

# Modern voluntary Health Care System

The influence of gamification on the willingness to live healthy

*188.407: Management von Software Projekten*

Group: 12

Dominik Oberhumer

1025454, 033 534, e1025454@student.tuwien.ac.at

Gerhard Schraml

0728067, 033 534, e0728067@student.tuwien.ac.at

Johannes Kurz

0727957, 033 534, e0727957@student.tuwien.ac.at

Matthias Tretter

0726390, 066 937, e0726390@student.tuwien.ac.at

Philip Messlehner

0728061, 066 937, e0728061@student.tuwien.ac.at

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# 1 Synopsis

The ultimate goal of the Modern Voluntary Health-Care System is to create and publish a new form of an e-health system that encourages users to live healthy. This platform is based on a bonus malus system to give users an easy understandable overview on how healthy they live and how they compare to others.

The project is split in both a scientific and an engineering part. The scientific part aims at searching for technical methods to encourage people to live healthier and generating knowledge of the influence of gamification on the willingness of people to live healthy. From a scientific perspective it is interesting to see how well-known methods like gamification and competition can be used to motivate people to live and stay healthy.

For this purpose we try to evaluate and answer some questions, such as:

- How can people, by technical means, be subconsciously forced to change their ways and daily routines?
- Is there a way to achieve practical improvements in peoples health by providing a playful approach to do so?
- Are those improvements comparable to e.g. consulting professionals such as nutritionists, health trainers or even doctors?
- Does competition motivate people to stay healthy?

The knowledge generated from these tests and questions can be used as a scientific backbone on the journey to a more healthy and fit society. From a psychological perspective it's important to generate data on how gamification of all-day tasks like eating, walking and avoiding health traps can improve the attitude and willingness of people to live healthy. Combined with a modern workflow and easy tracking of health-related data by offering a mobile interface our study aims at generating new knowledge in the field of gamification through technology. Moreover the study should reveal useful information on the usability and user interface of such a system. A clunky interface and no support for automatic tracking of information ultimately means a failure of the whole system. It is vital to generate useful and accurate data of each participant because the system stays and fails with the usefulness of the collected data. We can't force the user to manually enter each and every task he does throughout the day, we need to automate this process as much as possible and we need to integrate with other tracking systems to get access to even more data. The interface of the modern health-care system should stay out of the way of the user, it should intelligently track the information needed to generate good statistics of the habits of the participant.

Case studies including user tests in the section of human computer interaction shall lead to a basis for developing a completely innovative and ground-breaking health-care system, which brings benefits to several different parties.

The engineering part is split into different phases. This leads to the creation of a usable, rudimentary but integrated prototype after a short time. Nevertheless, the vision is a long-term development. For each phase it is necessary to find different partners in economy, politics, health-care and science. The partners mainly use our platform for advertisement and customer relationships, which brings benefits to them as well.

Possible Partners are:

- Phase 1:
  - Supermarkets
  - Fitness Centers
  - Restaurants
  - Doctors
- Phase 2 - "Integrating with existing services":
  - Sport-Community with Tracking (e.g. Runtastic, RunKeeper, Nike Plus, ...)
  - Other health-related tracking services (e.g. Pedometer, Weighttracking, ...)
  - Health-related gaming platforms (e.g. Geocaching, ...)
- Phase 3 - "A new form of health-care system":
  - Insurances
  - WHO

When a user buys something in a partner shop the product gets registered at our platform. The system stores the information in an anonymised form and calculates statistics based on a transparent score-schema. The user can then exchange his earned points for gifts like coupons for healthy shopping at a partner's store. Moreover the platform generates a monthly, opt-in ranking of people living in a specific area, people who register them as a group of friends or all registered people as a whole. It therefore aims at answering questions like "which user lives most healthy?", "which user eats most healthy?", "which user walks the farthest distance in a day?" and similar. Partners are able to interact with the user with the use of the platform so they can selectively advertise new products of interest for the user.

The goals of the platform:

- **Improving overall health of the user:** People are getting more sensible for health-care. So they get forced to live in a healthier way. Our health care system is very expensive. The whole government should have a benefit from this platform and more healthy people.
- **Financial benefits for the user:** Users will be given discounts and coupon codes when buying healthy products at partner stores.
- **Advertisement for the partners:** For the partners the platform offers a chance to advertise their promotions. Furthermore they have the chance to give coupons to the users. With this coupon they can interact with the customer. One possible effect is a gain in customer loyalty.



