

# **Social services in digital transformation**

## **Perspectives for service organizations in local disability, mental health and long-term care fields**

Johannes Schädler || University of Siegen || 2 December 2021

# Structure

## **1. Introductory remarks**

→ „clients and services under pressure“

## **2. Digital transformation**

→ „clients in hope and services under challenge“

## **3. EURECO-conference**

→ „what is on offer?“

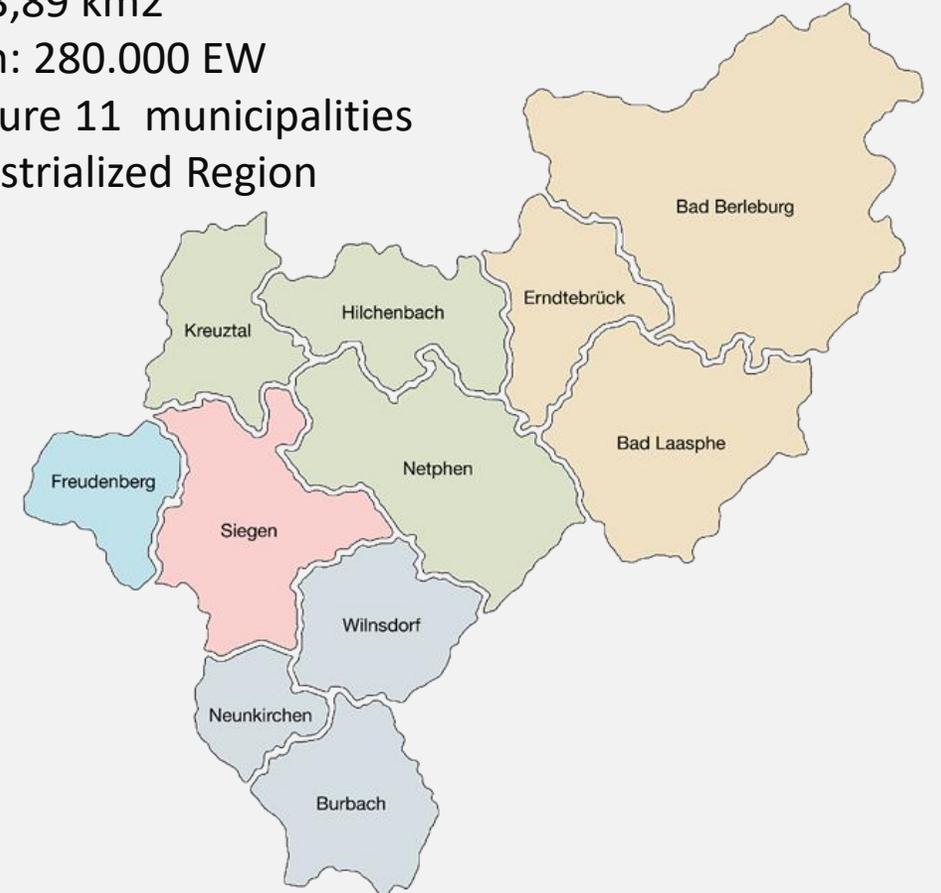


# The speaker's position

District of Siegen-Wittgenstein  
South-Westphalia / NRW

Germany / EU / Earth

- Area 1.123,89 km<sup>2</sup>
- Population: 280.000 EW
- Pol. Structure 11 municipalities
- Rural-industrialized Region
- University



