S. MERKEL, P. ENSTE. ***Technology acceptance of elderly users and social inequalities: Results of a qualitative study.*** *Gerontechnology 2016;15(suppl):49s*; doi:10.4017/gt.2016.15.s.851.00 **Purpose** Information and communication (ICT) technologies have the potential to support daily life and have become of growing importance in ageing societies. Especially concerning (health)care of older persons, many modern societies increasingly rely on technologies such as telecare, telehealth or ambient/active assisted living. However, there is often a lack of technology acceptance especially among the socially weak who have limited financial and educational resources. People who could benefit most from gerontechnological products and services are in danger of being excluded. The use of technology can also itself be seen as a dimension of social inequality[1]. As determinants of social inequality, the literature generally highlights, besides age itself, gender, education, and social networks or household size[2,3]. Therefore, the aim of our study was to analyse the influence of social inequalities on technology adoption and use of older persons. **Method** We conducted problem-centered interviews to gather the data. The interviewees were sampled based on determinants of social inequality. Each participant had to meet at least two out of the following criteria: being female, living alone, being older than 80 and having a low level of education. Interviews were carried out between May and September 2015 recorded and transcribed verbatim. Each transcript was anonymized and analysed using qualitative content analysis supported by MAXQDA11[4]. The process was organized according to the following steps: At first there was a familiarization with the data, including reading of each manuscript multiple times. Afterwards, categories were generated using a deductive-inductive approach. We generated categories based on previous research and theories on the acceptance of technology by older users. In addition, we developed categories based on the interviews. Therefore, two researches, who also conducted the interviews, independently worked through approximately 25% of the data and discussed the results. The next step was the first coding phase of the data; the researchers who developed the categories went through approximately 40% of the material. If necessary, the coding scheme was refined; conflicts were solved through discussion. As a last step, the complete material was coded based on the final scheme. **Results & Discussion** In total, we included 17 participants in our study: 15 of those were female. The average age was approximately 80 years, all were living alone and none of the participants had a university degree. Considering the determinants of social inequality we found that in particular age, household size and gender had an influence on the technology adoption and use. Most of the interviewees did not had any experiences in using modern technologies like a PC during their private or working lives but showed a positive attitude towards technology in general. This attitude was mainly influenced by previous experiences: During the so-called 'household revolution' technologies like washing machines were perceived as a great help – especially by female persons. However, the adoption of and the openness towards new technological generations stopped with the advent of the internet. With respect to ICT-based devices the interviewees were rather sceptical. One crucial aspect that negatively affected the attitude towards ICT-based devices was that the respondents did not see any sense in dealing with modern technology because they did not recognise any additional value as they did during the household revolution. Critical life events like the death of the partner or a divorce but also volunteering activities (e.g. in a public library) resulted in changes of perception – in particular, if these events resulted in living alone.

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