

eInclusion - Theoretical & Policy Overview

A contribution from the eInclusion@EU project

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Research background – the eInclusion@EU project in a nutshell

- FP6 Coordination Action (01/04 – 06/06)
- Enabling an informed stake holder dialogue in the field of eInclusion/eAccessibility (stake holder workshops on selected issues)
- Informing this dialog through collating available knowledge (literature, national correspondents)
- Evidence-based policy proposals (thematic policy roadmaps)



eInclusion – what is at stake ?

- **Maturing of the Information Society (IS):**
 - networked living and working environments
 - spreading of ICT devices/applications
 - increasing engagement in online activities
- **Political will to achieve a socially cohesive IS:**
 - Lisbon
 - i2010
 - etc.



eInclusion – the need for a coordinated policy response

- **Some aspects of inclusive IS already addressed**
 - EU IS policy (e.g. FP6/IST under “eInclusion”)
 - EU standards policy (e.g. eAccessibility)
 - etc.
- **Need for a coordinated effort**
 - increase impact through synergies
 - focusing and priority setting
 - potential conflicts (e.g. market vs. regulatory approach)
 - prospective view (new risks emerging from tech. progress)



eInclusion – what are the issues ?

- **Facing risks – combating digital exclusion:**
 - existing risk of eExclusion (e.g. access to IS application)
 - new forms of exclusion through ICT (e.g. service access)
- **Exploiting opportunities for social inclusion**
 - practical opportunities (e.g. access to employment)
 - empowering at-risk individuals (e.g. networking)
 - support communities at-risk of exclusion (e.g. social capital)
- **Inclusive ICT development/deployment processes**
 - shaping ICT innovations (e.g. ICT standardisation)
 - inclusive deployment (e.g. services of public interest)



eInclusion – from theory to practice (i)

- **Combating eExclusion – removal of barriers:**

- awareness and motivation among late adopters
- facilitating availability and affordability
- promoting digital literacy
- promoting eAccessibility
- promoting eService usability

- **Combating eExclusion – avoiding new risks:**

- alternative modes of service access for “non-liners”
- social isolation due to increased virtualisation
- avoiding “second order” divide



eInclusion – from theory to practice (ii)

- **Opportunities – practical opportunities**

- better opportunities for at-risk groups in employment
- distance bridging
- content and services relevant to at-risk groups

- **Opportunities – empowerment of at-risk individuals**

- empowering at-risk groups through ICT-based networking
- exploitation of ICTs by NGOs working with at-risk groups

- **Opportunities – addressing at-risk communities**

- ICT for building-up of social capital in deprived areas
- ICT infrastructures for underserved regions



eInclusion – from theory to practice (iii)

- **Inclusive processes in ICT development**
 - awareness and skills of ICT developers
 - users dialogue in standardisation processes
- **Inclusive processes in ICT deployment**
 - guidance re non desired impacts of ICT deployment in areas of public interest
 - monitoring progress and identifying gaps in inclusive ICT deployment



**Thanks a lot for your
attention !**



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