Figure 1: Obese in the EU

## 2 Introduction and problem description

Recent studies show that more and more people are getting obese these days due to an unhealthy lifestyle and way too less exercise, especially in the so called western society. Many studies and health reports in Europe and America describe the problem and show an increasing trend towards being overweight. The biggest problem in this area is that the situation is getting worse and worse. Especially children are rapidly becoming a big part of the problem, the risk of being an overweight child is about 30 percent, according to the Center for Disease Control <sup>1</sup>.

Studies[rki] show, that about 23 Percent of the people in Germany are obese nowadays. Being overweight affects your life in a lot of ways. From today's point of view overweight people are less attractive than others, have less success and are more likely to be the victims of day-to-day discrimination [Carr and Friedman, 2005]. Moreover obesity can lead to very serious health problems like hypertension, asthma, diabetes and other cardiovascular problems.

In the Forbes List for the fattest nation, Austria ranks on place 52 with a fat rate of 57.1%.<sup>2</sup> Figure 1 shows a rather recent statistic of the situation in 25 European countries, divided by sex.

One reason for the negative trend of childhood overweight are bad role models. Parents living an unhealthy lifestyle affect and influence their children. A recent study suggests that at-risk children are identifiable in their first years of life and tries to identify various risk factors

<sup>1</sup><http://news.stanford.edu/news/2004/july21/med-obesity-721.html>

<sup>2</sup>[http://www.forbes.com/2007/02/07/worlds-fattest-countries-forbeslife-cx\\_ls\\_0208worldfat\\_3.html](http://www.forbes.com/2007/02/07/worlds-fattest-countries-forbeslife-cx_ls_0208worldfat_3.html)

<sup>3</sup>. With increased age it gets harder to get in shape, the goal should be to teach children at young ages how to become and stay fit. In the future this negative trend will lead to an increased financial claim in our health care system - more and more people need expensive health treatments because of diseases caused by being obese over the years.

The only way to stop this trend and to reduce the costs for health treatment is to live healthier today. This is the point where our modern health care system comes into play: We want to help people improving their lifestyle and staying fit by motivating them through the help of gamification and technology. Rankings against friends and neighbours as well as bonuses for reaching milestones are a vital part of our system. People shouldn't get forced to live healthy, they should do it self-motivated. We want to increase this motivation. This will eventually lead to a healthier society over time.

Our goal is to make people realize how they can benefit from a healthier lifestyle. A latin quote goes as follows:

*"Mens sana in corpore sano"*

A sound mind in a healthy body, people that are healthy feel happier. Unfortunately it is way harder to motivate people to look after themselves than it should be. One's weaker self is often blamed for becoming a so called modern couch potato. Combined with the increasing stress of today's achievement-oriented society this leads to long working hours without time for healthy meals or exercises. Most people ignore the fact that often small changes of their habits can lead to a healthier lifestyle without having to invest hours a day for doing sports. Taking the stairs instead of the elevator, using a standing desk instead of sitting in front of the computer all day long, taking the bike to work, buying fruits and healthy meals instead of chunkfood - all these things can dramatically improve your fitness and can be easily integrated as your day-to-day routines. What's missing? The motivation to do so. People are easy to influence (in a good sense). People are driven by results they can see and by competing with people they know. People want to be better than others, naturally. People enjoy being rewarded for their efforts. We want to use these inner forces and turn them into something good, we want to use them to help people improve their lives.

Overall our modern health care system should lead to lowered costs for health care in general and it might be possible to integrate the system with private insurance systems. People would see another benefit of living healthy: cheaper insurance. People like to save money.

This project is accompanied by a scientific study. The goal of the study is to generate relevant data on which arrangements can motivate people the most and lead to best results as well as how people interact with a modern, technology-driven health care system, and how to improve these interactions. This data should lead to a good basis for future work on the topic.

