



European Foundation  
for the Improvement  
of Living and Working  
Conditions

The tripartite EU Agency providing knowledge  
to assist in the development of better social,  
employment and work-related policies

# The Impact of Digitalisation on Social Services

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EPSU

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# Presentation outline

- Project summary
- Scope and definitions
- National digitalisation strategies and key issues
- Introduce: Use of digital technologies in the *design* of social services

# Project Summary

# Objectives and research questions

- Eurofound will address how digitalisation can impact on the **design and delivery of social services**. This will help to close a knowledge gap regarding the opportunities and risks associated with technological change.
- Can new technologies support progress towards fairer access and higher quality?
- What new services and delivery methods are emerging, and what is the demand for these services?
- How are users and providers impacted?

Source: Programming document 2017-2020, pp.11-12

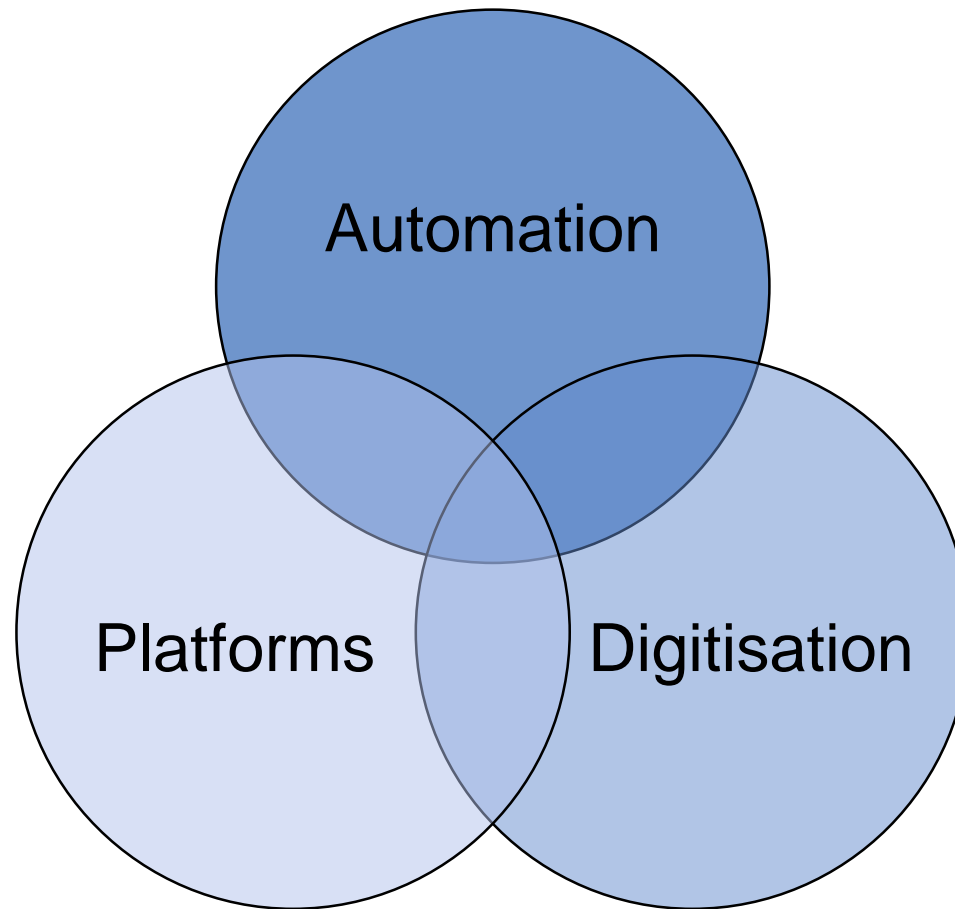


# Description of research

- Short contribution from the Network of European Correspondents (NEC):
  - Mapping out digitalization policies and initiatives
  - Information about the *role* of digital technologies in service delivery
- European overview and 5 country case studies
  - In depth information about digitalization policies and initiatives and their impact on the accessibility of social services
- Contribution from the Network of European Correspondents (NEC):
  - Use of digital technologies in the design phase of services

# Scope and definitions

# Digitalisation



“Automation, digitalisation and platforms: Implications for Work and Employment”

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# Digital technologies

- Emerging digital technologies used in the design and delivery of social services

