

- ✓ Results under the expectations
- ✓ Few results, due to.....
.....

4. ROLE OF THE EU POLICIES IN DEFINING THE ACTION/PROJECT

The aim is to understand if the action/project has been determined mainly by the local initiatives and needs or as adaptation to the EU policy framework.

- ✓ Local initiative
- ✓ Adaptation to EU policies
- ✓ Both influences

Co-ordination:

- ✓ Is the action co-ordinated with other national interventions on the same object (SMEs' access to ICT)?
- ✓ Is the action co-ordinated with the national interventions on the Information Society?

2. COHERENCE AND “RENEWABILITY” OF THE CURRENT ACTION/PROJECT

This section aims to evaluate if the objective and priorities addressed by the presented action/project are still coherent with the current priorities of the national policy on this issue. Alongside with the coherence with the national “framework”, it is interesting to understand if the presented action/project is going to be re-launched or replicated (even if adapted) in a new programme.

2.1 *Coherence with the current priorities at national level*

- ✓ The same priorities are addressed
- ✓ New priorities in the national policy

If the priorities at the national level are changed from the ones set up for the action/project hereafter presented, briefly explain the reasons.

(The problems addressed by the action/project have been overcome; the former priorities are not still considered important; the framework of the European policy has forced the national authorities to re-address the priorities...)

2.2 *Will the current action/project extended for the future?*

- ✓ Action/project re-launched with the same characteristics
- ✓ Action/project re-launched after adaptation
- ✓ Action/project extended for other years
- ✓ Action/project exhausted
- ✓ Action/project interrupted before the planned deadline

3. QUALITATIVE ASSESSMENT OF THE LEVEL OF SUCCESS OF THE PRESENTED ACTION/PROJECT

This section aims to evaluate (even in a merely qualitative way) the level of success of the presented action/project. In other terms, you should evaluate if this action/project could be considered a success-story (even at a national level). If an evaluation is not possible, please explain the reasons.

- ✓ Success story
- ✓ Results in line the expectations

PROJECT FICHE

1. RELEVANCE OF THE PROJECT/ACTION

This sections aims to assess the importance of the presented action/project within the overall policy for SMEs' access to ICT and Information Society.

1.1 **How much of the overall National expenditure does this action/project represent?**

(Budget of the current action/project on the total budget for SMEs' access to ICT and Information Society). When it is not possible to calculate this figure please explain the reason.

- ✓ Marginal
- ✓ Relevant
- ✓ Main action/project

1.2 **Scope of the project/action both in terms of a) territorial extension and b) of numbers of potential beneficiaries**

(Is the action/project targeting all the national territory and/or all the SMEs.? If not, which typology of beneficiary is addressed?).

Territory:

- ✓ All the national territory
- ✓ Objective 1 or 2 areas only
- ✓ Regional diffusion

Typology of beneficiaries:

- ✓ All the enterprises
- ✓ SMEs only
- ✓ Sectoral Focus
(specify which sectors).....
.....

1.3 **How do you evaluate the priority assigned to the current action/project within the framework of the national policies?**

(Is the current action/project the main action within the national policy framework on this issue? Which is the importance of the current action compared to other interventions on this issue?)

Priority:

- ✓ Main action/project at national level
- ✓ Pilot action/project
- ✓ Marginal action/project

ANNEX 2

Project Fiche

The Netherlands	????	The Netherlands Go Digital programme www.nederlandgaatdigitaal.nl	Web site in dutch
Finland	Ministry of Trade and Industry - ICT-O Project	ICT-O & Skills - The policy mechanism in Finland	Policy paper
Spain	National Government	INFO XXI - La Sociedad de la Informacion para todos www.info21.es	National action plan for IS
Greece	Ministry of Development	Measures and initiatives for SMEs and the digital economy	Catalogue

Nordic countries	Nordic industrial fund	www.nordicinnovation.net	Web site in English (partially) with institutional mandate and strategies on innovation, financed innovative projects
	EU	Trend chart country reports	Report
Ireland	Enterprise Ireland	RP notes	Synthesis of national initiatives and programmes
Switzerland	SECO	www.kmuinfo.ch	Web site in Italian with policy documents
Italy	MICA - Osservatorio	Guidelines for industrial policy in ICT – 1997 www.minindustria.it/Osservatorio/pol_industria_eng.html	Policy document
		Electronic commerce policy guidelines – 1998 www.minindustria.it/Osservatorio/pol_ce_eng.html	Policy document
		National programme for the promotion of ecommerce – 2000 www.minindustria.it/Osservatorio/progr_naz_ecom2000.pdf	Policy document
	MICA	Deregulation and liberalisation of ecommerce trade rules www.minindustria.it/Dgcas/Commercio/Disciplina_Commercio/Files/Circ_3487.pdf	Policy document
	National government	2001 National budget law (XVI, art. 103) - Incentives for innovation www.minindustria.it/Osservatorio/L231200Art103.pdf	Policy document
		National action plan for Information Society – 2000 www.governo.it/fsi/eng/actionplan/government_reports_compl.html	Policy document
National action plan for e-Government – 2000 www.governo.it/fsi/doc_piano/rapporto_pa_governo/egovernment_eng.pdf		Policy document	

Germany	BMWI	Competence centres for electronic commerce for SMEs www.ec-net.de	WEB SITE IN GERMAN/MAIN NATIONAL program for ecommerce and SMEs
		Action program: small/midsize enterprises www.bmwi.de/Homepage/download/mittelstand/Aktionsprogramm-Mittelstand_E.pdf	Policy document
		Innovation and jobs in the Information Society of the 21st Century - Action programme by the German Government www.bmwi.de/Homepage/download/english/innovation_and_jobs.pdf	Policy document
		Technology policy: paths to growth and employment www.bmwi.de/Homepage/download/english/technologiekonzept_e.pdf	Policy document
Austria	Minister of economic affairs and labour	E-business initiative www.bmwa.gv.at/ebusiness/index.htm	Web site in German/National program
	Federal economic chamber	E-business platform wko.at/webservice/ecom/	Web site in German/National program
	???	E-government information platform for business start ups www.gruenderservice.net/index2a.asp?target=amtswege	WEB SITE IN GERMAN/NATIONAL program
	ITA	E-POLICY FOR SMEs IN AUSTRIA	Paper

The list of the DEEDS Policy Documents

COUNTRY	SOURCE	DOCUMENT	NOTES
UK	DTI	A white paper on enterprises, skills and innovation www.dti.gov.uk/opportunityforall	Policy Document
		White paper implementation plan www.dti.gov.uk/opportunityforall/pdf/whitepaper.pdf	Policy Document
		A white paper on enterprises, skills and innovation: Environmental appraisal www.dti.gov.uk/opportunityforall/pdf/ofaea.pdf	Policy Document
		Opportunity for all in a world of change: Manufacturing	Policy Document
	The secretary of State for education and employment	Opportunities and skills in the knowledge-driven economy www.dfee.gov.uk/whitepaper/opportunity/finalstatement.pdf	Policy Document
	eMinister and eEnvoy	UK ONLINE ANNUAL REPORT www.e-envoy.gov.uk/2000/progress/anrep1/text/report.zip	Policy Document
	DTI	www.ukonlineforbusiness.gov.uk	On line service for businesses
	UK Government	www.ukonline.gov.uk	On line service for citizens
	DTI	Business in the Information Age: international benchmarking study 2000; www.ukonlineforbusiness.gov.uk/Government/bench/International/bench2000.pdf	Report
		UK competitiveness indicators – 2001 www.dti.gov.uk/opportunityforall/indicators2/pdfs/indicators.pdf	Report
		Business clusters in the UK: a first assessment www.dti.gov.uk/clusters/map	Report
eMinister and eEnvoy	UK ONLINE: THE BROADBAND FUTURE www.e-envoy.gov.uk/broadband/contents.htm	Report	

Annex 2

The list of policy documents:
UK, Germany, Austria, Nordic
Countries, Ireland, Switzerland, Italy
The Netherlands, Finland, Spain,
Greece

	<p>jobs (beginning in autumn 2001)</p> <p>Introduce around 6,000 UKonline centres</p> <p>Train up to 10,000 more people per year in advanced ICT learning programmes through new technology institutes</p>	<p>for ICT technologies</p> <p>Carry out International Benchmarking Surveys and adjust activities as necessary</p> <p>Launch a new £75m incubator fund developing around 75 incubators</p> <p>The Patent Office will work with the Small Business Service (SBS) to revamp the delivery of information for lone investors and small business and set up a pilot private applicant unit to deal with patent applications from them</p>	<p>1st Call for e-Science Application Projects in April 2001</p>	<p>Develop around 75 incubators</p>	<p>procurement</p> <p>Develop departmental interactivity and embed knowledge network in operational practices</p>
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	<p>establish 9 pathfinder projects in the English regions and put in place new core literacy and numeracy curriculum and tests</p> <p>Learndirect to provide 200,000 basic skills enrolments</p> <p>Invest an extra £45m in a smaller and stronger network of reformed National Training Organisations, with new arrangements in place</p> <p>Allocate over one billion pounds so that modern apprenticeships will be reformed and rise to 320,000 in 2004</p> <p>Invest an extra £8m to support Group Training Associations to provide Modern Apprenticeships</p>	<p>and understanding campaign</p> <p>Launch portal for new internet mentoring initiative</p> <p>Follow the university innovation centre model to establish around 15 industry/university collaborations up to April 2002</p> <p>The Small Business Service to establish the Business Link contact centre and website as the key access channel to a wide range of information and advice for small business and start-ups</p> <p>Develop programme of inward and outward missions to promote partnerships with leading overseas sources of technology</p>	<p>University Innovation Centres and Technology Institutes</p> <p>Establish Interdisciplinary Research Centre (IRC)</p>	<p>Promote co-operation between university innovation centres and new technology institutes in the regions to boost R&D activities, innovation and technology transfer, and to provide the regions with skills in ICT and high technology</p> <p>Support regional clustering</p>	<p>government to deliver electronic services</p> <p>Promote e-tendering, rising up to 50% by 2001 and 100% by 2002</p>
Codification of knowledge & Generation of new knowledge	Pilot in New Deal programmes to move 5,000 people into ICT	Launch of Next Wave Technologies and Markets programme	Introduce tax credit for R&D	Launch a new £75M incubator fund	Develop standardisation procedure in e-