### 3 Project goals and deliverables

The goal of the modern health care system is to create a new form of voluntary system that motivates people to live and stay healthy. It is based on several pillars:

- *Technology.* The goal of the modern health care system is to use today's possibilities to support a healthier lifestyle. Technology is often blamed as a culprit for the increasing

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<sup>3</sup><http://news.stanford.edu/news/2004/july21/med-obesity-721.html>

number of unhealthy people. We want to use technology to increase the overall health of people. Currently there are several focused approaches that use technology to improve health, see 5. We want to create a system that does not only track isolated parts of your health-related activities but rather creates a big picture of everything you do and therefore is much more accurate than the existing systems.

- *Ubiquitous Computing and Usability.* The modern health care system should be an easy to use system that transparently integrates into ones living day while staying out of the way and minimizing the need of manual interactions. The increasing success of mobile computing was a start to a new form of computing ultimately leading to ubiquitous and pervasive computing in the future. Ubiquitous computing is a post-desktop model of human computer interaction and describes the integration of computing into everyday activities. The modern health care system should be a case study on how ubiquitous computing performs on a broader range.
- *Psychology.* The modern health care system should use and gather knowledge on what motivates people to stay in shape, especially in the field of gamification. The broad range of data generated by our system should be analyzed and evaluated to generate statistics on how gamification of everyday tasks can improve life. The game designer Jane McGonigal describes her journey from becoming suicidal to enjoying life in her TED talk *The game that can give you 10 extra years of life* <sup>4</sup>. She describes how turning her life into a game changed her perception of life and made her a happy person. This and other examples clearly show that gaming can have a very high impact on peoples life, with the help of the modern health care system we want to generate scientific data to prove this.
- *Security and Privacy.* The increasing trend to an interconnected system and to ubiquitous and pervasive computing leads to higher risks of misuse of data. Health related data is very sensible data and therefore the modern health care system must guarantee data security and privacy from today's point of view. We need to investigate in how communication can stay private and how data can be obfuscated without losing the ability to generate useful statistics.

There are several research questions to be investigated:

- How can tracking be automatized and done transparently without the need of manual interaction?
- How does gamification of day-to-day tasks affect people's motivation?
- How can ubiquitous computing be used to support improving our health?
- How can different ecosystems be integrated into one giant, interconnected system without sacrificing security and privacy?

The main hypothesis to be investigated in this project is in the field of usability and ubiquitous computing. We want to generate knowledge on how a tracking system that monitors your whole day can be designed without being noticeable and annoying. As already stated such a system can only succeed if the generation of useful data is as automatized as possible, manual entries of exercises or nutrition facts can improve the data accuracy but shouldn't be vital for a working system.

The focus of the modern health care system isn't to become a game and therefore to compete with other game approaches like Xbox Kinect or the Nintendo Wii. The main goal of these

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<sup>4</sup>[http://www.ted.com/talks/jane\\_mcgonigal\\_the\\_game\\_that\\_can\\_give\\_you\\_10\\_extra\\_years\\_of\\_life.html](http://www.ted.com/talks/jane_mcgonigal_the_game_that_can_give_you_10_extra_years_of_life.html)

devices is to be a gaming platform, exercising while playing is a secondary factor that is to a great extent used for marketing reasons. Furthermore the modern health care system is no psychological study. The knowledge generated in this area is a side-product and not the main focus and the evaluation of the generated data is not part of the project. We also do not want to create an advertisement platform that can be (ab)used by our partners to spam our users. We do offer targeted ads, but only to a certain extent to be able to gain the interest of more partners in the industry.

## 4 Scientific relevance and innovative aspects

### 4.1 Scientific point of view

The approach to create a game out of tasks for sick people is not new. Dealing with traumatized children by example is nowadays often combined with a game. There are several different developments of games to fit the needs of different patients and problem fields. Furthermore there are very successful social gamifications like "Foursquare"<sup>5</sup> where people check in to places and earn achievements. All of that to keep track of what friends are doing. There is a high scientific potential in our idea because it combines many of already given approaches with existing infrastructure and organizations. For example a hospital can keep track of their patients health status after surgeries or treatments remote. A good idea would be to use the gathered data for better observation of diabetics. Hardware to gather the additional data is already available (see<sup>6</sup>). These possibilities to collect data lead to more knowledge of different diseases and effectiveness of treatments. By example collection the data of stuff people eat and how much they do physical workouts combined with the actual disease can help creating specialized therapies and new approaches to improve existing ones.

