Primary end-users

(older persons)

PlatformUptake.eu

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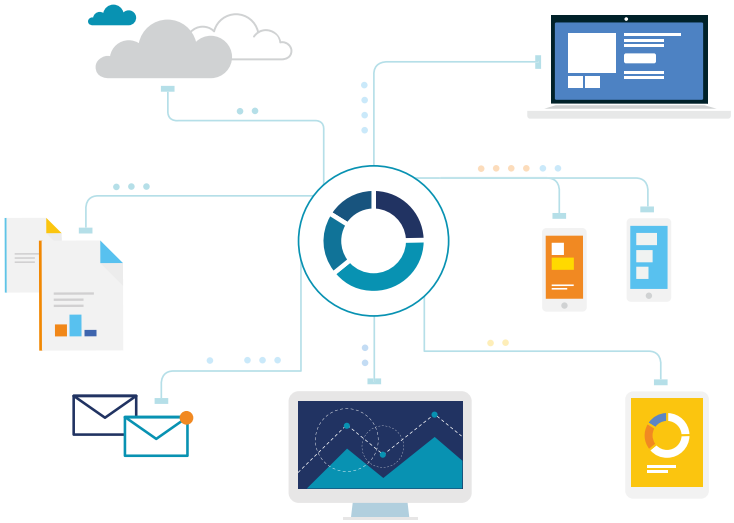
Introduction

Introduction

Scope

Ageing presents one of the greatest socio-economic challenges of our century. The EU has devoted a high level of resources to ICT projects in the field of Active and Healthy Ageing (AHA). As a result, a considerable number of open platforms for the development of innovative solutions in the field have been created. Unfortunately, their impact as well as potential and existing gaps have not been thoroughly analysed and assessed. Some of them are unknown to the wider public in Europe or have even stopped existing.

PlatformUptake.eu responds to this challenge by mapping open platforms in the AHA domain from across Europe and by carrying out an in-depth evaluation of the most representative cases (such as universAAL, FIWARE and AIOTES). The project assesses the hindrance and success factors for their evolution, to finally ensure the large-scale uptake of existing platforms and the development of new ones.



Introduction

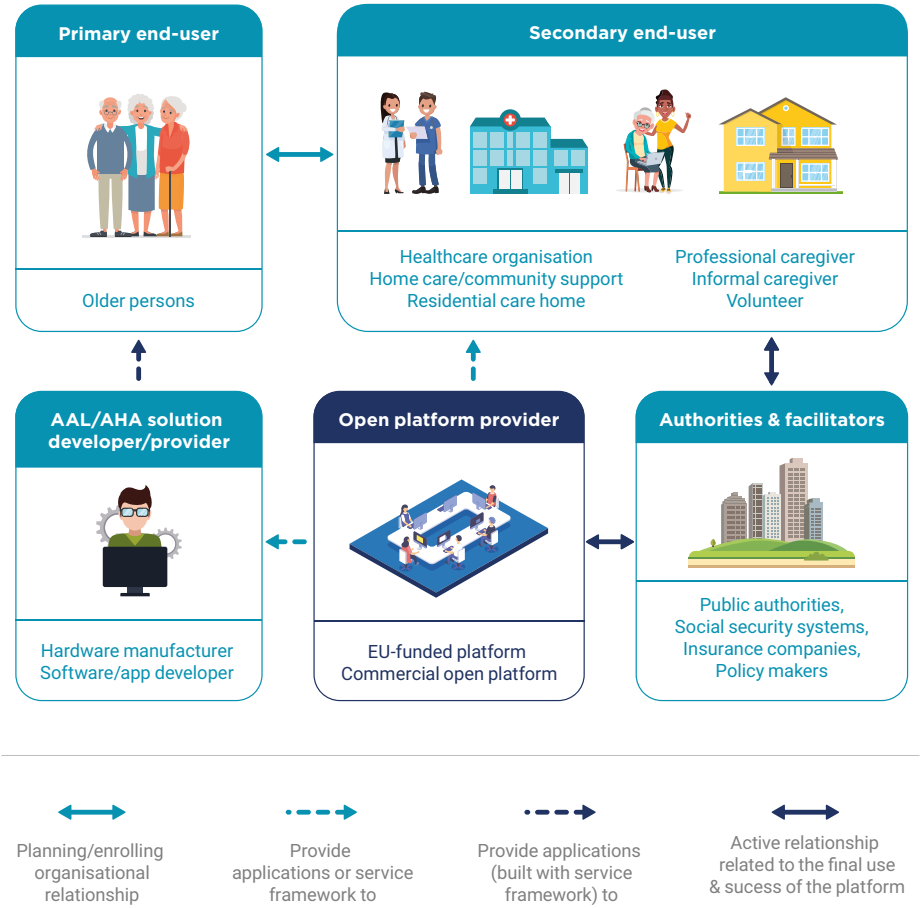
Objectives

The PlatformUptake.eu project is a Coordination and Support Action (CSA), which seeks to understand the whole ecosystem of open platforms in the field and contribute to the development of an open market for digital solutions for active and healthy ageing and ultimately promoting the uptake of open platforms.