ASSESSING POLICIES FOR THE DIGITAL ECONOMY (2000-2005): UK⁹

BENEFICIARIES	HUMAN RESOURCES	BUSINESS	RESEARCH COMMUNITY	LOCAL SYSTEMS	PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION
POLICY FOCUS					
Access to digital infrastructures & technologies	<p>Introduce modern processes into the curriculum by training 45,000 more teachers in, and equipping them with, CAD/CAM software</p> <p>Introduce around 6,000 Ukonline centres including in some of most disadvantaged urban and rural communities</p>	<p>Train up to 10,000 more people per year in advanced ICT learning programmes through new technology institutes</p> <p>Pilot in New Deal programmes to move 5,000 people into ICT jobs</p> <p>Introduce around 6,000 Ukonline centres including in some of most disadvantaged urban and rural communities</p> <p>Introduce tax credit for R&D and innovation</p>		<p>Work with the Digital Content Forum and others to develop pilots stimulating creation of local broadband content</p> <p>Invite applications from Devolved Administrations (DAs) and Regional DAs for innovative local schemes to extend broadband networks</p> <p>Introduce around 6,000 Ukonline centres including in some of most disadvantaged urban and rural communities</p>	<p>Work with Trusted Service Providers to ensure interoperability with government</p> <p>Identify suitable security and authentication technologies in the marketplace to support government Electronic Service Delivery targets</p>
Circulation of information & knowledge	Following launch of the Adult Basic Skills Strategy in March 2001,	Complete a marketing strategy for new e-business awareness	Establish effective networking arrangements between	Develop 15 University Innovation Centres	Improve the organisational capacity of

⁹ DTI-DFEE, 'Opportunity for all in a world of change: a white paper on enterprise, skills and innovation'; e-Envoy - Central IT Unit, 'Information age government. Benchmarking electronic service delivery', July 2000; e-Envoy, 'UK on line. Annual report 2001', 2001.

	<p>Promote the development of school and educational organisations</p> <p>Launch a feasibility study for the implementation of a training information platform</p> <p>Fund the implementation of 'virtual learning zone' projects in order to favour the formation of high ICT-oriented skills in the universities, the ETH and the technical high schools</p>	<p>Create an electronic platform for enterprises and businesses in the tourism sector</p> <p>Promote the verification of success of market liberalisation and checking of the regulatory framework in the ICT sector</p> <p>Set up the legal and technological solutions to protect consumers in electronic transactions</p> <p>Ensure the implementation and specification of the legal and technological solutions for the protection of privacy and the data protection</p>	<p>Launch a national research programme to promote sound scientific knowledge for the implementation of ICT actions</p> <p>Promote the development of research programme on estimating the consequences of ICT</p> <p>Evaluate the effectiveness of the measures implemented</p>		<p>Promote the development and implementation of the e-voting project</p> <p>Ensure the development of the legal basis for the public key infrastructure, especially concerning services for electronic certification</p> <p>Ensure the implementation of legal and technological solutions for the development of the digital signature</p> <p>Ensure electronic systems for taxes submission</p>
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ASSESSING POLICY FOR THE DIGITAL ECONOMY: SWITZERLAND (2000-2004)⁸

BENEFICIARIES	HUMAN RESOURCES	BUSINESS	RESEARCH COMMUNITY	LOCAL SYSTEMS	PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION
POLICY FOCUS					
Access to digital infrastructures & technologies			Promote access and empowerment of networking technologies		Promote the electronic access to the resources of the federal libraries, archives, museums and collections
Circulation of information & knowledge	Launch a programme for cross-entrants in order to favour vocational training in IT related fields Launch a prize for the promotion of awareness raising , including special prize for young people		Promote the diffusion and development of economic indicators for the Digital Economy		Promote an inventory of the legal questions in connection with the application of the new ICT
Codification of knowledge & Generation of new knowledge	Ensure training and professional development of teachers in IT related subjects	Promote the development and implementation of an SMEs portal	Promote the production and dissemination of cultural activity with the new ICTs	Ensure the re-organisation of the regional employment centres	Promote the implementation of concept and proposal for electronic one-stop shop

⁸ 2nd Report of the Information Society Co-ordination Group (ISCG) to the Federal Council, May 2000

	<p>job and skills</p> <p>Create new job, skills and professionals for the Digital Economy, up to 14,000 new professionals in 2003</p> <p>Ensure technical, graduate and postgraduate studies in ICT</p> <p>Provide courses of Spanish multimedia and develop projects of linguistic engineering in the net</p>	<p>Support the development and diffusion of applications and technologies for SMEs in the broadband telecommunication service sector</p> <p>Support the development of Sectoral Business Centres</p> <p>Create a network of Centres of excellence for E-commerce</p> <p>Promote businesses start-ups especially focalising on the ICT and high-tech sectors</p> <p>Provide the electronic services and digital operators sectors with ad hoc governance and legislative institutions</p> <p>Ensure the implementation of electronic services platforms providing collective access to SMEs</p>	<p>Implement the 2001 National Census through the Internet</p> <p>Ensure the implementation of research and statistical activities concerning the diffusion of ICTs by Spanish firms</p>		<p>technical, computer and telematic (electronic certifications)</p> <p>Implement law for ensure electronic signature</p> <p>Develop a system of suppliers credit and of products certification to ensure electronic signature</p> <p>Extend the possibility to present and pay via the Internet the overall procedures of declarations and taxes: income taxes, VAT, retention and informative declarations</p>
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		<p>Develop an Intranet for tourist informants</p> <p>Provide public access to economic indicators and documents related to the tourism system</p> <p>Provide support services and information regarding the Quality System in the Spanish Tourism Sector</p> <p>Set up systems of exchange of information among Spanish tourist administrations</p>			<p>infrastructures, operators and cultural resources in the net and provide electronic access to the information of the museums, archives and libraries</p>
Codification of knowledge & Generation of new knowledge	<p>Ensure the introduction of content and subject related to the Digital Economy in the compulsory education</p> <p>Provide ICT-oriented training for teachers</p> <p>Ensure training activities for citizens in ICT-related subject, providing them with skills certificates in ICT</p> <p>Provide access to both ICT content and infrastructure for women workers, so as to create new ICT-oriented</p>	<p>Implement new law systems for services related to the Information Society and e-commerce</p> <p>Develop a system of New Interactive Services of the General Treasury of the Social Security</p> <p>Set up an electronic network of contents of arts and cultural industries, as well as creation and diffusion of new digital contents with innovative technologies</p>	<p>Support the development of Digital Technology Centres</p> <p>Create a network of Centres of excellence for E-commerce</p> <p>Ensure the implementation and diffusion of an electronic database for patents (CIBPATNET)</p>	<p>Set up an electronic network of contents of arts and cultural industries, as well as creation and diffusion of new digital contents with innovative technologies</p>	<p>Ensure the enterprises to accessing, filing in and submitting the forms on line to the Public Administration</p> <p>Ensure security, validity and effectiveness in the communications of the State General Administration and of the public administrations to the citizens, and to each other, through</p>

	<p>broadband network of post offices, providing e-mail address for citizens</p> <p>Develop a network of Public Internet InfoPoints through the National Library Network</p>	<p>assistance for business start-ups</p> <p>Implement a portal for SMEs in order to provide information and support services</p> <p>Ensure access and use of the Internet services for enterprises in traditional sectors</p> <p>Ensure the use of electronic intermediation between consumers and producers</p> <p>Implement campaigns to foment the security and trust of economic transactions in the net</p> <p>Provide information and procedure through the Internet concerning the overall system of support of the Ministry of Science and Technology</p> <p>Create a portal for the promotion of the Spanish tourism with information to the final consumer and the professionals on products and tourist resources</p>	<p>statistics and indicators concerning the diffusion of the Information Society and ICT sectors</p> <p>Ensure the diffusion of the results of the 2001 National Census on the Internet</p> <p>Ensure the on-line access to information databases</p> <p>Provide on-line statistical services and information</p>	<p>with information to the final consumer and the professionals on products and tourist resources</p> <p>Develop an Intranet for tourist informants</p> <p>Provide public access to economic indicators and documents related to the tourism system</p> <p>Provide support services and information regarding the Quality System in the Spanish Tourism Sector</p> <p>Set up systems of exchange of information among Spanish tourist administrations</p>	<p>Administration and gradually enlarge the number of on-line administrations, with the possibility of on-line access to the files for the citizens</p> <p>Provide the Public Administration with a guidebook for the use of the Internet in PA procedures and services</p> <p>Implement and develop an electronic network of Public Administration InfoPoints for enterprises</p> <p>Ensure the electronic transmission of legal and normative forms from the Public Administration to enterprises</p> <p>Ensure the development of electronic ID cards and procedures for citizens</p> <p>Provide a map of</p>
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ASSESSING POLICIES FOR THE DIGITAL ECONOMY: SPAIN (2001-2003)⁷

BENEFICIARIES POLICY FOCUS	HUMAN RESOURCES	BUSINESS	RESEARCH COMMUNITY	LOCAL SYSTEMS	PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION
Access to digital infrastructures & technologies	<p>Enhance access to the Internet for schools and educational centres through the implementation and development of broadband networks</p> <p>Ensure computer and telecommunications equipment in schools and educational centres</p> <p>Implement a Broadband Network to 2.5 Gbps connected to other European Union networks, within the framework of the GEANT Project</p> <p>Provide access to both ICT content and infrastructure for disabled persons</p> <p>Provide basic courses to ensure computer literacy</p>	<p>Create a portal for the promotion of the Spanish tourism with information to the final consumer and the professionals on products and tourist resources</p> <p>Develop an Intranet for tourist informants</p>		<p>Develop telecommunication infrastructures within Objective 1 Regions, through the FEDER Programme</p> <p>Create a portal for the promotion of the Spanish tourism with information to the final consumer and the professionals on products and tourist resources</p> <p>Develop an Intranet for tourist informants</p>	<p>Implement an Intranet network connecting all public administrations</p> <p>Provide access to the Internet and connect in a network the Civil Register Offices, allowing the admission of certificates from other Register Offices and accessing information through the Internet</p>
Circulation of information & knowledge	Develop a network of Public Digital InfoPoints via the	Develop an electronic network for on-line consultancy and	Promote the circulation of economic studies,	Create a portal for the promotion of the Spanish tourism	Facilitate the access to the information in the Public

⁷ Spanish Cabinet, 'INFO XXI – Information Society for all. Action Plan', 2000.

