ENABLE – A View on User's Needs

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Abstract. The ENABLE project, which is partly funded by the European Commission, aims to assist elderly people to live well, independently and at ease. In this project a wrist unit with both integrated and external sensors, and with a radio frequency link to a mobile phone, will be developed. ENABLE will provide a number of services for elderly people, among them also a remote control service for the home environment. This paper briefly describes the project in general and then focuses on the initial user needs investigation which was carried out in early 2007 in six different European countries. The provisional findings are discussed and an outlook on the ongoing and future project work is given. A special focus of this paper is on the environmental control service.

Keywords: ageing population, disability, wearable computing, alarm systems, fall detection, guidance, environmental control, smart environment, ambient assisted living.

1 Introduction and Aim

ENABLE is a RTD (Research and Technology Development) project which is partly funded by the European Commission in their 6th Framework Programme under the theme of "Ambient Assisted Living". The aim of the project is to assist elderly people to live well, independently and with an increased feeling of personal security. It will provide a number of services which are based on new mobile technologies [1].

ENABLE will integrate a combination of various systems that already exist as standalone devices, such as an alarm system, a reminder system, various biosensors and environmental controls into a mobile device, in addition to a number of other functions based on user-requirements. The environmental control service mentioned will control most common remotely controllable devices (consumer electronics, domestic appliances, etc.) in a person's home environment. It will also be possible to control building automation systems such as Konnex/EIB.

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