To enhance the technical, contextual and business capabilities of existing and future platforms, and thus ultimately contribute to the broad upscale of their services, the project seeks to:

- **IDENTIFY** critical success factors of the development, deployment and spread of open platforms in the Active and Healthy Ageing domain, through a sophisticated tailor-made monitoring methodology.
- **DEVELOP** monitoring and self-evaluation tools to support platform providers and users to self-assess their success, uptake, capability gaps and evolution potentials through smart assessment and visualisation tools.
- **ANALYSE** existing platforms based on the created methodology, by assessing the projects and initiatives hosted by them, their further evolution, uptake, sustainability and socioeconomic benefits.
- **INVOLVE** end-user communities and related stakeholders to initiate a knowledge exchange cycle for collecting insights on best practices and challenges of platforms' uptake, evolution and costs, etc.
- **LEVERAGE** the platform uptake by their user communities as well as their continuous improvement and expansion, by elaborating and showcasing best-practice models and evaluation guidelines.
- **DISSEMINATE** the acquired knowledge to end-users for increasing their uptake of existing platforms, and promote best practice models and identified benefits to foster future developments.

Introduction



This infographic provides an overview of the open platforms' ecosystem in the Active and Healthy Ageing (AHA) and Ambient Assisted Living (AAL) domains, including the platforms' main end-user groups and the interactions between them. These represent the basis for the definition of the recommendations for open platform providers concerning **Primary end-users**.

Recommendations

Easy to use

Much has been published about the potential of digital technology for the enhancement of the quality of life and the independence of older people. However, based on the analysis which was carried out in PlatformUptake.eu it was established that the research still offers mixed findings regarding the benefits of ICTs for active and healthy ageing. For example, usability issues of digital technology developed as a standalone or on the top of open platforms, still exists and older people are sometimes overlooked or not sufficiently involved in the design of digital technology or even not considered as active users of technology systems. There are also misperceptions that older people tend to be hesitant towards and rather reluctant to learn how to use digital technology. Therefore, to support them in enhancing their digital literacy, one needs to provide them with more training or instructional support.

- The open platform should be intuitive in its use, with a clear and simple architecture. Hence, it will allow Primary end-users to easily locate content and navigate it without having to question themselves.
- The platform should have an interface design with navigation through easily identifiable icons and low hierarchical complexity.
- Older people with disabilities can equally perceive, understand, navigate, and interact with the platform and contribute equally without barriers.
- Older people can perform a task without inconvenience or delay and in a reasonable number of steps and without being cognitively exhausted from the user experience.
- The platform should allow for older people to easily find information that they need, thus conveying to them the sense of power in its use.

Recommendations

Reaching user goals, needs and preferences

Digital technology helps Primary end-users remain independent and active. Older people become increasingly accustomed to contextualized and relevant interactions. However, a lack of support networks can hinder the uptake of digital solutions including open platforms' services. At the same time many services are becoming digital or web-based. Additionally, the declining functional abilities of older people combined with devices that do not meet their needs or expectations can reduce the use of open platforms' services and digital technology in general and strengthen the feeling of being out-of-touch.

- Gain a deeper understanding of the older people's context, emotional needs and drivers.
- Apply design thinking by moving from the concept of designing one solution for many to designing many experiences for one.
- Apply experimental piloting in the process of technology development to observe the behavior of older people, their interaction with the platform's services and draw insights from their consumption experience.
- Develop solutions and platform services that help older people deal with their problems according to their own needs and lifestyle.
- Develop solutions and platform services that promote autonomy. Older people need to be the protagonist of their own learning.
- The applied solutions and platform services need to offer older people the possibility of expanding communication channels, so they can be in contact with their relatives, friends and carriers.

Recommendations

Safety and Trustability

Safety correlates with the duration of technology's use and often determines whether a solution will be used for a long time or not. It refers to the user's trust in the solutions or platform's service provided. Regarding the number of digital solutions or services for active and healthy ageing available, older people are increasingly concerned with finding and using the safest ones. Additionally, the importance of solutions' trustability becomes even more important in the AHA and AAL domains as most of the older people use digital solutions in this field to achieve more independence, high quality and inclusive living.