	<p>Increase the knowledge base and competencies in the field of software engineering and IT architecture in order to reinforce and expand the IT services sector, via the support to the international technology project Systems on Silicon</p> <p>Enable ICT research and education strategic plans made by the research institutes in consultation with the business community</p> <p>Support the formation of new high-skilled young scientific talents in fields including ICT through the Innovation Impulse Programme</p> <p>Realise a joint Action Plan for Efficiency and Quality oriented to the realisation and optimal deployment of an adequate skills base</p>	<p>approach of the 'Netherlands go digital' project</p> <p>Fund SMEs feasibility studies in ICT-related and more generally innovation oriented projects</p>	<p>Promote the public/private reinforcement of research particularly for embedded software and a 'wireless test lab'</p> <p>Clarify and simplify the responsibilities assumed by the research institutes, realising policy intentions that aims at favouring the transparency and transfer of research results and knowledge</p> <p>Develop a pilot in the field of ICT in co-operation with a Technical University in order to implement an active knowledge protection and exploitation policy</p>	<p>between ICT users and suppliers and research and technology institutes, in turn providing locations with a high-tech infrastructure and promoting the creation of strong ICT</p> <p>Stimulate a climate favourable to innovative and ICT-oriented start-ups</p>	
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		<p>organisations, focalising on the role of industrial sectoral organisations as knowledge intermediaries</p> <p>Establish help desk to provide innovative companies (both LSEs and SMEs) and organisations with relevant information and contacts concerning the electronic highway, multimedia and e-commerce (Informe – Information Help Desk Programme)</p>			
Codification of knowledge & Generation of new knowledge	<p>Foster SMEs to employ skilled human resources assisting firms in the definition of innovation and competitive strategies and processes, focusing on ICT-oriented skills as well as other (productive, managerial, commercial, etc.) skills as required</p>	<p>Stimulate the establishment of new electronic services to SMEs involved together in networks and chains of company, as complementary to the solely individual company</p>	<p>Stimulate ICT breakthrough projects that cater to next generation scenarios, pilots and the dissemination of results by favouring research consortia between ICT users and suppliers and research and technology institutes</p>	<p>Focus on regional diffusion of actions stimulating the establishment of new electronic services to networking groups of SMEs</p> <p>Enable close collaboration</p>	<p>Promote the role of Government as an innovative ICT user, enhancing the possibilities for innovative government purchases</p>

		<p>SMEs with concrete questions and consultancy tailor made</p> <p>Within the framework of the 'Netherlands go digital' campaign, offer consultancy and back office services sector-oriented, in order to lift up the sector as a whole regarding the level of information and expertise about ICT</p> <p>Focus on SMEs in the retail and craftsman industry in order to stimulate awareness to the opportunities digital economy offers (Passing the Digital Divide Programme)</p> <p>Stimulate the transfer of knowledge by industrial sectoral</p>			
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ACTIONS CONCERNING SMEs AND ICT IN THE NETHERLANDS⁶

BENEFICIARIES	HUMAN RESOURCES	BUSINESS	RESEARCH COMMUNITY	LOCAL SYSTEMS	PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION
POLICY FOCUS					
Access to digital infrastructures & technologies		Fund SMEs feasibility studies in ICT-related and more generally innovation oriented projects			
Circulation of information & knowledge		Establish national campaign to ensure awareness to SMEs about the opportunities ICT can offer ('The Netherlands go digital'; project exhausted) Within the framework of the 'Netherlands go digital' campaign, offer 'back office' services assisting	Organise the 1 st edition of the National ICT Knowledge Conference and Fair by research institutes, market parties and the Dutch Ministries		

⁶ SME campaign 'The Netherlands go digital'; Programme to stimulate the establishment of electronic services; Programme to stimulate the retail and craftsman industry 'Passing the digital threshold'; Programme to stimulate SME Feasibility Projects; Programme to stimulate the transfer of knowledge by Industrial Sectoral Organisations; Knowledge carriers for SMES 'KIM'; Information help desk 'Informe'; Policy Action Plan 'Competing with ICT competencies: know how and innovation for the Dutch digital delta'.

		<p>Promote SMEs aggregation in industry-based portals</p>	<p>Promotes the creation of centres of excellence within the universities in R&D activities related to the Digital Economy, up to 10 national centres in 2002</p> <p>Establish a special national fund to financing scientific research in ICTs, within the framework of National Budget Law</p>		<p>instrument for government purchases of goods and services (e-procurement)</p> <p>Enhance and update the specialised skills of the staff who are responsible for running IT infrastructures, in particular network infrastructure managers, and of the documentation and public relations staff, to make them familiar with the new services related to the Digital Economy</p>
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<p>Codification of knowledge & Generation of new knowledge</p>	<p>Ensure the creation and training of new skills and job related to ICTs through training courses financed via the special fund formed with firms' contribution of their payroll earnings, in turn providing training courses for 150,000 workers</p> <p>Increase employment in the high-skill careers of the digital economy via training programmes for knowledge workers in southern Italy</p> <p>Provide co-financing for graduate and post-graduates courses in topics related to information technology, up to 15 courses in economics and information technologies in 2002</p> <p>Establish a special national fund to financing the development of training activities in ICTs and computer literacy, within the framework of National Budget Law</p>	<p>Encourage the establishment of high-risk start-ups via the reform of legal framework (reform of the bankruptcy law)</p> <p>Enhancing the role of the New Market Stock Exchange in order to increase the number of listed company</p> <p>Promote the implementation of nation-wide sectoral portals, especially within the traditional sectors of the Italian industrial specialisation</p> <p>Provide incentives for the development of electronic commerce, according to the EU <i>de minimis</i> allowance, via tax incentives and direct funds for capital investments</p> <p>Provide incentives for ICT oriented re-engineering in the production and organisation management, especial in the textile and clothing sector</p>	<p>Ensure rapid implementation of the fund for financing industrial research, pre-competitive development and the diffusion of technology during the start up phase of high technology enterprises</p> <p>Support academic spin-offs during the production launch phase</p> <p>Ensure the co-ordination of public and private research in the ICT sectors via the development of research networks between universities, research bodies and firms</p> <p>Support basic research in ICTs, also co-financing research laboratory start-ups</p>	<p>Establish training courses to create skills and competencies related to the Digital Economy reflecting the need of local markets</p>	<p>Create a portal for integrated services to citizens, to get forms, fill out and submit statements and reports, transmit request for services</p> <p>Create a portal for services to businesses, enabling firms to transmit via a single portal to the various agencies the overall reporting forms required by law</p> <p>Ensure and test the circuit for issuing electronic ID cards</p> <p>Promote the dissemination and use of the digital signature</p> <p>Enable the computerised management of documents</p> <p>Disseminate, promote and develop e-commerce as an</p>
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<p>Circulation of information & knowledge</p>		<p>Promote an awareness campaign for SMEs managers and owners, in close co-operation with industry and trade associations</p>	<p>Ensure support for the hiring of young researchers within enterprises</p> <p>Issue the implementing effective regulations for Legislative Decree 297/1999 on the secondment and transfer of researchers and faculty to firms</p>	<p>Disseminate and support best practice in local portals within the local supply chains</p> <p>Disseminate and support best practice in local incubators models, especially in the multimedia sectors</p>	<p>Implement information portals, especially providing access to legislative-judicial data banks</p> <p>Create a certification service portal</p> <p>Create an employment services portal enabling jobs and applicant to match</p> <p>Provide subsidiary services and services in support of decentralisation, so as to permit harmonious co-operation between local and central governments</p> <p>Develop civic networks in order to connect all civic and family registers, and to provide services for citizens' political and social participation</p> <p>Link the National Library Service, local libraries and training centres via digital networks</p>
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ASSESSING POLICIES FOR THE DIGITAL ECONOMY: ITALY (2000-2002)^{5*}

BENEFICIARIES	HUMAN RESOURCES	BUSINESS	RESEARCH COMMUNITY	LOCAL SYSTEMS	PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION
POLICY FOCUS					
Access to digital infrastructures & technologies	<p>Ensure training of skills and job focusing on new technology literacy especially in remote and less developed regions (the 'Mezzogiorno')</p> <p>Increase employment in the digital economy via programmes for training and social inclusion for unemployed persons in southern Italy</p> <p>Bring computer penetration in schools up to the European average, following the 1997-2000 programme for the dissemination of teaching technologies</p> <p>Increase the number of ICT training laboratories, up to 30 laboratories in 2002</p> <p>Increase the number of multimedia centres for training and access, up to 40 centres in 2002</p>	<p>Establish a special national fund to financing the adoption of ICTs by enterprises, within the framework of National Budget Law</p>		<p>Support the implementation of new local vertical portals, up to 30 new portals in 2002</p> <p>Support the implementation of local business incubators related to the Digital Economy and especially to the multimedia sectors, up to 25 in 2002</p> <p>Co-finance 50% of libraries and multimedia centres (at private, non-profit and municipal level) providing access and training to the public</p>	<p>Realise interoperability among existing regional networks and with the central public administration network</p> <p>Create a virtual Extranet covering then entire national territory for areas not yet covered by other local initiatives</p> <p>Create a cultural national portal via the complete informatisation of the National Library Service</p> <p>Provide computer literacy to all public employees and improve the level of knowledge of those who already have some basic skills</p>

⁵ Prime Minister's Office – Information Society Forum, 'Action Plan for the Information Society', June 2000; Prime Minister's Office – Department of Public Administration, 'e-government Action Plan', June 2000; Ministry of Treasury, 'National budget law 2001 (XVI, art. 103) – Incentive for innovation', December 2000; Ministry of Industry – Electronic Commerce Observatory, 'National programme for the promotion of e-commerce – 2000'; Italian Cabinet, 'Norms for the development of e-commerce and the diffusion of computer literacy', July 2000.

* Please note that at present, the specific National Action Plan for E-commerce, including focalised policy measures for businesses taking up, is being finalised. Consequently, this assessment could not account for it.