## Automation

Robotics

Artificial  
intelligence &  
Machine Learning

## Digitisation

Internet of things

Virtual/augmented  
reality

## Coordination by platforms

P2P

Blockchain



# Social services

- Country case studies and European overview: services in cash and in kind (ESSPROS definition)
- European Pillar of Social Rights
  - Childcare and support to children (e.g. parenting support, child benefits)
  - Social assistance welfare and benefits
  - Unemployment benefits
  - Old age income and pensions
  - Inclusion of people with disabilities (including incapacity and disability benefits)
  - Long-term care
  - Housing and assistance for the homeless
- Public, private for profit and private non profit

# National Digitalisation Strategies

# Digital Strategies

## Austria

- Digital Roadmap Austria, 2017
- Focus health services

## Estonia

- Estonia ranks high eGovernment (Baller et. Al, 2016)
- Digital technologies for social services still limited, mostly developments ICTs

## UK

- Government Transformation Strategy, 2017
- Devolved system and funding

## Finland

- Health and social services reform, 2021
- Social services behind healthcare

## Italy

- Strategy for digital growth 2014-2021
- Users critical of digitalisation?

# Robotics - Hobbit Mutual care robot (AT)

- Assist elderly people, helping elderly people feel safe at home
- Robot is perceived positively
- Feeling of security not increased



Source: The Hobbit – Mutual Care Robot

# Virtual Reality - Wildcard (IT)

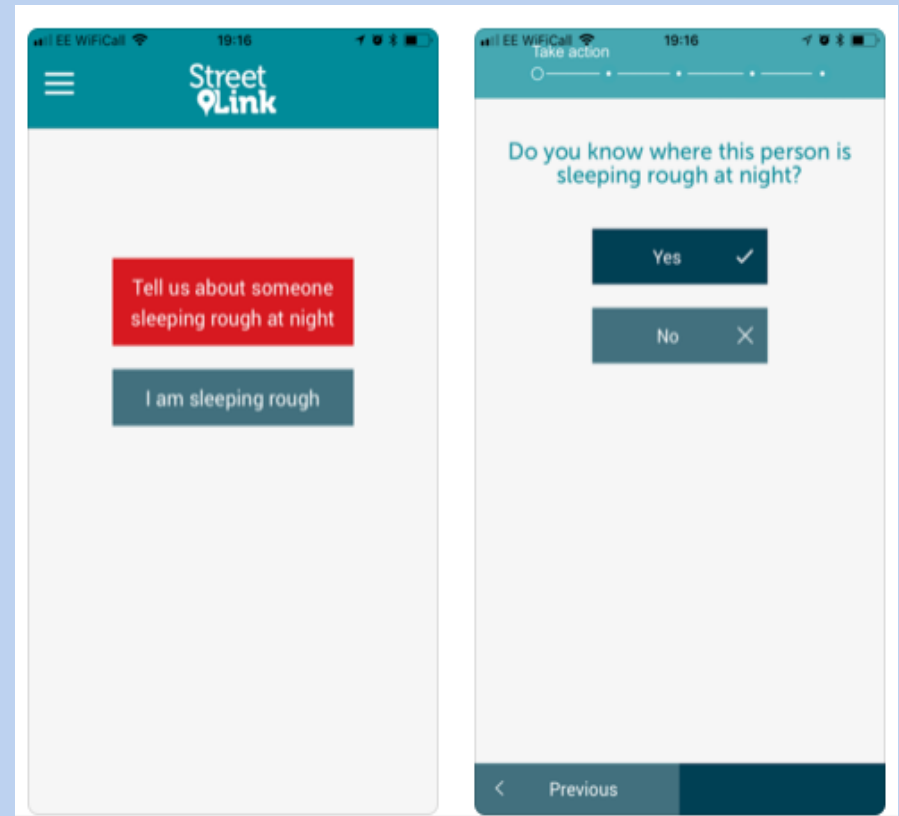
- Support for children with neurodevelopment disorders (autism, ADHD, intellectual disability)
- Gaming activities
- Affordable cost and design features
- Unknown how children generalize skills acquired in VR to the real world, physical discomforts of VR



Source: Wildcard and two games

# Platform - StreetLink app (UK)

- StreetLink app (UK)
- Assistance for homeless people
- Between 2012-2017 received 92, 000 alerts



Source: Streetlink

# **Digitalisation in the design of social services**

# Use of digital technologies in the design of social services

<b>Name of Provider</b>	<b>Type of social service</b>	<b>Who was involved in the design of the social service through using digital tech?</b>	<b>Type of digital tech used in social service design</b>	<b>How the digital tech was used in the design of the social service</b>
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- What is the impact of using digital technologies in the design of social services?
- In your national context, what are the drivers or motivations for using digital technologies in the design of social services and social service policies?



# Thank you

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