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Which technological platform is the right one for my care facility? EU Project supports active living in old age

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The EU project PlatformUptake.eu aims to promote the development and dissemination of open platforms and their acceptance, especially in the field of healthy and active aging throughout Europe. For this purpose, Fraunhofer IGD has analyzed platform-based solutions, their ecosystems and stakeholder networks and developed a comparison portal.

There's a lid to fit every pot, as the saying goes. And it probably feels a bit like online dating when computer scientist Silvia Faquiri sets out to match up providers of technological platform solutions with managers of care facilities and multigenerational projects. The IT expert works at the Fraunhofer Institute for Computer Graphics Research IGD in Darmstadt and has spent several years working on the question of how digital networking with its manifold advantages can be harnessed to support independent living in old age. There is no shortage of ideas and offers for networked concepts in Europe, and yet the possibilities of the Internet of Things (IoT) are only slowly being realized in the nursing home and assisted living sector. Reason enough for the EU to help get the industry up and running with the PlatformUptake.eu project.

Although there are already quite a few systems and platforms to integrate different sensors into the living environment, there is also a need for them to actually be used. However, facility operators find it very difficult to identify the optimal open platform to connect the individual technical components – for example sensors that detect when a frail person has taken a fall, or automatic switch-off mechanisms on the stove – and to control them in a targeted manner. Project manager Silvia Faquiri explains the thinking behind PlatformUptake.eu: “We want to close this gap and do the groundwork so that every care facility can work with the best solution for its needs and for the benefit of the people who live there.” As a technology partner in the EU project, Fraunhofer IGD has already worked on open platform solutions such as

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universAAL IoT and accumulated many years of experience in piloting new developments across Europe.

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At the beginning of the project, it was necessary to draw up a detailed inventory of the existing open platforms on the market and to develop key figures for their evaluation. At the same time, the needs and expectations of user groups for platform solutions in the area of Active and Healthy Aging (AHA) were identified and compiled in several workshops. In the course of discussions with seniors, care facilities, public authorities and technology providers, it emerged that not everyone was clear about what exactly constitutes an open platform and what it should be able to do. So, the project team set out to define it. Silvia Rus: "To qualify as 'open', a platform should satisfy various criteria. Three out of a total of nine criteria are that the platform and/or its code is open source, which is to say that it is freely available and transparent, that it has open interfaces and that it is based on open standards. It is particularly important that technical devices and services from different manufacturers are supported, because only then does the platform enable applications that can be tailored to the needs of a wide range of end users." According to Silvia Faquiri, the objective is for an open digital ecosystem to emerge that connects individual users with health/social care services, with lifestyle and preventive applications and with home technology to support independent living, a healthy lifestyle and continued social participation.

Transparency and education are considered vital to dispel concerns about the technologies and to minimize teething problems when entering an open platform. For this reason, the project website clearly presents all information of the existing platform solutions as well as further explanations and analyses by the researchers. In the video series "Voices from the Industry", representatives of various platforms report on their challenges and solutions. But the project partners have gone one step further. "We have set up an effective comparison portal for open platform solutions," explains Silvia Faquiri. "Interested parties can enter their system requirements and are shown the platforms that are best suited to implementing them." Last but not least, users who take the decision to adopt a technology platform will not be left to flounder on their own. A purpose-built learning platform will offer various online training modules. The learning platform and comparison portal will go online at the end of 2021.

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Providers of open platform solutions are welcome to present their technologies on the platform at any time. To include the view of AAL application providers, a questionnaire captures various economic and functional aspects - which is available online.

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For more information:

[More about PlatformUptake.eu on the website of Fraunhofer IGD](#)

[Official project page of the EU](#)

[Online questionnaire for providers of AAL applications](#)



Picture: The EU project PlatformUptake.eu aims to advance the use of platform-based solutions in the field of active aging. (@ PlatformUptake.eu)

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About Fraunhofer IGD

Founded in 1987, the Fraunhofer Institute for Computer Graphics Research IGD is the world's leading institute for applied research in visual computing— computer science based on images and 3D models. We turn information into images and images into information. Keywords are human-machine interaction, virtual and augmented reality, artificial intelligence, interactive simulation, modeling, 3D printing and 3D scanning. Around 180 researchers at three locations in Darmstadt, Rostock and Kiel in Germany develop new technology solutions and prototypes for industry 4.0, digital healthcare and the smart city. In cooperation with its sister institutes in Graz, Austria and in Singapore, they also take on international relevance. With an annual research volume of €21 million, we use applied research to help in the strategic development of industry and the economy.