



# eSangathan Project

## First Year of Project Operations

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## GENERAL OVERVIEW OF ESANGATHAN

The main objective of the eSangathan project is to study how innovative approaches based on an intensive use of ICT, particularly collaborative working environment or CWE, can generate ideas or perhaps models to answer the urgent European situation made out of low employment of older workers, shortage of critical skills and decline of birth rate in several countries. It is noticeable that the social and cultural attitude towards ageing workforce differs according to national social and economical history and, of course, geographies. India is a remarkable example of such a difference in the “organised sector” of the economy (this is the economic segment which best compares with Western economies). It is the reason why the eSangathan project has implemented two pilots in extremely different contexts: one at regional level in Öresund (Sweden and Denmark) and one at corporate level in Mahindra & Mahindra (India). The objective is to learn, by using a specific methodological approach, declining and refining roadmaps with a set of tools, and to measure and evaluate the results. Also, to compare what will be comparable such as the learning and adoption curves of CWE. Hopefully the results will enable the consortium to propose a number of social and policy recommendations to improve the level of employment of the aged workers in the European labour market.

The eSangathan project is inspired by 3 major observations:

- The level of employment of 50+ people is far too low in Europe
- Available and affordable ICT can play an inclusion role and generate a better work/life balance
- Different social models do exist in other geographies

### 1.1 LEVEL OF EMPLOYMENT OF 50+ PEOPLE

The level of employment varies from one European country to another in an astonishing way. Indeed, looking at the Eurostat 2004 figures, the employment rate varies from 28,8% (Austria) to 69,1% (Sweden)<sup>1</sup> in the EU-15. The situation is even worse in the new Member States where the employment level of the 50-64 workers ranges from 28% to 32%<sup>2</sup>. As mentioned in the introduction of the report on Age and Employment in the new Member States:

“Despite the response of policymakers, who have highlighted the need for initiatives to foster active ageing across the EU25, differences have emerged in the individual responses to this challenge. These differences are apparent not just between the individual Member States but, more markedly, between the “old” and “new” Member States. While policies and practices aimed at improving opportunities for older people have developed significantly in the EU15 in recent years, there has not been the same response in the new Member States and acceding countries.

Employers in many of the new Member States, for example, are still reluctant to employ older workers. Moreover, although public actors have devised policies targeting such workers, the

<sup>1</sup> Source : Employment initiatives for an ageing workforce in the EU-15, Eurofound, 2006

<sup>2</sup> Source : Age and employment in the new Member States, Eurofound, 2006





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measures have not been sufficiently specific to contribute substantially towards fostering active ageing.”

To reach the 50% employment of the aged workforce as stated in the i2010 strategy; there is still a long way to go even if between 2001 and 2004 the employment rate has raised from 37,5% to 41% in the EU-15. Sometimes figures do not compare easily because most statistical systems are based on a “55-64 segment”. But, nowadays, some statistics do count “50-64” as this matches better the reality of the issue in the labour market.

### 1.2 THE ROLE OF ICT IN THE EMPLOYMENT OF AGED WORKERS

The eSangathan project started from the premise that mastering ICT and making sure aged workers remain or become enough ICT-skilled is an advantage for them on the labour market. Further, the consortium also assumed that knowledge workers, who are the target in this project, could take advantage of this situation by negotiating more flexible working arrangements with their employers and benefit from a better work-life balance with less commuting, stress and improve their quality of life while remaining active and transferring their knowledge.

This is the reason why the project concentrates on various forms of collaborative working environments. The details of the tools and platforms used are further described in this document as well as the first findings after the initial phase of 6-months of both pilots in Öresund and in Mahindra & Mahindra as well as internally in the consortium. The partner AgeProof, who is an internal expert on ageing populations, has played a major role at this stage to raise the awareness of the members of the consortium to specific issues related to this segment of population.

### 1.3 A DIFFERENT SOCIAL MODEL

There is a particular social model existing in the Indian structured economy which could play a role of model for a number of European corporations. The last fifteen years, a large number of European companies have implemented all kind of social plans, in many cases partly financed by public money, to implement early retirement schemes. The net result is the low rate of employed aged workers, and the terribly bad image of the aged unemployed person on the labour market. This has become part of structural unemployment in many cases with dramatic social consequences. The paradox is to observe such a situation while everybody knows that one will live longer and that one will have to work longer in order to be able to pay the pensions of the retirees. In addition, the legal system is such in some countries that it is even close to impossible for a retiree to work after retirement even if the person wishes to do so. The fiscal system can also be discouraging. So, what is now expected from the political decision makers, is the implementation of measures stimulating the aged workers to work longer in attractive conditions.





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In India, such a knowledge worker can become a “retiree expert” and continue to work with his former employer with a new contract. Some retiree-experts have organised themselves in associations and act as consultants: their knowledge is transferred to the new generations and decision makers can benefit from their experience. Unfortunately due to the local geography and the distances, quality work-life balance is difficult to reach.

### *The eSangathan idea!*

Try to learn from both and experiment is crossing a social model to which well-adapted ICT tools would be added, could result in better working conditions and job opportunities for aged workers and develop the Active Ages Worker market.





