

Maaailma Tutuksi ry  Get to Know the World Assoc.

Towards an inclusive European Information Society: Enabling interconnections between digital natives and digital immigrants

The realization of an inclusive European information society is in the hands of both young and older generations of European citizens. In addition, the global process of population ageing does not only demand acknowledging the needs of senior citizens, but also promoting their participation to all processes of the everyday life.

In this project the inclusive and emancipatory potential of ICT is investigated. Being embedded in all activities of the everyday life, it is natural to study young and older generations of European citizens from the conceptual perspective of "digital natives" and "digital immigrants"¹. Digital natives are the "*native speakers of the digital language of computers, videogames and the Internet*", while digital immigrants are "*those who were born not into the digital world, but have, at some later point of their lives, become fascinated by and adopted many of most aspects of ICT*".

As digital natives and digital immigrants think, learn, work and socialize differently, it is important to acknowledge the needs, experiences and attitudes towards ICT in both groups in the design, implementation, marketing and policy-related discussions on ICT. It is not sufficient to recognize the existence of both groups: it is also essential to build interconnections between them at all levels (family, work and social life) in order to encourage cross-cultural dialogue and practices of these two groups who can and should support each other in a cooperative, productive and enjoyable manner.

The project, to be implemented in the context of the EU framework '*Europe for Citizens*', is initiated by the NGO Maaailma Tutuksi ry – Get to Know the World Assoc. (Finland). The goal is to contribute to both theoretical and practical knowledge on the characteristics and lifestyle of these groups, as well as opportunities and obstacles that they face in the everyday life. Being part of the Mare Balticum – Mare Nostrum programme, the association is inviting partners (institutions, associations, companies) from the two regions to support the project in its main phases:

1. **Conceptual work:** definition and characteristics of digital natives and digital immigrants at national level; identification of main needs, obstacles and potential of the two groups in family, work and social life.
2. **Data collection:** gathering knowledge on digital natives and digital immigrants (through surveys, interviews and workshops)
3. **Multimedia production:** one or two stories (successful practices, failures) are written on the basis of the main themes emerged in the previous phase. Such stories are both described in text and realized as short documentary (~ 3 to 5 minutes). The most significant sentences/images are used for the production of promotional material, such as postcards, posters and calendars.
4. **Dissemination of the results:** the results of the project are presented in workshops/seminar at national level and at European level in a final conference. In addition, all material is made available on the Web (www.forum-fennicum.net)

If interested in participating to the project, please contact Special Adviser giuseppe.lugano@gmail.com or Executive Director Maaailma Tutuksi ry, Mr Paul Lwoff, at edu@maailmatutuksi.fi

¹ Prensky, M. (2001) Digital natives, digital immigrants. *On the horizon*, vol.9, n.5, October 2001.