### 4.2 Open questions

There are many studies about the influence of games in everyday life. Some scientists (see Jane McGonigal) are trying to use games to let people learn to get the most out of their lives. Her experiments show that habits changed during playing a game with real world content like a global lack of oil are kept by most of the players even after ending the game. These experiments were made with small groups of 500 to 1700 people as a sort of proof of concept. No one knows what impact it may have when millions of people are achieving a healthier life through various gaming strategies and what comes out of the motivation they put into it. So many questions in the area of wide field gamification are still not answerable.

### 4.3 Innovative aspects

The combination of different aspects already in use like surveillance of old people living alone to achieving the daily goal of walking 1.5 kilometers or drinking 2.5 liters of water is new. In Africa there is a project to do a basic doctor consultation by SMS. The reason for this is because nothing is spread that widely other than a simple mobile phone. Going many kilometers for a checkup to the next doctor is often way to far for people with no car or the possibility to use public transportation. Approaches like this one are already rolled out for certain diseases and specialized groups (see<sup>7</sup>). Combining all the existing programs to one big socialized game for healthier living could even change economy.

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<sup>5</sup><https://foursquare.com/about/>

<sup>6</sup><http://www.bgstar.com/web/ibgstar>

<sup>7</sup><http://derstandard.at/1345166647163/Der-Doktor-im-iPhone>



## 5 State of the art / current knowledge

Today there are several approaches to motivate people to live healthier, but most of them are just focusing on doing your regular workout and track your success or just help to have more fun doing physical activities.

Analyzing these current systems you can find two strategies, on one hand the gamification of healthcare (see 5.1) and on the other hand a combination of healthcare and social engineering with special platforms.

### 5.1 Gamification of Healthcare

Nowadays there are several products that are using a gamification approach to motivate the user-base to do sport-activities. This technique is used in the gaming industry to sell sport and fitness games and was also part of creating new remotes and interaction possibilities to evolve the whole gaming industry.

#### 5.1.1 Nintendo Wii

One of the first well-known of these systems was introduced by the Japanese company called Nintendo in the year 2005 and named Nintendo Wii. This product is a typical games console, but offered a new kind of remote called “Wii Remote”. The shape of this remote is also highly inspired by the form of an TV remote and uses 4 infrared sensors on top of this remote which makes it possible to point on several objects presented on the TV-screen with a precision comparable to a common mouse used for personal computers.

The included accelerometer is the most important part of this remote which recognizes motions and rotations of the remote and lets users play their games in a very funny and highly interactive way.

Another additional input device for the Nintendo Wii is called “Wii Balance Board” (see 2), which users have to place on the floor in front of the games console. The users have to stand right on top of this board and are able to control the game by switching their weight from one side to the other side. For user feedback they also included speakers and vibration sensors into the Wii Remote.

All these devices are connected via Bluetooth with the Console and are heavily used by sport and fitness games. Some rehabilitation centers are using these consoles to gamify the process and making workouts more interesting. These rehabilitation centers were also observed and analyzed in medical studies showing, that patients have more fun doing their daily workout and training and also getting back to a normal physical condition more quickly.

#### 5.1.2 Xbox 360 and Kinect

Microsoft also introduced an additional remote for their Xbox 360 in the year 2010 called “Kinect”. Kinect is working with a different approach than Wii Remote. It's like a camera placed in front of the TV capturing the users and working with 3D motion sensor, facial recognition and voice recognition (see 3). These facts lead to one big advantage compared to Nintendo's remote: the user does not have to hold a remote in his hand and therefore the user isn't constrained within his motions and movements.



Figure 2: Wii Balance Board in action



Figure 3: Microsofts Kinect remote

Microsoft also offers a SDK and Development ToolKit to allow programmers to build their own Kinect games or application. One of these experiments was build at the University of Minnesota and its goal was to measure or detect diseases like autism. It's also possible to connect a Kinect remote to a Windows PC which makes it easier to run such applications used in an scientific area.

### 5.1.3 Playstations Remotes Eye and Move

Sony also introduced in the year 2007 and 2009 two remotes, very similar to the previous described remotes from Microsoft and Nintendo.