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## 2. WP 1 - OVERVIEW ON METHODS AND TOOLS

### 2.1 OBJECTIVES

The assignment for Copenhagen Business School in eSangathan Project is to contribute with the methodology that is being used by the Öresund Pilot (situated in Sweden) and Mahindra & Mahindra Pilot (situated in India). The methodology is based on roadmaps in such a way that there is one overall roadmap and four specific roadmaps which contain a basket of different tools that can be used to reach the final destination: inclusion of an ageing work force.

We have concentrated on defining the methodological approaches of the joint activities that will be conducted during the lifespan of the project, i.e. define a roadmap for Inquiring Systems for Self-Organising Heterarchies needed for the creation of social innovations and sustainable growth based on cross border knowledge exchange among 45+.

So we work on defining, for the two pilots:

- A roadmap for collaboration management in the pilots
- A roadmap for social innovation management in the pilots
- A roadmap border crossing communication management between the two pilots
- A roadmap for business modeling.

Through the implementation of an integrated roadmap for the two pilots as a cultural diversified approach we gain experiences as a basis for socio-political recommendations to better integrate an ageing workforce in the active population.

### 2.2 METHODOLOGY

Basically we find the issue of CWE for inclusion of an ageing workforce an unstructured wicked problem, which requires non-traditional ways of finding solutions. The way of thinking and working in a traditional hierarchical organizational setting is strongly rooted in our mindsets. It requires primarily dedication of time, trust and willingness from the participants to change this way of thinking and working.

Therefore the methodology that are chosen for this project has a common denominator namely to address Collaborative Working Environment (CWE) in a different organisational setting than are traditionally observed, i.e. hierarchies. So the methodology chosen is suitable for managing structured as well as unstructured (wicked) problems in hierarchical as well heterarchical (participatory) organizational settings.

The overall roadmap is designed as inquiring systems in self-organising heterarchies, which means that the communication and collaboration between the participants in the pilot's is taken to be based on an open transparent way of exploring and sharing knowledge. The heterarchical part means that the participants in this knowledge exploration and sharing will be working based





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on different values and under different kinds of management. In that way they can choose the best ways of exploration and sharing according to their preferred inquiring style.

During the lifespan of the project the methodology are being adjusted and re-designed to fit to the choice of the roads taken. After this first year the methodology looks like this:

Roadmap	Tool
Overall	Inquiring Systems: Twelve Necessary elements of a system
Communication	Communication Platform Socratic Dialogue Narratives
Collaboration	Team Syntegrity Themes are chosen by the structure and management of M&M
Social Innovation	Information Space, Social Learning Curve (SLC) KUBUS adjusted The six arenas in the KUBUS model at each of the 10 measuring points in SLC
Business Modelling (if requested by participants)	Business Plans (ex.: Schilit, Wickham, McKinsey, and many more) e-business Models Microfinancing Social Economic models SLC as Business Plan

The idea of using a CWE is to enable the participants in the pilots to work and learn together at the same time as they qualify for inclusion at an organizational, regional and societal level. So we explore the dynamics of using these methods in a sequence order to increase the usage of virtual collaborative working environment for the aging workforce.

Early in the project we have tried to estimate an average level of the Öresund Pilot Groups participant's eSkills (hard-, soft, and CWE-skills) for introducing them to an collaborative working environment (CWE), and we found out that the primarily choice of CWE, namely mayeticVillage was a little too sophisticated in the beginning. We also have taken into account the learning process that actually took for the pilot project management to learn mayeticVillage. Since one of the objectives for the project is to see if the usage of a CWE increases the possibility for the aging workforce to better be integrated in the active population, we changed this tool as a point of departure from mayeticVillage to Basecamp, where the user interface for managing content is more simple and straightforward, and thereby create a solid base to work from.





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During the whole time of the Öresund Pilot working progress, there has been a close collaboration between CBS and FU, since the methods usability is tried out in this pilot first for later to be used in the Mahindra & Mahindra Pilot. We can at this stage admit that there has been a need for continuously support in using the CWE (Basecamp), and explanation of methods, simply because it is difficult to change mindsets and work in another way than experienced in the past.

### 2.3 FIRST FINDINGS

In the beginning of the project the original roadmaps was proposed to follow a specific order of usage, but during the time in the project when applying the methods in the Öresund Pilot, we found out that there was a need to change the order of roadmaps and using the methods. For example it is difficult to collaborate, before you build up trust between the participants, yet even more hard to develop social innovations. We therefore recommend using the tools in the specific roadmap on communication and then go over to the specific roadmap on collaboration, for the purpose of creating trust for collaboration.

The main experiences gained thus far - mainly based on the Öresund Pilot - are:

- The overall idea of the project may be easy to understand for the participants as far the CWE is concerned. However it cannot be done unless there is joint confidence in the group and towards the management of the pilot.
- It is better to start with the roadmap on collaboration in order to obtain the confidence needed.
- Communication can be supplemented by using narratives in order to facilitate a joint understanding of each other's back-ground and wishes for the participation
- The way of collaboration using Team Syntegrity works very well, but due to problems in physical participation in all meetings it can be hard to use only in a CWE environment.
- The dialogue on "ageproofing" based on the presentation by Marianne Ziekemeyer at the Kick-Off meeting in Copenhagen has been a theme throughout, which is also seen in the themes developed thus far.
- A sound evaluation of the roadmaps and tools has not yet been possible, as the pilot has just begun to function as planned for after the summer period.
- The participants seem to look at using CWE both for employment possibilities and for "making a difference" possibilities, i.e. realizing dreams and wishes that reach beyond employment - or at least towards other kinds of employment than "wage-employment" or "career-employment".
- It seems evident, that we will have to adjust the tools in ways that fit to the participant's mental models of handling structured problems in a hierarchical context compared to handling unstructured (wicked) problems in a participatory (self-organizing) heterarchical context. This means that we have to adjust and explain tools first in the structured hierarchical context and later through use move the tools towards their ideal use in a participatory (self-organizing) heterarchical context.





