CONTEXT ANALYSIS

Part 2: e-Facilitators

Coordinated by D-O-T

Based on interviews to LSO carried out in each country by Telecentar (Croatia), LIKTA (Latvia) and LIA (Lithuania)

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Preface

In coherence with the project objectives, the cross-country context analysis (WP2) is aimed to provide systemic information from the field (at local level) to facilitate a further realistic implementation of the pilot phase where the intergenerational exchange will take place. Knowing better the particularities of each national context (pilot area), the partnership will be able to design, plan and carry on the different training activities described in the Intergenerational Learning Circle duly adapted and contextualized to each country, thus incrementing guarantees of success.

The context analysis is presented in four parts.

- *Part 1 focus on Intermediary organisations that were identified as potential field actors by the project partners –organisations that are active in the provision of social services to disadvantaged people, particularly to youngsters or elders. These Local Stakeholder Organisations (LSO) have manifested an interest to participate in the Pilot activities and to further exploit the results of this project.*

- *Part 2 (this document) presents the needs and opinions of the professionals or volunteers who are in direct contact with the final target groups (youngsters and seniors), the so-called e-Facilitators that cover a range of socio-digital profiles.*

- *Parts 3 and 4 reflect the voices of the final beneficiaries of the planned activity (i.e. the seniors and the youth) as captured through a survey, which is analysed comparatively across participating countries.*

To carry out this research, D-O-T designed interview's questionnaires and online surveys for the data collection of all the key actors identified, as well as the templates to gather and report this information in each country. The three partners involved in piloting activities interviewed the LSOs and their Facilitators and shared the individual interviews through the project's collaboration platform Moodle at http://escouts2.eu/moodle while seniors and youngsters were surveyed online using Lime Survey at http://escouts2.eu/limesurvey (in the case of seniors, with the assistance of e-Facilitators)

This document already incorporates the feedback provided by project partners, who helped to enrich its findings and conclusions. The preliminary outcomes of this report were shared with partners during an online meeting in June 2014. The final version of this report was presented to partners during a partnership meeting celebrated in Rovinj (Croatia), August 2014, focusing on its implications for the customization of the training curriculum (WP4).

1. Facilitators profile

The key role of e-Facilitators

The so-called e-Facilitators –i.e. facilitators of digital literacy processes with a view to empower citizens to participate actively in the Information Society- are called to be the key enablers of the intergenerational dialogue to be stimulated by this project. They are involved in all the different stages of the training cycle, acting as mediators of the whole process. Since the kick off meeting the whole partnership is aware of this actor's key position in the project.

Those selected to participate in piloting activities will start being trained and prepared (module 1) to be able to become teachers/facilitators for the youth (module 2) and the seniors (module 4). On top of that, they will monitor and follow up both groups when developing their training activity (youth to seniors in module 3) and mentoring (seniors to youth in module 5).

Therefore, a good selection of the Facilitators' team (2 per country) is an important step to be taken by the partners, and this document is expected to smooth that selection. However, the main purpose of this analysis is to investigate and gather information about the Facilitators profile, their strong and weak points, as well as their needs and interests. By taking care of their training/experience gaps and satisfying their motivations, the partnership expects to reduce the dropout risk as much as possible, while maintaining facilitators engaged and collaborative along the project's evolution.

Facilitators sample by country

Each country has chosen four professionals who have been asked to complete a questionnaire developed to select the Facilitators and identify their training needs, with a view to prepare their training.

Age and sex

Normally professionals working in settings where ICT are basic skills or transversal competences, often belong to groups younger than those from other professions. Nevertheless a noteworthy variation between the ages of interviewed Facilitators in each country has been found, as shown in the table below.

Country	Single ages	Average age
Croatia	32, 18, 40, 31	30
Latvia	51, 47, 55, 25	44
Lithuania	25, 26, 34, 29	28

As can be seen, Facilitators from Croatia present very heterogeneous ages, but the group can be considered a middle young Facilitators ones. Furthermore, all Latvian Facilitators except for one are over 45, what make it a group of senior Facilitators. On the contrary, the Lithuanian one is a group of young Facilitators, being three of them under 30.

