely to use computers and internet.

Telecentres network in SERBIA

In Serbia there are currently two civil society organizations' (CSOs) initiatives related to promotion of ICT and e-Education. One is led by IAN International Aid Network (from 2001) and its aim is to organize telecentres in urban areas throughout the Balkan region. Currently, the informal regional Telecentar Network includes three Telecentres in Serbia (Belgrade, Novi Sad and Nis) and five in BiH and Croatia. The second initiative is Teledom Association of Serbia focused more on small, rural areas, which has had huge problems with survival after the withdrawal of main donors in 2007. There are no exact data about the number of Teledoms currently operating within this Association (estimation is between 10 and 20). Also, there are more than 20 other CSOs occasionally providing similar activities throughout Serbia, but with no connections with between these organizations.

Best services provided by the SERBIAN network

Important factor in further economic development of our region is acquiring knowledge and skills needed in the modern economy and society. Unfortunately, the existing education system cannot adequately meet these needs and the gap between the requests of the labour market on the one side and skills that

individuals have on the other side grows bigger every day. This gap is especially large with groups who are vulnerable and outside the mainstream of the society - refugees and displaced persons, Roma, unemployed, minority groups, people living with HIV, disabled persons, etc. This makes these groups even more marginalized and isolated from the society.

The aim of Telecentar is to develop competencies required for active participation in the knowledge economy, for finding a new/better job and adjustment to the needs of the labour market, through:

- Promotion of lifelong learning as a development tool for all citizens
- Stimulation of social inclusion of marginalized groups in the lifelong learning process
- Searching for the best teaching and learning practices worldwide
- Adoption of the highest standards of the knowledge society
- Development and implementation of the programme according to labour market demands

Many people from vulnerable groups have no means for participation in education processes, by which they are even more excluded from the mainstreams of their society. They cannot find (better) jobs because they have no adequate knowledge needed in the modern economy:

1. Computer knowledge
2. Knowledge of English Language
3. Social skills
4. Entrepreneurship skills

1) Computer school

ICT learning modules cover more than 30 different ICT courses form standard Microsoft Office applications, which is currently a market-leading package in this category of software for end users to advanced courses for web design or ICT Network maintenance. ICT learning modules are organised on a daily basis and each module consists of 20 lessons. At the end of each course participants are tested. Following courses are available in the Computer school:

Courses for acquiring internationally recognized ECDL certificates (ECDL – European Computer Driving Licence is the world`s most spread end-user certificate recognised in more than 140 countries) - these courses provide you with the knowledge necessary for everyday use of computers at home or at work. Courses and exams include the use of the most popular software packages Windows and Office. Persons who pass the required number of exams obtain international certificate recognized in all European states, USA, Canada, Australia, etc.

- Courses for acquiring internationally recognized ECDL Advanced certificates
- Web design courses - include a package of 9 web design courses that cover all areas required for professional web design
- Graphic design courses - represent advanced levels in computer training. They include Photoshop and CorelDraw.
- Practical courses such as Computer maintenance and Network maintenance

2) English language school

Good command of English language has become a requirement for many jobs and this skill facilitates finding a (better) job. Telecentar English language learning modules complies with the Adult English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) Core Curriculum, developed by the British government Department for Education and Skills (DfES) and the Basic Skills Agency (BSA). Teachers use this curriculum to carry out initial assessment, design learning programme of individuals and groups and assess their learning progress. It is the British national standard for speaking, listening, reading and writing. English language learning modules include 60 lessons. Classes are taught for small groups or for individuals. Teachers are all graduate English teachers who use modern methods, dictionaries, literature and audio material. There is also a rich library available for course participants.

Following English language courses are available in IAN Telecentar:

- Elementary level - program HeadWay and English File Oxford Elementary
- Pre-Intermediate level - program HeadWay and English File Oxford Pre-Intermediate
- Intermediate level - program HeadWay and English File Oxford Intermediate
- Upper-Intermediate - program HeadWay and English File Oxford Upper-Intermediate
- BAC business courses - program BAC Vantage
- Preparation for TOEIC exams

3) Social skills school

The interaction of globalization, technological development and changes in the organization of work has resulted in the demand for higher and different skills. Skills have become increasingly important in determining an individual's ability to secure a job, retain employment and move flexibly in the labour market. Today's world of work calls for individuals who are able to flexibly acquire, adapt, apply and transfer their knowledge to different contexts and under varying technological conditions, and to respond independently and creatively. What is especially important is that skills within these modules will strengthen the psychological status of target groups, their persistence in searching for a job; it will also help

them find and keep a job. These courses will teach the participants how, where and when is most efficient to search for a job and they are directly focused on acquiring job search skills.

Our trainers, some of whom are certified by the British Institute CIPD, and others are psychologists and psychotherapists of different therapeutic orientations, offer the following programs:

Recognition and analyses of individual potentials

Training in recognition and analysis of individual potentials is application of cognitive science to Human Resource management. The goal of this module is to enhance the efficiency of individuals, groups and firms.

Personal development - career planning

The course will enable participants to critically assess the role of self-development in people-management and HR processes. The research evidence for the effectiveness of self-help methods will also be covered.

Self-management

The underlying premise in self-management programme was that individuals who need to change are more likely to succeed if they are in control of the change process. When people take charge of their own change program, they are more likely to feel efficacious, and change should be more lasting than if they feel that someone else is in charge.

Communication skills assertive training

Assertion means standing up for what you want, stating your needs clearly. It means expressing opposition. It means confrontation and it takes courage. Assertiveness training courses and workshops can help delegates increase work effectiveness and productivity, achieve greater control of their daily activities and overcome work stressors.

Communication skills - presentation

This course will be focused on giving participants the confidence to use the skills and practical tools needed when preparing and delivering a clear, memorable presentation. It will boost participants' effectiveness and enable them to feel positive when presenting.

Communication skills - written communication and CV writing

This module will help participants to establish 'good practice' with emails, letters and reports and CV writing.

4) Entrepreneurship school

Those who have already started their small business face many problems in its maintaining and development, and need proper additional support in improving their work. The skills and knowledge

related to entrepreneurship are not incorporated in regular education curricula in elementary and secondary school.

Institutions for education have been out of modern trends for more than a decade, and lack capacities to follow up and transfer new approaches and streams from more developed societies. Compared to the real needs, there is a lack of training and consultancy programs for development of personal skills and knowledge related to entrepreneurship.

Self-employment is seen as an efficient way of resolving the problem of unemployment among different marginalized groups. To manage own business, people need entrepreneurship skills which are not in regular education curricula in elementary and secondary schools and are often neglected. These skills help in initiation of own business. List of courses in Entrepreneurship school:

Starting a Business

Within these module participants will learn about organizational structure of enterprises, legal framework for start-ups and small and medium- sized enterprises.

Business Plan

Participants will learn what a business plan is, how to make a business plan and how to use the plan.

Financing

Bookkeeping and financial administration are important in each small business and each entrepreneur will be introduced with basic concepts from finances.

Business Skills

Business skills can always be improved and special attention will be devoted to resource managing, managing styles and business communication.

Business Management / Managing Enterprise

Managing an enterprise, analyse profitability, growth strategies, valuing a business are some of the most important topics within this module.

Marketing, Advertising and Public Relations

Without active marketing, without building own brand, identification of target market, it is not possible to develop a successful business. This module provides participants with basic knowledge from marketing, advertising and public relations.

Other telecentres (mainly in rural areas) provide also following services:

- Free Internet access,
- Information Center,
- Office services (ex., word processing, printing, copying, sending and receiving fax, binding, laminating, scanning, CD burning, use of office),
- Usage of multimedia,
- Computer game,
- Agricultural Service and the Center for Rural Development,
- Department of Environmental Protection,
- Office for the Protection of Cultural Property,
- Volunteer Center,
- Local shops and businesses,
- Tourism Bureau,
- Center for Civic Organizations and
- Place for exhibition.

The greatest interest is for free of charge IT courses.

The structure of the unemployed in Serbia is mainly characterized by long-term unemployment which has deepened in recent years. Reintegration of the long-term unemployed people and members of vulnerable groups into the labor market is a crucial task, considering that these people have lost skills, knowledge, and motivation and working habits due to long-term absence from work. Exclusion from the labor market also leads to psychological problems and deterioration of social and economic position.

First and obvious benefit from educative activities is gaining new skills and knowledge which is necessary in today modern office environment. But beside this "effect" according to the research results through ICT trainings participants report to have increased self-confidence, improved social networks, increased motivation for job-search, and improved psychological status. The results show that after longer attendance of educational programs participants have:

- *General improvement of the psychological status*
- *Decreased level of emotional instability and destructive aggression*
- *Raised level of conscientiousness*
- *Decreased tendency to blame others and unfavorable circumstances for personal difficulties, participants show tendency to take over the responsibility for own future*

- Most significant changes have been registered in the way participants perceive their own competences, before all professional. They feel *considerably more competent and capable in the professional sense.*

Positive change is not limited only to general psychological status. Participants show *much higher degree of intention for engagement in job search*, than before attending the program. They believe that business opportunities for them exist, that loss of a job may be a chance for advancement not exclusively a personal catastrophe, that their future mostly depends on themselves and that they have enough qualities to influence the decision of their future employers.

Finally, the most important result is that the participants have more chances for finding a new/better job after completing our education programs. In some programs percentage of beneficiaries who found jobs three months after the completion of the program goes up to 30%.

Sustainability of telecenters in SERBIA

As mentioned, IAN Telecentre that has been operating as one department within a larger local NGO – IAN, has succeeded in ensuring its continuity through constant building up of its services and their quality, great commitment of staff, addressing the right needs of community members.

IAN, similarly to other members of the informal network of Telecentres in Serbia, ensures its sustainability through two types of activities – donations and income generation activities. IAN has a diversified network of donors and ensures funding for digital inclusion through comprehensive projects that recognize digital inclusion as an integral part of support to vulnerable groups in their social and economic integration. In this way IAN Telecentre secures funds for programs aimed at supporting educational activities for refugees, IDPs, the unemployed, Roma, torture victims, disabled and other vulnerable groups.

IAN Telecenter also secures some degree of sustainability through market generated income – provision of services, mostly educative courses, to solvent groups in the community. Around 30% of IAN Telecentre income comes from these activities. Most of these commercial clients are individuals, but there are also a number of companies who send their employees for IT courses to IAN Telecentre. All staff members participate together in designing new services that correspond to the needs and demand of the community. A lot of effort is invested in promoting these services through social media and other forms of e-marketing, innovative promotion techniques.