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### 2.4 REFLECTIONS

All in all we have followed the WP1 objectives and milestones and produced the deliverables required for the first year. The roadmaps and the tools are brought into practice and lessons are being learned. So we are convinced that this project will create valuable knowledge for the aging workforce in better being able to be included in the labor markets, especially when experience across the two pilots are beginning to be gained and exploited.

We are glad to conclude by saying that the participants of Öresund Pilot are showing great enthusiasm over both learning and working in a virtual CWE world. And they are really looking forward to communicate and collaborate across borders with the participants in the Mahindra & Mahindra Pilot in finding social innovations.





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## 3. WP 2 - ÖRESUND PILOT

### 3.1 INTRODUCTION

To establish a pilot group in Öresund with aim on social innovation through the use of a CWE for 45+ is definitely a multitasked mission. You need to find motivated Danes and Swedes who are willing to learn non-traditional methods and tools, and also people who are willing to contribute to a change of the labour market landscape for aged workers. Where do you find these people and how can you create an effective pilot identity with strong communication mechanism both inside and outside the pilot?

The recruiting process started out within our own networks in November 2006 - in Folkuniversitetet and CBS. A press release on the Swedish side resulted in a couple of articles which gave us much response from aged workers - both retired, employed, self-employed and unemployed who were interested in joining eSangathan and the Öresund Pilot Group. On the Danish side, CBS found the organization Seniors without Borders who immediately showed interest in learning our methodology for CWE and social innovation. We also scanned the labour market programs for 50+ in the south part of Sweden which resulted in additional presumptive pilot members. Unfortunately we couldn't recruit people directly from the Public Employment Service since un-employed people in both Denmark and Sweden need to register here in order to get their unemployment benefit. The registration result in an action plan towards getting back to the labour market and this can include a course in starting you own business or a labour market program.

In mid March, we had 35 presumptive aged workers who had shown interest in joining the Öresund Pilot Group through submitted applications describing background and motivation. Today the group consists of 25 pilot members which tell us that we had some fall-outs in the beginning of the project. Some left because they got work, and some did just not find the time to be 100% engaged. Others basically find our methodology to abstract to cope with.

### 3.2 THE STORY

The Öresund Pilot Group met for the first time in March 2007. Here, a heterogeneous group of Danes and Swedes, men and woman, MBA's, engineers, teachers etc. join forces in order test a CWE environment and tools for communication, collaboration and social innovation. The idea was to only arrange a minor amount of physical meetings and that rest of the work should be carried out on the CWE. We started out with a kick-off meeting introducing the whole eSangathan project and specifically the roadmap for the Öresund Pilot. All pilot members also got an introduction to the CWE environment Basecamp. The following meetings were about Team Syntegrity - our tool for self-organizing collaborative development and implementation. Here, pilot members defined 57 topics of interest that was narrowed down to 12 themes of importance with aim on social innovation and job creation, both for themselves and others. This was followed by a theme auction where they negotiated on which role they should have in the themes. Were they should be members, critics and observers - all according to the Team





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Syntegrity model. After the action, we introduced the tool Socratic Dialogue with aim on inquiring dialogue instead of convincing discussion. The pilot members practiced this method on the overall theme "Intercultural Communication for Social Innovation in the Öresund Region" and five members in each group tried to reach an universal statement on this theme. As Socratic Dialogue can be quite time consuming, the dialogue was placed on Basecamp for further elaboration.

Our Team Syntegrity meetings ended up with sessions on synteintegrations. In total, six synteintegrations were carried out and one person during each session took notes for Basecamp and here all pilot members got the chance to discuss all themes - in some as members and in others as critics. During our last synteintegration, twelve themes were merged into seven and our final themes covered topics like sustainable energy, ages across borders, social economics, joint EU-India project from the bottom of the pyramid and ecological resources.

With our themes formulated, we started to implement Max Boisot's theory on Information Space and Social Learning Curve (SLC). Each theme should try to answer the SLC-questions in order to find out in which areas they have knowledge and expertise and in which areas they don't have insight. Parallel with this process, we tried to get them to find a way to structure the SLC-questions and the answers within the CWE. A couple of support meetings in the Basecamp environment has been arranged since some of the pilot members inquired training, but except for these sessions, our pilot members has learned the virtual environment themselves, through "learning by doing".

And here we are now after a one year of eSangathan using half a year to recruit the pilot members and the second half to introduce the tools for communication, collaboration, social innovation and CWE. Some themes are still themes with focus on creating social innovations, while other themes rapidly has produced concrete projects with aim on business modelling and job creation.

### 3.3 FIRST FINDINGS

Reflecting upon the roadmap for communication, the movement from hierarchical discussion toward heterarchical dialogue is clear - yet, it is characterized of a structural problem context. With this we are stating that dialogue is not yet reaching out to deal with un-structural problems and complexity.