Regarding gender considerations, it is a relevant matter in social activities at large, and sometimes it can even become a delicate issue especially for certain ages. Having a balance between both males and females normally enriches the facilitation and uplifts educative models of intervention, but practice shows that women participation predominate in social and educative interventions. However, in the group of interviewed professionals their gender was not specifically asked since a partner had objected the gender question precisely due to concerns about a possible misinterpretation of the question as discriminative. Lacking this information, from a project perspective partners can only be encouraged to look for a gender balance when making the final selection of Facilitators.

Years working in the organization and in the socio-educational sector

Understanding in advance the professional background of potential Trans-eScouts Facilitators allows planning training activities to address their detected learning gaps, appropriately shaping the practical approach/content of the different modules.

For this reason it is important to highlight the Facilitators previous experience, considering both the years they have worked in the organisations and the years worked in the socio-educational sector.

Country	Years/org.	Average	Years/sector	Average
Croatia	5, 2, 11, 1	5	4, 2, 15, 12	8
Latvia	5, 9, 5, 6	6	27, 25, 13, 6	18
Lithuania	7, 4, 9, 3	6	7, 4, 9, 3	6

It appears that the Facilitators have balanced experiences in the organisations; on average they have spent about 5-6 years working in them except for two Facilitators in

Croatia, who only have 1-2 years of experience in their organisations. In general, the average years working at the same organization shown in the table is quite high, taking in consideration the high mobility in the sector, an issue that many social organizations usually need to deal with.

Regarding Facilitators experience in socio-cultural sector, there are some differences to be noted. Croatian Facilitators present a slightly higher experience in the sector than in the organisations. Lithuanian group has worked the exactly same amount of years in both categories, what would imply that Facilitators have no experience in the field but the years worked in their current organisations, which is understandable because of their young age. On the other hand, there is a largely experienced group in the socio-educational sector in Latvia, with an average experience of 18 years.

These considerations lead us to the presumption that Trans-eScouts will count with experienced facilitators, fact that envisages a good starting point. However, it is important to highlight that close monitoring to the Croatian Facilitator with low experience in both categories could be needed.

Years worked with target groups

As professionals of the social field, all the Facilitators are expected to be aware of the importance of knowing the particularities of each age group, their typical behaviours and dynamics. So that, the years that each professional have been working with each target group are shown in the table below:

Country	Years/youth	Average	Years/seniors	Average
Croatia	1, 2, 8, 4	4	0, 1, 8, 1	2.5
Latvia	23, 18, 13, 4	14,5	15, 9, 12, 5	10
Lithuania	7, 2, 9, 3	5	7, 4, 9, 3	6

On the one hand, the experience with both target audiences presents variations depending on the countries. Thus, as there is a largely experienced group of Facilitators in Latvia (five years or more above the other countries), the group of facilitators in Croatia is less experienced, without even 5 years worked with neither youth nor seniors. This is pointed out as a risky issue to pay attention to, especially for the training and for the monitoring during the pilot.

On the other hand, there is a noteworthy gap of experience between target groups in all countries, which varies from one year in Lithuanian group to almost 5 in Latvian team. The whole group shows lower experience with seniors (average 9,5 years

worked with youth vs. average 4.5 years worked with seniors). This lack of experience working with the elderly should be taken in consideration when preparing the content for the Module 1, the training for the Facilitators.

2.   Education and Competences

Educational level

As it was mentioned before, the purpose of this analysis is to investigate the Facilitators profile and educational background with a view to extract relevant information for the partners for a tailored design of Facilitators training workshop (module 1) and adequate further monitoring and follow up.

Regarding the second issue, the graphic below shows the educational level of the Facilitators in each country.