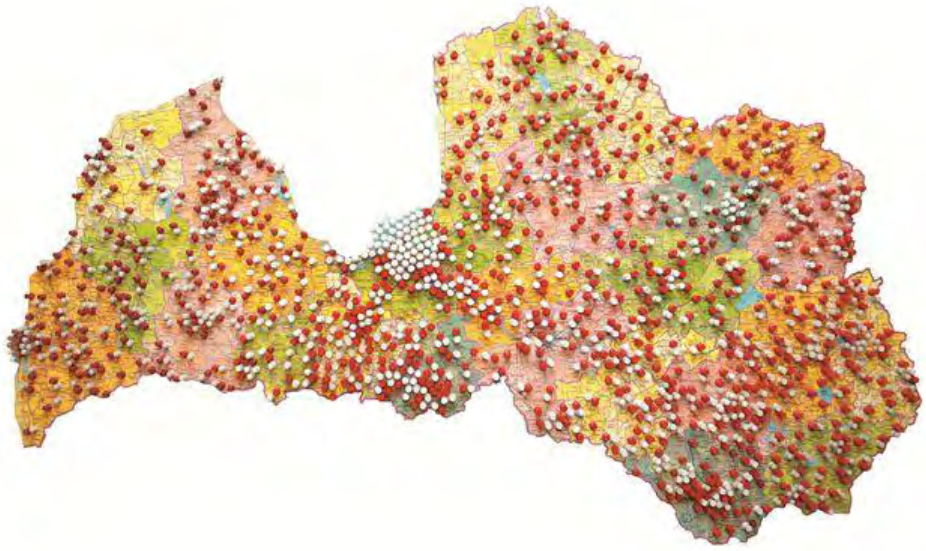
Shared Learning and Community Digital Inclusion through telecentre services LATVIA

Telecentres network in LATVIA

In Latvia with telecentres we understand 2 different networks:

- **Public library network** – 874 Libraries. Through library modernization project "Father's third son" (*Trešais tēva dēls*) – as Biblionet Project in Romania - sponsored by Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation all of the libraries were equipped with all together around 4000 modern computers with Internet access. Librarians were trained to work with the new equipment and software, as well as trained in the use of electronic signatures, innovative library activities and other topics. Librarians are able to help and consult any person interested both in relation of using computer equipment and other issues.

Figure 5: The 874 Libraries



- **Latvia@World (L@W) network** – gathers 31 training centres all over Latvia. Training centres are certified for four different level trainings. Latvia@World network consist of 4 type organizations
  - NGO's
  - Municipal institution
  - Educational institutions (life-long education)
  - Companies

The aim of the centres is to create all necessary prerequisites for the training of people who have no experience in using a computer and the Internet or who have basic ICT competencies and want to develop them or want to certify existing knowledge. All organizations are working forwards the aims of Digital Agenda and are involved in several European initiative realizations.

Figure 6: Courses provided through Latvia@World (L@W) network

Best services in the LATVIAN network

Telecentres offer wide range of services.

- ICT courses
- Digital studies for kids (Digital summer schools), seniors and families
- Certification – Microsoft UP, E-development, ECDL, e Citizen, eGuardian
- Online knowledge assessment and testing tools (IT Barometer, E-citizen and ECDL test)
- Initiatives for NGO's, SMEs, Unemployed
- Language studies

Telecentres use centrally developed ICT tools, test them in pilot groups, provide feedback for modifications and them integrate developed tools in their learning circles and offer as one of their services.

Employability Toolkit

The Online Employment Toolkit was developed through the Key Competence for All Project funded by the European Commission – DG Education and Culture, the Lifelong Learning Program – Grundtvig for adult education. The Online Employment Toolkit was developed for five countries: Belgium, Latvia, Romania, Spain and the UK and also available in five languages.

Employability Toolkit aims to improve the key competencies of citizens at risk of exclusion from the labor market by improving their employability through an alternative learning approach. This approach is ICT – based, user-centered and interest-oriented.

Key competencies addressed within the toolkit: digital skills, learning to learn, social and civic competencies, sense of initiative and entrepreneurship.

Employment Toolkit consists of three parts: Choose it, get ready for it and Go for it. Each part has two sections: Online resources and practical workshops.

The online resource section combines e-learning sessions, additional learning materials and online resources. Employment Toolkit consists of more than 28 online resources, which have been carefully selected to offer information for job seekers with low ICT skills.

Target audience:

- The long-term unemployed;
- Young people with no previous job experience;
- Immigrants and ethnic minorities;
- Women without previous job experience or returning form maternity leave;
- Unemployed people from regional cities and rural areas.

Most important skills that end-use learned were:

- Online job search;
- CV and covering letter preparation (and uploading online);
- Self-assessment skills;
- The development of a digital identity and self-promotion through social network;
- Text editing and presentation.

In Latvia end-users took part in survey about Employment Toolkit Trainings. The Respondents sample was chosen accordingly to main target groups for the Online Employability Toolkit and showed the same demographics as the general sample of end-users who enter and graduate from LIKTA courses. In general respondents have indicated that they have the basic computer and internet skills. However this is a self-estimation and the Pilot trainings in Latvia have shown that many of these skills are very fragmented and not sufficient for employment needs. End users were quite targeted to acquire the skills which they expect will directly help to improve their employability situation. Taking into account end users preferences more time and attention should be paid to Employment Toolkit resources which are designated to these competences: creating CV and presentations, preparing for job interviews, creating digital identity and searching job online.

E-Guardian Online Barometer

IT skills measuring tool is an innovative online skills assessment tool, that supports participants in training activities, supports improvements in quality and innovation in vocational education, training system and practices. This tool provides initial skills assessment and encourages participating in further skills improvement process using e-Guardian project materials.

IT Skills measuring tool as pre-test and motivation online tool developed in English, Lithuanian, German and French languages. This testing tool is targeted to assess basic information society security (e-Guardian) skills, it is developed according e-Guardian syllabus. The tool allows examining competence level and receives an automated evaluation with indications for necessary improvements. The advantages of such evaluation tool – it is easy to use (it takes not more than 20 min, can be taken any time, any place with Internet connection). It provides also advice on skills upgrade / certification roadmap. Online IT skills measuring tool has been used already for more than 5 thousand users.

Online IT skills measuring tool has been used already for more than 5 thousand users. In Latvia the demographics of users is following:

- 52% women (avg. 66% correct answers) and 48% men (avg. 64% correct answers);
- 8% students (avg. 68% correct answers), 81% pupils (avg. 63% correct answers), 4% public sector employees (avg. 77% correct answers), 3% teachers (avg. 80% correct answers), 4% other;
- 69% aged under 18, 22% aged 18-25, 4% aged 26-40, 4% aged 41-55 and 1% over 55.

E-Guardian learning materials

Created material support the development of innovative ICT-based content, pedagogies approaches and increases the usage and access to lifelong learning opportunities.

In frame of E-Guardian E-learning materials were translated and localized:

- Syllabus (3 pages)
- E-learning course (42 pages)
- Syllabus Guide (17 pages)
- Students Guide (41 page)

Prepared materials are located on e-learning platform Moodle; it ensures sustainability – wide availability and material usage without facilitator ensuring material quality. Based on pilot project participant initiatives – links were continuously updated and supplemented.

Target audience:

- Wide range of teachers – primary schools, secondary schools, social educators and teachers from vocational educational institutions and youth centres.
- Librarians;
- Parents;
- Representatives of school administration;
- Adults, who works in educational system or organization providing learning opportunities.

Prepared e-learning material were localized and adapted to Latvian reality adding extra links to Latvian legislation, initiatives, multimedia materials and additional relevant information. Based on pilot project participant initiatives – links were continuously updated and supplemented.

Digital skills for NGOs

Training material for NGO leaders' to help them in using ICT in their everyday work, for example, communication tools, presentation tools, document exchange sites, etc.

Purpose of training material "Digital skills for NGOs" is to promote information and communication technology use in NGO every day work. Show them how communication tools, presentation tools can help them to exchange information, work more effectively and promote themselves in nation and international level.

Training material consist of book and more than 10 additional e-learning resources, like Microsoft Word, Microsoft Power Point, Windows Live, E-commerce etc.

Digital skills for SMEs

Specialized, 20 hours training program for small and medium enterprises (SMEs) and micro-enterprise needs.

The training program includes the following main sections:

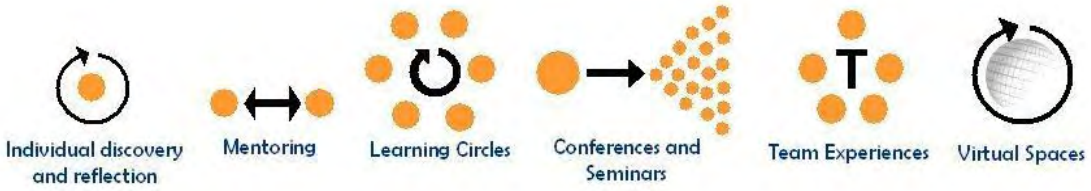
- Basic IT skills;
- Microsoft Word.
- PDF use;
- Microsoft Excel;
- Presentation skills;
- Internet skills;
- Electronic mail;
- Windows Live features;

- Work with Internet bank;
- Internet security;
- E-commerce.

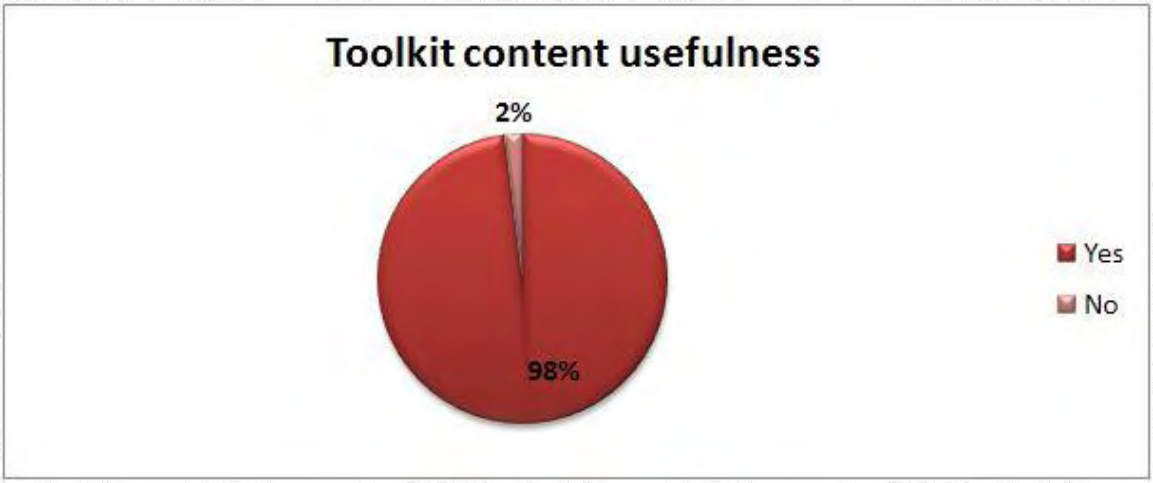
Learning material "Digital skills for SMEs" was developed in LIKTA, in frame of e-skills initiative Latvia@World in collaboration with Microsoft Latvia. More than 1000 SMEs has been trained in frame of this learning program.

The benefits of these services

Centres combine trainings in big groups (10-12 persons), small groups (5 persons), individual and e-courses. To achieve best results all 6 elements of learning environment are used and integrated in developed ICT tools.