From a collaboration roadmap point of view, Team Syntegrity worked out very well although many pilot members had problems dealing with the absence of managers telling them what to work with and when to be active. It sure takes time to implement self-organizing thinking since people in general are used to be directed in hierarchical systems.

Observing the process of implementing the roadmap for social innovation, it seems hard for our group to be thorough and really rely on the knowledge scanning process and not jump into project action too soon. We have detected some frustration related to the SLC-questions since one of these questions often give reason to ask additional questions in order to reach a workable answer.





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Related to the roadmap on CWE, it has been quite obvious that some members would not admit that they felt insecure using Basecamp, so in the start only a few messages were posted, followed up by a comment or two. This has probably to do with the fact that they did not know what to do on the CWE. Hence, grasping the idea with Social Learning Curve, the activity increased rapidly and we could see a more sophisticated use of the CWE. Instead of just posting simple messages, the pilot members started to test other features, like uploading files and using to-do-lists. So far, the conclusion is that you really need a stimulating reason in order to start using and explore the CWE.

From a general point of view studying the overall roadmap, we can detect a mind-shift where pilot members are slowly moving from traditional hierarchical thinking dealing with structured problems towards self-organizing heterarchies dealing with complexity and un-structured problems. Still, pilot members are struggling with dilemmas like unification versus fragmentation, authority versus uncertainty etc. Therefore, tools on inquiring systems and narratives within the communication roadmap will be further implemented.

In all, the learning curve for our pilot group has been exhaustive and it took them approximately six months to understand roadmaps for communication, collaboration, social innovation and CWE.

### 3.4 PERSPECTIVE

Now we will continue working with the tools for communication such as inquiring systems and narratives, parallel with efforts on implementing the roadmap for social innovation in Basecamp. We will continue experimenting on additional use of CWE, introducing Wiki as a meeting platform for the Indian pilot and the Öresund Pilot. The motivation for getting into contact with the Indian pilot is very clear and this virtual meeting is something that our pilot members really are looking forward to. And from our perspective it is very fascinating to actually see what happens when the two pilots share experiences and knowledge through a Wiki in the eSangathan context. Reaching the end of this project, we will reflect, sum up and measure our results so that guidelines for replications can be produced.





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## 4. WP 3 - MAHINDRA PILOT

### 4.1 INTRODUCTION

Mahindra Pilot of eSangathan started with objectives of having a minimum of 30 people and 10 of them of retiree experts, understanding impact of Collaborative Work Environment (CWE) in performing their duties and on their social time spent. M&M HR participated in selection of the retirees. Some of the criteria used were location from Workplace, Age, Family members, Type of work, existing contracts etc. Microsoft Sharepoint was chosen as corporate collaborative tool for Mahindra Pilot. The demography today comprises of 10 retiree experts from multiple sectors - Auto, Technology, Defence etc - with more than 100 serving people spanning India sub-continent and abroad.

### 4.2 IMPLEMENTING MAHINDRA PILOT

To understand the retiree experts, we have conducted user study by user-interviews supported with questionnaire on work life, social life and technology usage. We used ICT Skill's Hard Skills/competences (OECD & Eurostat), Evaluation Criteria (D006, D011), Questionnaire from usability experts and specific inputs from AgeProof related to user-interviews and user-profiling. The OECD and Eurostat skill matrix was adjusted to recent advances in Web 2.0 technologies. Retirees were not exposed to the questionnaire and the mode of information gathering was conversational. Retirees were also not exposed to MS SharePoint CWE, in order not to bias them. Analysis was performed on the interview results (D013) and various observations on retiree's location, nature of work, educational qualifications, ICT proficiency, time-spent on professional & social etc were made. AgeProof contributed in the analysis process to correctly profile retiree experts.

Based on the analysis, usability engineering design team profiled the users as YES-YES, SO-SO and NO-NO and developed different interfaces for them. These were then implemented on the eSangathan CWE and were readied for end-user feedback.

Meeting was organized with most of the retiree experts to obtain feedback on eSangathan CWE. Some suggested integration of web search engines like Google, Wikipedia & ThomasRegister.net, integrating with their present applications, access to M&M common knowledge resources such as ASME / IEEE. Others suggested large-scale enterprise integration with M&M group of companies to organize Training sessions, seminars etc.

Based on user-feedback, the CWE was further customized to retiree expert's expectations and a training program was developed. We conducted training of three different collaborative environments namely portal application, instant messaging and offline access of the community. The users received detailed training on portal (features such as document management with workflow and version management, search, discussions, blogs, wikis, calendar, project planning, tasks and contacts management), on instant messaging (features such as set up your contacts list, start a conversation, manage contacts, send messages and files, view and change presence information, control voice communications and share applications) and on offline access. Some





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of the retiree expert preferred training to be tuned to their needs. One of the retiree experts came up various business scenarios and wanted the service persons to attend the training along with him so that they can together discuss the usefulness and implementation strategy for their community sub-site in eSangathan. Information Architecting was carried out and a four-level exchange communities were created as per the following:

