**PROJECT CO-FUNDED BY EUROPEAN REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT FUNDS (ERDF)**

**Lead Researcher:** Dr. Leopoldo Abad Alcalá

**Reference**: CSO2015-66746-R

**Title**: ‘Elderly, E-Commerce and electronic administration: towards bridging the third digital divide’ (Personas mayores, E-commerce y administración electrónica: hacia la ruptura de la tercera brecha digital).

**Financing Entity:** Spanish Ministry of Economy, Industry and Competitivity (Ministerio de Industria, Economía y Competitividad), European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) and Spanish State Research Agency (Agencia Estatal de Investigación).

**Total amount**: 21. 780 €

**Start date**: 01/01/2016

**End date**: 31/12/2018

**Summary:**

This research project is mainly based on the conclusions obtained in the projects ‘Digital divide and elderly: media alfabetisation and e-inclusion' (Brecha Digital y personas mayores: alfabetización mediática y e-inclusión, CSO2012-36872) funded by Spanish Ministry of Economy, Industry and Competitivity and ‘Digital health communication for active aging’ (Comunicación digital sanitaria para un envejecimiento activo, USP-BS-PPC03/2012) funded by Universidad CEU San Pablo. Both research projects confirm elderly’s certainty about the advantages that E-commerce and the electronic administration had to offer as well as their reluctance to make use of them. Demographic data shows a clear aging of the Spanish population (the percentage of people over 65 years of age in Spain will increase from 17.3% in 2010 to 36.4% in 2050 - IMSERSO Report) while studies on e-commerce and e-government indicate an increase of 18% and 11%, respectively, in this type of online activities in Spain in the last year (ONTSI 2014 and INE 2014). However, both increases do not go hand in hand and the percentage of people over the age of 65 who make purchases over the Internet accounts for only 2.3% of the total and those who carry out online procedures with the public administration for 4.14%. In view of this reality, this research project aims to analyse the motivations and causes that limit the access of this population group to this type of products and services.

Considering the basis of this analysis, the aim is to propose criteria, conditions and environments that allow older people to access websites and other types of IT tools related to e-commerce and e-government from a position of security and trust. A methodological triangulation will be used (including quantitative research, focus groups and Delphi method) to carry out a complex and detailed study of the phenomenon to be studied.

The final aim of the project is to establish several criteria that allow to design a guaranteed mark which certifies that the websites who meet a series of established requirements may be classified as ‘Elderly-friendly website’. It would be adopted both by the Administration and by business and sectoral associations as a distinctive element of quality. This would allow the creation of a safe and reliable digital environment for older people who could benefit from all the advantages offered by e-commerce and e-government, especially to cope with the functional, motivational and psychological limitations they have due to their age.