Educational level
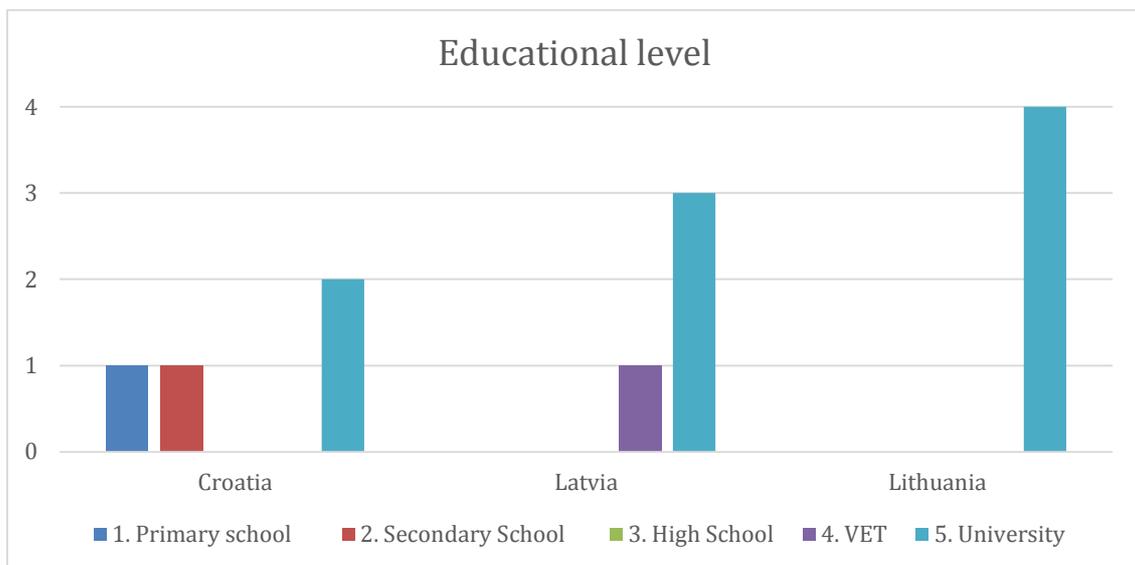
As we can see, the level of studies of the interviewed Facilitators is on average high as 9 out of 12 respondents have University degrees, which represents 75% of the total. Some Lithuanian Facilitators even have a Master degree and one Latvian Facilitator obtained a vocational education diploma on computer studies. While two members of the Croatian group attended non-formal education, yet two Facilitators in Croatia have only reached low formal educational levels.

It is important to highlight that a training curriculum that addresses directly training needs and competences required to become a Facilitator does not formally exist in any of the participating countries, since this implies teaching an extensive range of

domains (technical, pedagogical, social, organizational, etc.) and, on the other hand, there is no such a professional qualification in the national catalogue of professions of any of the participating countries. For this reason, the interviewed professionals have usually got studies which partially cover some of the fields touched by the Facilitators role but not all of them, complementing their skills and knowledge with non-formal training and/or working experience in the field.

ICT competences

In this project ICT is the main tool, chosen to become the link between two generations - the seniors and the youth. In other words, ICT is supposed to enable and stimulate an interest into exchanging life experiences and different kinds of advices through Internet. It is important for the Facilitators to handle ICT with confidence enough to be able to lead the groups along the different stages of the training cycle.
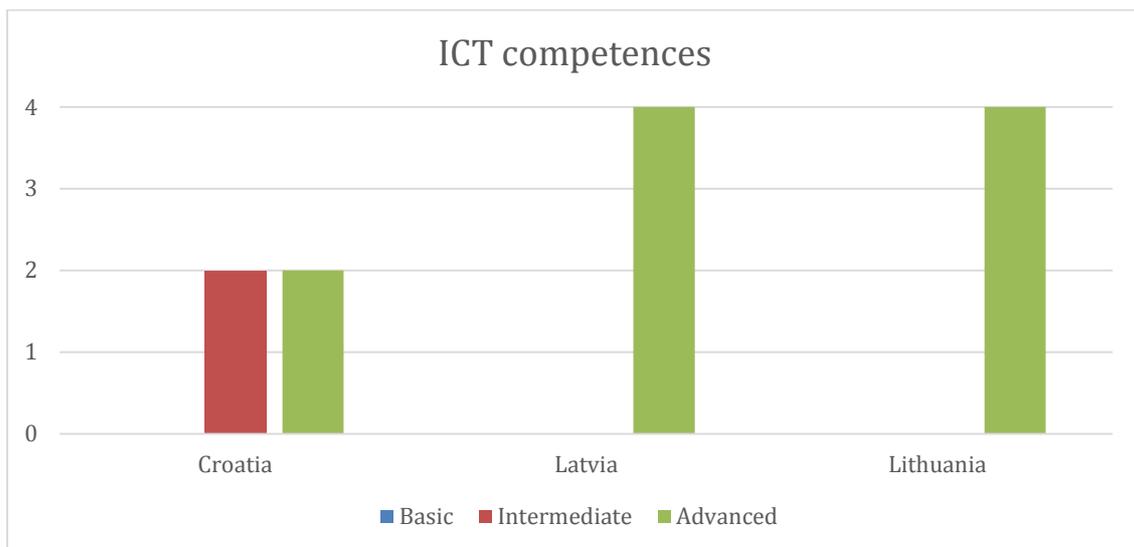
A high percentage of the interviewed Facilitators (10 out of 12, which represents more than 80%) declared to have an advanced level of ICT, especially in Latvian and Lithuanian Facilitators groups. Two Latvian Facilitators declare to have achieved higher education in ICT, the third one has a University degree in Computer Science and the fourth one has a 6 years ICT teaching experience. Regarding Lithuanian respondents, they all claim to be skilled on Microsoft Office, Internet searches, Adobe Reader or Picasa and one respondent claims to work with databases. In contrast, the two Croatian Facilitators with low formal educational levels have also intermediate ICT competences. **It is recommended to Croatian partner** to help its selected facilitators improving their technical knowledge before Module 1 workshop is delivered, for example making them accessing to and going through introductory material and

