

## Call for papers

# Digitalization and regional transformation – new challenges in turbulent times

28.-29. Nov. 2024, Düsseldorf, Germany,

Location: 'Malkasten',  
Jacobistraße 6a, 40211 Düsseldorf

Abstract  
deadline:  
October 1, 2024

Notification of  
acceptance:  
October 15, 2024

Registration  
deadline:  
October 31, 2024

*Abstracts* – max. 750 words - should be submitted by email to: [jacob.hochhaus@uni-siegen.de](mailto:jacob.hochhaus@uni-siegen.de)

### Thematic scope

The transformation of economic systems is a well-established topic in economics and related fields. However, what sets the current era apart is the concurrent emergence of multiple global megatrends – such as demographic shifts, digitalization, and climate change – each unfolding with a breadth, intensity, and velocity that is without precedent. These megatrends bring about specific structural and economic challenges and impacts at the regional level. For example, urban areas encounter a situation that is qualitatively different from those in rural areas. Potential reasons for this are manifold. First, the historical technological development of a region influences its capacity to respond to contemporary impulses. Second, the infrastructure in regions varies, often being less developed in rural areas compared to their urban counterparts. Third, the geographical position of rural areas, typically featuring a core-periphery structure, presents unique challenges compared to urban settings, such as longer commutes, underdeveloped public transportation, and logistical adjustments required by businesses to accommodate regional traffic limitations. Fourth, demographic change and related shortages of skilled labor is likely to become a more pronounced issue in rural regions due to the increasing drift of young employees to urbanized regions.

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*Mittelstand-Digital Zentrum Ländliche Regionen*

Mittelstand-  
Digital

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The two-day workshop focusses on digitalization and various aspects of regional transformation. Specifically, we aim to deepen our understanding of how the introduction, implementation, and spread of new digital technologies within regional innovation systems impact existing technological and economic structures and development potentials, the labor market, industrial relations, vocational and further training opportunities, as well as various aspects of sustainability. We are especially interested in exploring how these challenges affect rural regions.

We welcome submissions on the following – non exhaustive – list of topics:

- How does the implementation of new digital technologies affect the labor market and/or potential qualification measures? (Session organizer: Pusch, T.; Gerbracht, M.; Hochhaus, J.)
- How does the implementation of digital technologies affect traditional industries and their competitiveness in rural industrialized regions? (Session organizer: Rothgang, M.; Kudic, M.)
- How does the implementation of new digital technologies affect the achievement of sustainability goals (and vice versa)? (Session organizer: Buchmann, T., Wolf, P.; Kudic, M.)

We invite contributions from the field of economics, sociology, organization science, economic geography and socio-informatics. We are interested in experiences from different countries and regions and welcome a variety of methods, including both qualitative and quantitative approaches, social network analysis, agent-based simulations, evolutionary game theory, experimental methods, design-case studies, ethnographic field studies, as well as historical and institutional analyses.

### **Organizing team**

Muhamed Kudic<sup>a,b,c</sup>, Toralf Pusch<sup>d</sup>, Marc Gerbracht<sup>a,b</sup>, Jacob Hochhaus<sup>a</sup>, Tobias Buchmann<sup>e</sup>, Patrick Wolfe<sup>e</sup>, Michael Rothgang<sup>f</sup>

### **Concept of the event:**

The event is conceptualized as a two-day workshop. The first day – the science day – is scheduled for the 28. November 2024, addresses predominantly researchers, and calls for latest contributions in the above introduces thematic fields. The second day – the policy and practitioner day – is scheduled for the 29. November 2024. Results and insights from the first day are processed and made available. The second day is devoted to practitioners, policy makers, entrepreneurs, managers, and researchers. We enable transfer of insights gathered at the first day and provide network opportunities with a broader audience of stakeholders. Details on keynotes and an inspiring podium-discussion will be provided as soon as available.

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