

Ingo Meyer

**The possible role and contribution
of ICT to the social and economic
participation of senior citizens**

empirica, Bonn / Germany

▪ About empirica

▪ empirica
ageing-related
activities

▪ An age-friendly
IS

▪ ICT and older
people

▪ Mainstream
ICT

▪ Special
purpose ICT

About empirica

- Germany-based research consultancy
- Active in eBusiness, eWork, eHealth, **eInclusion & eAccessibility, ICT for independent living, ICT and the ageing population**
- Operating the Secretariat of the SEN@ER Silver Economy Network of European Regions



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empirica ageing-related activities

- SeniorWatch (1999-2002)
understanding the market dynamics of ICT products and services relevant for older (and older disabled) people
<http://www.seniorwatch.de>
- eInclusion@EU (2004-2006)
support EU Information Society policy-making targeted to population at-risk groups (incl. older people)
<http://www.einclusion-eu.org>
- Study “The Demographic Change – Impact of New Technologies and Information Society”
Does industry provide ICT products and services which meet the specific requirements of elderly users?
- SOPRANO - Service-oriented Programmable Smart Environments for Older Europeans (2007-2009)
Integrating stand-alone AT, smart home technology and telecare services into an innovative independent living service



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An Age-Friendly Information Society 1

- **Prevailing age divide in the virtual space:**
 - 30 years to catch up under “no change” assumption (52% of 55-64 online by 2034, “cohort effect”)
 - emergence of second order divide (40% 50+ late beginners with sub-average skills)
- **Factors influencing ICT use of older people:**
 - Socio-economic / costs
 - Attitudes and motivations
 - Skills
 - Functional restrictions

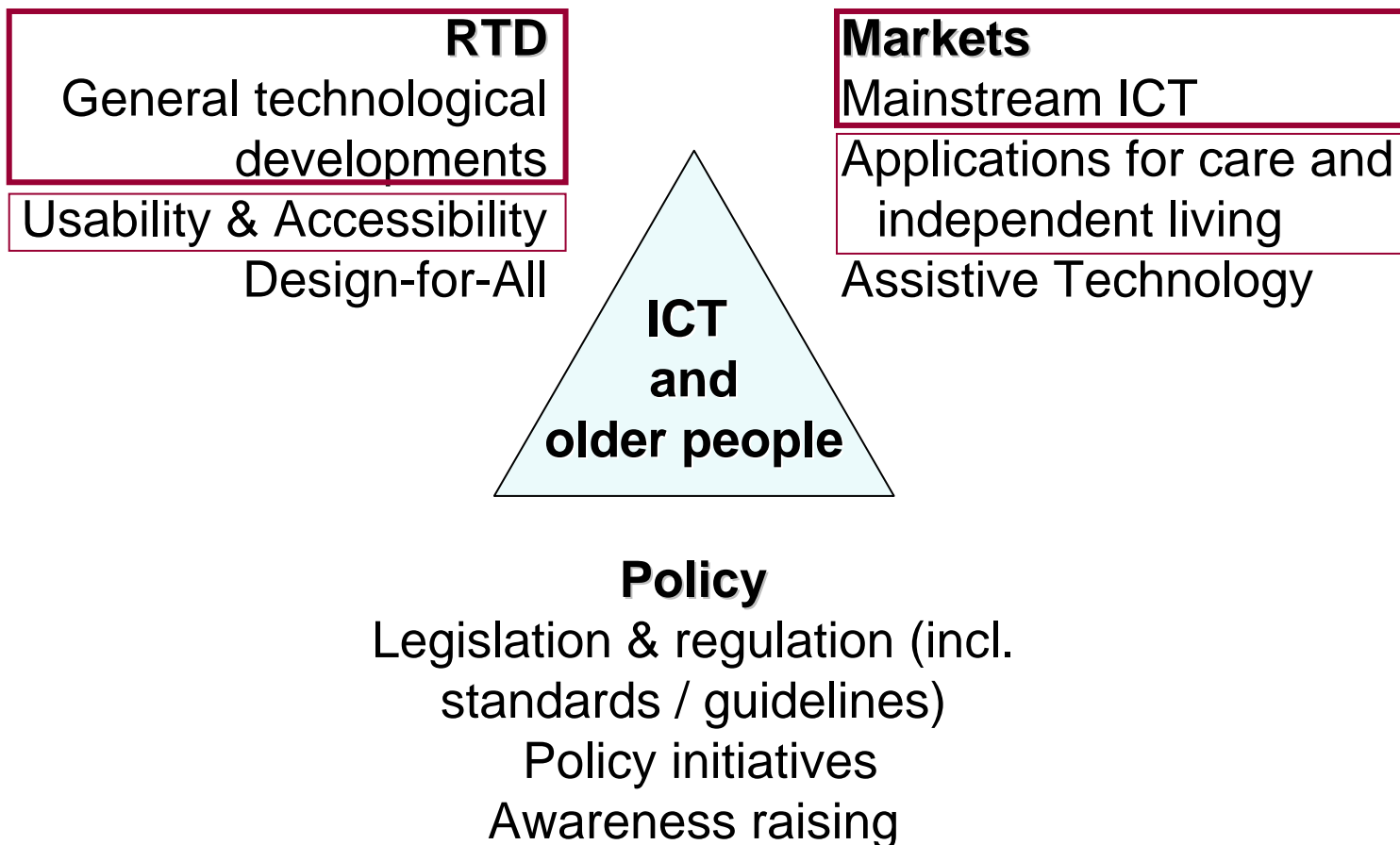
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An Age-Friendly Information Society 2

- Missing potential practical benefits:
 - doing things remotely / basic IS benefits
 - access to health information (“health divide”, DK: 7.2% 18-24 vs. 0.8 65+)
 - consumer empowerment
 - Market opportunities lost
 - mainstream ICT
 - Assistive Technologies
 - applications for care and independent living
 - Social risks:
 - discrimination through lacking accessibility and usability (20% 50+ severe accessibility problems , 40% have slight problems)
 - more services available only online (e.g. 50% of saving banks branches to be closed down in Germany over coming years)
- 2005-2020: 10mio increase in no. of people 50+ with moderate vision problems (same for hearing)

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- **empirica ageing-related activities**
- **An age-friendly IS**
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ICT and older people: influencing factors



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Addressing the Market: Mainstream ICT

- **Product design**
 - Bearing in mind needs and restrictions experienced by older people
 - High usability
 - High accessibility, alternatively following Design-for-All
- **Pricing**
 - ICT products and services cheap enough for low income people (substantial market share)
 - ICT products and services with favourable cost-benefit ratio -> demand for high quality solutions
- **Marketing**
 - Tailored to the heterogeneous target groups

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Addressing the Market: Care / Independent Living / AT

- **Product design**
 - Bearing in mind needs and restrictions experienced by older people and other relevant customers (e.g. carers)
 - High usability
 - High accessibility, alternatively following Design-for-All
- **Pricing & Marketing?**
 - Often no markets in classical sense (e.g. third payer markets)
 - Highly regulated, provision schemes, reimbursing institutions
 - Know your markets! Include stakeholders!

**Thank you very much for your
attention!**

For more information please visit:

<http://www.empirica.com>

<http://www.einclusion-eu.org>

<http://www.seniorwatch.de>

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