Playstation Eye is very similar to Xbox Kinect, offering a camera and microphone to capture the users motions and voice. Playstation Move is an Wii Remote like remote with an additional orb which can change the color to give additional feedback to the user and is used as anchor point for the Playstation Eye to recognize the movements. (see 4)



Figure 4: Playstation Move and Playstation Eye

## 5.2 Socialisation of Healthcare

Another way of motivating people to live healthier and doing their regular workout is to add a social component to the experience of making sport. The goal of this approach is to create a social network where you can track your own success and compare it to the progress of your friends.

### 5.2.1 Introducing RunKeeper

RunKeeper was created several years ago and started as a simple tracking platform to track your runs. It works with several smartphones and uses their GPS sensor to track speed, distance, elevation and other things of a run.

In addition they build a website where you can see your previous runs on a map and give you overview of your last activities with monthly stats (see 5).



Figure 5: RunKeeper website and mobile clients

**Social aspects:** The next step was to add social features to their platforms to make this service more interesting for their users. They introduced a route-sharing feature, which makes it possible to find interesting routes near you posted by other runners. To get in contact with these people they introduced the so called Street Team to see the activities from your friends and match against each other, a simple way to gamify your daily workout.

**Enhance the platform:** RunKeeper also introduces some other features to motivate the users even more to do their workout. One of these was the ability to set goals on a monthly based, like total distance or furthest run, etc.

They also thought how to make this platform a little bit more profitable and released a new way to manage your training with this platform, called “Training Plans”. You can subscribe to these plans after paying a small fee and attend a class. The plans are created from professional trainers and have different goals, e.g. complete a 10 kilometres run within 50 minutes. The users track their run to the classes and are allowed and welcome to spread their success within the class with their classmates.

**The look over the rim of a tea cup:** RunKeeper tried to expand their offer to cover more bases. First step was to include more different sports to allow cyclist or swimmer to track their activities too.

Offering sport equipment to track your heart rate or your body weight and body fat were another steps in this direction to track more measurement parameter to observe the users health status.

In their blog they are spreading really nice success stories about people losing a lot of weight because of the motivation they got from RunKeepers apps, platform and equipment.

HealthGraph is another platform they are hosting which focuses more on the social aspects and this system is covering even more health parameter than the original RunKeeper website, but this platform is still in kind of a beta mode.

To catch even more ideas and possibilities they also released an SDK to integrate RunKeeper into other apps and allow other platform to use these collected data.

### 5.2.2 Similar Platforms

There are several other platforms tracking your sport activities, a lot of them do not offer that many features as RunKeeper does, do not have that many users, or do not follow such an intense social approach.

- **Runtastic:** This is a very similar system like RunKeeper but also had a lot of success during the last few years. The company is situated in Linz in Austria and expanded their user base all over the world. A lot of people switched from RunKeeper to Runtastic because of several individual reasons (e.g. design, user-base, etc.).

- **Nike+:** Nike also started with a tracking service for runners, but they used another sport equipment to track the distance of your run. The user had to place these small sensor on one of his shoes and this sensor tracked your step like a step counter and calculated your run distance.

They also began to work on an app and introduce new features and also selling their combined sport equipments like gears and so on. Also the social aspect became more and more important in their system.

One big advantage is the use of Xboxes Kinect which not only combine these two platforms but also combine the two strategies of gamification and socialisation.

- **Other platforms introduced by several sport equipment manufacturers:** Other manufacturers like Polar also introduced their own platforms but have problems to reach a big user-base. They tried to jump on this movement made by platforms like RunKeeper or Runtastic, but couldn't get that much success with their systems, although they have a lot of success with their equipment.

## 6 Method

- *Length: 2-5 pages*
- **How?**
- How should the expected results be achieved?
- What method(s) will be applied? (e.g., empirical study, user-centered design, prototype implementation,...)
- Description of the methods.
- Justifications for chosen methods.

## 7 Detailed description of the workpackages

- *Length: 2-4 pages*
- Structuring the project into self-contained parts.
- Additional verbal descriptions.
- Work packages
  - title
  - goal(s)
  - description
  - expected results
  - responsible person(s)
  - dependencies

## 8 Time plan (Gantt chart)

- *Length: 1-2 pages*
- Realistic estimation of schedule based on workpackages.
- Including milestones (not only when but also what is to be achieved for each milestone).
- Generation of a Gantt chart. (Including phases, milestones, buffer times, critical areas, etc.)