resources, and **to the partner in charge of delivering Module 1** (Fundación Esplai) to prepare its trainers to be ready to solve ICT-related questions and doubts during the workshop.

Complementary information regarding Facilitators' education

Since there is no formal education covering the whole spectrum of training required to become a Facilitator, it is especially relevant to investigate other studies and courses they could have attended, as important elements to take into account in the selection of those participating in the Pilot.

<mark>Respuestas a: **Knowledge/competences learnt by education that are relevant for the Project + Other complementary training/job experience relevant for the Project:**</mark>

In Croatia, facilitators knowledge or competences learnt by education that are relevant for the project encompass multimedia proficiency, adaptation of explanations to seniors' level of knowledge, as well as in-house IT training experience in rural settings.

In Latvia, all four facilitators cite their degrees in pedagogy and IT

In Lithuania, mostly through academic formation and incipient job experience, facilitators have matured knowledge about didactics and educology; heritage, tradition and value sharing; public relations, online communication, social networking, internal and external project team/organization communication, project management and computer literacy; library and information centre management, children information skilling and reading, information science, information technology and communication skilling; team and individual working, public speaking and conflict management.

3. Background

Professional experience relevant for the Project

Since there is no formal education to become a Facilitator, the competences acquired through informal learning (i.e. through labour experience) reveal to be a critical supplement to their profile and an important element to take into account in the selection of those participating in the Pilot.

At this regard it is nicely noted that all the 12 facilitators have matured experience

participating in projects, particularly in training projects. Additionally almost those from Latvia y Lithuania has experience in education in values activities (with one exemption in Latvia), youth animation, elderly animation, ICT projects. Only Croatian facilitators are less experienced, particularly with reference to education in values (one of them is not familiar with the concept) and use of ICT with youth and seniors (only two of them).

Regarding different training modalities, again Latvian and Lithuanian facilitators are well experienced in face-to-face, e-learning & blended learning systems. Croatian ones instead lack of sufficient e-learning and blended learning experience.

Diving into other complementary training or job experience that could be relevant for the purposes of the project:

One facilitator in Croatia holds a teacher trainer certificate (issued by Agency for Vocational Training and Education and Adult Education, Croatia) and counts with several years of experience as a project manager (IPA programme, Lifelong learning programme, Europe for Citizens), while a second one counts with fieldwork experience matured during graduate studies, working with people of various backgrounds. The other two didn't report any relevant experience, confirming their lower readiness to become a facilitator of intergenerational dialogue.

In Latvia respondents reported the most recent training courses they attended, ranging from intercultural management to development of e-courses and their implementation in study process, development of educational films, or IT courses. One reported experience working with both young people and seniors, indicating an experience to share with young people on how best to teach seniors so that they better understand and easier to remember.

