







## e practice The Knowledge Volunteers

### The Knowledge Volunteers

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Acronym of the case: TKV

Web address of the case: <http://www.tkv.mondodigitale.org/>

case:

Country of the case: Czech Republic , Greece , Italy , Romania , Spain

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[ICT](#) | [volunteering](#) | [Ageing](#)



fmd's picture

#### Type of initiative



Project or service

#### ▼ Case Abstract

"The knowledge volunteers" (TKV) project aims to promote: - the acquisition of **digital competences** among **elders** at risk of exclusion - **intergenerational relations** that also benefit the education of young people In addition, the voluntary participation, of youth and elders, provides a learning opportunity for both generations to improve their self-esteem and relations, while reducing the risk of social isolation for elders in particular. TKV project conducts dedicated **pilot training courses** in the European countries with minor involvement of elders in voluntary activities: Italy, Spain, Greece, Czech Republic and Romania. The

beneficiaries are schools and elderly centres and also young volunteers, teachers, elderly volunteers; local citizens at large.

## ▼ Description of the case

Domain	eInclusion
Topic	Digital literacy and competences   ICT and Aging   ICT and community development
Sector	Education, Science and Research   Local/Regional Community Development
Start date - End date	September 2011 (Ongoing)
Target Users	Older people (60+)   People with no or poor digital literacy   Young people at risk of marginalisation   Other
Target Users Description	In the TKV project, Italy, Spain, Romania, Greece and Czech Republic experiment with a continuous learning programme for adults: elders, students/tutors, teachers and schools are involved in the project's digital literacy training courses.
Scope	National   Pan-European
Status	Implementation
Language(s)	Czech   English   Greek   Italian   Romanian   Spanish

## Policy Context and Legal Framework

The Knowledge Volunteers project is funded the European Commission in the framework of the Lifelong Learning Programme Grundtvig.

The main aims of The Knowledge Volunteers Project adhere perfectly to the principles of adult education, as do the project's objectives: promoting digital competence amongst elders at risk of exclusion, through intergenerational exchange and relations with young people, and encouraging the active participation of elders in society through voluntary activities, thus enhancing self-esteem, identity and social relations.

The field of adult learning has specific characteristics that the "The Knowledge Volunteers" project has taken into consideration:

- Adults do not enjoy being fed vast amounts of theory with little or no practice. The Project promotes a "hands-on" learning-by-doing approach. Learning is much more effective if adults can take an active role in this process.
- Adults learn more in informal environments. The Project creates an informal environment composed of young volunteers, teacher coordinators, elderly volunteers, etc.
- Adults require a variety of teaching methods. The use of different approaches is important to pass knowledge on to adults. The Project implements an intergenerational teaching model with young volunteers to help the elderly learn how to use new technologies. At the same time, after acquiring the new skills, the elderly may volunteer to teach other elders, fostering the creation of a peer-to-peer process whereby volunteers develop other volunteers.

## ▼ Project Size and Implementation

Type of initiative	Training and education
Overall Implementation approach	Partnerships between administration and/or private sector and/or non-profit sector
Technology choice	Standards-based technology   Mainly (or only) open standards   Open source software
Funding source	Public funding EU

## Implementation and Management Approach

During the project there are 4 level courses (The ABC of ICT, Social Networking, E- Governmente and Easy technologies) and 4 pilot/testing programmes in each country. Each course lasts about 20/30 hours and is organized during the school year, since the didactical model comprises, as key factor, the presence of young students as tutors for elders (in a student/elder ratio of 1 to 1 or 2 to 1), under the active supervision of an adult teacher. Elders are enrolled in the courses by the local network of each partner.

## ▼ Impact, innovation and results

### Impact

The project develops and brings to EU level the didactical/organizational ICT learning methodology for elders defined and successfully applied at local level by the Italian partner, [Fondazione Mondo Digitale](#), integrating it with other partners' experiences. Moreover, this methodology is enriched with the application of the peer-to-peer course approach carried out by older experienced volunteers to other new older students. The didactical inter-generational approach is based on the active role of young students, who act as individual teachers or tutors of elders. A special didactical toolkit has been set up and is free downloadable [here](#).

## Track record of sharing

Thanks to the development of the project website [www.tkv.mondodigitale.org](http://www.tkv.mondodigitale.org) and a virtual community-building environment including a public interactive area and a helpdesk, partners will engage in the development of a network [www.phyrtual.org](http://www.phyrtual.org), of organisations, schools, universities, elders centers, elders, youths and teachers interested in participating to local community development through ICT.

Furthermore information about the project will be available at European level as well as all training materials developed during the project, promoting and ensuring the replication of the initiative in different contexts:

- guidelines for teachers, tutors and trainee involved in the courses.
- handbook on the 4 levels part of the training Curriculum: [ABC of ICT](#), [Social networking](#), [E-government](#) and [Easy technology](#).

To promote the project experience transfer and replication, a comprehensive evaluation report of the pilot trainings have been also produced and published by Fondazione Mondo Digitale and the University of Edinburgh. The document is available to download free of charge and constitute a tool for organisations and schools to develop and implement similar actions based on the project results.

Partners will also engage in several project dissemination activities, participating in conferences and organisation events at local and national levels to spread the project results and increase the number of people involved in its activities.

### Lessons learnt

The Knowledge Volunteers project's European and international dimension can continue to grow on the basis of further knowledge codification and the process of knowledge-based community building strategy developed during the project and stimulated through the Phyrtual social innovation environment (phyrtual.org). The project demonstrated that a community building environment is a key aspect in order to break the time and space barriers in the continuous development of social innovation movements.

If applied to a volunteer-based inter-generational model of intervention, the peer-to-peer movement that it can generate, is able to promote an active involvement as well as an healthy ageing.

This tool can support the project long-term perspective, allowing it to make a significant contribution to a global challenge, continue facilitating the involvement and motivation of stakeholders beyond the project. In the case of The Knowledge Volunteer project ( <http://phyrtual.org/it/project/the-knowledge-volunteers-network> ) this happened targeting knowledge codification, social networking and volunteerism. Thanks to the community environment, youths, students and schools can continue playing a central role in the experience, integrating the project results into their educational activities, *internalizing* it as an instrument for 21<sup>st</sup> century education and community involvement, fostering the creation of a process whereby volunteers develop other volunteers. The same capitalization process applies to elderly centres, voluntary associations, public bodies, companies and policy makers that legitimately perceive and adopt the project activities though participating in the knowledge bases environment as part of their roles in the challenge of active and healthy ageing in Europe.