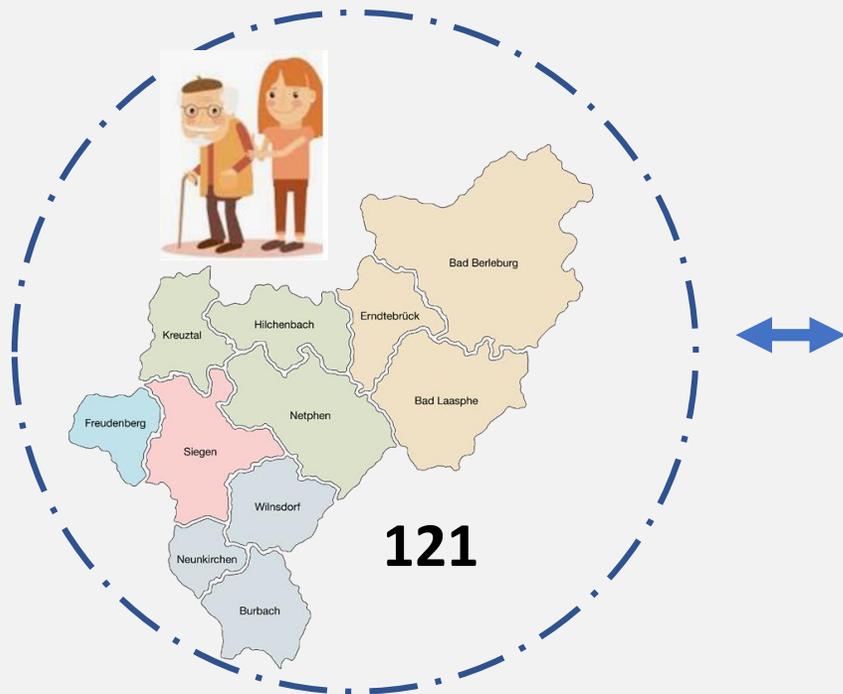
# Social services ...

- are organisations,
- that provide services
- with professional and non-professional 'staff' and technology
- for people with social problems,
- mainly funded by public authorities,
- framed by welfare state legislation,
- shaped in their routines by developmental paths and institutionalized rules
- embedded in 'organizational fields' and political regions.

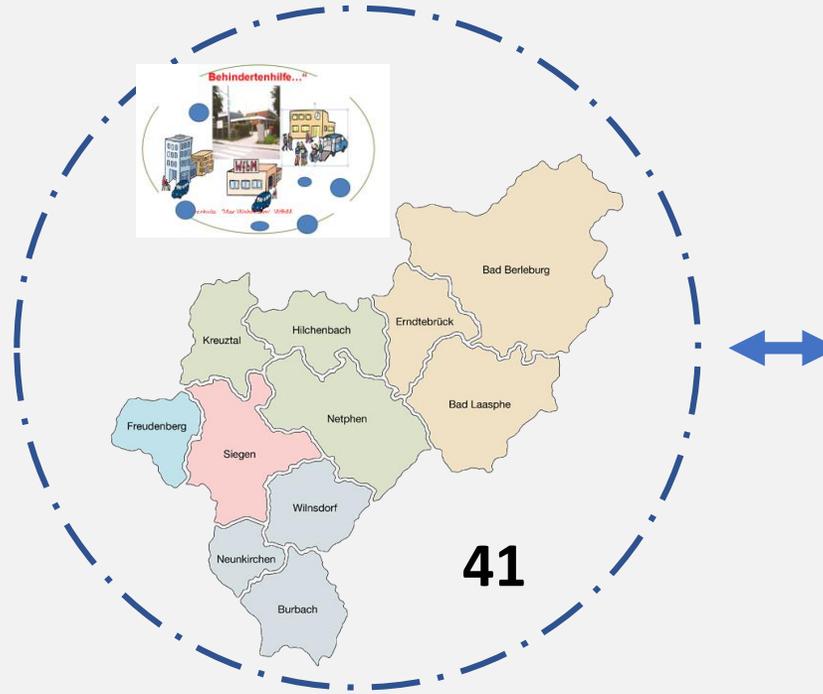
... are under pressure because of permanent struggle for resources, conceptual development needs, **pandemic, and staff shortages.**