In Lithuania one facilitator has been a lecturer for "Libraries for Innovation" project (aimed to reduce seniors' digital exclusion), teaching IT for beginners as well as providing seniors with social media courses. Another facilitator shows a blended profile that encompasses public speaking, additional trainings on various computer programs, IT project management, marketing and team building. A third facilitator has organized in a local library the first computer literacy course for local community members (unemployed, older people and senior) and for people with disabilities, as well as improved course on library and children's cultural education, communication psychology, advanced computer literacy, internet sources and modern services for library. The forth respondent held computer literacy courses for elder people in project "Bibliotekos pazangai" and is at the moment involved in the project "Bibliotekos jaunimui" as a mentor of young volunteers (age 18-29) who are working in the libraries.

## *Knowledge of training and learning methodologies*

Asked about the approaches to help people learn (i.e. to facilitate a learning process), Croatian facilitators reported experience in out-of-classroom video workshops, web design workshops while creating a video production of reports covering topics such as the civil society, lifelong learning, arts and culture; mentoring experience (but ignorance about project source methodologies, i.e. CSL and PAAR). One recognised to have only basic training in direct method / instruction, while another avoided answering this question.

In Latvia facilitators are high-qualified professional pedagogues (namely teacher, lecturer, consultant, education quality expert, organizer of educational events, project manager), equally experienced on working with various target groups and people of different ages.

In Lithuania facilitators count with experience as online course mentor, lecturing face to face to various size groups of people, training and learning methodologies for adult people, and mentoring volunteers: working in group's psychology, motivating and focusing people, energizing exercises, effective teaching skills.

The differences noted between the three groups, with Latvians as the oldest facilitators and the most qualified pedagogues, the Croatians as the less prepared group and Lithuanians somehow in a middle point, combining youth with relevant academic preparation and job experience, should be an issue of reflection for the design of Module 1. Interestingly one Lithuanian facilitator counts with a relevant background that might be of help: "*I have undergone "Libraries for Innovation" training for teaching eldery people and am also familiar with Participatory and Appreciative Action and Reflection approach, which ensures effective learning results. I have knowledge on the main principles of this approach: orientation on future, change and positive appreciation.*" In our view, this facilitator can play a key role –through peer learning and support- in the adoption of PAAR methodology for the mentoring process to the whole group.

Knowledge of the pilot local area
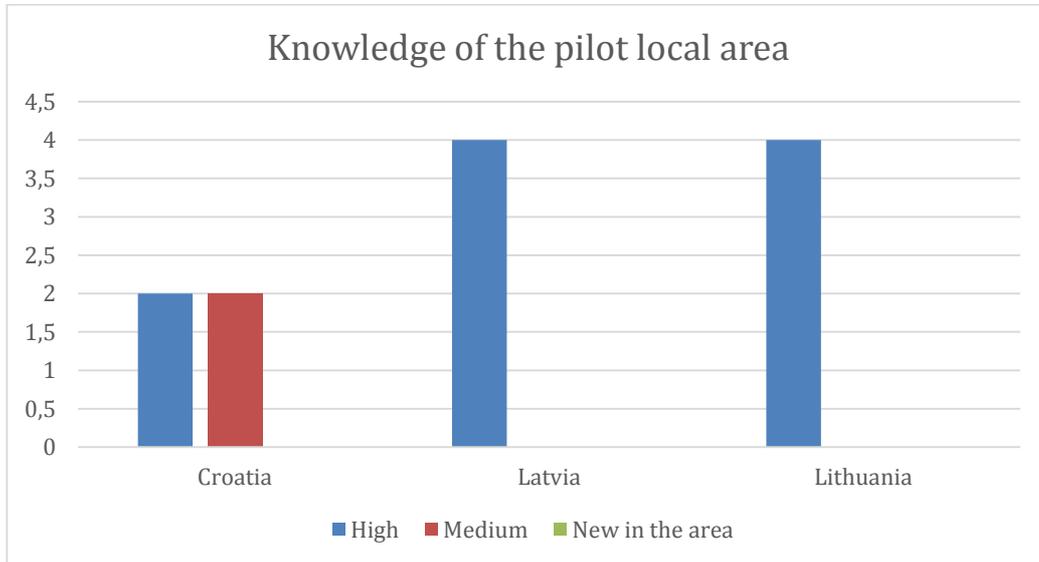
Facilitators seem to be familiar enough with the local area where experimentation will take place. Even though, again in Croatia there is some gap with regards to the whole group, this time in terms of knowledge of the pilot local area

