Call for Abstracts for the Online Workshop

## COVID and what next? Methodological Implications for Digitalization Research in Rural-Peripheral Areas

Chairs: Prof. Dr. Heike Mayer (Uni Bern), Dr. Julia Binder (BTU Cottbus), Prof. Dr. Gabriela Christmann (IRS Erkner), Dr. Ariane Sept (IRS Erkner)

Date: Wednesday, 17th November 2021, 2pm to 6.30pm, in the context of the IRS International Conference "Digitalization and Socio-Spatial Transformations".

Target group: doctoral students, postdocs, interested scientists and stakeholders

The pandemic not only confronts political actors with the enormous task of finding answers to the infection processes and how to deal with it in society, but also researchers are confronted with new challenges in adapting their research to the transforming socio-spatial conditions. Former research designs lose their validity, field approaches have to be redefined, and social actors in public space become invisible.

Against this background, digital space is gaining enormous importance. The relevance of digitalization for the shift of everyday practices to the virtual is only one example that reorients digitalization research in perspective. Rural-peripheral areas are also subject to growing attention in terms of urban-rural digital inequalities. Rural and urban migration, multilocality, as well as new forms of working and living are widely discussed in the media and enrich the dynamic debates about the opportunities of digitalization for rural areas.

Our workshop aims to provide a forum to discuss the methodological challenges of the pandemic for digitalization research in rural areas. We address researchers as actors of knowledge production in order to reflect on pitfalls and limitations as well as on new opportunities for research. The digital format is intended to provide a forum to present intermediate and current work, but also to openly discuss uncertainties. Perspectives from the various disciplines of spatial research are welcome. Contributions can be submitted in German or English.

Two keynote presentations (one methodological and one related to content), five thematic sessions in virtual subgroup rooms, and a concluding panel discussion (e.g., Lessons learned: the future of methodological data collection, how COVID is sustainably changing research practice) are planned.

Potential topics may include (but are not limited to):
- Challenges for ethnographic approaches;
- Transformations of spatial qualities;
- Knowledge traditions and normative argumentation such as "good research is that which can be done on the ground";
- Visualization methods;
- Strategies and argumentation about research designs and data qualities in times of Covid-19 (e.g., also in publications):

We are open to other suggestions for topics.

Please send your abstract (max. 500 words) no later than 31st August 2021 to Dr. Julia Binder binder@b-tu.de and Dr. Ariane Sept ariane.sept@irs-leibniz.de