Based on previous experience and respondent responses developed ICT tools were acknowledged as very useful from more than 95% of the respondents.



Within Latvia@World project LIKTA has developed a number of up-to-date highly valuated training programs, online tools and other training materials. These materials can be used for E-skills training for various knowledge levels and needs. A great part of programs and materials are developed both – in Latvian and Russian.

Specific innovative training programs developed by LIKTA:

- **Basic computer and Internet skills with ECDL certification** – 160 hour modular program, approved by State Employment agency (http://www.nva.lv/index.php?cid=3&mid=311);
- **Basic Information Society Skills** – learning tool for people who have no or little experience of working with computers.

12 hours hand-on-training program;

- **Digital skills for SMEs** – dedicated training program for small and medium enterprises (SMEs) and micro-enterprise needs.

24 hours program with additional module for e-business;

- **Virtual guide for family** – training program for families including practical examples of how to use home computers for communications, family entertainment, as well as to process and create images, to control their personal finances, etc.

20 hours program with practical tasks and competitions;

- **Digital skills for NGOs** – training material for NGO leaders' to help them in using ICT in their everyday work, for example, communication tools, presentation tools, document exchange sites, etc.

32 hours program with possible additional modules (online materials).

LIKTA also have introduced ECDL related *training modules and related trainings are provided:*

- Text processing – preparation of documents including textual information, images and tables;
- Spreadsheets – basic principles of working with spreadsheets, including the creation of a worksheet, editing data, charts and graphics creation, and publishing a spreadsheet to the Web;
- Internet and Web Basics – browse the Web, use search engines to handle e-mail, and create Web pages;
- Basic computer skills – essential basic knowledge of computers;
- Digital media Basics – using digital media, including digital photography, audio and digital video;
- Presentations Basics – everything about persuasive electronic presentations – from the basic slide show creation and graphics, video and audio insertion for rich multimedia presentations;
- Web design Basics – complete Web site development process – from basics of HTML to full Web site design and development strategies;
- Database Basics – program provides background on relational databases, tables, forms and accounts.

Online tools developed by LIKTA:

- **IT barometer** – online self-evaluation tool for ICT skills, available in Latvian and English;
- **e-Citizen online tests** – European standard tests for basic information society skills; allows to obtain e-Citizen certificate;
- **ECDL online tests** – European standard tests for E-skills; allows to obtain ECDL and ECDL Advanced certificates;
- **e-Guardian online learning tool, tests and safety barometer** - learning materials on Internet and computer safety, self-evaluation tool in Latvian and English and tests that allows obtaining an eGuardian certificate.

Centre involvement in e-skills week

LIKTA is initiator and coordinator of e-Inclusion and e-Skills development initiative Latvia@World. More than 95 000 people have acquired different level e-Skills within the project. Project is an example of public private partnership and has accumulated resources from: European Social Fund, other EU funding programs, Governmental support programs, private donors (Microsoft, Hewlett-Packard, Swedbank, Lursoft, etc.) and municipal (local) funding.

Sustainability of telecenters in LATVIA

L@W trainers have regular joint training meetings to update knowledge and get introduce with the new tools. Trainers get trained and certified to bring the knowledge back to their telecentres. Telecentre trainers are actively involved in new ICT tool development, localization and testing.

A telecenter to achieve sustainable development must take into account the new needs in changing the current and potential customer. Telecentres in Latvia have developed complex programs and specific e-Learning on a local and European dimension and have established good cooperation with partner telecentres from other European countries.

To develop new ICT tools and use the existing tools to train citizens different sponsors have been attracted (Microsoft, EU grants etc.).

Telecentre financial sustainability depends on the organization type. Usually telecentres have several funding channels:

- Municipalities
- EU projects (e.g. Cross border programs, ICT PSP, Grundtvig, Leonardo da Vinci)
- Course fees (many telecentres specialize on higher competency courses - e.g. AutoCAD, Solid Works)
- Government procurements (e.g. Employment Agency)
- Certification (E-citizen, ECDL/ECDL Advanced, eGuardian)
- Rent of technique and premises

Telecentres in Latvia work on adapting the ECDL materials; the activity is sponsored by municipality and the telecentres are providers.

Volunteers - Telecentres involve trainees from vocational education institutions and universities and people from State Employment Agency's social security programs with governmental allowance.

Good practice is to involve those persons who participate in different trainings in telecentres later in other activities. Some persons later like to share with their own experience and lead some training after they have improved their personal technical skills. For example after “KC4All” project - that supported the enhancement of the basic key competencies of low qualified adults improving their employability through an alternative learning approach - later we found out that we can cooperate in other trainings and they can help less experienced participants (lead multimedia courses, about social networks, Internet marketing etc.). Good time for this kind of involvement is e-Skills week when in every telecentre have different activities where everybody can participate for free and help to organize also untraditional ICT based activities.

Independent projects - Telecentres realize individual projects in cooperation with external partners and each other. Telecentres have the possibility to participate in project competitions organized by State Employment Agency - the education program which requires training of a person at the risk of unemployment. The aim is that for the persons that are under the risk of unemployment could increase and develop skills and abilities necessary for a job. A possibility is ensured for involving adults in lifelong learning process.

Cooperation - it is very important if telecentres have support also from municipality. In this kind of cooperation activities are oriented to teachers and school administrations. Telecentres are actively involved in teacher trainings and pupil ECDL certification - this cooperation is especially important in rural territories.

Shared Learning and Community Digital Inclusion through telecentre services MOLDOVA

Context

Economy + Unemployment

Moldova has a solid and comprehensive normative framework regarding access to information. The Moldovan Constitution adopted in 1994, according to the expert's opinion offers, "One of the strongest commitments by access to information that exists in the world."(David Banisar, OSCE Comments on the Moldovan Draft Law on Information, September 2005 - http://www.osce.org/fom/16546). It provides free access to information, including the information disseminated by the government. The Law on Access to Information, adopted in 2000, stipulates that „citizens have the right to seek, obtain, and disseminate official information, and to require to the government authorities to provide information that is requested". Moldova has also ratified several international conventions on this topic. The current government has prioritized access to information initiatives as well. On his agenda the problem of solving the access to information is as a matter of human right, increasing the use of ICTs in government communications and the establishment of e-government principles. E-Government is implementing online-based services ('e-services') in education, health, social protection, elections, business services, and agriculture, including all e-services compulsory in the European Union. Even if Moldova has risen in the ranking of e-government, climbing up 13 points since 2009, in 2010 it still ranked 80th worldwide, lagging behind such neighbours as Latvia (37th), Romania (47th), and Ukraine (54th) (United Nations e-Government Survey 2010, Chapter 4: Country Rankings.

http://kz.mofcom.gov.cn/accessory/201009/1284225105383.pdf).

According to an analysis made by the World Bank, an increase of 10% in the number of broadband internet connections can increase economic growth by 1.3% (World Bank News and Broadcasts, http://web.worldbank.org/WBSITE/EXTERNAL/NEWS/0,,contentMDK:22231728~pagePK:64257043~piPK:437376~theSitePK:4607,00.html). As Moldova aspires to boost its economic development with the help of ICTs, the rapid growth of broadband penetration is a necessary precondition for success.

Moldova is the poorest European country, with an annual GDP of only $ 2937/inhabitant. Since 1990, Moldova entered into a strong economic decline, and she recovered just after the year 2000. The agricultural sector represents the largest weigh from the economy sector. The economy returned to a positive growth from 2.1% in 2000 to 7.5% in 2008. World Bank data shoes that one third of its GDP comes from Moldovans working abroad.

Population - Decline of population in Moldova has an average annual rate of 0.5%. In Moldova, demographic aging is very pronounced, in the first place through a reduced number of young people aged under 15 and, simultaneously, with an increased number of older people (60 years and over). In 1989 these categories of populations constitute 29.6% and 12.6% from the total population and in 2004 -21.0% and 14.3%. To the last census in 2004 there were registered 97 people aged over 100 years, from which 85 were women and 79 persons lived in the rural areas.

In this national difficult context, telecentres in Moldova are very important because they are trying to offer services and to improve the life of the community members and their results will contribute to the reduction of migration phenomenon among young people. Also, the aged population enjoy the benefits of the telecentres network, because a range of activities were developed for them, and they have the chance to keep in touch with their children and relatives working abroad.

Broadband and Percentage of the digital included population or excluded

Moldova has one of the best wired Internet connections in the world as well as one of the cheapest in terms of $ per Mbit (http://www.netindex.com/value/). The overall infrastructure is well developed which allows many users to experience good quality services throughout the country. However despite high speed availability and cheap prices the penetration level is quite low compared to many EU or CIS countries.

Statistical data shows rapid growth in internet adoption. According to statistics from the International Telecommunications Union, Moldova had 40 internet users per 100 citizens in 2010, compared to 19.62 in 2006 and 7.41 in 2003. Moldova compares favourably with its neighbour Ukraine, which had 23 internet users per hundred citizens in 2010, and is on par with Romania's 39 per hundred. Broadband is becoming increasingly available nationwide and steadily replacing dial-up internet, while prices for end users are falling.

However, despite rapid growth in the adoption of the internet by Moldovan citizens, few can afford connections at their homes, and many homes are not connected at all. Here, again, the urban-rural divide is prominent. More than 56% of broadband subscribers are in Chisinau. The number of subscribers per 100 households is 43.3 in Chisinau Municipality and between 5 and 15 in most regions ("Republic of Moldova: Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper—National Development Strategy Report for 2009-2010."2008-2011 http://www.imf.org/external/pubs/ft/scr/2011/cr1194.pdf). One contributing factor is the uneven development of infrastructure.