<p>knowledge</p>	<p>strategy training course to SMEs, up to 2,000 firms by 2002</p> <p>Fund staff training</p> <p>Fund the recruitment of specialist skills</p>	<p>feasibility projects</p> <p>Fund basic R&D costs</p> <p>Provide services, incentives and training for the implementation of e-commerce solution by micro-businesses</p> <p>Provide technical assistance grants to micro-businesses</p> <p>Create 18 E-business Networks of SMEs to explore new and innovative approaches to SME adoption of e-business</p>	<p>into e-business and its impact on the SME sector both nationally and in an international perspective</p>	<p>going series of local E-business Awareness activities with local partners, using the positive experience of local SMEs as the catalyst for further SME adoption of e-business</p> <p>Provide services, incentives and training for the implementation of local and sectoral electronic networking by micro-businesses</p> <p>Create E-business Strategy Alliances for SMEs at local and regional level between the State Agencies, Higher Education, County Enterprise Boards, Area Partnerships, banks, Large businesses and the social partners</p>	
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INITIATIVES AND ACTIONS FOR THE DIGITAL ECONOMY IN IRELAND⁴

BENEFICIARIES	HUMAN RESOURCES	BUSINESS	RESEARCH COMMUNITY	LOCAL SYSTEMS	PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION
POLICY FOCUS					
Access to digital infrastructures & technologies		<p>Fund investment proposals in order to accelerate the adoption by Irish company of best e-Business practices</p> <p>Fund the development of e-business systems and processes</p> <p>Provide technical assistance grants to micro-businesses</p>			
Circulation of information & knowledge		<p>Enable the awareness among Irish company of the need to become ICT-enabled</p> <p>Stimulate an awareness campaign focalised on opportunities the digital economy can offer to micro-businesses</p> <p>Provide mentoring assistance to micro-businesses</p>		Provide a national network of local support and advisory services to SMEs through the chambers of commerce network	
Codification of knowledge & Generation of new	Provide e-business	Fund ICT-oriented	Facilitate primary and secondary research	Engage in an on-	

⁴ Enterprise Ireland £10 Acceleration Fund; Chambers of Commerce of Ireland – PRISM II; County Enterprise Boards Initiative

	<p>2005)</p> <p>Support the creation and development of skills in the enterprise related to the digital economy and the use of related services via specific trainers with certified Information Systems knowledge, through the Go Digital Programme (started in 2000; completed by 2005; 50,000 enterprises targeted)</p> <p>Promote e-Learning projects in order to transfer know-how and technology, training of expert executives-university graduates, readjust and re-educate of laid off or part time employees to cover job openings (started in 2001; completed by 2004)</p>	<p>Support the creation of digital environment in specific areas (special and innovative subjects as cultural heritage products, educational and electronic recreation, tourism, publishing) (started in 2001; completed by 2005)</p> <p>Encourage the formation of e-marketplaces (started in 2002; completed in 2005)</p>	<p>business partners (started in 2001; completed by 2004)</p> <p>Finance ICTs and Telecom enterprises with 50% of the cost hiring researchers (started in 2001; completed by 2004)</p> <p>Develop incubators and research & technology parks (started in 2001; completed by 2006)</p>	<p>and technology parks targeting exclusively enterprises of the digital economy (started in 2002; completed in 2005)</p>	<p>in 1999; completed by 2005)</p>
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		<p>2001; 50,000 businesses involved)</p> <p>Promote the formation of a helpdesk for the support of enterprises in their incorporation into the Digital Economy and their familiarisation with the business use of the Internet (started in 2001; completed by 2005)</p>	<p>between R&D, educational and university centres in order to create a digital library with national and international data and information (started in 2001; completed by 2004)</p> <p>Granting scholarships for thesis dissertation to researchers in order to train new scientist in ICTs sectors , upgrade research in the fields of IS, support co-operation among University, Technology Centres and businesses, increase the number of researcher's position in businesses (started in 2001; completed by 2004)</p>	<p>favouring the formation of e-clusters (started in 2002; completed in 2005)</p>	<p>activities (started in 2000; completed by 2001)</p> <p>Establish a large number of digital tourist info-points to enhance access to tourism services (started in 2002; completed in 2004)</p>
<p>Codification of knowledge & Generation of new knowledge</p>	<p>Promote the creation of new jobs and skills related to the electronic business through the formation of constant mechanism (e-Business Forum) of consultation and co-operation between the State and the academic and business world (started in 2000; completed by</p>	<p>Complete the National Laws in issues of digital signature, security of transactions, cryptography and authenticity (started in 1999; completed by 2005)</p> <p>Establish the formation of products and services certification and standardisation mechanisms for the Information Society (started in 2001; completed by 2004)</p>	<p>Promote e-Business research projects to support R&D activities and spread the use of e-business practices and technologies, to develop methodology and services, to create advanced environments for efficient communication and co-operation between</p>	<p>Finance e-clusters that take over e-business digital project (started in 2002; completed in 2005)</p> <p>Create a favourable environment for the start up of new ICT enterprises with the support of incubators</p>	<p>Promote incentives for the SMEs to submit electronically the VTA</p> <p>Complete the National Laws in issues of digital signature, security of transactions, cryptography and authenticity (started</p>

		<p>of VSEs for a specific time frame via Internet Service Providers through the Go Digital Programme (started in 2000; completed by 2005; 50,000 enterprises targeted)</p> <p>Funding of the development and hosting to businesses portals of VSEs through the Go Digital Programme (started in 2000; completed by 2005; 50,000 enterprises targeted)</p> <p>Finance manufacturing, tourism and services firms (especially SMEs) for the introduction of informational systems (ERP, e-business, e-procurement, client service applications), and for re-engineering projects (started in 2001; completed by 2005; 1,500 firms targeted)</p>	<p>advanced applications of high speed video and tele-immersing (started in 2001; completed by 2004)</p>	<p>completed by 2004)</p>	
Circulation of information & knowledge	<p>Promote the continuous information of citizens and businesses about issues of electronic business through the e-Business Forum initiatives (started in 2000; completed by 2005)</p>	<p>Support businesses networking for the development of collective innovative systems of electronic commerce (started in 1998 – completed by June 2001; 200 enterprises involved)</p> <p>Promote the use and diffusion of e-business practices through the development of the Clearing House of the Commercial and Industrial Chamber of Athens (started in 1999; completed by</p>	<p>Supply of the backbone network services for the development of national projects and co-operations in network infrastructure subjects and experimental application of new technologies (started in 2001; completed by 2004)</p> <p>Activate co-operation</p>	<p>Develop 13 regional development centres for supporting co-operation between R&T activities and businesses</p> <p>Promote the formation of local groups of enterprises connected by e-business practices and technologies, in turn</p>	<p>Develop 'one stop shop' in 52 prefecture local administration interconnected to the central directorate of the Ministry of Development in order to simplify the procedures of licensing enterprising</p>

MEASURES OF THE MINISTRY OF DEVELOPMENT FOR THE DIGITAL ECONOMY (1996-2006): GREECE

BENEFICIARIES	HUMAN RESOURCES	BUSINESS	RESEARCH COMMUNITY	LOCAL SYSTEMS	PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION
POLICY FOCUS					
Access to digital infrastructures & technologies		<p>14 Electronic Commerce Centres will be completed within the 1st semester of 2001, providing access to the Internet and processing business transactions</p> <p>Support to commercial enterprises in the adoption of e-commerce technologies and organisational solutions, through the National Infrastructures of Electronic Commerce project (start in 1998 – concluded; 200.000 enterprises involved)</p> <p>Promote the adoption of the EDI technology within industrial sectors and covering the largest part of the value chain (started in 1999; completed by June 2001; 253 businesses participated)</p> <p>Funding of the least required terminal equipment for the connection of very small enterprises (VSEs) to the Internet through the Go Digital Programme (started in 2000; completed by 2005; 50,000 enterprises targeted)</p> <p>Funding of the Internet connection</p>	<p>Upgrade the backbone and the international network of GRNET from 34/155 mbps to 2.5/10 Gpbs using DWDM technology supporting data, voice and multimedia high speed transport and guarantying quality of service (started in 2001; completed by 2004)</p> <p>Interconnection of University and Research Centres as well as other R&D departments through an advanced National Research Backbone Network service (started in 2001; completed by 2004)</p> <p>Supply of the backbone network and infrastructure for development of experimental advanced applications and ultra-high speed innovative services like virtual labs,</p>	<p>Strengthen the local infrastructures (vertical e-marketplaces, electronic exhibitions, sectoral local portals) of electronic commerce supply services to SMEs, by Public Bodies and others social, collective and professional bodies</p> <p>Create a complete supporting network connecting local small and medium enterprises with Business and Technology Development Centres</p> <p>Create advanced technological infrastructures for the formation of e-business service supply networks in industrial regions (start in 2002;</p>	<p>Introduce and adapt electronic information, procedures and transactions between businesses and the Ministry of Development and the competent services of local administrations (started in 2000; completed by 2001)</p> <p>Develop the formation of an integrated system of Electronic State Procurement (started in 2001; completed by 2004)</p>