Ca. 200 services in

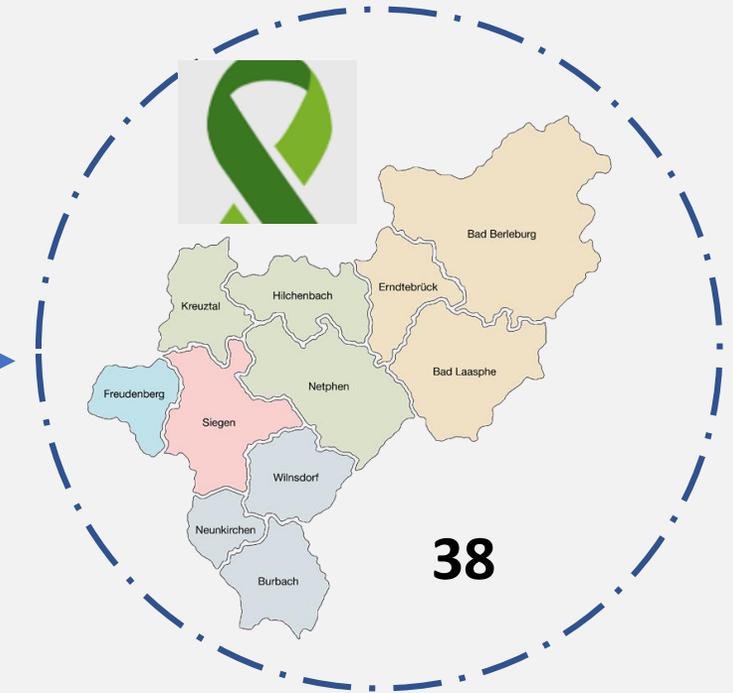
## Long-term-care services



## Disability services



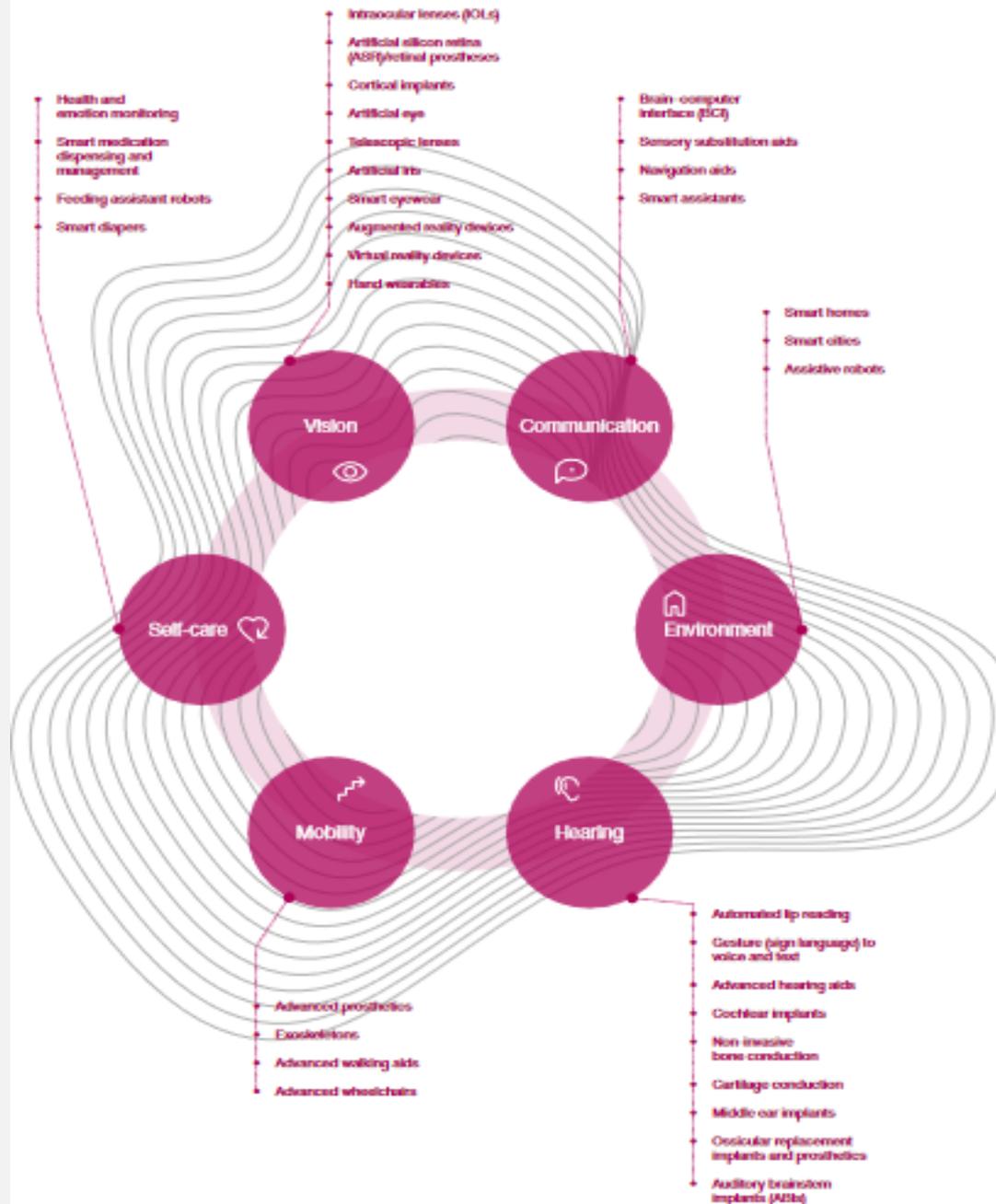
## Mental health services



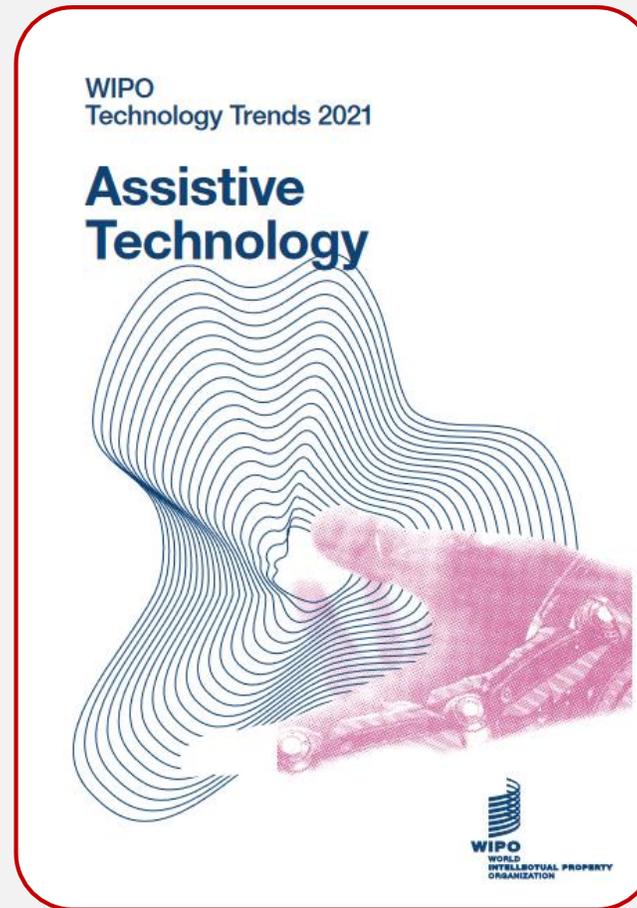
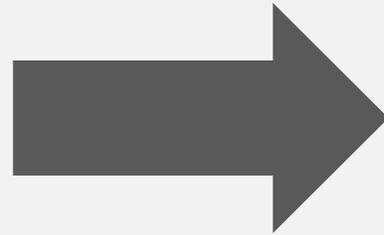
