

Globalisation and New Collaborative Working Environments



Motivation

NEW GLOBAL is a study on "Globalisation and New Collaborative Working Environments" commissioned by the European Commission. Globalisation issues are in the heart of EU policies regarding integration, trade, employment and social affairs and the information society. New collaborative working environments (CWE) driven by strong technological integration and application of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) can enable companies to exploit global networking opportunities. This study explores how globalisation affects the way companies are operating and investigates how even the very small EU companies can respond to it and extend their business possibilities in a beneficial way by establishing new collaborative working environments.

The Challenge

It is expected that global CWEs could contribute to take advantage of the opportunities and meet the challenges of globalisation. However, not much is known about the critical factors determining the success of global CWEs, how collaboration across continents will impact on the European economy, and what that implies for European policy making. Increased maturity of broadband technologies on a global scale and ubiquitous/ambient computing are providing advanced opportunities for an emerging generation of networked CWE's. These have the potential to substantially boost the effectiveness and productivity of working processes at the individual, office, team, and (inter-)company level. At the same time, the challenge of globalisation – itself strongly connected to advances in ICT as well as other technologies – substantially increases the pressure on European companies to improve their competitiveness. The main way for EU companies to withstand competitive pressure from newly industrialising countries is by revving up the speed of innovation and exploiting much more than before the creative potential of the European labour force.



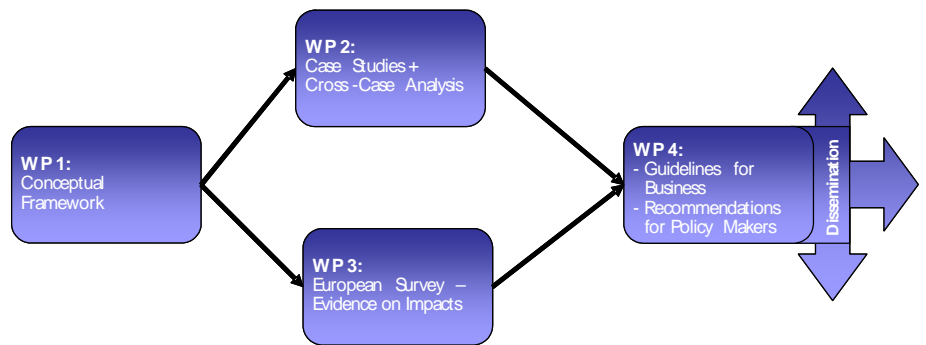
Main objectives

The main objectives of the study are:

- To explore and analyse the key links between ICT rich collaborative working environments and global working.
- To identify, analyse and select high profile best practice cases of global CWEs and their key characteristics in Europe, US and Asia, in particular China, India and South Africa in key industrial and service sectors and raise awareness strongly by disseminating widely throughout Europe both the lessons learned and the way in which European companies take advantage of them.
- To identify and analyse in depth the main drivers towards the realisation of more effective human-user-centred, ICT-intensive, new collaborative working environments in Europe and increase awareness on how they can be replicated more widely in Europe.

Approach

The study will apply an interdisciplinary research approach which combines assessment of current developments with strategic future analysis and qualitative and quantitative in-depth analysis of the state-of-the-art of research related to impact of cross-border collaborative environments. As one core activity of research, case study will be performed, and the results made subject to cross-case analysis. In parallel to the case study research, a representative survey of EU businesses in sectors prone to globalisation will be conducted. In a last step, all findings will be integrated and, based on them, recommendations will be developed aimed at policy- and decision-making at all relevant levels. Together with the findings from the desk research and empirical research, the outcomes will feed into the production of dissemination material to be distributed to a wide audience.



Expected results

The expected outcomes of the study are as follows:

- 1) The study should show how globalisation forces can be better exploited and thereby be regarded as opportunities, by showing how ICT, applied and used wisely, can trigger significant economic and employment gains even for small European companies.
- 2) The development and wide dissemination of best practice cases should show how European companies can adapt to global structural changes by upgrading to ICT human-centred new collaborative working environments. This should enable them to launch more innovative products and services, more effectively, and with high constant productive gains in the fast evolving global knowledge-based service economy, while entering new markets.
- 3) The provision of comprehensive but operational and concrete recommendation for European policy makers to support them in improving understanding and in triggering appropriate policy responses to the globalisation forces, for the advantage of European companies.
- 4) The study should catalyse and improve awareness by instigating a better intellectually informed debate amongst leading experts and European policy makers about appropriate and better responses to the globalisation forces in Europe for the benefit and successful transformation of Europe towards the knowledge-based global service economy.

For more information you
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