		Digital Radio and Television Initiative Establish branch competence centres with a national focus, providing advice and assistance to enterprises and professions on a nation-wide in respective branches/sectors on issue of e-business			
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		<p>goods</p> <p>Establish electronic contacts between the supply and demand for jobs and parcels of work in communication supported fields (tele-work, tele-service, call centres)</p> <p>Present a concept for legislation on employee data protection</p> <p>Promote model projects in electronic commerce to provide small and medium enterprises and craft firms with concrete solutions adapted to specific sectors</p> <p>Promote pilot projects intended to realise virtual companies and co-operation networks in the service sector</p> <p>Stimulate innovative business start-ups via sponsoring the annual New Multimedia Business Competition</p> <p>Stimulate women entrepreneurs to co-operate in networks</p> <p>Start the FABNET competition on tele-work projects</p> <p>Ensure the development of the</p>	<p>increase the quality support</p> <p>Promote innovative research and development projects in the technology fields 'Basic research in software' and 'Human-Technology interaction'</p> <p>Promote research and development for new high-technologies in micro-electronics to process and store signal and information</p>		
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	<p>Support the Training Fund as a public-private partnership</p> <p>Ensure teaching material on handling the modern ICTs to be included in state recognised basic and advanced training regulations</p> <p>Support networking activities to increase the share of women in IT training occupations via the project 'New Occupations for Women in Europe'</p>	<p>Support the transition from analogic to digital radio transmission</p> <p>Support the rapid introduction of the UMTS mobile phones standard</p> <p>Avoid restrictions to market access for technological applications</p> <p>Provide a legal framework for data protection so as to ensure the use and diffusion of new electronic services</p> <p>Set a new legal framework for consumer protection, especially focusing on long-distance sales, financial services' sale, and prices transparency</p> <p>Promote the development, use and diffusion of technologies and applications for cryptography, electronic signature and secure ciphering technologies</p> <p>Harmonise the copyright legislation within the European Union framework</p> <p>Provide suitable regulations and taxation for electronic commerce and transactions in pure 'virtual'</p>	<p>operation between basic research in the field of health sciences</p> <p>Promote IT projects in environmental education, e.g. innovative projects and initiatives for the environmental education of children and young people</p> <p>Promote the research and development activities for new network technologies in the fields of optical and radio networks</p> <p>Promote research into network-based applications</p> <p>Promote the research and development of the software and hardware platform needed for mobile multimedia use</p> <p>Promote the development of new Internet technologies specifically to improve the search of information and</p>		
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Codification of knowledge & Generation of new knowledge	<p>Build up a tuition programme in informatics for women in co-operation with the Summer University for Women in Informatics</p> <p>Promote the creation of jobs for women in the Information Society</p> <p>Promote the building up a national education server to access existing reservoirs of information , extending it also to European School Net initiative</p> <p>Promote the development of long distance courses at universities</p> <p>Fund new multimedia forms of learning and the development of teaching and learning software in vocational training</p> <p>Support the building up of an IT and media-specific training system, including the promotion of teaching and learning software for advanced training of IT specialists and side-entrants</p> <p>Expand the supply of further training courses funded by the Federal Labour Office</p>	<p>Establish an information platform for SMEs, providing access to technical and economic information regarding e-Business</p> <p>Launch the Internet Prize promoting and stimulating the development of effective Internet applications and tools, with a social focus on SMEs products</p> <p>Launch a competition for the development and testing of network-based learning in SMEs, financing best practices</p> <p>Develop the framework of regulations on the information, communication and media sector in co-operation between the Federal Government and the Länder</p> <p>Undertake a reappraisal of the legislative framework on telecommunications, reducing sector-specific regulations and focusing on competition-oriented frameworks</p> <p>Reduce the barriers to market entry for foreign firms and for German firms abroad</p>	<p>Promote associate projects for employers and research establishments to develop software, organisation models and legal solutions for tele-co-operation between services firms</p> <p>Fund the development of knowledge-based services on the basis of ICTs</p> <p>Support the German research contribution to the European Commission building up of a global civil satellite navigation system</p> <p>Support research in the development of new technologies, applications and equipment for satellite navigation</p> <p>Set up a Telematics Platform for Research Network, involving national interdisciplinary co-</p>	<p>Provide financial support to the regional centres for electronic commerce</p> <p>Improve the work of the regional centres for electronic commerce with a comprehensive network to deal with enquires</p> <p>Support regional networks of women entrepreneurs awarding the 'Most promising region for women setting up in business</p>	<p>Launch a competition for the development and testing of network-based learning in public administrations, financing best practices</p> <p>Evaluate the possibility of issuing an ordinance to enable patent application to be made electronic</p> <p>Launch a competition to set up and try out telework with data security in the municipal administrations</p>
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<p>Circulation of information & knowledge</p>	<p>Develop an information and demonstration campaign to make the Internet accessible through a partnership for innovation between the private sector and policy makers, supporting private initiatives</p> <p>Ensure and extend an awareness campaign to make women conscious of the opportunities the Internet can offer them in education, training, work and leisure activities</p> <p>Launch an information campaign in conjunction with employers and associations to increase the share of women on engineering and informatics courses</p> <p>Fund the promotion of the International Women University of Technology and Culture, publicising the achievements of women in shaping the Information Society</p> <p>Increase public awareness of ICT and support it with concrete examples and activities via launching the Information Society Forum</p> <p>Build up an information system for innovative multimedia applications in vocational training</p> <p>Increase the share of women in IT occupations through joint information campaigns on new IT careers</p>	<p>Promote cross-sectoral projects and actions with public relations to accelerate the spread and use of ICT</p> <p>Promote security consciousness on the Information Society by awareness campaigns and by promoting the diffusion of cryptography</p> <p>Support activities by private companies and research establishments to improve access to technical and financial information for SMEs and their use in business and production processes</p> <p>Promote the co-operation between the policy makers and the transport sector in the Transport Telematic Forum</p> <p>Promote the development of new techniques linking existing timetable information systems for all public transport</p> <p>Build up It-supported environmental information systems and information networks at the Federal level</p>		<p>Encourage wider use of electronic commerce through public relations campaigns developed by the network of regional centres for electronic commerce</p> <p>Encourage the use of regional competence centres for electronic commerce by SMEs in the transport sector</p> <p>Raise and disseminate awareness on the potential of new information and communication technologies at localised level</p>	<p>Simplify company law, removing the requirement for written forms and permitting electronic declarations and statements</p> <p>Remove obstacles in electronic commerce company law to electronic communication and adapt regulations from a cross-frontier viewpoint</p> <p>Build up a comprehensive range of multi-media and IT services</p> <p>Ensure the possibility to use electronic tender procedures</p> <p>Ensure electronic publication on the Internet of forms, documents and description of projects to tender</p> <p>Ensure electronic submission of tax declarations, trade taxes and other tax types</p> <p>Expand and develop the Federal Labour Office information service to make it more user-oriented and endeavour to achieve national coverage</p> <p>Promote the 'Election on the Internet Project'</p>
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ASSESSING POLICIES FOR THE DIGITAL ECONOMY: GERMANY (2000-2005)³

BENEFICIARIES	HUMAN RESOURCES	BUSINESS	RESEARCH COMMUNITY	LOCAL SYSTEMS	PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION
POLICY FOCUS					
Access to digital infrastructures & technologies	<p>Fund the development of school teaching and learning software</p> <p>Fund the acquisition and use of multimedia information sources for teachers and pupils</p> <p>Fund the building up of a computer exchange for schools</p>	<p>Implement a competition-oriented price regulation for telecommunications services, so as every company in German is able to use telecommunication infrastructures</p> <p>Provide a legislation on competition ensuring competitors to have access to essential facilities</p> <p>Support small and medium services firms and very small firms to open new markets by providing electronic support for joint ventures</p> <p>Fund the development of telematics systems for general transport mobility and telematics in the transport and logistic sectors</p>	<p>Ensure that all scholars and scientists have access to networked computer workplaces with the latest state of technology</p> <p>Ensure the adoption and the diffusion of networked computer workplaces and network connections by Universities, enabling the participation in the new forms of teaching and learning</p> <p>Launch a promotional funding programme for the diffusion of new media in German universities</p> <p>Fund the building up and the expansion of a national gigabyte research network</p>	<p>Ensure that the development chances of the regional companies that are to take over the broadband cable network of Deutsche Telekom are not restricted by excessive regulation</p> <p>Ensure that cable lying rights of the Länder do not disproportionately restrict the use of the cable networks by new-multimedia suppliers</p>	<p>Fund the expansion of digital libraries and electronic document delivery services</p> <p>Promote the use of the Internet in municipal affairs through the MEDIA@Komm project, networking towns and municipalities</p> <p>Provide all the staff of the Federal Labour Office with a networked computerised workplace</p>

³ Federal Ministry of Economics and Technology-Federal Ministry of Education and Research, 'Innovation and jobs in the Information Society of the 21st century. Action Programme by the German Government', November 1999; Federal Ministry of Economics and Technology, 'Small-Midsize Enterprises Action Programme', July 2000.

Codification of knowledge & Generation of new knowledge		Train SMEs to understand value of Internet in the entire value chain of the firm from previous experiences, in order to make them able to planning effective Internet strategies Establish ICT-oriented 'learning by doing' training projects in joint companies, aiming to creating new skills related to the Digital Economy, and to re-qualifying jobs			
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ICT-O & SKILLS IN THE POLICY MECHANISMS IN FINLAND²

BENEFICIARIES POLICY FOCUS	HUMAN RESOURCES	BUSINESS	RESEARCH COMMUNITY	LOCAL SYSTEMS	PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION
Access to digital infrastructures & technologies		Provide financial support not to generic ICT investments but <u>only</u> to special-purpose ICT-tools (i.e., sophisticated CAD/CAM or production control equipment)			Foster SMEs moving into ICT by moving a number of government activities (i.e. tax filings, applications of permits and licenses to the web)
Circulation of information & knowledge		<p>Increase SMEs awareness of the opportunities created by the Internet, opening enrolment ICT seminars and knowledge transfer NetMarkets forums (1998-2000 NetMate Programme; over 220,000 firms targeted)</p> <p>Develop and diffuse a guidebook to planning Internet Business based on experiences gained from the NetMarket program (1998-2000 NetMate Programme; over 220,000 firms targeted)</p> <p>Ensure awareness of opportunities of net-business to SMEs</p> <p>Provide services consultancy and training services to SMEs that are just planning their net-business strategy</p>		Within the framework of the NetMate Programme, activate nation-wide co-operation and interaction between cities, regional chambers of commerce and corporate associations, in order to meet region-specific or industry-specific business needs	

² Ministry of Transport and Communications, 'NetMate Project'; Ministry of Trade and Industry, 'SMEs netbusiness development Programme'; Employment and Economic Development Centre (EEDC) of Southern Finland, 'KEKO - Development Training Programme'

