

Governance, Social Policy and Communication

Comparative policy mapping of technology assistance for independent living of older adults S. Ishihara, K. Ishihara. *Gerontechnology* 25(s)

Purpose This study maps how governments frame technology assistance for independent living of older adults across a multi-country set: the EU (supranational) and EU States (Belgium, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Malta, Netherlands, Portugal, Slovenia, Spain and Sweden), the UK (England plus devolved administrations), and US, Canada, Mexico, Brazil, South Korea, Taiwan, Singapore and Japan. The goal is to identify cross-national similarities and differences in policy narratives and instruments—particularly the balance between (a) technology as part of long-term care (LTC) and community support, (b) digital health infrastructure, and (c) innovation/industrial “Gerontech” agendas. **Method** Government policy documents were identified for each jurisdiction (e.g., EU ageing and care strategy documents; national digital health strategies; adult social care reform papers; long-term care plans; official telecare/teleassistance guidance; and care-technology/robotics priorities). Fifty-five documents were collected. From these documents, a controlled keyword set was coded per jurisdiction (binary presence/absence), covering themes such as telecare, digital health, interoperability/data platforms, assistive technology, robotics/AI/IoT, housing/home modification, caregiver support, and industrial policy. Two analyses were performed: 1. A country × keyword co-occurrence matrix to compare policy profiles and identify “core” versus “signature” (rare) emphases. 2. Correspondence Analysis (CA) on the contingency table to map countries/regions and keywords jointly in two dimensions, enabling interpretation of dominant policy axes and clusters. Keyword extraction was computed with ChatGPT 5.2-Pro. **Results and Discussion** The keyword matrix shows strong convergence on several cross-cutting themes—especially digital health, telehealth/telecare, and care integration embedded in policy. CA reveals two salient dimensions: Dimension 1 (orientation toward industrial Gerontech vs. social-care digitization). The right pole is associated with AI/IoT, wearables, remote monitoring, robotics, and industrial policy, reflecting a technology-and-market framing. Countries such as South Korea, and to a lesser extent Japan and the United States, align with this orientation. The left pole aligns more closely with social care reform and technology-enabled care governance (e.g., digitization of social care records and service delivery), exemplified in England (UK) and in parts of the UK-wide care reform discourse. Dimension 2 (digital infrastructure vs safety-at-home and housing supports): The upper pole is driven by eHealth infrastructure, interoperability, data platforms, and integrated records, with Belgium and Sweden relatively prominent. The lower pole reflects ageing-in-place service models, including telecare/teleassistance, emergency response, falls prevention, housing and home modifications, and related caregiver supports; these align with countries such as France, the Netherlands, Germany, Canada, and Taiwan (LTC 2.0’s ageing-in-place orientation). Overall, three policy narratives emerge across the map: 1. Infrastructure-first digital health (platforms, interoperability), 2. Service and housing-centered ageing in place (telecare, safety, housing adaptation), and 3. AI/IoT and industrial Gerontech framing (remote monitoring, robotics, market strategy). Many jurisdictions blend these narratives but differ in emphasis and sequencing. Interpretation and implications: Cross-country differences are not simply “more” versus “less” technology. They reflect distinct governance choices about where technology sits: within LTC entitlements and community services, within health data and interoperability architecture, or within innovation/industrial development agendas. For future policy development, this suggests that scaling technology-assisted independent living depends on aligning (a) service models and workforce practices, (b) interoperable standardized digital foundations on social care and insurance, and (c) evidence and procurement pathways that translate innovation into routine care.

References: 55 government policy documents.

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Figure 1: Correspondence analysis of countries and keywords from government documents on the technology assistance for independent living of older adults.