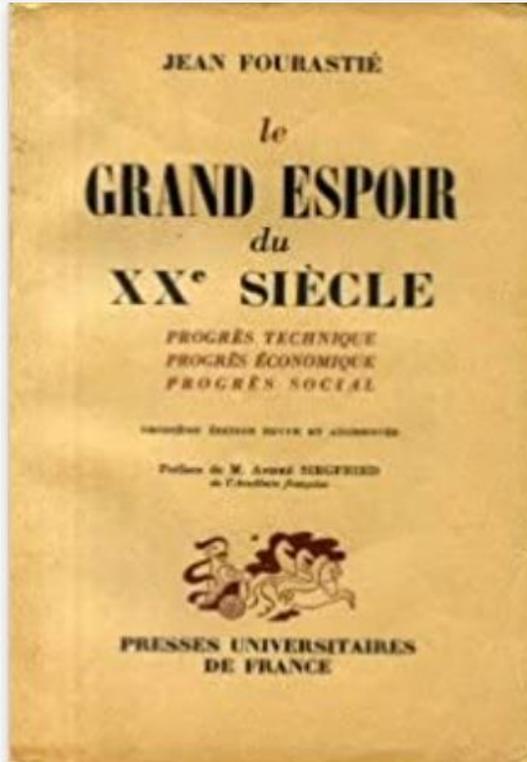
... fields have **differences** (target groups, legal basis, traditions, professions ... ) and **communalities** (share territory, goals, problems, solutions, strong calls for more integrated care, and the **challenges of digital transformation**)