<p>Codification of knowledge & Generation of new knowledge</p>	<p>Award technological solutions in connection with relevant business models which use the Internet technology to support transactions within the value chain</p> <p>Implement a marketplace for IT training and e-learning</p> <p>Implement e-Competence centres for women</p>	<p>Establish one-stop-shops for the proceeding of the collection of revenues from intellectual properties, so as to guarantee a more efficient exploitation and protection of IPR</p> <p>Make available access to digital rights to make revenues from works of Austria arts</p> <p>Create an e-business portals as a single-access point for SMEs under the recognition of existing content and the evaluation of already existing services</p> <p>Provide ICT related services via adequate networking solutions on the horizontal and also regional level</p> <p>Provide on-line services for intermediation between potential business partners</p> <p>Award technological solutions in connection with relevant business models which use the Internet technology to support transactions within the value chain</p> <p>Fund the Multimedia National Prize Europrix, supporting the production of multimedia best practices in Austria</p> <p>Finance business start-ups</p> <p>Establish centres for eTourism</p>	<p>Build up and promote one or more clearing houses which are able to do research on and clarify the system of IPR</p> <p>Provide support for relevant research and development project through the FFF (Industrial research Promotion Fund)</p> <p>Award technological solutions in connection with relevant business models which use the Internet technology to support transactions within the value chain</p> <p>Promote the implementation and development of industrial competence centres and competence network in order to create technology cluster and strengthening the co-operation between science and businesses</p> <p>Improve networking various scientific disciplines and research and industry in order to increase co-operation and the development of positive synergies</p>	<p>Promote the implementation and development of industrial competence centres and competence network in order to create technology cluster and strengthening the co-operation between science and businesses</p> <p>Promote electronic ordering between firms within a specific cluster</p>	<p>Develop a secure and privacy-protected Austria chip card, to be rolled out to all people during 2002</p> <p>Provide similar identification, security measures and standards for the electronic contact on all level of public administration, so as to establish a system of e-government</p> <p>Establish a task force that connects on-line the activities of ministries, Länder and administrations, developing on-line applications</p> <p>Define interfaces that allow software enterprises to develop compatible programmes for the contact with administration</p> <p>Promote the development of compatible e-government applications with European administration proceedings</p>
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<p>Circulation of information & knowledge</p>		<p>Concept and realise of marketing and information campaign, including the promotion of knowledge transfer in relation to e-business, especially B2B</p> <p>Elaborate and offer material to measuring awareness raising</p> <p>Concept and realise events explicitly in relation to SMEs, partly sector-specific</p> <p>Provide consultancy support and advice for the introduction of B2B solutions</p> <p>Promote the public diffusion of best practices in B2B and IT use</p>		<p>Provide and diffuse e-business information services at the regional (Lander) level</p> <p>Organise Roadshow for region-based (Land Styria) SMEs in the Information Society</p> <p>Provide Internet advice- and funding modules for locally based (Vienna) enterprises</p> <p>Provide business information for suppliers through a regional (Vienna) electronic business portal</p> <p>Provide information concerning commercial proceedings that can be handled through the Internet to local (Vienna) entrepreneurs</p>	<p>Open the existing and future on-line proceedings for all enterprises as well as the free choice of access</p> <p>Provide on-line handling of proceedings of the general administration practice and of the leading organisation of administration</p> <p>Provide a transparent basis for the utilisation of public information carried out by all ministries and Länder governments as well as by the affected parts of the economy (e.g. legal texts, statistics and geographic data)</p> <p>Implement an on-line service platform dedicated to public administration services for business, in order to realise business related e-government services</p> <p>Promote electronic tendering</p> <p>Establish</p>
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E-POLICY FOR SMEs IN AUSTRIA (2000-2003)^{1*}

BENEFICIARIES	HUMAN RESOURCES	BUSINESS	RESEARCH COMMUNITY	LOCAL SYSTEMS	PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION
Access to digital infrastructures & technologies	<p>Increase the Internet access of Austria schools via high speed access in the class rooms of all pupils, via the development of the Viennese Education Net Project (already realised)</p> <p>Build up xDSL data infrastructure</p>	<p>Provide financial support to favour technology transfer by Austrian enterprises</p> <p>Provide support for and implementation of B2B solutions for SMEs (both single and co-operative projects) within the framework of ERP Fund</p> <p>Promote the EDI Business Austria programme to raise the number of EDI users</p> <p>Promote the Multimedia Business Austria initiative, supporting the diffusion of information systems, digital training software and multimedia application in the B2B field</p>		<p>Grant annuity-subsidy for commercial loans which are used for investments in order to strengthen regional (Länder level of Salzburg) micro and small enterprises' ability to compete through the building and enlargement of electronic commerce</p>	<p>Improve the technical equipment and education of the staff of public administration so as to be able to realise e-government</p>

¹ Austrian Chamber of Commerce, 'Putting into action e-government in Austria'; Working Group Information Society of the Austrian Chamber of Commerce, 'Measures for the location Austria in the Digital Economy'; Ministry for Economy and Labour, 'e-biz for SMEs' and 'e-Business award Austria'; Land Salzburg, 'e-Business support for the 'Land' Salzburg' and 'eBusiness information'; Land Burgenland, 'Industrial e-Business'; Land Carithia, 'eCommerce show' and 'eBusiness funding'; Land Lower Austria, 'Industrial eBusiness'; Land Upper Austria, 'eBusiness information'; Land Styria 'Multimedia show', 'e-Business information' and 'e-Business funding'; Land Vienna, 'Go2Internet in Vienna', 'SPIN: eBusiness', 'eBiz FAQ' and 'Industrial eBusiness'.

* Please note that the new Action Plan of the BMWA 'e-Austria Action Programme' is to be presented to the public in mid-May 2001.

ANNEX 1

The assessment of actions in national policies for the Digital Economy: Austria, Finland, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Italy, The Netherlands, Spain, Switzerland, UK

5. CONCLUSIONS

At this early stage of the exercise, conclusions deal mostly with the effectiveness of the methodology in providing interpretative support to policy assessment, rather than on the benchmarking outcomes.

The methodology has allowed to enter the cross-analysis of differently targeted policies from different institutional sources and socio-economic contexts, using a conceptual framework which upgrade the survey from horizontal compilation to vertical analysis.

Moreover, the methodology can be used as well including sub-national and supra-national policy making sources, and can be disaggregated into sub-items on both the axes of the matrix case by case.

This work is offered to the DEEDS Policy Group 1st Meeting, where conclusions and implications for further research and policy assessment are expected to be discussed and addressed in the next phases of the DEEDS project.

the different knowledge-enhancing dimensions and are eventually well funded. On the other hand, policy strategies positioning on the lower-left side of the diagram are bottom-up, localised and eventually fund-limited policies. They represent the distributed input and contribution of different capacity centres, which focalise efforts on specific and well-defined issues, and could even do not require heavy financial efforts.

Secondly, from an empirical viewpoint, the trend in national strategy from our 'small sample' is to concentrate on policies aiming to favour the generation of new knowledge focusing in between the systemic level and complementary beneficiary blocs. In other words, most of national guidelines are oriented to implement policies which aim to develop the Digital Economy by means of actions involving complementary economic beneficiaries, and tending to cover the overall framework of economic interdependencies between economic actors.

Furthermore, it is also interesting that any of the national policies is not specifically focusing on strategies that favour the mere access to knowledge and technological infrastructures.

Finally, it is to be noted that there is not any clear-cut tendency even within the same country. Most of the countries' strategies are in between two categories both in the knowledge orientation and in the economic focus dimensions. At the country level, most of all the categories are addressed by policies and actions, and each country's position in the policy space depends on the prevalence of actions belonging to a certain category.

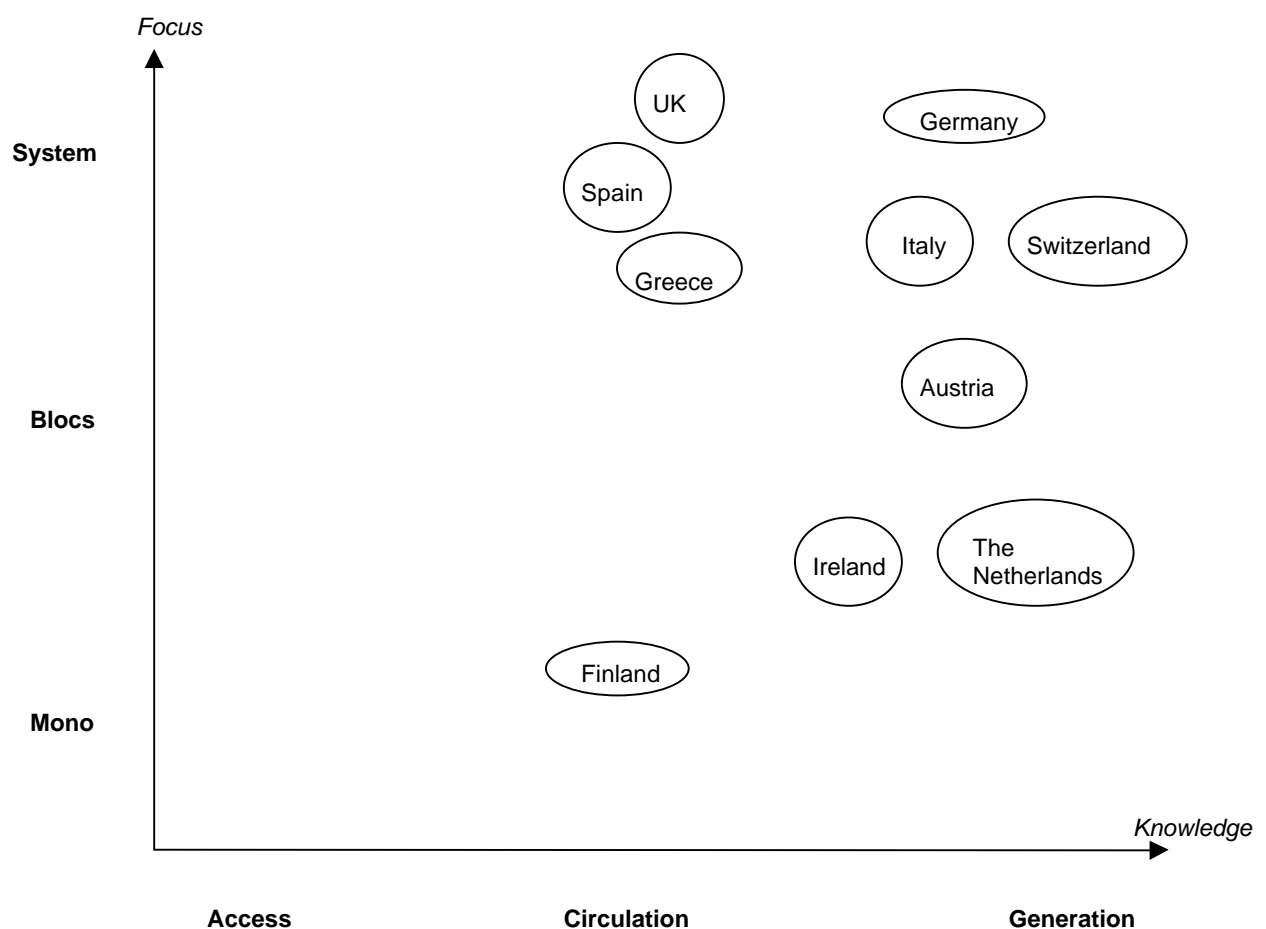
Two methodological and final comments are also required when taking into consideration such a benchmarking. Firstly, in that our collection of information and 'data' concerns only national policies and initiatives from more or less centralised public bodies, the emerging picture is only one of the possible scenarios of policies for the Digital Economy. When new and complementary sources, e.g. regional policies, will be added, the policy space will be more and more populated by diverse positions even within the same country.