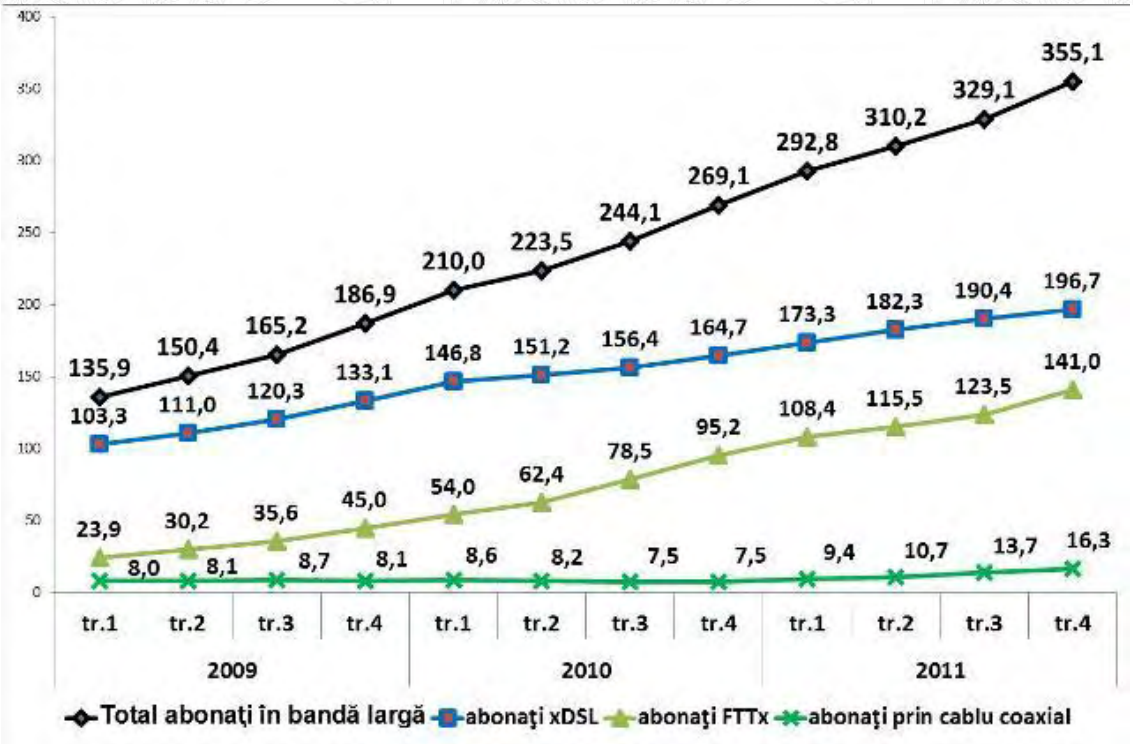
So, for those citizens that cannot afford to pay a subscription to internet, the telecentres locations especially in the rural areas are the best way to are the best way to get in contact with the new technologies and to know the advantages of using computers and internet.

Internet Usage and Broadband Subscribers (2010) http://www.itu.int/ITU-D/icteye/Reporting/ShowReportFrame.aspx?ReportName=/WTI/InformationTechnologyPublic&ReportFormat=HTML4.0&RP_intYear=2010&RP_intLanguageID=1&RP_bitLiveData=False**)**

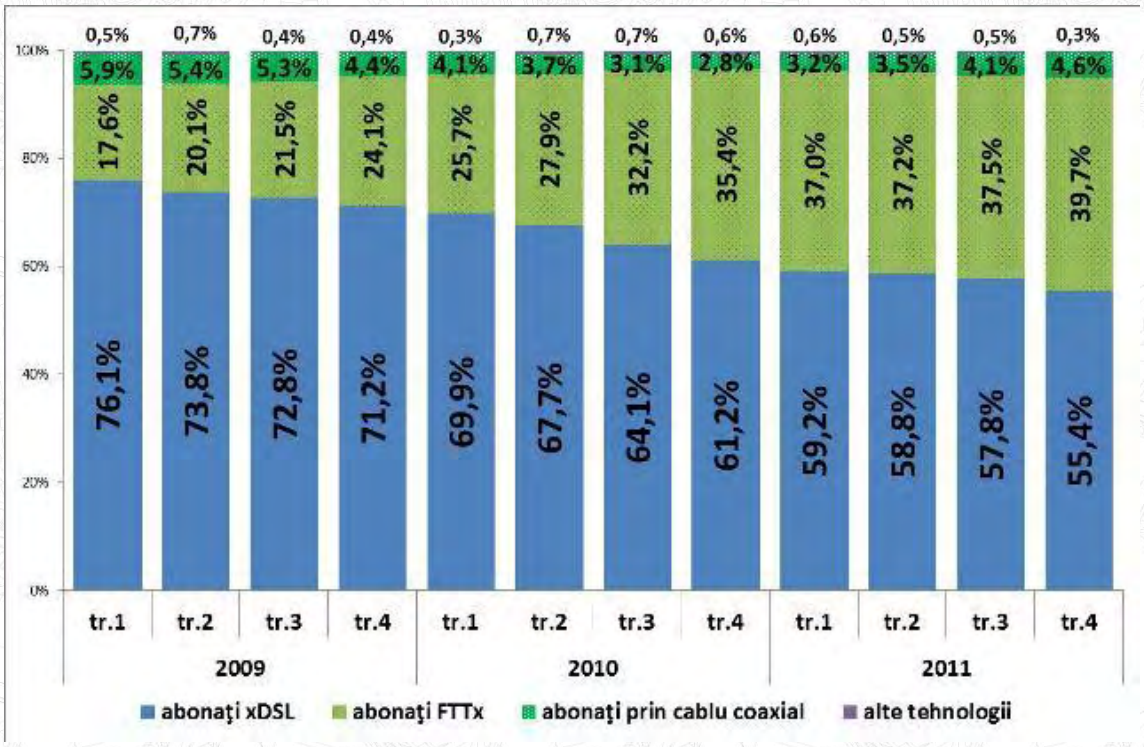
- Number of Users - 1,425,000
- Number of Broadband Subscribers - 269,100
- Penetration - 40%

Structure of Broadband Service Market, by Access Technology (2011)

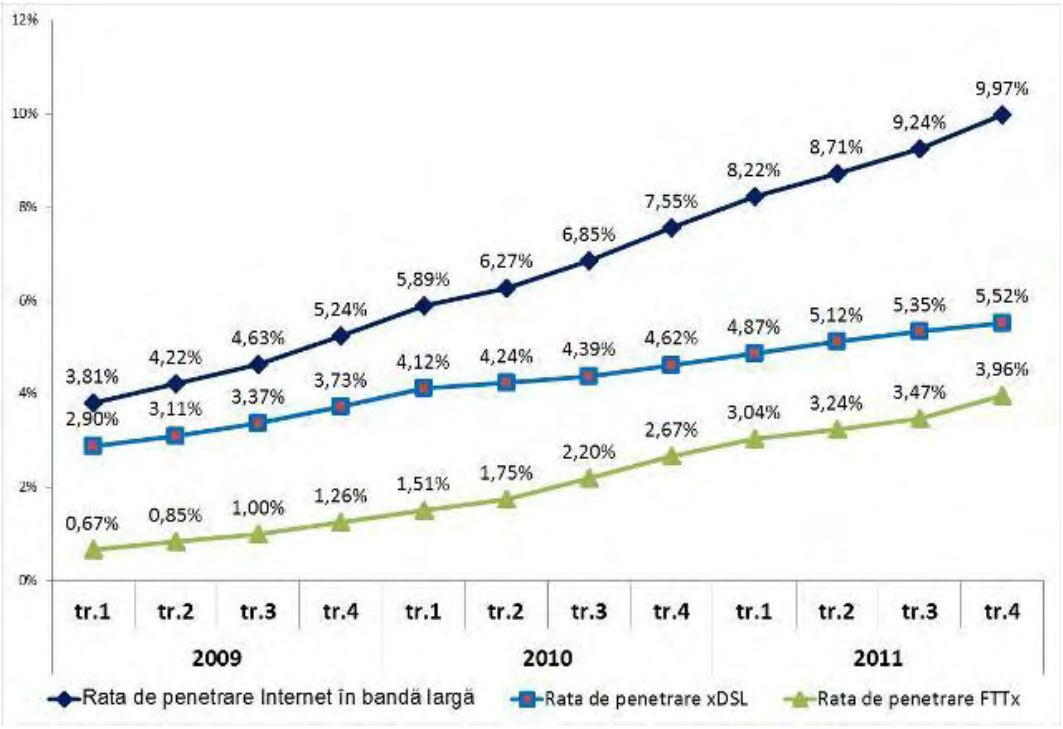
- xDSL - 55.4%
- Cable - 4.6%
- FTTx - 39.7%
- Wireless - 0.3%



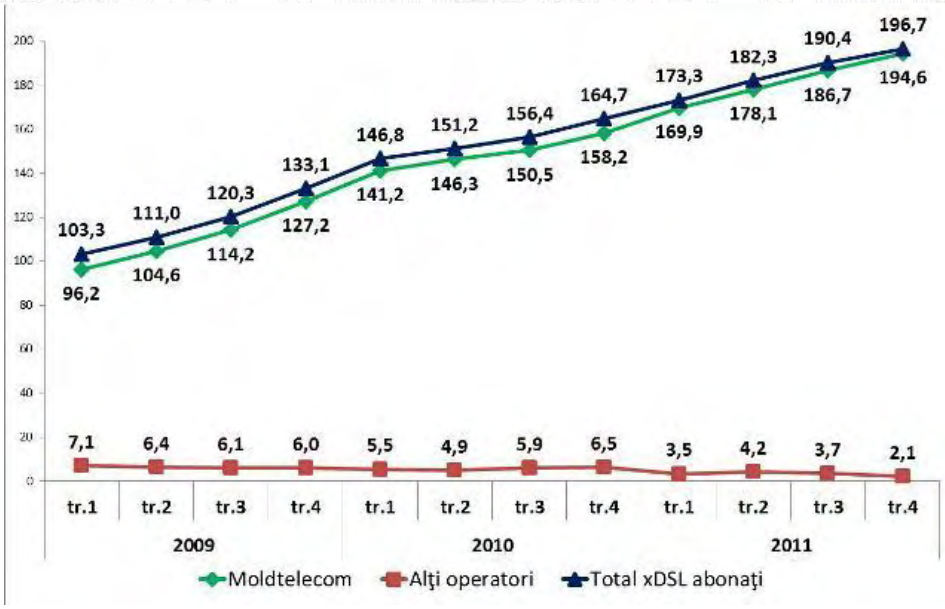
The evolution of broadband subscribers, depending on access technologies, (thousands)



Market structure of broadband according to the technology access



The evolution of fixed broadband penetration, including the main technologies



The evolution of broadband DSL subscribers (thousands)

In 2009 the share of gross value added of ICT in the country's GDP is 9.37%.

Telecentres network in MOLDOVA

In the Republic of Moldova in the 2000s there were several major problems as:

- Many members of the community (civil servants, health care providers) had a firm grasp of digital technology;
- Many computers were inefficient and often lack adequate capacity (Pentium I and II);
- Internet and its potential were often unknown and frequently not utilized.

During 2001-2006 Information Program of the Soros Foundation-Moldova had a spectacular development. With the financial support of Soros Foundation-Moldova ($ 761.672) and with the community contribution (approximately $ 395,000), in partnership with Local Public Administrations, education institutions, enterprises, and NGOs, 102 Access to Information and Training Community Centres were created. The potential of this network is huge: over 700 computers, 102 printers, 102 scanners, 102 telephone/fax machines, 102 copy machines, 82 web cameras, as well as internet connections were installed in these centres. Every centre has its own facilities which are rented through a leasing contract. Each centre provides internet, printers, scanners, email, training and consultation services, etc. for over 300 localities in Moldova.