# High dynamic in development of technological innovations – great expectations

- Progress in sensors- and actors- technology and miniaturization
- leads to ever more possibilities for Human-Computer-Interfaces
- that result in development of many ICT-based „consumer technologies“ and,
- assistive technologies in forms of „wearables“, „usables“ and „installables“,
- with new options for independent living of persons with major dependencies



# Digitalization: „Le grand espoir de XXI. siècle?“



- Promises and great expectations for easier and self-determined life for all!
- Will progress leave certain people behind?
- the digital divide?

- Jean Fourastié (1952) was right and wrong
- Today 74% of Europeans work in the service sector, but: „service societies“ see
- „the return of the servants“

# The digital divide

“... refers to the gaps in access to information and communication technology (ICT). These gaps threatens the “ICT have-nots”, whether individuals, groups or entire countries. Education and learning lie at the heart of these issues and their solutions. The gaps that define the "learning digital divide" are thus as important as the more obvious gaps in access to the technology itself” ([www.entelis.net/glossary](http://www.entelis.net/glossary))

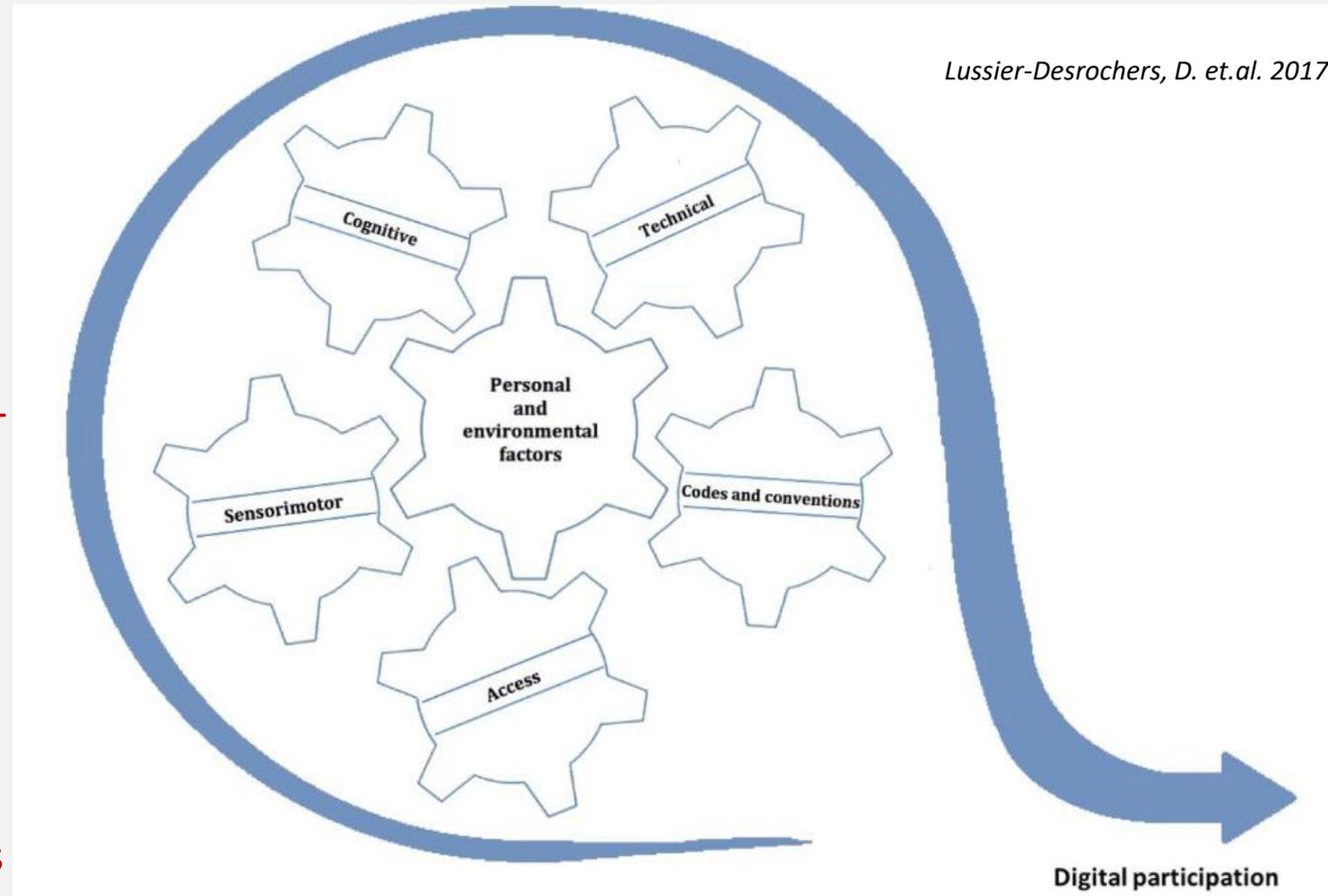
- What does this mean for social services in a region?

# Digital challenges for social services and clients that are „distant from technology“ on various levels

1. level of direct interaction and digital participation of clients
2. level of organizations
3. Level of service infrastructure
4. Level of regional development and coordination

# Pre-conditions of digital participation of persons 'distant to technology' personal and environmental factors and their interplay

- **Material dimension:** availability of devices and internet access.
- **technical dimension:** application knowledge and skills
- **Assessment of assistive technology needs:** availability of support for individual sociotechnical assessment
- **Mental dimension:** confidence in digital self-efficacy
- **Cognitive dimension:** knowledge and understanding of functional relationships
- **Sensory-motor dimension:** tactile, sensory perception-related and motor skills
- **Dimension of social conventions and codes:** Knowledge and understanding of social rules in virtual communication