Belonging organisation
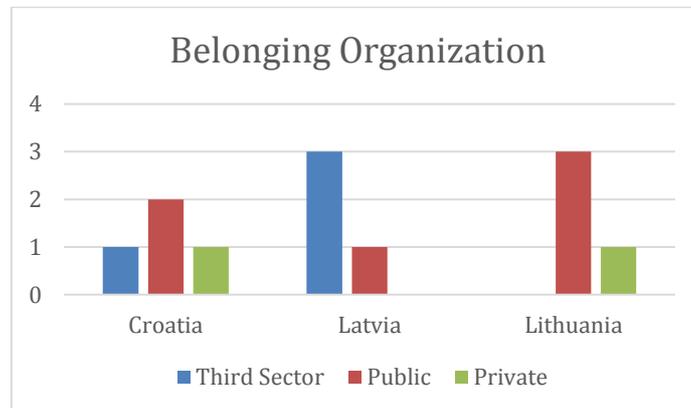
As per organisational typologies and mission, there is a more extended analysis performed in **Part 1: Local Stakeholder Organisations**. It is anyway worth pointing out that, as per facilitators' pertaining organisations, in Croatia there is a balanced combination of typologies, while in Latvia there are no private organisations represented through facilitators and in Lithuania there are no Third Sector organisations represented. Almost all facilitators' organisations are micro-organizations (i.e. with less than 10 staff members), with the exemption of one

organisation in Latvia which is middle size (33 employees). Those organisations do not use to work with volunteers, expect one in Croatia and one in Latvia.

4.   Facilitators'engagement

Formal relationship within the organization and availability

Formal relationship with the Organization
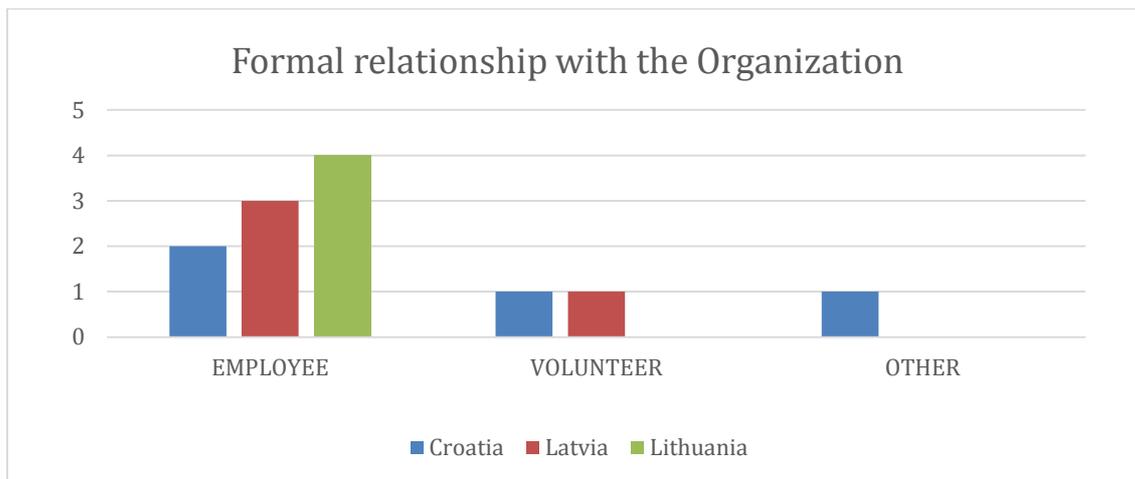
The predominance of Facilitators holding an employment contract with their organisation makes them confident about their ability to maintain their engagement along the Project. However, it is worth remarking that two of the Croatian facilitators are not employees (one serves as volunteer, the other as a freelancer) which makes them feeling less sure of their engagement. **Since the cost of replacing a facilitator during the piloting lifetime can be high in terms of methodology transmission, adaptation to the group, etc, the Croatian partner should find the way to mitigate any risk of dropout**.

Facilitators Interests and expectations regarding Trans-eScouts project

In Croatia, facilitators' interests and expectations around the project range from learning new skills for the benefit of others, working with both youth and elderly as a valuable experience, meeting interesting people, networking and exchange experiences, and discover a new learning experience and mentorship.