Secondly, it is necessary to ask and verify whether positioning in the upper-right side of the diagram is 'better' than in the lower-left side. In other words, for example, ineffective or unfitting systemic policies for the generation of new knowledge are worse than effective and 'adaptive' initiatives for the implementation of technology infrastructure. At least, this issue could be considered as to be addressed in this Policy Group meeting and over the next two years of the DEEDS project lifecycle.

existing knowledge; to generate new knowledge, or to codify it, it is necessary to make the existing stock of knowledge absorbed by the wide spectrum of actors contributing to the knowledge creation.

The following figure (figure 2) is the spatial representation of the distribution of national policy strategy.

Figure 2. The benchmarking of countries' strategy for the Digital Economy



Two kinds of results could be addressed when analysing such a distribution. Firstly, from a conceptual viewpoint, the diagram opposes two different 'visions' of the policy-making process and of policy strategy subsequently. On the one hand, policy strategies positioning in the upper-right side of the diagram are to be considered as top-down, wide and eventually heavy-funded policies. They represent the centralised and overwhelming input to the implementation of the Digital Economy, cover the overall economic and social system accounting for

4. THE EMERGING PICTURE

When considering the overall distribution of actions related to the development of the Digital Economy in 10 European countries (see Annex 1), the taxonomy previously introduced (figure 1) represents a useful tool to appraising the general policy guidelines of each country.

In this regard, the three categories of the economic beneficiaries of actions may be also seen as the different and specific axes of an overall strategy for the implementation of policy oriented to the Digital Economy. They represent the economic focus of policies, being measures of the wideness of the policy spectrum in each country.

In other words, the policy strategy within a given national framework could be more focalised on **one specific beneficiary**, e.g. human resources, and give marginal importance to other beneficiaries. In this case we have mono-dimensional policy strategy.

On the other hand, the focus could be on more than just one kind of beneficiary, and taking into account the complementarities between the different economic dimensions, i.e. policy oriented to ensure the adoption of new technologies by SMEs by means of supporting actions to the research and technology system. In this case **blocs-oriented policy** could be conceived.

Finally, when the policy strategy in a given country takes into account the overall framework of interdependencies between economic beneficiaries, the **systemic level** of policy is achieved.

These three kinds of policy orientation are to be conceived as cumulative, that is to say that the implementation of more complex lines of policy requires achievements also on the bottom line.

Consequently, when assessing the overall economic focus of national policy for the Digital Economy it is possible to sketch out three different and cumulative levels characterising the economic focus of a given national policy strategy:

- **Mono-dimensional**
- **Policy-blocs**
- **Systemic level**

When coupling the economic dimension of national policies with the knowledge dimension, a representation of the policy space of national strategies results, one where both the dimensions are cumulative. In fact, also within the knowledge dimension each level requires the previous one, i.e. to disseminate information and knowledge it is necessary to have access to the stock of

Figure 1. The typology of actions and relevant assessments

		BENEFICIARIES		
		<i>Business</i>	<i>Institutional environment</i>	<i>Human resources</i>
KNOWLEDGE IMPACT	<i>Access</i>	Provide support to implement B2B applications for SMEs Promote the development of regional cable networks Promote the adoption of the EDI technology within industrial sectors	Improve the technical equipment and education of the public administration's staff Build up a national gigabyte research network Promote the interconnection of University and Research Centres through a national research backbone	Increase the Internet access of national schools Fund the development of school teaching and learning software Fund the acquiring of multimedia equipment and applications in schools Develop an integrated system of electronic state procurement
	<i>Circulation</i>	Provide Internet advice for locally based enterprises Raise and disseminate awareness on the potential of ICTs Develop a guidebook to planning Internet Businesses Promote the creation of an information helpdesk for e-Business	Promote electronic tendering Establish electronic one stop shops Establish a large number of digital info points for tourists Activate co-operation between R&D, educational and university centres Ensure on-line statistical services	Ensure and extend an awareness campaign to make women conscious of the potential of the Internet Build up an information system for multimedia applications in vocational training Promote the e-Business Forum for citizens
	<i>Generation</i>	Implement sector-specific and region-specific e-marketplaces Launch an Internet Prize to stimulate the creation of IT applications for SMEs Promote local electronic networking and the creation of e-clusters Promote SMEs aggregation in portals	Implement e-Commerce technology centres Promote R&D projects in the fields of optical and radio networks Create a portal for public services to businesses Fund industrial and pre-competitive research Support academic spin-offs in ICTs-related fields	Implement e-marketplaces for IT training and learning Promote the development of long-distance courses in the universities Ensure the creation of new skills and job related to the ICT Provide ICT-oriented training for teachers

- **Business**, grouping the categories 'Business' and 'Local systems', in that the analysis of actions and measures in each national policy shows that initiatives aiming at favouring these two categories are highly interdependent and complementary.
- **Institutional environment**, grouping the categories 'Research community' and 'Public administration', in that actions in both the categories are increasingly oriented to ensure the proper research, technological, legal and administrative environment, in turn providing a network of complementary partners to businesses and enterprises.
- **Human resources**, as the common background of skills, competencies, capabilities and jobs to both businesses and institutions.

Holding that access, circulation and generation of knowledge are basic dimensions of the knowledge feature of policies, the following taxonomy results (figure 1), where a few cases of actions implemented in the national policies are included as examples.

This taxonomy is to be considered as a methodological tool to benchmark different actions in different countries and classify actions in terms of their impact on the relevant dimensions of the Digital Economy.

Moreover it is also useful in that it is a preliminary step to the implementation of the further analysis, aiming at sorting each country in respect to the categories of actions have been implemented.

In other words, the taxonomy so far introduced arranges for actions in national policies according to their impact in terms of knowledge and economic beneficiaries. In so doing, nine different categories of actions are identified, pooling three knowledge dimensions (access, circulation and generation) and three economic beneficiaries (business, institutions, and human resources). Such categorisation provides the tool to compare each overall national framework in terms of the classes of actions put in place. Next paragraph will draw the overall picture of the policy strategy for each country, trying to figure out the key policy trend in each country and comparing the different country strategies each other.

for e-commerce; promoting co-operation between university innovation centres and new technology institutes in the regions; launching IT incubators.

- **Public administration** is also important in that it plays as a promoter and multiplier for the diffusion of several information, applications and practices related to the Digital Economy. Measures focusing on the adoption, diffusion and development of ICT-enabled, applications and procedures into the public administration favour at the same time adoption, diffusion and development of new ICT-enabled artefacts, tools and solutions by all those economic and social actors which have to interface the Public Administration. In this concern, examples of actions are: the improvement of the organisational competence of governments to deliver electronic services; the implementation of electronic one-stop-shop; the establishment of trusted service providers to ensure interoperability and legal value to the transactions between citizens and government.

Annex 1 provides the overall assessment of the specific actions contributing to national policies for the Digital Economy in 10 European countries. However, it seems useful to provide here some evidence of such an assessment in order to both introduce the benchmarking exercise carried out in the next paragraph, and explain the criterion for such a benchmarking.

When introducing the taxonomy and the related examples of policy benchmarking, some further methodological remarks about the sources are needed. This appraisal and the classification here provided are based on documentation accommodated by ministerial bodies and concerns policy having a nation-wide reach. However, the methodological effort to develop a model to benchmarking can be employed also using different and complementary sources. E.g., actions and initiatives implemented by the European Commission; by sector-specific and/or region-specific entrepreneurial and professional associations; by third-party institutions, could also be analysed in further research works, using the same methodology.

In order to provide an introductory appraisal to the benchmarking considering the different actions implemented through different national policies, the categories previously elaborated to explain the overall methodological assessment of national policies need to be redefined. Such a refinement will be also useful to account for the next methodological step (paragraph 4) and compare national frameworks, instead of single actions.

As far as the two dimensions concerning the knowledge impact and the economic beneficiaries previously articulated are considered, the different categories of economic beneficiaries could be grouped according to economic analogies and complementarities. Three main groups of economic beneficiaries are consequently identified:

Secondly, measures are classified taking into account ***the relevant beneficiaries***. The economic impact of the policy measures is here considered and that the focus is on whether and which economic actors do benefit from a given measure. In that a given action could impinge on a number of economic conditions, the core beneficiary is considered. E.g., an action funding the development of school teaching and software impacts both on the research systems -in that it promote basic and technological R&D-, and on human resources -in that it ensure the adoption and use of e-learning practices. In this regard, the core beneficiary is considered to be human resources, in that the intensification of R&D activities is an induced effect due to the growth of the aggregate demand.

When analysing the potential beneficiaries, five categories are the central terms of reference:

- **Human resources** is the first beneficiary, when actions are targeted on the development of skills, competencies, know-how and kinds of jobs. To give some examples of measures which focus on human resources: funding the building up of a computer network for schools; an awareness campaign on the opportunities the Internet can offer to women in education, work and leisure; the promotion of long-distance education; the development of an educational portal.
- **Business** is key beneficiary of policies for the Digital Economy. In this concern, SMEs are at the core of the focus. Nevertheless, in that the Digital Economy is assumed to be based on the knowledge exchange and on networking organisations and technologies, complementary kinds of businesses are also taken into account. Few examples are: the provision of financial support for the adoption of Internet-oriented applications by SMEs; the implementation of information services to ensure the take up of e-commerce; the implementation of e-marketplaces for SMEs in the same sector.
- **Research community** is also an important actor to focus on in the Digital Economy. Actions are considered when they favour R&D activities in the field of ICTs; networking between research and technology centres; digital communication and knowledge exchange within the research community; and the adoption of telecom and computer advanced infrastructure into research institutions. E.g., launching tender for e-science projects; building up and expanding a national broadband research network; promoting of associate projects for R&D in ICT-enabled business services; the research & analysis of new economic indicators for the Digital Economy.
- **Local systems** are core beneficiaries of e-policies in that growing empirical evidence in economics shows that higher rates of innovation, growth and social cohesion are more and more concentrated in local clusters. Some examples of actions that fall in this category are the following: the establishment of regional centres

3. THE PROCESS AND INTRODUCTORY ASSESSMENT

As far as the implementation of the methodological framework so far elaborated is concerned, a number of policy documents accounting for the development of the Digital Economy in nation-wide has been collected. More precisely, this appraisal assesses for the situation in 10 European countries and presents preliminary results from the analysis of measures and actions implemented by the relevant Ministries in each country. Countries covered by the data collected with the collaboration of the members of the DEEDS Policy Group are the following: Austria, Finland, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Italy, the Netherlands, Spain, Switzerland and UK.