Tele-Centres/Community Centres:

- The centres have all been equipped with modern computers (Celeron, Pentium IV)
- The centres have all been suitably arranged to provide connections for phones, internet, electricity, etc.
- Training and seminars were held with teachers, doctors, civil servants, etc., allowing these community members to develop digital literacy
- The centres offered training on using the internet to other members of the community
- High-skilled staff was trained and serves as the primary community resource at the centres

Other community centres have been created with the support of other donors (UNICEF, the US Embassy, the Norwegian Embassy, IREX, FISM, etc.) and enterprises (Modtelecom, Moldova Post). The following deficiencies currently exist with these centres:

- At the moment, they lack a clear vision and set of actions regarding how the information network and community in Moldova should be developed
- Poor communication between the donor community and economic agents, which has resulted in uneven distribution of equipment throughout Moldova, and sometimes duplication of resources within certain communities
- The on-going emigration faced by Moldova has also significantly affected the country, primarily resulting in a deterioration of human capital.

Currently the Tele-Centres' mission is to contribute to the transformation of Moldovan society in a knowledge-based economy. In Moldova, especially in rural regions, there is a very large digital divide. Many people do not use technology in their professional activities. Many employees working in public services, especially Local Public Administration at the first level, do not use information technology. For example, many accountants do not use programs such as Excel to calculate salaries and expenses because they are worried about the mistakes will be made as a result of using these programs. There are countless other examples of these cases in Local Public Administration. Because of this, many of these telecentres must focus on directing their services to those working in such professional positions. There is also a large informational generation gap. This process could possibly involve volunteers with experience and access to informational facilities (students and other youth within the community) to help train the older generations within the community, possibly including their own family members, such as parents and grandparents.

Best services provided by the network in MOLDOVA

The goal of the Telecentres in the Republic of Moldova is to assure access to information for population from rural areas by offering new informational services, based on advanced technologies and training in using these technologies, in order to create virtual communities and to utilize common shared informational resources.

The main objectives of AAITCC are:

- Promoting new concepts about information, education, and training in the area of information technologies and Internet in rural communities ;
- Promoting an understanding of computers, software and Internet ;
- Offering access to information through Internet ;
- Organizing seminars in the domain of information and using technology ;
- Facilitating public access to information and new forms of communication ;
- Offering services that correspond to the needs of the population (FAX, printing, photocopies, pictures etc.).

Alliance AITCCM is implementing numerous projects individually and in partnership with different state and non-profit institutions and media.

Main activities are as following:

- *Web-site creation*
- *Blog creation*
- *Filming, cutting and broadcasting documentary*
- *Radio emissions*
- *Consultancy, logistics support and expertise in local and regional project implementation*
- *Civic and electoral education*
- *Alliance is member organization of the Civic Coalition for Free and Fair Elections – "Coalition 2009", Telecentre Europe, Eurasia Telecentre Network, and EUTA.*

Other telecentres (mainly in rural areas) provide also following services:

- Free Internet access,
- Information Centre,
- Office services (e.g., word processing, printing, copying, sending and receiving fax, binding, laminating, scanning, CD burning, use of office ...),
- Usage of multimedia,

- IT courses – (Office, Web and Graphic design) ,
- Fundraising and community development,
- Foreign language courses,
- Life Skills courses ,
- Entrepreneurship ,
- Computer game,
- Agricultural Service and the Centre for Rural Development,
- Environmental Protection,
- Volunteer Centre,
- Hotel,
- Tourism Bureau,
- Centre for Civic Organizations,
- Internet provider,
- Place for exhibition.

Community centres in the early 2000s were an important element in community life, especially in rural areas. Centres have brought innovation and contributed to strengthen the information society of these communities. Once with the beneficiary changed and the structure of telecentres, adapting their activities to the final beneficiary needs and initiating new and new services.

Sustainability of telecentres in MOLDOVA

The long-term goal of Telecentres is to achieve digital inclusion. Through these centres, those capable of using information technology can train those who currently do not know how to use them. Telecentres can also offer many important communication services, such as Skype and yahoo messenger, helping to create a social network that includes even those people who have moved abroad.

These centres provide a valuable resource both for people learning computers for the first time, as well as those people who already use computers, but seek to improve their skills in order to find work, attain a better salary, or better perform their current job.

In order to achieve sustainability telecentres are implementing a range of activities and established a few objectives, as follows:

- They provide access to modern computers and equipment in cases when current equipment is old or outdated (could be a government project through e-Governance);

- They are collaborating with Local Public Administration. The centres are supported by the state - they wish to provide and in the future free services for the beneficiaries;
- Are looking to be involved as many as possible in the planning and implementation of community projects on both the local and national level; they are running many projects through which they try to assure their sustainability;
- They are offering diversified services as using educational software, personal blog management, videoconferencing, etc.;
- Continue to train new people, thus increasing the number of experienced members in the community; this members will find better jobs and will contribute to the development of the local community and to the growth of national economy;
- Are working to develop partnerships at the local, regional, national, and even international level; in this way they will have many projects to implement and will use the experience of others countries in order to create new services;
- They are promoting good practices and success stories from all the communities so that other telecentres to have the chance to take over the services that are developed in other communities;
- Specific beneficiaries of services are targeted (people with disabilities, civil servants, etc.). The specific needs of these beneficiaries are identified and met through a continuous process of surveillance and identification of beneficiaries
- Centres are opened for change and innovation in order to better provide their services, and this thing will lead in the future to a better sustainability of the Moldavian telecentre network.

Best success stories from telecentres

Best stories from ROMANIA

CORINA MUSET – SUCCES STORY, DIOSIG (e-centre) – BIHOR COUNTY

Corina Muset, 37-year-old is mother and wife, the model of the independent women that tried and succeed to transform her social status from women in the labour market without job, in an active and financially independent woman. This change started to be achieved by participating in a simple IT course held in one of the e-centres in Romania, more precisely – Diosig e-centre.

Corina Muset enrolled in this course as a person that is looking for a job, and, she attended and graduated this professional development program.

Corina Muset enrolled in this course as a person that is looking for a job, and, she attended and graduated this professional development program. Soon after receiving the graduation certificate delivered by the National Council for Adult Training that certifies the digital skills acquired, she signed a collaboration agreement with the Agency for investment in Agriculture in order to consult the documentation for farmer's subsidies on cultivated areas. The ICT training course proved to be appropriate for the activities developed by the Agency for investment in Agriculture because consultancy is consisting in submission of the online applications, online parcel identification and processing of electronic files. From a simple citizen our character became the colleague of the e-centre manager because her work as employee is conducted in the Diosig e-centre where with the ICT infrastructure equipment's she offers advice and consultancy to farmers.

For Corina the ICT course and the e-centre changed completely her life and today she says that it is very pleased by her findings and also by the fact that with her knowledge she can help the community members to manage their application for the land subsidies provided by the government.

ZARIN DUMITRANA - SUCCESS STORY, TIMIȘOARA (Lifelong Learning telecentre) – Timis County

Dumitrana Zarin, aged 28, is part of a large family composed of 11 siblings. Her father died several years ago and so their mother had to financially support the entire family. Currently, of the 11 children only one has a permanent job, which is why the family's material status is very difficult.

Despite difficulties, the 11 children have always been concerned to learn new things and always knew that computer skills may offer them an additional opportunity to find a job. This is why they wanted to attend a computer course. Given that most courses require payment, they have always postponed such courses due to financial issues. They were very happy when their mother told them that she saw an ad in the bus announcing that our centre offers free computer courses.

Dumitrana and her siblings appeared at the centre, where they were enrolled in the "Introduction to Computer Use" course. She said that this course was great and that it helped her lot to improve her computer skills. Following this course, she has an e-mail address which she uses frequently, especially to stay in touch with employers. Because she has no computer at home, she often comes to the telecentre to access the Internet and to navigate through the job offers from each job website.

She signed up also for another course conducted in the telecentre - an advanced course and after completing this course she find a job in a store like computer operator

DORI TIBERIU – SUCCES STORY, SANNICOLAU MARE (TELECENTRE), Timis County

Dori worked some time ago to a multinational private company in Sannicolau but the economic crisis come and he was dismissed. That time he had some ICT knowledge but there were very basics and he wanted to learn more and to improve his IT skills. This was the time that he met the staff of telecentre in his small village because in that period the telecentre was implementing a project through

which they were developing advanced ICT training courses for free for the community member. He followed this course for free and he was very excited by the things he learned so he stated "I liked, I helped trainers to teach the others students from the course, and then they offered me a job in telecentre. At the beginning I was assistant trainer. I was hired and had my first course with a group of old retired ladies. It was great and now I'm in touch with them. I've done in the organization and other courses (advocacy, organisation management).

I can say I'm happy, I changed my entire career".

In the present he wants to succeed and to work more in the NGO field, to use what he learned in the IT field in order to write projects and to get founds for his community. And we are sure he will do that because according to the telecentre manager he is very ambitious and serious in everything that he does.

DORIN COSMA: FIRST TIME ON THE NET: „I'M 67 AND COMING TO THE LIBRARY VIA HALL PASS!"

A passionate about the mysteries of Egypt and of the pyramids of the civilizations of Mexico, Mister Dorin Cosma (in the picture below), is the newest student from the Buni Neților Club (seniors club). His story begins in March during the „Get Online Week!" campaign which was on going at the „St. L. Roth" Municipal Library, CIP – Biblionet department.

One day I noticed a gentleman who was standing and looking through the window from the library entrance. I opened one of the doors and asked him a few questions, after which I remembered two stories: the one written by Andersen - „The Match Girl" and the one written by N. Calma - „The Red Shoes".

Why Andersen? The girl from the story wanted to warm up her hands at the fire, as this gentleman wanted to warm up his soul in the library, reading a book.

Why N. Calma? Neuti's mother had money just to buy one single red shoe, and this gentleman who came at the library had a disability – he was sitting in a wheelchair because he had an amputated leg.

I got very emotional and decided to help him with everything I knew, having a common passion as well: Egypt's civilization.

I instructed him to enter the library through the main entrance where there was a ramp for persons in wheelchairs and printed some information about pyramids. He came the next day too. We looked for the Pyramid of the Sun in Mexico. On the third day, he watched some movies about the Valley of the Nile. Today he asked for materials about the connection between planets and pyramids.

Day after day, step by step, I suggested to him to come and find out about computers so that he himself could look for information on the Internet. Reluctantly he admitted that he did not know how because he did not have a computer at home, and told me that „what I'm wearing is everything I have". Exactly as in the ancient Latin dictionary - „Omnia mecum, mecum porto".

Mister Cosma Dorin aged 48, became an orphan when he was just 12 years old, lived in Sibiu and then came to Medias. He does not receive any pension, he just benefits from the social welfare. There is no library where he lives. He came to the library because he likes to read, but he didn't know how to get past the door on his own...He needed help.

He was everyone's friend although „I'm my own family"! He likes reading and hopes to be helped in the future with other materials like the ones about Easter Island, Machu Pichu and planets' influence in the year 2012.

Today he touched a mouse for the very first time and managed alone to move the scroll up and down to read articles on the Internet. I suggested to him to attend the Internet course together with other persons and to learn how to look on his own, for information from every field he was passionate about.

The first class starts on April 18th. Until then, he needs a letter for the representatives of the Rehabilitation Centre through which the fact that during a certain amount of time, he attends these classes at the telecentre is being announced. „And now I have a hall pass for the library because I have to be at lunch at 12.00."