- Level -1 - Community/Site for Retiree Expert and his team. A total of nine such communities have been created with restricted accesses. Solution here comprises of a balance between structured collaborative features and participative collaborative features (wiki's and blogs). <https://mcon.mahindra.com/sites/eSangathan/<SUBSITE>>
- Level -2 - eSangathan - To promote collaboration exchange among eSangathan Mahindra Pilot members - both serving and retired. Solution here shifted more towards participative collaborative features. <https://mcon.mahindra.com/sites/eSangathan>
- Level-3 - Mahindra Intranet eSangathan - To promote exchange between eSangathan Mahindra Pilot members and any Mahindra & Mahindra employee. Most visited locations on Mahindra Intranet - for example - Homepage, Knowledge Web, and People's Corner promotes eSangathan. Solution here shifted more towards greater participative collaborative features. <https://mcon.mahindra.com>
- Level-4 - Public eSangathan - To promote exchange between Oresund Pilot and Mahindra Pilot, between Mahindra Retiree experts with non-eSangathan members such as Universities, NGO, thought leaders etc. Solution here essentially comprises participative collaborative features. <http://esangathan.netcipia.net>
- eSangathan Subsite names were chosen by retiree experts. Retiree experts were also encouraged to migrate their current data to eSangathan platform. The service went live from 1-Oct at M&M, Kandivali Data Centre in Mumbai.

### 4.3 FIRST FINDINGS

- Most of the Retiree expert had comparable Hard and Soft Skills, leader of their communities and were willing to participate without any corporate mandate. Also, each of the Retiree experts was handling key strategic.
- Nature of Work fed various requirements, some of these around access control, Workflows and access to Enterprise IT Infrastructure etc.
- M&M HR took active interest in eSangathan and is open to formation of new policies revisit existing infrastructure, contracts with retiree experts.

### 4.4 INSIGHT

#### 4.4.1 DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILES

- 80% of them are in range 59 - 65 year olds
- 70% of them work fulltime and 30% in part time
- 30% of them spend 20 hours in a week on social activities
- 70% of them are residing less than 6 kilometers to reach the office and 30% of them need to travel at least 200 kilometers / week.





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- 90% of people prefer to use a hard copy for reading a document.
- Retiree experts are having good health
- Most of the experts feel a vacuum post retirement

### 4.4.2 USER HARD/SOFT SKILL PROFILES

- **Yes-Yes user** - Mr. Madhukar Joshi has developed knowledge base application for managing parts and drawings catalogue for a product using ASP and MS Access database.
- **So-So user** - Mr. Sunil Hari Shankar Patil *"Like to use mobile camera for photo, video clips of real estate sites"*. Mr Anil Agnihotri shoots personal videos, edits on his own using video-editing software and circulates among friends and family.
- **No-No user** - When we have asked Mr V Jagannathan on his usage of spreadsheet, he said *"it's too much time-consuming to work upon, prefer to give it to younger members. I would critically review and provide comments"*.

### 4.4.3 HOW DID ICT FEATURES MAP TO DAY-TO-DAY BUSINESS?

We are able to identify the tools like: libraries for document, images and media, workflow for document review cycle, calendar, task management and announcements along with discussions, blogs and wikis.

### 4.4.4 WHAT WAS THE MOTIVATION FOR KNOWLEDGE SHARING?

Some of the experts Mr. Avinash Marathe, Mr. Madhukar Joshi, Mr. Kishan Singh and Mr. SK Arora felt that it is their duty to share their experiences and knowledge with the next generation, so they associate themselves with education institutions, associations in conducting training for the next generation of the corporate and the society.

### 4.4.5 REFERENCES

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## 5. WP 4 - THE ROLE OF CWE

### 5.1 THE CONSORTIUM'S CWE

#### 5.1.1 THE LEARNING CURVE

To promote CWE, it is necessary to master these tools, because the change of paradigm they bring in the daily work is so important that it should be impossible otherwise to promote them correctly to anybody else. It is why the first objective of the consortium has been to implement a CWE for the consortium itself. The CWE provides the infrastructure for the management of the 2-years project and the rule from the beginning has been that all the documents and the information related to the consortium must be produced and stored to a workspace within the CWE.

The first time we presented the mayeticVillage CWE to the members of the consortium, it was through a training session of one day during the first PMB at Copenhagen. A first overview of what is a CWE, how the information systems are evolving from a file/e-mail paradigm to an online-web-content paradigm, and where the Web 2.0 is driving us, was presented in 2 hours. After, each member of the consortium received his access credentials to enter the consortium workspace, and a training session was initiated for half a day, showing all the possibilities of mayeticVillage. Everybody seemed to understand correctly the different features and the usage. This was for asynchronous collaboration, and Skype was chosen for synchronous communication and awareness between all the members. AgeProof gave a series of recommendations about how computer interfaces must be adapted to aging people.

But what happened after the meeting, is that the people not already familiar with asynchronous CWE, dealing again with their habitual daily tasks, started little by little to forget what we seen during the trainings, and each time a document written was introduced in the CWE for revision, modification or storage, it was difficult for some of the members because they didn't remember the procedure. This procedure was not difficult in itself, but because the possibilities of creating different types of pages and the necessity to think differently to put the file in the workspace instead of sending it simply by email to the other participants, there was a kind of rejection feeling for the CWE. It was clear doing the support to different members that this feeling during the first months was strong: "why do I must use this CWE if I can send the document simply by email? It is a loss of time".

The rule of "I must first do an effort and only after a while I'll collect its retribution" is always difficult and needs some time to be accepted and it is natural process for the main reason that people involved in the project are not working on it full time, and some of them are working in a very partial time, only few hours a week. And everybody is spread over Europe and India, without any more physical contact before the next meeting attended six months after the first one.

