

L. SPIRU, I. TURCU, C. GHITA. *Assistive Technology (AT) development: A capital response to population aging. The European model. Gerontechnology 2010;9(2):333;*

doi:10.4017/gt.2010.09.02.202.00. **Purpose** The International Plan of Action on Ageing¹ includes the development of supportive environments for the elderly as a priority direction. One of the most important actions in this respect is the development of Assistive Technology (AT). Our presentation deals with this notion and its implication in the provision of health care, support and protection for older persons. **Method** An overview of the main notions related to AT and its specific ontologies is performed, dealing with the AT concept, the actually affordable technologies, products and services, the main AT's sore topics, profiling elderly users and the main obstacles that prevent elderly people from benefiting from AT and information society achievements. The list of the most important European projects in the field and their estimated impact are commented on as gauges of the European model of AT development. The tailoring of assistive technology devices based on the profile of the end-user, a process often impeded by the extreme variability of physical and/or cognitive disabilities in the elderly, as well as their needs, which are consecutively extremely variable, is discussed. **Results & Discussion** We present our partnership outcomes in the SHARE-it and Key4Care, EU's FP6 IST Projects, examples of the struggle with the above, challenging matters. Our presentation also points out some main topics such as the remarkable heterogeneity of functional profiles in elderly or disabled people, often combining cognitive and physical impairments, the improvement of the tools of their evaluation and monitoring, the definition of their needs and impairment profiles, useful for the elaboration of innovative forms of agent-based artifacts that will enhance the autonomy of the target user group in their daily life. The development of AT and Aml is one of the most suitable answers to global aging and its medical and economical challenges. AT and Aml impact lies in the creation of smart homes which will help their inhabitants with their Activities of Daily Living. They could enable cognitive and/or motor impaired people, either at home but also in hospitals and even outdoors, to be self-dependent enough to autonomously live in the community, to stay at home as long as possible with a maximum safety and comfort, and to delay institutionalization.

References

1. United Nations. Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing; 2002; www.un.org/esa/socdev/ageing/madrid_intlplanaction.html; retrieved January 2010

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