Let's wish him sincerely **...Welcome to the Medias Library - telecentre! A world where life becomes better!**

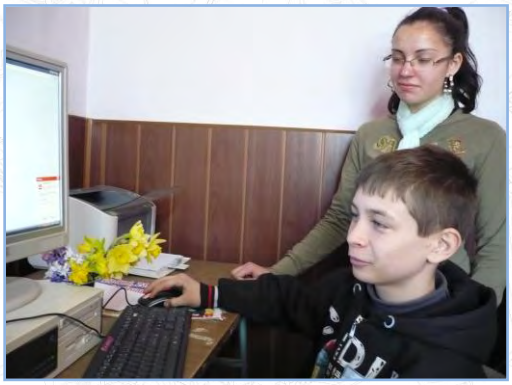
THE STORY OF DANI: INTERNET, A FRIEND AT NEED!

Once with the appearance of the Biblionet Project at Pausesti-Maglasi Library, the users of the public library were to discover that their friendship and the ones dear to them can make their existence easier and nicer with computers and internet.

Dani, a smart and cheerful child, had a happy childhood, despite the fact that he was living with his parents (coming from the Arges County, to Pausesti looking for a job, impossible to find it in their home village) and his sister, in a rented room, in Pausesti-Maglasi, and didn't have everything he wished for. The public library from Pausesti-Maglasi, that exist here, have become, for Dani, the place where he goes daily, where he feels good and has made friends.

Until one day, when, Scheuerman disease, with which Dani has been diagnosed, has shaken the existence of his entire family. The doctor has told his parents just a few about Dani's disease, but they wanted to know what they didn't have the strength and dearness to ask the doctor about that disease they had never

heard before. At that moment, the library (telecenter) has been their best friends. The internet that he had for free, gave those answers to their questions and worries helped them to find out what were the best method of diagnosing the disease, the most suitable treatments in Dani's case, natural treatments, and the addresses of some clinics where Dani could be treated by kinetotherapy, medical massage and physiotherapy. It helped them to know, even before any doctor told them, that Dani had to give up the physical education class (he needed a time-out from sports), and that he was not allowed to carry weights. By the help of ICT we have made appointments for Dani's consultations at clinics from Bucharest, Cluj and Targu Mures, we have made reservations at the transport agencies from Valcea for the roads that he had made by bus to the cities where he needed to go for investigations and treatment. ICT also helped him to order online and to buy a trawler suited to Dani's needs (he was not allowed to carry heavy loads), to buy a gypsum corset for Dani's prosthetic treatment and orthopedic shoes recommended for his condition.



Dani feels well … he managed to keep his condition under control ... He misses Internet and his friends from Pausesti-Maglasi…and to send them a thought, via mail, Dani has to travel now 8 km to one of his cousins who has Internet connection and who lives in another commune … there are neither telecenter, library nor Internet in his home village where he lives now and he has no friends, no socializing …

FROM USER TO VOLUNTEER IN THE „GET ONLINE WEEK" CAMPAIGN

The campaign **Get Online Week**! (Branded in Romania as "Hai pe Net!") has brought to the public library in Dumbrăviţa, Braşov county, from the first day (26.03.2012) and to the last day (01.04.2012), a total of **240** users. I must add that Dumbravita is a locality inhabited by **3532** people and our story is linked exactly to these two numbers.

The library is equipped with five computers and two laptops with Internet access, which facilitates free and unconditioned access to the Internet for our community.

In the fourth campaign day, the number of Romanians' votes did not satisfy the children who were present there. A competitive environment had formed in our library; all who accessed the vote page have consulted call centers in Europe as well hoping that our country would reach the top of the list (they wished for the same thing last year). One sixth grader, Anghel Ionuţ, who has a computer at home but comes to the library together with his friends to participate at diverse activities or just to be around them, hearing that I blame myself that we may not have promoted this campaign enough within the community, had an idea towards which I myself was reluctant to at first and I quote: „*Missis librarian, I was thinking to go to our friends', relatives', neighbors' homes who have a computer with Internet access and promote the campaign page*".

He also took the flier with the inscription „Hai pe Net!", the charts we used for the list of those who participated in the library and, with a contagious enthusiasm, he left in a hurry. At the door, he turned towards me and told me: „*You will see tomorrow, I have another idea, I won't tell you what it is, but I will get more people involved*". I smiled lovingly, kissed his forehead as a parent would do, wished him good luck and for him to be respectful with those who he would talk to as well as to thank them for their understanding. After closing the library, as soon as I got home, the phone already rang.

It was someone on behalf of a family who wanted me to confirm that Ionuţ was doing this with my consent. The kid really started working!

He also convinced another friend of his Olaianoş Gabriel, and they split the village in two. The first thing next day, they walked in the library, their eyes glittering with enthusiasm. They had 105 signatures – people that now were aware of the campaign, involved in the campaign together with first names, last names, and age and employment status. What was the idea he did not want to disclose when he left the library?

He thought that for persons who could not come to the library out of various reasons (work on the field, jobs outside the commune, health concerns) and who did not have computers with Internet access, to offer the following service: to take the laptop, show them how a computer works and in return, if they felt interested about knowing more, to come to the library!

After they came with the lists they sat in front of the computer and finished their mission as volunteers with the votes of those who mandated them. I also took a picture which I will attach to their story.

The result of Ionuţ' action: 54 persons came to the library afterwards and more than that became users of our library and learnt to use the Internet.

The little volunteers presented them the library's services, showed them how to scan and print a document and thus, in the most natural way, inter-generation teaching became a reality here, at Dumbrăviţa. Ionuţ Anghels' mother called to thank me for the way in which I managed to involve him actively in the community life and for the trust I've shown to the kid. I congratulated her for the way in which she raised him and I gained the agreement to co-opt him as a legitimate volunteer for the future actions of our library.

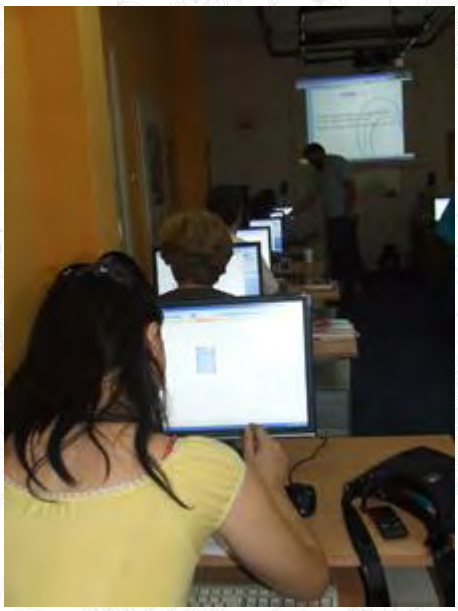
Best stories in the telecentre network in SERBIA

Success Story of Irena – a young woman that changed her life with the aid of IAN telecentre

I came across IAN Telecentre quite by chance, at a time of my life when I was unemployed and had completed my university education for an economist the year before. In order not to waste time by just sitting idly at home, I had decided to attend some of the free of charge courses that were offered at the IAN Telecentre. So I ended up enrolling for these courses with the sole condition that we are to have a perfect attendance record. The courses were well organized, structured, and the lecturers were polite and dedicated individuals who had the ability to easily transfer their knowledge on to others. I have also completed English language courses here.

Lectures were organised in such a way that the individuals were divided into various groups comprising of individuals of different age and gender. Here I had an amazing opportunity to see the value of accessing the information technology (IT) for females of different age, be it girls, women, and/ ladies in their late fifties.

Experiences vary. Younger generations of females see this as an opportunity to excel in the field of IT, thus showing that they are just as talented as the rest when it comes to technical fields, even though they would still (due to the pressure of the current stereotypes) rather, and more frequently, choose to venture into other professions). The aim of educating the female population, is to provide access to managerial positions and/ various career achievements, all for the sake of economic and female empowerment. After all, this is only one of the possibilities. For those individuals, who due that their age aren't able to use this as an opportunity for career creation, this access to IT will improve their overall quality of life. Let me explain this in different terms. I will now provide a case of a woman who attended the computer course at IAN Telecentre, at the same time as me. In her late fifties, her aim was to attend the computer courses in order to be able to learn how to use the internet so that she could speak, and see her daughter in Australia, via the use of Skype. Motives may differ, but the final outcome is the essentially the same. Namely make advancements, raise standards, and generally make one's life easier.



Now, those individuals who have not worked on the computer, this may seem extremely difficult. From personal experience I can attest to the fact, that there is a doze of fear present, and that it stems from the fact that there is poor knowledge of the computer as a machine.

Getting better introduced to the computer, and thus gaining a better handle of the situation, and by doing so decreasing the level of fear that we feel towards them, means that we will in turn broaden our horizons and increase our quality of life.

Before actually completing the entire IT education in IAN Telecentar I have found employment in a company dealing with computer hardware. I still haven't reached my target position, but I feel that I am striving and moving in the right direction towards it, as this is a process which takes time. But the first step has been taken, and I am ready for what comes next. To me this just proves the fact that we should have the courage and take that step towards the unknown, and the results are bound to follow. I am a good example of this. From a girl which hardly knew anything about the computer, to a girl which now works for an actual computer company.

Once I got employed I was asked whether or not I would have gotten this job had I not known how to use the computer. I remember answering „of course not, but I also wouldn't have gotten any other job either! “.

What one needs is willpower, hard work, patience, good teachers, and hopefully many organisations such as IAN in order to connect all of us with a modern way of living, making us happier, more content and successful females. It isn't that hard to do. I can safely state that each one of us can learn how to use the computer and reap the benefits.

Story of Maida

My name is Ms. Maida N., and I am currently employed at the Public transport company of Belgrade (GSP) as the legal officer. Here my responsibility is to obtain and record documentation regarding the company assets, whilst my everyday job is to capture data into the computer.

Life is wondrous, each day is an experience and we are uncertain what it will have in store for us. Faith had a plan for me. I used to be an owner of a party, event, planning company, and at this stage of my life the computer was of little use to me. Besides having a very limited knowledge of the Internet, I had mostly

used a couple of things which I had learned of by heart. In principle I had no need to know more about the world of IT – or so I thought at the time. I, myself, didn't know how to find the required information, so whenever I needed to do something regarding the commuter or the Internet I would just go and ask somebody to do it instead… My lack of knowledge in this field caused fear – I developed a mental block and was fearful of making a mistake and thus deleting something from the computer that I might actually need, or worse yet cause some program to stop working.

As I have already mentioned, faith was playing a trick on me. I got divorced and had to share my company offices with my now ex-husband, and was thus forced to automatically close the company. In a very short period of time I was left unemployed. I was an optimist from the very beginning. Other people helped me out and made my CV, and I learned how to go onto the Internet and find 'infostud' (online information site used for finding opportunities in various fields), but I must say that all of this was done highly repetitively and without any actual understanding of the subject at hand. Unfortunately, if you are doing things in this way, and are required to add any additional information or in any way need to deviate from what you have 'learned' you are faced with a problem. And so, besides the obvious problems, if you would like to find any better standing position, then it is essential that you are computer literate. Thus I had to miss some opportunities by never applying for the jobs, as this is not a field in which one can say that they know it, and then just learn it as they go along.