In Latvia, the intergenerational cooperation is valued as a relevant component to be embedded in projects' design, as well as the sustainability of project activities. Also the chances for own further professional development as well as the benefits for seniors and youth are taken into account. Despite their experience with youngsters and

seniors, the exchange between the two groups is an attractive original component.

In Lithuania, facilitators like the possibility to make new contacts and partnerships; develop communicational and organizational skills while gaining more experience as a socio-cultural mediator; improving own skills in building online community and running an international project, improving foreign language skills, networking; gain experience leading and working with a group, get fresh ideas to improve work quality at own centre.

All of them seem to be interested in enjoying a good time and interesting job experience.

Support from the LSO vs. support requested by Facilitators
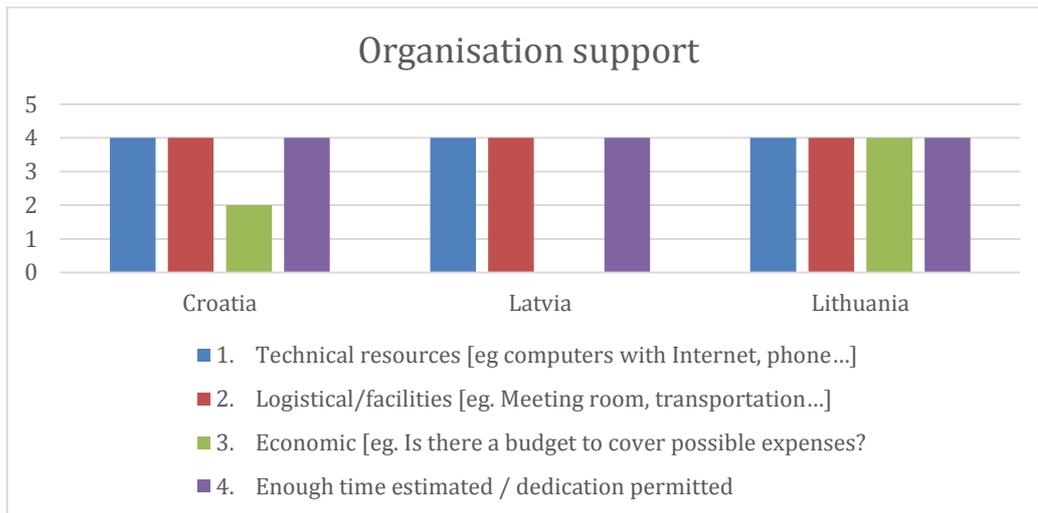
Regarding the support Facilitators might need from their own organization, they say to count with enough support in almost all areas. The only critical area seems to be the economic one, where only 2 Facilitators in Croatia and no one in Latvia count with this kind of support.

5.   Summarising

While in Croatia there is a middle young Facilitators group, in Latvia this is a senior Facilitators group while in Lithuania it can be considered a young Facilitator group. There is a balanced organizational experience in the group, except two Facilitators in Croatia who have a short history of collaboration with their LSO (1-2 years only).

Notably the Latvians form a largely experienced group in the socio-educational sector. In general the sample shows lower experience working with Seniors than with youngsters. The group of eFacilitators in Croatia is a priori the one that would require more support as it is the less experienced.

Regarding their educational level, most Facilitators hold got a University degree, and even a Master; most have advanced ICT competences, and even formal education on Informatics. On the other hand, two Facilitators in Croatia have only reached low formal educational levels, and have intermediate ICT competences.

Most Facilitators are well experienced in similar projects, as well as knowledgeable about online and blended learning. However, a couple of them are not familiar with "education in values" activities (1 in Croatia, 1 in Latvia) nor with ICT use with youth or seniors (2 in Croatia). And Croatian facilitators are not familiar enough with e-learning.

Facilitators are familiar enough with the the local area where experimentation will take place. Again in Croatia there is some gap with regards to the whole group, this time in terms of knowledge of the pilot local area.

Most Facilitators are employees (with two exemptions, again from Croatia), which makes them confident about their ability to maintain their engagement along the project.

Regarding the support Facilitators might need from their own organization, they say to count with enough support in almost all areas. The only critical area seems to be the economic one, where only 2 Facilitators in Croatia and no one in Latvia count with this kind of support.