Some of the members were facing real troubles using the CWE and would have wanted to stop using it. But the core members of the team was used about CWE for years, and they have been able to continue to do their best to motivate and support people to store the documents and the





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information on the CWE, and collecting all the bad usages noticed to correct them during the next training session in the PMB-2 meeting.

### 5.1.2 THE ADOPTION

Just before the PMB-2 session, the decision should have been taken to provide a CWE for the Oresund pilot. Due to this difficult situation about the usage of mayeticVillage, the leaders of WP1 and WP2 asked if it was possible to use another simpler CWE for the pilot, at least for the beginning, and they proposed to use BaseCamp for this, BaseCamp being already used by CBS students and the IT department. The consortium decided that it could be a good thing to experiment another CWE, presenting another way to do the things than mayeticVillage and Microsoft SharePoint Portal Server, and the choice was validated.

During PMB2, we prepared an additional training session to explain again to the consortium members how and why mayeticVillage should be used for the success of the project, and because we studied the reasons of the difficulties of usage during the 6 previous months and we presented the training focusing on the resolution of this difficulties, a lot of problems were solved very rapidly and the situation became very clear for everybody. Each of the main features were again explained and demonstrated, but because this time there was a real experience behind (and sometimes a "bad" feeling experience), the result was great and everybody understood immediately what they didn't have understood before.

And since this time, there is no more problem using mayeticVillage and everybody is publishing their files, doing notifications to alert the others, and going to check what happens on a regular basis.

### 5.1.3 THE BLOGS

In parallel, another story was going on. In the initial plan, the official website was planned to be built using a public mayeticVillage workspace, mayeticVillage being able to create websites using some particular features ("simple pages" and "word pages" essentially). NCP to the coordinator, since the beginning of the project, to change this and to switch to a blog infrastructure (using WordPress, the #1 open source blog project) to be up to date with the market and the new rules of publication arriving.

This shift was not so easy to take, because this time nobody in the team was comfortable with this new way to publish information. But the decision was taken to make different experimentations, even outside the consortium, and after 3 months, it was clear for the coordinators of the consortium that the blog infrastructure was the best solution for the future. We decided then to implement it very quickly, creating a special web design to personalize the blog, and deciding to derivate also a blog for each country.

Once again, during the PMB2, the solution was presented, and we train the members to use their local blogs and push them to produce posts on a regular basis, using the example of the French and European blogs fully adopted and filled by their managers.





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Different problems raised about this topics among the members of the consortium, also because it was not part of the budget to adopt and learn other tools, and the time was very limited for everybody, so it was not easy, So the process to adopt the tool took some time for different reasons among the members of the consortium, and this is only after a few months that the posts started to be published on a regular basis for those who decided to do it (it was not an obligation, some countries have decided to don't publish the blog).

### 5.1.4 THE LIBRARY AND THE SOCIAL BOOKMARKING

When the decision to create a public library for the project came to the table, we thought about different tools to build it, like databases, dedicated softwares, etc... but discovering on the internet that some companies are realizing their libraries using also a blog infrastructure, we decided to do the same; of course the coherence with the websites was obvious. And it was a very good idea, not only because of the coherence, but because of the features proposed to the visitors of the library, like the possibility to comment the articles published the possibility to track easily the news thanks to the RSS feeds, and the possibility to trackback the links to their own blogs or websites.

The last tool proposed, first for the French SIG to test it, and after for the whole consortium during the PMB-3 project, was the social bookmarking infrastructure. It's not so different than the library, but it is dedicated to store, share, and exchange information about any article written and discovered on the Internet. The social bookmarking website, created using the Pligg open source project. was very quickly operational and it is a wonderful way to share a common goal on collaborative watching, not only with the members of the consortium, but also with all the other people interested by this topics, as they are in the SIGs groups or as they are discovering the website by themselves and want to be part of the watch.

### 5.1.5 CONCLUSION

As a conclusion, what we can say is: being in the most difficult situation, managing a team of 15 people, half of them being 45+, disseminated over 3 continents, 3 time zones, meeting physically 2 times only in one year, and not working full time on the project, the eSangathan project has succeeded for this first year to bring this people to a new user experience, allowing them:

- To really adopt and become comfortable using a complete and powerful collaborative working environment instead of the traditional email/file paradigm;
- To discover the usage of the blogs as a tool for website publication and to manage and master them for their own usage;
- To help the pilot thanks to this experiences to use also a CWE for their purpose;

All this demonstrates the perfect adoption of these new technologies and the new usages they induce.

I think we can be proud of the result and it is a unique experience in itself :-)





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### 6. WP 5 - DISSEMINATION STRATEGY AND TOOLS

Dissemination is key in any EU-funded project and certainly in support actions. Support actions are a vehicle to communicate the EU-strategy to the outside world and market with practical illustrations of the declared objectives in the work programme. Dissemination is the forerunner action of the exploitation that the consortium members will be able to implement. It prepares the market; it enables to look for, find and consolidate active stakeholders and is the starting point for the concrete actions once the project funding is over.