I was lucky enough to be selected and invited to, as a single parent, attend computer courses at IAN. I took this very seriously, and was present at all of the lectures, gained a better understanding of the subject matter and was able to ask the lecturers for help. This was extremely important as the lectures are linked onto one another, and the previously acquired knowledge. In order to determine and clarify what we have learned, each lesson was concluded by a practical exercise, and in my case they gave good results.

I have learned to freely work on the computer and use some programs such as Excel and Word, as well as to surf the Internet and find whatever I need on it. I now feel like I have just learned how to read and write.

I had immediately added the fact that I have completed computer courses to my CV, and that I now have an ECDL certificate. Within a month, i.e. on the 1st of September, I was employed.

Maybe I was lucky, but had I not had the necessary knowledge I would not have been able to even apply for this job, as the prerequisite for it was a good understanding of the computer.

Story of Natalija

My name is Natalija T. and I am residing in Belgrade, and am a graduated geographer. Recently I have become Serbia's first certified instructor for the World Health Organizations' (WHO's) therapeutic „Aviva “exercises. My biennial work has been directed at the prevention and management of hormonal dis balance of the body, in a completely natural way: health through physical activity. A month ago I have become the consultant of the renowned Belgrade clinic which was actually the first to have looked into the fantastic potential of this type of activity. However the path to its realization wasn't easy at all.

The preceding year of my life was marked by a very hard period. Despite being highly educated, creative, innovative, and all of the effort which I have placed into this idea (in this period I wrote three guides on the subject of physical exercises in healthcare), the much availed and expected realization of my business plans never came through. My self-confidence had seriously started to waver.

I arrived at the IAN Telecentre in the spring of 2011, completely unexpectedly, (I was sent through by the National employment service), but as far as I am concerned just at the right moment. Courses at the IAN Telecentre have marked, and with their joyous strands, threaded my spring. Nearly three months that I have spent studying various contents and skills that are available in the Telecentre, have become that small part of the mosaic which was missing in order for my business story to be completely encircled. A fresh, new, approach to valorisation of business ideas provided through the courses for a business administrator, and one for active participation and job selection, substantiated by new insights which occurred due to various computer skills were, besides some happy circumstances, one of the leading forces behind the positive events in my life. Upon suggestions made by my lecturers, shortly after the courses began, I sent out a chain letter regarding my vocation, to correct addresses and within a short time received some feedback. In this period IAN Telecentre represented a base of sorts, from which I was able to sort out some of the specific problems in my life, where I socialized, and recharged with positive energy.

With each passing day, modern technology and cutting edge applications together with expert and creative lecturers aroused our curiosity. Irrespective of whether we were complete beginners, for the first time sitting behind the computer, or as was the case with me, were individuals that had some knowledge and/ experience in the IT world, the outcome was the same. Young and old, from various backgrounds, life experiences and occupations, we all had an opportunity to be useful and add to the variety and completeness of the lectures, whilst helping one another thrive and concur various aspects of the coursework. I was especially glad to see that the resistance which was expressed by many individuals, including myself, towards the computer was decreasing on a daily basis, and to upon completion of every

module (Windows, Word, Excel, Internet, Access, and PowerPoint) be replaced by the interest and desire for further discoveries. I had enjoyed and eagerly awaited each lesson, as we socialized in a pleasant atmosphere, where we acquired new and upgraded existing knowledge and experience. Expert and helpful lecturers and all of the staff in the IAN Telecentre met us half way, wholeheartedly assisted in overcoming any difficulties that we might be facing, provided their help, assistance and genuine support. Along the way I discovered new content at the Telecentre, got acquainted with new courses and course material, of which there is quite enough, so that each person can master the individual skills that they lack.

Final exams had also represented a special experience for which we prepared jointly, which rather than making it unpleasant, turned the examinations into a challenge. Tests were demanding, but this additionally motivated me to give my best and release my own creativity, a fact which always fulfils me. International ECDL certificate which we obtained after completing the courses, as well as the other ones which we gained, provided a special weight and opened further opportunities for me, as if I had undergone further vocational training in the field of computer literacy in any European country. Once you fulfil the international standards you really feel as an important part of the international society. These certificates primarily provided reinforcement of my higher level of knowledge and skills, whilst in practice they proved to be highly valued, and in my case represented kind of a stepping stone which jumpstarted the course of my professional career.

Majority of the people know that in order to be happy and satisfied with your surroundings, and primarily with yourself, one does not need a lot. But still: little bit of effort, good will and support provided at the right time will provide inspiration, whilst your willingness and effort will lead you to accomplish your goals. Only a few things in life can be compared with a dose of satisfaction that we feel once we help a person fulfil their dreams!

Story of Milorad

Milorad R. is a refugee from Zadar, Croatia, who fled to Serbia with his family that decided to stay in this country. He graduated at the Faculty of Transport and Traffic Engineering and has been attending courses in IAN, Belgrade. Before starting the IT courses he was unemployed. Two months ago he got a job in a company “Network Group”, where one of the main requirements for the position was computer literacy, MS Office and Internet.

Today Milorad successfully performs daily duties at his job, using IT knowledge and skills he gained through this programme. Knowledge of Word and Excel have been of critical importance to him, but he also uses

some advanced programs, especially those needed for e-banking, for e-mail and Internet communication with colleagues.

Practical courses enabled through the courses helped Milorad to get the job, be good at it, and he also hopes that these skills will enable his quicker promotion.

Story of LJ**. L.**

LJ. L., woman aged 34, a refugee from BiH, is a participant in the professional empowerment program in NSHC. She found out about the program course from a friend from Belgrade who started the courses at IAN in Belgrade.

After seven months of education she found a very nice job. "*The main reason they've picked me from a group of candidates was my ECDL certificate and my knowledge of English (by coincidence, the company imports computer components*)", she said and added that her CV was also helpful, containing records on all the Life skills trainings that she attended. LJ.L also emphasises that she retrieved her self-confidence during several months of the education. "*My job interview was fantastic and it resulted in my being hired for the job vacancy*", she adds. "*In addition, I would like to mention that I was unable to pay for any of these courses even if I wanted to and I would like to express my gratefulness to people who designed this program and those who supported it... "*

Best services provided by the LATVIAN network

EMPLOYMENT TOOLKIT "KEY COMPETENCES FOR ALL"

SOCIETY „LEARNING PROJECTS", LIEPAJA

Course title: Employment toolkit "Key Competences for All"

Target group: Online Centre users

Duration: 40 hour programme

Reference: Kristine Cice

I applied for a computer training course, mostly because I wanted to get a better job. I did not have enough skills and knowledge about Microsoft office programmes. During the course I learned to use Excel formulas, previously unknown to me, and after the training I could really use them. Then I used all the knowledge acquired during the course – how to write proper CV and conduct myself at a job interview - to search for a job. And I got it quickly – thanks to the computer training courses.

By searching a job, I sent out CVs to numerous employers. I accepted the first job offer, although it was not my dream job. After a month I got an invitation to another job interview, went for it, and got the job. I really like this new job, thanks to the computer courses, where I was taught necessary skills. Everything I learned during the course, I can now use in my job and at home.

THANK YOU FOR THIS OPPORTUNITY!

"DIGITAL SKILLS FOR NGO LEADERS"

PREIĻI NGO CENTER

Course title: Digital skills for NGO leaders

Target group: NGO leaders

Duration: 24-hour programme

Reference: Anisija Putine, Chairman of the Board, *Sīļukalna zilais lakatiņš* Society

Computer and its usage skills are required to manage and be a member of a senior citizen society. We came across the problem first when registered our NGO in the Enterprise Register. I had to write the Articles of Association and other supporting documents by hand and then ask somebody to type it into a computer.

Then, in 2006 I was offered to take 12-hour basic computer skills course. Without the computer I soon forgot what was taught. In 2007 I got a second chance and offer to undergo the refresher training. Yet it also gave me nothing because I had no computer. In 2008 we took part in a project tender to raise funding for healthcare

consulting point. I completed the project application by hand and asked somebody to type it, since I could not do it myself. Then, in 2008 we learned that there is CIF funding available for procurement of hardware to our society. We were lucky to get the computer. In 2009 I wrote a project application for improvement of society house and purchase of furniture. I again had to write it by hand and find somebody to type it – there were complex tables to fill which I am not capable of doing myself. Three project applications were written with the help of others, so I decided to ask Ineta Liepniece, the director of Preiļi NGO Centre to find me computer courses. I was even ready to pay for them from my own pocket, but a call came in to inform that Preiļi NGO Centre in collaboration with LIKTA and Microsoft are offering free course 'Digital skills for NGO leaders'. The news came as a blessing to me. Now we learn how to type and insert tables in a document. And learning has become a lot easier for me when I have a computer at home to repeat the in-class activities. By the way, I typed the success story myself!

NGO CONNECTION DAY "INNOVATIVE TECHNOLOGIES FOR NGOS"

CIVIC ALLIANCE

Case study: Inta Simanska, political coordinator, Civic Alliance-Latvia

In May of 2010 LIKTA together with Microsoft Latvia organized the first NGO connection day "Innovative technologies for NGOs".

Connection day has been organized in partnership with Civic Alliance of Latvia. Civic Alliance - Latvia (CAL) is an umbrella NGO headquartered in Latvia and unites **more than 107 non-governmental organizations and private members**. Civic Alliance Latvia and its member organizations together represent **more than 30 000 socially active people in Latvia.**

Civic Alliance-Latvia was a partner for organizing a conference for NGO leaders on the use of ICT for everyday activities taking place in 2010 in Riga. CAL views the cooperation as very successful in twofold. First, it did not only provided NGOs with important information of ICT tools that eases their work but also deepened cooperation with CAL in field of advocacy by engaging LIKTA in evaluation of government's tasks.

GOW2012 IN LATVIA CASE STUDY

E-SKILLS FOR EMPLOYABILITY WORKSHOPS HELP TO GET A JOB

During the Get Online week 2012 in training centres all across Latvia workshops „E-skills for employability and development" took part. These workshops were based on Online Employment Toolkit, and the main aim of these workshops were to show people how to find a new

or a better job by searching jobs online, preparing CV and Cover letters and promoting themselves through social networking.

Mrs. Katerina Sokolova was one of the participants in these workshops during Get Online week 2012. „In training centre LatInSoft I acquired customer service profession, when my trainer offered me to take part in workshops „E-skills for employability". I was familiar with searching jobs online and preparing CV, but thanks to these Kc4all trainings I understood, that I have prepared my CV incorrectly and it doesn't give full information about my skills to employer. Meanwhile I had my field practice and company manager offered me to leave my CV in this company – for „just a case". As I had good practice using Employability toolkit, I have learned how to improve my CV and cover letter and I submitted it to company manager." Katerina told us.

And it played crucial role – she got the job.

