

Smart Cities: *Towards Smart Citizens*

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Background

- Open University:
Research in Smart Services for Learning
- Heerlen and region Limburg:
Smart Services Campus: bringing cities, universities and companies in the region together to research, develop and implement Smart Services



Smart Cities – Smart Services



What about the people?

Two perspectives:

1. “People prefer to live in ‘not-so-smart’ cities (*‘...in the end they will destroy democracy’*, MacAskill, *The Guardian*)”

(counter movement)



What about the people?

Another perspective possible:

2. “People should be supported with smart technologies to improve the quality of living within cities”

(the stance I take in this presentation)



Important requirement for every Smart Services Initiative:

“Everybody should be able to use the services effectively and safely and should enjoy using it”



Example of “Bad Practice”

- In the Netherlands people should now use a single smart card for all public transport. They should check in and out when taking a bus, train or metro
- Problem:
Many people forget to check out
- Due to:
It requires too much change in behavior.
Default behavior = buy ticket before entrance (not do anything afterwards)



Examples of Smart Services to support workers and citizens in “learning”

Smart Services can support questions like:

- What do you want to learn?
- What is your current knowlege/skill level?
- Are there any suitable activities/resources?
- Is there someone who can help me?



What do you want to learn?

Example:

Software that support people to identify their learning needs and provides suggestions for relevant activities that are:

- available online
- are organised in the city/region



What is your current level?

Example:

Use of language technologies to position learners

Case:

A person writes reports/emails, etc. and with text analysis we can position the person in the knowledge domain



Are there relevant activities/resources?

- Are there any relevant activities organised in the city/region in the coming period?
- Are there any suitable online courses, resources or communities?
- Notify me!



Is there someone who can help me?

- We developed various matching technologies to find people who are able and willing to help you when you encounter a problem in learning some skill or knowledge
- We also take care that experts are not overloaded (balancing in the network)



To conclude

Most Smart Cities initiatives focus on issues like energy or transport, but we could also utilize Smart Services to provide more direct social benefits to the citizens, e.g. by:

- helping them to utilize the infrastructure of the city
- to build competence to keep themselves employable or to support personal growth.



Thank you!!

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