The dissemination strategy of the eSangathan project is built in two steps:

- The first year is the time to chose and implement the dissemination tools and make sure each member of the consortium gets thru the learning curve in order to master the tools and to be able to rapidly adopt new ones if they appear to be better adapted to the needs of eSangathan
- The second year is an action period within the defined strategy with the aim to
  - Exchange as much as possible with the external world thanks to the blogs
  - Consolidate the SIGs in the countries which have implemented such an interest group
  - Increase the number of national stakeholders
  - Exchange as much as possible with other EU-funded projects (IST, ESF, etc.)
  - Organise the two planned conferences in Mumbai (India) and Brussels (Belgium)
  - Gather the content for the White Paper

The first important decision in the field of dissemination made by the eSangathan consortium is to walk away from the traditional website which already seems outdated and not really adapted to the chosen approaches of the team.

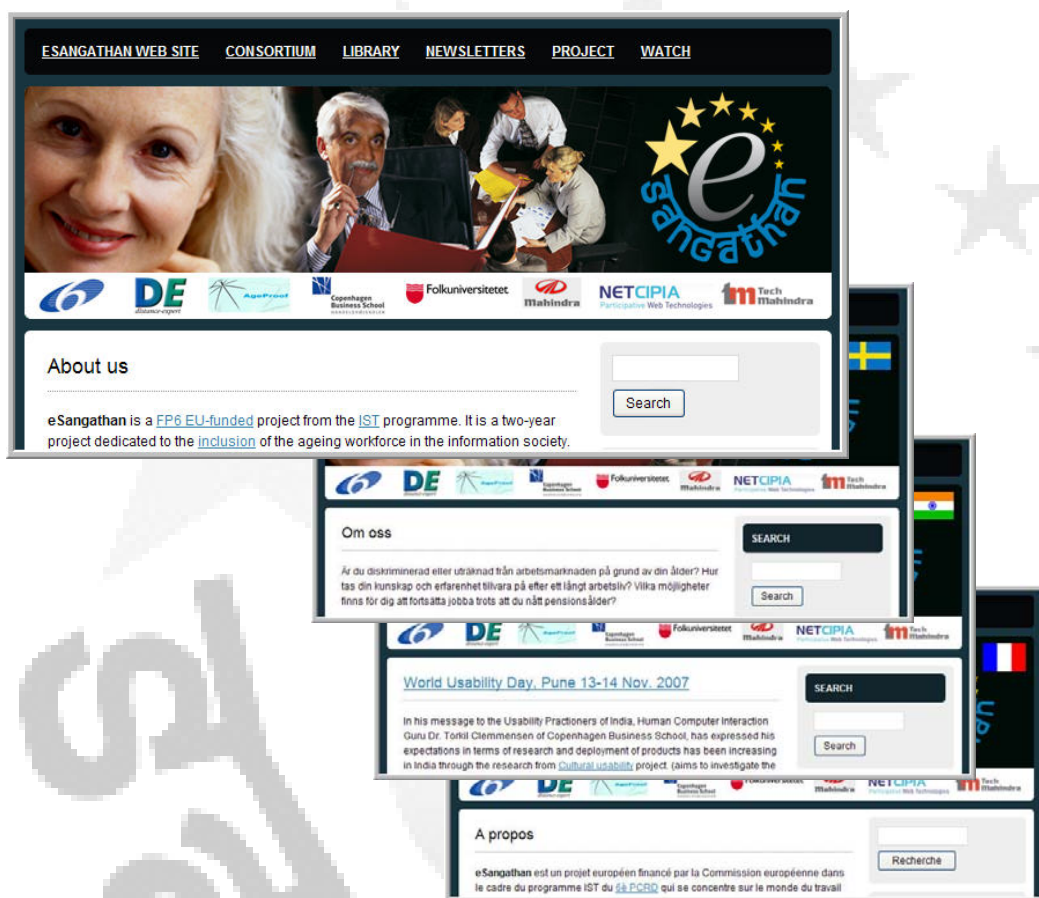
So, the choice was made to have a project or EU-blog and decline this media at national level in national language for each partner who wished to have a national communication and dissemination vehicle. This was the case of France, Sweden and India during the first year and Denmark is joining in Year-2. [Ageproof](#) who started the experiment cannot continue due to the budget limitation and is using the homepage of the company website to disseminate eSangathan.





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The co-ordinator and the partner Netcipia have taken care of the design and the implementation and support for all the partners. The ergonomic recommendations made by the partner AgeProof have been taken into account in the choice and design of the blogs. eSangathan wants to deliver a sort of project corporate image and is declining the same approach adapted to each market.



The implementation of the tools has enabled eSangathan to get publicly known on Google. Indeed, at the end of the first year a simple search made on "esangathan" gives already more than 5-Google pages with 10 references per page where eSangathan directly appears.





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The screenshot shows a Google search for 'esangathan'. The search bar contains 'esangathan' and the 'Rechercher' button is visible. Below the search bar, there are navigation links for 'Web', 'Images', 'Actualités', 'Maps', 'Nouveau!', 'Groupes', and 'plus'. The search results are displayed under the heading 'Web' and show 'Résultats 1 - 10 sur un total d'environ 1 170 pour esangathan (0,40 secondes)'. The first result is 'eSangathan - France', which is a project funded by the European Commission. The second result is 'Annonce du projet eSangathan | eSangathan - France', a press release from October 2006. The third result is 'eSangathan Web Site', a two-year project dedicated to the inclusion of the ageing workforce. The fourth result is 'eSangathan - Ageing Workforce and Collaborative Working ...', a project involving six countries. The fifth result is 'Newsletter eSangathan #2 - Etat des lieux sur les environnements ...', a newsletter from the consortium. The sixth result is 'Veille Collaborative eSangathan - La blogosphère est-elle un ...', a blog post about the project's public space.