## 9 Human resources / team

- *Length: 1-2 pages*
- Description of the team that is needed to carry out the project. (For the execution phase of the project, not the planning phase.)
- How many people?
- To what extent are individual members needed?
- What knowledge, skills, and experiences are needed for each member?
- Demonstrate that the members will be able to carry out the project successfully.
- Work structure
  - Who will lead the project?
  - How do they work together?
  - Management and coordination
    - \* What communication structures will be established? (e.g., mailing list, blog, CMS, CVS, ...)
    - \* How often will meetings take place? (Who will participate?)
    - \* How will the work be documented?
    - \* How will information be stored and shared?
- Cooperations
  - Will external cooperators be part of the project? (e.g., other research institutions or companies)
  - What is their role?
  - Why are they needed?

## 10 Costs

- *Length: 2-3 pages*
- Rough estimation of cost in form of calculation (table(s)) + descriptive text.
- Justification for the personnel and non-personnel costs (equipment, material, travel and other costs)
- An Excel template is provided as supplementary material to support budgeting.
- Personnel costs
  - Justification for the personnel to be assigned to the project (type of position(s), description of nature of work, length and extent of involvement in the project)
  - The application should include all persons who will be required for the proposed project (project lead, researchers, developers, advisory board, etc.). The available legal categories of employment are contracts of employment for full- or part-time employees (DV) and reimbursement for work on an hourly basis (GB). In addition, a part-time contract of employment (DV 50%, “studentische Mitarbeiter”) may be requested for people who have not yet completed a Master or Diploma program (Diplom) in the relevant subject.
  - The justification of the requested personnel should contain:
    - \* description of type of work;
    - \* extent of involvement (part-time contracts are permitted).
  - Exact numbers of employment categories can be found on the FWF Website (<http://www.fwf.ac.at/de/projects/personalkostensaetze.html>)
- Equipment costs
  - Indicate reasons for equipment costs. The “scientific equipment” category includes instruments, system components, costs for the use of software required by the project and other durable goods provided the cost per item (including VAT) exceeds EUR 1,500.00.
- Material costs
  - This category encompasses consumables and smaller pieces of equipment where the cost per item is below EUR 1,500.00 including VAT. The calculation of requested material costs should be justified with reference to the schedule, work plan and experimental plan. Experience with previous projects should be taken into account.
- Travel costs
  - Funding may be requested for the costs of project-specific travel and accommodation, field work, expeditions, etc. Applicants are to provide a detailed travel (cost) plan broken down by project participant. For brief stays, the calculation of the travel and accommodation costs should be based on the federal regulations governing travel costs (RGV). The RGV rates governing Austria and abroad may be found in the FAQs on the FWF Website (<http://www.fwf.ac.at/de/faq/reisegebuehrevorschrift.html>). For longer stays an appropriate and comprehensible cost plan should be prepared.
- Other costs
  - Independent contracts for work and services (costs for work of clearly defined scope and content assigned to individuals, provided that this is scientifically justifiable and economical)
  - Costs that cannot be included under personnel, equipment, material or travel costs, such as:
    - \* reimbursement of costs towards or for the use of research facilities, e.g. of large-scale research facilities (project-specific ‘equipment time’). Applicants should obtain and submit multiple offers;
    - \* costs for project-specific work carried out outside the applicant’s research institution (e.g. for analysis work performed elsewhere, for interviews, for sample collection, for preparation of thin slices etc.). Applicants should obtain and submit multiple offers;
    - \* honoraria for test persons;



## 11 Expected implications and risks

- *Length: 1-2 pages*
- Importance of the expected results for the discipline
  - To what extent does the proposed research address important challenges?
- Importance of the expected results for other areas
- What are possible risks of the project and how can they be alleviated?
  - What factors could lead to a failure of the project?
  - Which factors or persons could support the project and increase the chance for success?
  - What if important team members leave the project?

## 12 Ethical considerations & security issues

- *Length: 1-2 pages*
- Provide a brief explanation of the ethical issue involved and how it will be dealt with appropriately.
- Are there any security-sensitive issues that apply to your proposal?

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## Abbreviations

**MSWP** Management von Software Projekten

**WP** Work Package

**OECD** Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development

**RKI** Robert Koch Institut