



JTC 2017 - Ageing and Place in a digitising world

BCONNECT@HOME

Being Connected at Home – Making use of digital devices in later life

SUMMARY AND OVERALL AIM

This project investigates fundamental changes in the contemporary experience of later life, at the intersection of digital infrastructures, place and the experience of “being connected”. We address a research gap by exploring and theorizing the role of digital communication devices (such as smartphones (that will be tracked), tablets, PCs, apps, fitness trackers, pedometers, or “brain games”) in relation to the modern life course. And we combine this theoretical approach with a practical goal of making our insights actionable through co-design by involving diverse older people and other relevant stakeholders in “Academic Work Places” in The Netherlands, Spain, Sweden and Canada. The project is contextualized by debates around ageing in place, loneliness and social isolation, and the idea that these are age-related challenges that require interventions. The potential of such interventions has so far not been realized because the complexities of human-machine interactions are both under-theorised and over-instrumentalised in technology projects. To have impact, new devices to stimulate social engagement and social connectedness need to be based on a fine-grained understanding of digital use as an integral element in the contemporary experience of “being connected”. We will deliver such understanding and utilize it in order to realize impact for older citizens, business and policy maker alike – impact that will help alleviate the increasing burden of loneliness and social isolation.

PROJECT DURATION AND BUDGET

Project duration: 36 months
Project costs: 571.032

CONSORTIUM

The consortium consist of 4 partners:

1. Utrecht University (the Netherlands)
2. Universitat Oberta de Catalunya (Spain)
3. Trent University (Canada)
4. KTH Stockholm (Sweden)

WORK PACKAGES

WP1. Tracking older people’s mobile use

Focuses on a specific digital technology, the smartphone. Conduct a 1-month tracking of a sample of 150 older individuals in the Netherlands, Spain, Sweden and Canada. Tracked data includes apps used, web pages visited, time of use and length of the activity.

WP2. Digital lives of older people

Explores how the use of digital devices has consequences in the way older people inhabit and create a sense of place and belonging, and how places impact the way these technologies are used.

WP3. Digital infrastructures of health and ageing

Explores the ways that expertise about ageing and health is both produced and reproduced as it circulates through them.

WP4. Academic Work Places for the digital life course

Ensures the development of participative methods for the implementation of new technologies in older people’s home, consistently across all “Academic Work Places”.

BCONNECT@HOME received funds under the JTC 2017 launched by JPI MYBL.

JPI MYBL is supported by J-Age II. J-Age II is funded by Horizon2020, the EU Framework Programme for Research and Innovation, under Grant Agreement nr 643850

Joint Programming. Initiative (JPI) “More. Years, Better Lives”

A total of 8 projects received funding.

www.jp-demographic.eu.