The first tool that was made available to the consortium was the press release which has been translated by some of the partners. It has generated further press coverage at the launch of the Öresund pilot and it is being used as a common vehicle to give first level information about the project.


Further, the Newsletters are giving a more in-depth information about what is exactly happening and being done in the eSangathan project. At the end of the first year of operations, five (5) newsletters are available and downloadable from the blogs.





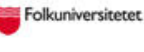







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[ESANGATHAN WEB SITE](#)   [CONSORTIUM](#)   [LIBRARY](#)   [NEWSLETTERS](#)   [PROJECT](#)   [WATCH](#)



## Newsletters

eSangathan will produce 10 newsletters during the two years of the project. Each newsletter will cover a specific topic related to the work of the project which concentrates on employment issues of the ageing workforce and collaborative working environments (CWE).

[Newsletter 1](#) draws the picture of the situation in the participating countries of the eSangathan project. More material is available for some countries. It is why you will find "to read more" at the end of the article. Here is the additional content for [Denmark](#), [France](#), [India](#), [Sweden](#), [The Netherlands](#) and the [United Kingdom](#).

[Newsletter 2](#) is dedicated to the Collaborative Working Environments (CWE) to introduce the organisational frame of the eSangathan project. Additional input is available for India as well as the [full report](#) on Future and Emerging Technologies.

[Newsletter 3](#) introduces the Oresund region (Sweden/Denmark) where the European pilot of the eSangathan project is being implemented.

[Newsletter 4](#) gives you an insight of the situation in India and introduces Mahindra & Mahindra to you as well as the Indian pilot for eSangathan.

### CATEGORIES

- [Active Ageing](#)
- [Collaborative Environments](#)
- [Conference](#)
- [Demography](#)
- [Denmark](#)
- [e-Inclusion](#)
- [EU Commission](#)

Another useful internal and dissemination tool which has been implemented is the [eSangathan library](#).





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The special interest groups (SIG) have also been implemented in France and Sweden and are starting in Denmark and in India. Their activity will be reported in the second year of the project and they will actively contribute to the elaboration of the White Paper. Some of the members may also be involved in one of the two conferences in Mumbai and in Brussels.

Year-2 of the project will also aim at having eSangathan referenced in well positioned and recognised website and/or blogs from important stakeholders in the market of the active ageing workforce such as it is already the case with the [Global Forum on Ageing and Retirement](#) from HSBC:

- **[United Nations - Ageing](#)**  
Facilitating global thinking, exploration and policy orientation towards the creation of a society for all ages
- **[European Papers on the New Welfare](#)**
- **[International Centre for Creativity and Imagination](#)**  
An organisation focused on creative ageing and retirement, creative education and youth, and creative communities and organisations.
- **[World Health Organization](#)**  
The World Health Organization is the United Nations specialized agency for health, established in 1948.
- **[eSangathan](#)**  
eSangathan is a FP6 Eu-funded project from the IST programme, a two year project dedicated to the inclusion of the ageing workforce in the information society.

Members of the eSangathan consortium have also participated in several conferences as reported in the first annual report.

So, at this stage, one can say that all the necessary elements are in place for a dynamic and active dissemination during Year-2 of the project.





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## 7. FIRST FINDINGS AND CONCLUSION

The eSangathan project anticipated a major European social and economical issue in an innovative and ambitious way. Indeed, the proposal was prepared early 2005 and submitted in September 2005 when the topic of the ageing workforce where two isolated words in the FP6 work programme. Of course, the issue existed but rarely brought at the forefront of the political stage.

It is innovative because, still today, very few people do dedicate their effort to this topic in the field of e-Inclusion which concentrates much more on disabled, young and elderly people, etc. than on the whole segment of population that is excluded from the labour market and who could be generating growth, productivity and competitiveness.

It is ambitious because it is not afraid of learning from and mixing experience coming from geographically, historically and culturally completely different horizons. The common reference mark is corporate experience and Western management techniques which has become common rule in the global economy.

It is also unusual because the consortium made methodological choices which are radically different from traditional surveys and measurement systems. The set of tools is soft and human-centric to reach common goals within the pilots. The configuration of the two pilots is extremely different and the heterarchical approach is planned to end up in an open dialogue between the teams on common topics using intensively the most up-to-date technologies. By the way, this is also part of the work pursued in this project; showing that aged workers can use and adapt to methods and tools which differ fundamentally from what they have known so far in their professional life and demonstrate that change and learning is not an issue for this segment of population.

The real challenge is also to have betted on the use of Collaborative Working Environments (CWE) to offer new opportunities and a better work-life balance to the aged knowledge workers. The choice of CWE technological environment is important and well adapted for the following reasons:

- It is based on participation and the participative approach stimulates interpersonal and professional relations
- It encapsulates knowledge and offers an impressive potential for knowledge workers
- Once the learning curve is over, it stimulates new initiatives and supports new future-oriented approaches and initiatives from the AAW
- When such an environment is familiar to a knowledge worker, it softens the cultural and managerial differences
- The experience in other ICT related fields shows that once a person has adopted a technology, they personalise the usage and it becomes part of their identity.

So, the eSangathan project is not an easy one but it is an exciting one because it tries to bring concrete answers to real issues which are now identified at the highest political, social and economical level.