- Raise awareness among older people about the privacy of open platform's system and solutions built upon it.
- Inform older people about the collection and reasons behind the processing of their personal data.
- Establish appropriate security measures against unlawful or unauthorized processing of personal data.
- Work together with public sector to ensure universal access to internet, availability of equipment in settings such as care homes, and personalized support to give confidence to older people in developing digital skills.

Recommendations

Quality of Life

Many older people have experienced challenges in their daily life, particularly during the Covid-19 pandemic. However, more older people are increasingly using digital solutions, and as a result, many of them have experienced a better quality of life.

Many times the most important factors are not the new technology solutions themselves, but how companies and institutions shape them, and adopt them to seniors' preferences and needs. It needs to be done in a way that seniors enjoy using them more. For this, it is relevant to identify the most important areas for seniors that reflect the concept of having a good quality of life. Some areas, such as home life, wellbeing, social life and entertainment need to be considered.

- Increase the use of technology such as video calls or 3D calling for better communication between the older people and their relatives, friends and carriers.
- Enable easy consumption for older people by applying technologies such as AI for smart refrigerators or home assistance speakers.
- Offer robots or robot functions to tackle the feeling of loneliness but also help older people cover daily tasks such as cleaning or cooking.
- Increase mobility connected with confidence of being independent and feeling safe.
- Develop and offer easy to wear, discrete and easy to maintain wearables to gather and analyze health status, and enable older people to act on collected medical data.
- Offer technology such as VR or AR to empower older people with new skills and knowledge.

Recommendations

Autonomy

As older people are expected to use digital technology to become independent and to self-manage their health, an increasing number of them are embracing digital lives. However, they face unique challenges due to age-related changes. These unique barriers make it difficult for them to keep up with rapid technological advances. To tackle these challenges and to help older people use digital technology autonomously a quality learning environment for older people for a more productive and enjoyable life with digital technology is required.

- Offer a value-added and age-appropriate training to older people to enhance their digital literacy and gain marketing advantage among prospective customers.
- Develop education programs to help older people establish self-confidence, elicit positive attitudes and facilitate positive social interactions.
- Implement in the design of the platform's services facilitators of technology acceptance among older people.
- Prioritize cybersecurity combined with transfer of knowledge to older people regarding data privacy and how to identify phishing and malware scams.
- Implement plain language instead of technical jargon to explain the use and benefits of the solutions or platform's services.
- Enable older adults' health self-management through self-report and visualization.
- Implement user-centered design and engagement of older people throughout the product lifecycle with the aim to create a platform or digital solution that meet their needs, as well as integrate behavior change techniques and personal analytics.

Recommendations

Interest and enjoyment

Despite the large amount of digital technology development in the AHA and AAL domains, the lack of digital inclusion of older people is hindering the deployment of solutions and open platform's service in the field. Digital inclusion requires among others factors such connectivity, financial accessibility and skills. To enhance the digital skills of older people, however, one must increase their overall media literacy. Moreover, their creativity and content-creation need to be encouraged, by taking into account what animate older persons and what arouses their interest.

- Design open platform's services and a digital technology that creates "wow" moments for older people. The more they experience the incredible things technology enables them to do, the stronger their engagement with it will be.
- Different older people have different needs. Prioritize the needs and requirements of the older people during the design phase of your platform's services or digital solutions.
- Provide the opportunity for older people to test and practice the services of your platform or solution. Hence, you can make them feel comfortable using your technology independently and share their experience with their friends and relatives.
- Include the elements of portability and communication in your platform's services to facilitate positive reactions.
- Consider age-related (e.g. cognitive decline) as well as technology-related (e.g., interface usability) challenges in the design of your platform's services. Mobile devices such as tablets with a touch-based interface are less complex, compared to the same terminal using a standard keyboard and mouse.
- Open platform's services and digital technology for active and healthy ageing as a whole should not replace social interaction, but rather facilitate new social and community-building opportunities for older people.

Recommendations

€ Costs

Against the background of growing costs of independent and assisted living and the socio-economic diversity of the EU, long term care becomes less affordable for many middle-income older people across Europe. Additionally, they are faced with long waiting times for care at home resulted from a home care workforce shortage. To tackle these challenges providers of open platforms need to develop services that can bring down costs, improve care quality and establish a more sustainable business model for older people care.

- Consider the price-value of your platforms' services and offer older people numerous benefits compared to the costs that they have to incur (i.e. information exchange, social interaction, sharing, etc.)
- Keep the costs for maintaining, training and education of older people in the use of your technology low.
- Facilitate enjoyment as an entertainment factor of your platform's services to support the repurchase intention of older people.
- Foster joint decision making with other companies' directors to enhance local leadership and improve the provision of integrated care for older people, and consequently reduce care delivery costs.

CONTACT US!

and learn about open platforms in the AHA domain, upscale your digital solutions for older people and improve the quality of care provision to your patients and citizens.

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