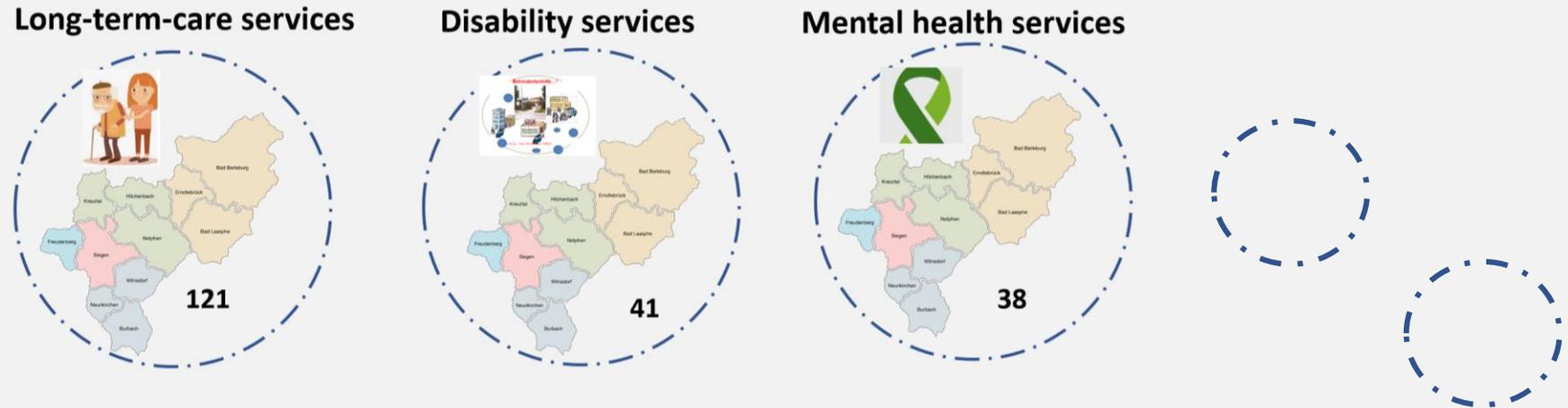
# Co-creation of socio-technical support arrangements and user training

- Large diversity of dependencies makes assessment and planning of individual socio-technical support arrangements a challenging task: “inventions for the universe of the one”
- Existing formal procedures for individual service planning are still ,digitally blind‘
- More conceptual work needed, but some is already available: „seven steps model“ (Klaus Miesenberger) or „4-wheel concept“ (Jan Hoogerwerf) (WS A-1) or „Co-creation in living-labs“ (David Unbehauen, WS A-2)
- Co-creation must go together with training options for people „distant from technology“, see e.g. the experiences from ,KI-I-empowerment center‘ in Linz or the PIKSL-programme (WS 3-C)

## Ad 2: Challenges on the level of organizations

- Service organizations in digital transformation change management structures, concepts, equipment and service routines (WS C 1 or A 1 on online based counselling and support):
- Approaches to develop a „**digitalization index**“ measures digital transformation in a company/service and provides comparability (BIBB 2021)
- Unmet digital training needs in staff corresponding with deficits in professional qualification, but already some curriculum concepts emerge (see DSSkills-project WS C2)
- Co-operation with ,**makers**‘ and **community platforms** (WS in B sessions)

# Ad 3: Regional service infrastructure and assistive technology:



Need for new advisory services, but what format:

- a platform?
- a virtual network?
- an advisory centre?

Advisory services for assistive technology and digital participation

A need for networking with „facilitators“ and „makers“ in local communities

## Ad 4. Level of regional development and coordination of digital transformation – „tackling the digital divide“

- According to art. 9 UN CRPD there is public responsibility of local authorities to provide digital infrastructure for all, **but how can this be implemented?**
- To make use of the potential of digitalization for its citizens a region should have an accessible advisory infrastructure for assistive technology available for all services across fields, and adult training offers for persons ‚distant to technology‘, **but how could this look like?**
- Digital transformation of social services in a region can be facilitated by cooperation and mutual exchange of experiences between service organizations, OPD’s and other local actors, **but how can this be initiated and coordinated?**
- Co-operation and mutual exchange should be fostered among European regions with similar geographic, economic and social conditions, **but how could comparative research look like with different research questions?**
- **There is work to do for our conference and for the EURECO-platform!**

**Thank you for your attention!**  
**Danke für die Aufmerksamkeit!**

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