Online Employment Toolkit is very useful tool, which provides opportunity to acquire e-skills which are necessary for everyone to get a job. And during Get Online week 2012 everyone who participated at Employability Toolkit workshops had opportunity to increase their knowledge and probably get a better job!

JELGAVA REGIONAL ADULT EDUCATION CENTRE

Case study: Jeļena Medvedeva, representative from SME, graduated course „E-skills for employability". In 2009 Jelena entered course „Digital skills for SME" in Jelgava Regional adult education centre and in 2010 she upgraded her skills and attended course „E-skills for employability", which was organized by LIKTA in frame of Microsoft Unlimited Potential programme.

Acquired knowledge's were essential in her work, as she is responsible for developing home page for enterprise she works for. Latest information about available e-services in Latvia which was presented during training helped Jelena to optimize her work.

Now she wants to apply to MS Excel and MS Word advanced courses to make her work more efficient.

DIGITAL SKILLS FOR NGO LEADERS

JELGAVA REGIONAL ADULT EDUCATION CENTRE

Course title: Digital skills for NGO leaders

Target group: leaders and members of non-governmental organisations

Duration: 24-hour programme

Reference: Sintija Harju, Chairman of the Board, P. Stradiņš College Support Foundation

Sintija Harju giving presentation on P. Stradiņš College Support Foundation at the end of the course

P. Stradiņš College Support Foundation was established only a year ago. Therefore, despite the inherent potential at present we are working in a narrow field of activities. I highly appreciate the course *Digital skills for NGO leaders*. This course gives opportunity for those who know less about ICT and those who already rely on it in their work to upgrade their knowledge and skills. Marketing is an essential part of young organisation's activities; we have got to make ourselves visible and a desired workplace. Presentation and web-design skills are very useful. These skills will soon be put to good use in creating foundation web-page.

DIGITAL SKILLS FOR NGO LEADERS

JĒKABPILS FURTHER EDUCATION AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY CENTRE

Course title: Digital skills for NGO leaders

Target group: NGO leaders

Duration: 24-hour programme

Reference: Anita Ruliete, member of *Ungurmuiža* Society of Krustpils

New and useful information is always a blessing. But mastering digital skills is a must in the Age of Technology. For unemployed like me it was indeed a blessing to find out that free computer courses are available nearby.

My notebook for the course contains entries of 'good things' coming from the experience of trainer Inga put down with a green marker. Another blessing was the possibility to learn more about Windows Vista operating system, the newest Microsoft Office 2007 software, presentation tools and skills or 'the good things', and get good tips on internet browsing.

My dearest achievement was that I passed the e-Citizen exam and got the certificate.

Thank you LIKTA, Microsoft Latvia, Jēkabpils FEITC and the trainer Inga Grīnberga.

"DIGITAL SKILLS FOR NGO LEADERS"

SOCIETY „LEARNING PROJECTS", LIEPĀJA

Course title: Digital skills for NGO leaders

Target group: NGO leaders

Duration: 24-hour programme

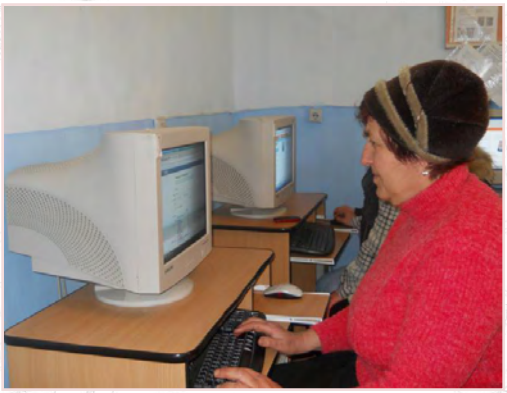
Reference: Līva Kupfere, Deputy Head of Red Cross Youth

Līva Kupfere, the Deputy Head of Red Cross Youth, completed the course *Digital skills for NGO leaders* to integrate ICT benefits in the organisational workflow, for example:

- use MS Outlook for more convenient, faster and effective communication;
- bring MS Excel to create wage tables and cash forecasts;
- Improve and speed up data dissemination through internet.

Līva says: "training was based on 'learn as you go' approach, making it easier to memorise and use at least some of the knowledge gained. We played role games with daily interactions from NGO sector. Those made me look at my own work from a different angle, spot the mistakes and patch them with solutions for I am responsible for contacts with all NGOs in Liepāja and the region, municipal authorities and people facing difficult situations. Training gave me an opportunity to express my emotions and discuss various subjects, and that helped me remember important lessons and skills. Training gave me new skills that I now use on daily basis. One thing is sure; you inspired me to keep pushing, find more improvements in my work and, of course, act upon those decisions! Keep up the good job that can help many more as it did help me, no doubt!"

The story of Maria Brasoveanu – a happy grandmother that discovered the benefits of being online



Maria Braşoveanu, an employee of the Health Care Centre in Crihana Veche, has been frequently using our library since 2004. Being invited by our telecentre to come and to an ICT training course, she showed interest in learning new things. The computer and internet help her feel happy and satisfied, particularly now that she became grandmother.

Her nephew David-Gabriel is already 10 months old. He lives far away and there is no way for her to be by his side every day. But she found a solution: the Internet and the social networks, more exactly **Facebook.** After she made her Facebook account and learned how to use it she said very impressed *„I can see my nephew growing up. This is how I felt the joy of many events of his life: the first tooth, the first step, the first word. As I work in the health care sector, sometimes I advise my daughter Rodica how to better take care of David-Gabriel so that he can grow up healthy".*

„I participated in the Open-Door Day organized at the library, event organised during the Get online week campaign I told everyone how useful the Internet is and urged them to open a Facebook account", she said.

Thus, the computer and Internet became indispensable for Maria Brasoveanu and her family.

The Internet makes you look at life with different eyes…

For some people the computer and the Internet mean an additional element of everyday life, while for other people these represent a chance, a hope and a way to feel part of society.

Ion, Elena and Mihai Bocancea from Moldova (Taraclia village, Causeni district) are three brothers aged 43, 38 and 37 respectively. Unfortunately, from early adolescence they have been suffering from progressive muscular dystrophy/ myopathy - a

genetic muscular disease in which the muscle fibres do not function for many reasons, resulting in muscular weakness. They couldn't continue their studies and have to be permanently supervised by their parents, who, therefore, gave up their jobs.

Nevertheless, they tried to find a source of courage and motivation to go on with their lives. For a couple of years they practiced weaving and helped their parents, bringing additional incomes, but after the local factory closed down their services were no longer requested.

In 2000 Ion, Elena and Mihai benefited from basic training in computer skills that a local IT teacher conducted for them at home. But it was possible for them to work at the computer only during the summer time when one of the school computers was given to them. A couple of years later the Association of Myopathy from Moldova donated a computer to the Bocancea family, which considerably changed their everyday life. Since then the computer has been the main "window" to the wider world. In 2004-2008 they provided secretarial services to local public institutions and had a monthly salary of 200 MDL (12 EUR). But informational technologies have intensively developed lately and the computer is no luxury anymore either for individuals or for administrative bodies. Their computer (128 MB of OM) no longer matches the current needs and their knowledge needs to be improved. Having a meagre monthly income of 190 EUR for 5 family members, it is almost impossible to cover the basic needs and especially the annual medical treatment, food and monthly payment for electricity and internet connection. Several years ago they were able to dress themselves and to do their hygiene, whereas now this is no longer possible and their already old mother "replaces" their physical capacities. But they still can use the computer and they pin many hopes on the future. Their only wish is to use the computer to generate additional income for their family and to feel useful.

In April 2012, the Alliance of Access to Information and Training Community Centres of Moldova "Infonet" donated to Bocancea family a second hand computer in a slightly better condition than their first one. Also, an English teacher and an ICT trainer from the telecentre were willing to come to train them at home. The additional training that they received in English and ICT developed their skills and in the present they are able to use the skills they gained and to earn some money in order to sustain themselves. They are doing translation for different members from their community and for small companies and also they are receiving translations via e-mail from other towns in their county. The telecentres staffs helps them to find clients in order to have as many translations as possible, and they are very happy and grateful for the things that telecentres made for them.

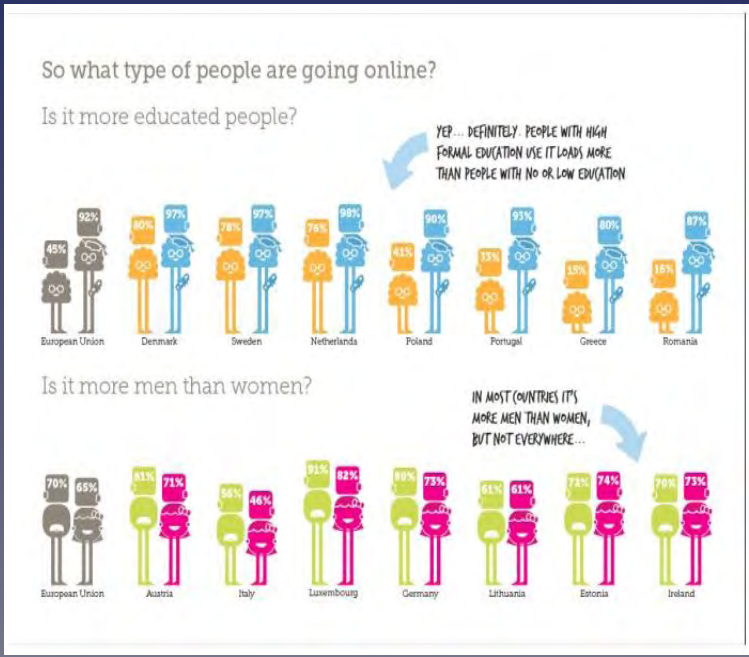
Proving services for all the community - WI FI in Razeni and services for community members

The telecentre in Razeni community was built in 2005. At this moment only few computers were available in a community of 7000 people. We started with different computer trainings for young people, volunteers, job seekers, pregnant women and other categories. Trainings consisted of basic knowledge's about computers, internet, web design, creating of blogs. Only in the first year, around 300 people get successful training, and we continued. Due to the fact that people were trained, the number of computers in the community increased to more than 1500 at the moment. Our telecentre is in the same time a youth centre. Students use computers to search information for classes. The quality of studies in Razeni High School increased. Now, students cannot imagine how to learn without information from internet.

Adults were happy to discover the possibilities of Skype video conference in order to see and communicate easily with relatives who work abroad. We unified many families in front of the computer.

We created a Wi-Fi network to cover the entire community. People can use mobile devices in order to connect to internet and search quickly information. We were one of the first organizations who created in rural area Wi-Fi connection. The community became part of global information system. Our motto for this is that: *"access to Internet connection has to be the same easy like electricity".*

We created in our telecentre, through a project an Access to Information Point. Now people can come to ask any information connected with legal system in Moldova, programs for starting business, or just simple information for job seeker. We try to offer all kind of practical information for people. We helped the local public administration to complete successfully applications for community projects and to improve the quality of life for citizens.



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