The number of actions and initiatives this paper relies on refer to a wide and inhomogeneous spectrum of sources even within the same country, i.e. the relevant Ministries and public bodies. Consequently, the first step it has been employed to provide a consistent set of information was to pick up fragmented initiatives and recombine them in a systematic and structured way, suitable for a preliminary benchmarking of actions.

Using the methodology developed in this early stage, a taxonomy has been articulated. This taxonomy aims at the distribution of actions and measures into specific categories referring to two policy-related dimensions of the Digital Economy.

Firstly, actions and measures are classified considering their ***impact on the knowledge base*** of the Digital Economy. In this concern, three kinds of macro-effects are taken into account, whether policies are:

- To favour **the access to knowledge**, even when it is embedded in technology and infrastructures. Few examples of measures and actions which are classified as access-oriented are: those supporting the acquisition of multimedia information sources for teachers and pupils, the adoption of networked computer workplaces in the universities, the diffusion of network-oriented technologies and applications by SMEs and public administrations, the development of regional broadband cable networks.
- To ensure **the circulation of knowledge and information**, by means of both personal and digital communication channels. E.g., awareness campaigns, Internet forums, electronic tendering.
- To promote **the codification and generation of new knowledge**, either via traditional and via digital-enabled tools. Examples are: the implementation of sector-specific portals and digital marketplaces, support to the research and development of new technological ICT-oriented applications for SMEs, development of institutional networks of regional competence centres for e-commerce.

networks either to collapse, or to become more compact - by increasing selection to access, that is raising up barriers to the knowledge transfer and creation. On the other hand, the power of connectivity allows for new networks be created, leading to increasing pluralism, and new knowledge creation and accumulation.

The problem of the access of the small businesses to the digital economy, therefore, should be seen from three angles:

- Access to the digital infrastructure
- Access to networks
- Access to knowledge creation

Although the role of the market in the digital economy is increasing and positive, in that it enhances economic dynamism, competition, and pluralism, the transition to the digital economy claims for strong policy support, to avoid the gaps in terms of access turn into irreversible loss of knowledge and socio-economic fragmentation and divides.

The current dominant approach to electronic commerce is mostly oriented to costs-reduction, to be achieved within networks whose membership tends to be selected by the market. That apparently leads the strongest player to become stronger, while the risks of exclusion are likely to overcome the benefits of increased connectivity for the small businesses.

Policy for the access of small businesses to the digital economy have to be oriented to overcome the three kinds of gaps, be open to innovation in the networks' configuration models, with the purpose of contributing to the generation of additional value/knowledge.

These three dimensions of the access to the digital economy have been used as the basic terms of reference to a taxonomy that has been tested in the policy assessment exercise initiated within the DEEDS project. The process of implementation of the methodology and exercise is described in the following paragraph.

The processes of knowledge creation, transfer, re-generation - be they vertical or horizontal processes and whatever the share of codified and tacit knowledge at stake - take place within a typical **network** dimension. Networks have different and dynamic configurations.

1. The network dimension of the exchange of knowledge

The firm	Networks of firms		Networks among firms and institutions
	Geographical dimension	Productive dimension	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vertically integrated firms • Horizontally integrated firms • The internal network of business processes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local systems • International systems • Global systems 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supply chain • Distribution chain <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⇒ among different actors within the trade system ⇒ among backward and forward actors in the productive and distributive system respectively • Virtual organisations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Between the firm and the scientific community • Between the firm and the knowledge intensive business services <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⇒ Firms-consultants linkages ⇒ Firms-financial system linkages ⇒ Firms-technology transfer centres linkages • Multilateral networks

Digital technologies exert a relevant impact on the processes of knowledge creation and re-creation either because - through digitisation - they allow for the divisibility, transportability and integration of knowledge (making transparent the knowledge content of any transaction) , and because - through their connectivity power - they influence the setting and re-setting of the networks where the knowledge flows and transactions are implemented.

The implications of the digitisation give the market a dominant role in the digital economy, either because of the creation of the market for knowledge, and because the market increasingly interferes with the dynamics affecting the inclusion/exclusion in/from the networks.

In the digital economy opposite network dynamics are taking place: on one hand, networks become more open, loose-coupled, and unstable. That can lead

economic dynamics and the life-cycle of policy actions is and will inevitably be persistent. Therefore, policy assessment cannot but be driven by policy options, whatever explicit be their motivations and inspirations. We are trying here to pull out from the 'analysis' systematic inputs to inject motivations and vision into 'policy'.

The methodology here proposed to policy analysis rests on the assumption that **knowledge** - as the 'kernel' of the digital economy - plays a key role in the process of economic and social growth and development, that can be seen as the combination of the following processes:

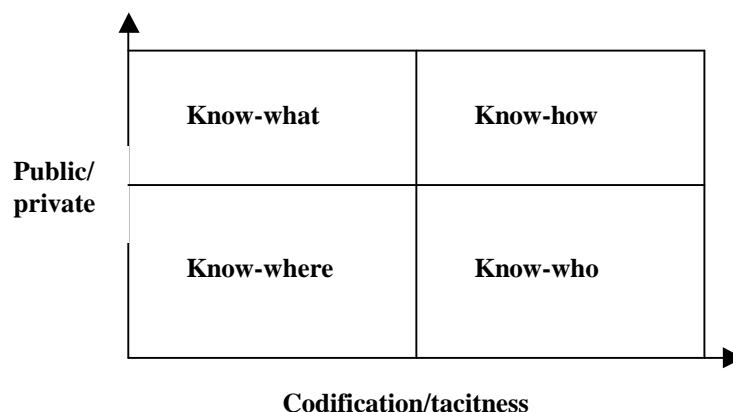
- production of new knowledge
- transmission of old and new knowledge
- accumulation of new knowledge
- recombination of old with new knowledge
- rejuvenation of the total stock of knowledge

In that these flows of knowledge are stemming from a variety of sources and knowledge owners, the exchange knowledge is something different and something more than the mere transmission of bits of information.

In order to be exchanged, knowledge needs to be to a large extent a public good, having basically the characteristics of information. At the same time, the process of exchange of knowledge does not involve only a kind of top-down and linear sequence between scientific knowledge eventually translated into technological knowledge. That is, not all the knowledge can be codified, on the one hand; there is interdependence between top-down and bottom-up processes of diffusion of knowledge, on the other hand.

That requires a systemic approach to the production and exchange of knowledge in the digital economy be adopted; highlighting the complementarity among diverse kinds of public or scientific-based and private or firm-based knowledge and the collective character of technological knowledge.

1.1. Patterns of knowledge in the digital economy



The exercise has been made possible thanks to the collaboration of the DEEDS Policy Group members, who have selected and provided the relevant policy documentation, either using a 'Project Fiche' tool - produced by the DEEDS research staff (see Annex II) and/or or providing the links to the accessible resources on the Web.

Documents have been accessed in the original languages, except in the case of Greece, where the Policy Group member has kindly made available in English a summary of the national programme for the access of the SMEs to the Internet economy.

In almost all the cases, the policy documentation sources are the national Ministries of Economics. The documentation addressing the policies for the SMEs in the digital economy covers a wide spectrum, including not only strictly SME-targeted policies, but also collateral policies, such as e-government, which have an obvious impact on the way 'SME go digital'.

The current survey is proposed as the first contribution to the policy assessment exercise within DEEDS, which is expected to be strengthened and prolonged over the project life cycle.

2. THE METHODOLOGY

In the early stage of the project, the DEEDS research staff has started developing a methodology for policy assessment, which is a preliminary step to benchmarking. There is an increasing attention - and expectation - on benchmarking within the European Commission and the nation states, as benchmarking currently represents the more appropriate methodology to measure the change along with the transition from one environment to another - be it the business or the policy environment - in the absence of agreed interpretative models to be used as terms of reference.

We are not entering here now the debate about the benchmarking theory and technicalities. Rather, we would opt for a soft approach to benchmarking, as a supportive methodology allowing for qualitative comparison, more than for quantitative rating.

Qualitative methodologies are often criticised as meta-instruments unable to work out the uncertain nature and outcomes of new phenomena or practices, as quantitative methodologies aim at. In the case of policy making it is really hard to compose the variety and complexity of players and contexts into self-sustainable, replicable models, or to reduce them into quantitative indicators, such as the return of investment. The gap between the time-cycle of the socio-

1. INTRODUCTION

In the DEEDS kick off meeting (October 2000) the need to 'take stock' of the policies for the access of the SMEs to the digital economy, underway in the EU, was raised up as a common requirement by the DEEDS Policy Group. Over the last five years a number of initiatives, actions, and programmes have been set and launched at national, local and European level, to cope or to catch up with the uptake of electronic commerce and of the digital economy. Now, the discussion about the best policies to fit the change knocking at the door cannot be separated from an assessment of what is already on the ground.

There are two ways to approach this policy assessment.

One is to approach the task horizontally, producing a compilation of policy actions and programmes. There is much to be listed, the list is to be a long list. Policy making is working in 'real time' and in the short run, as well as analysts, because the history of the digital economy and of the policies for the access to the digital economy is too young. That helps activism, on the one hand, but does not favour ex-post assessment, on the other.

The other way is to approach it vertically, trying to get some intelligence by an assessment 'in progress'. That requires a methodological framework be set up, taking upon the risk of selecting the analytical criteria ex ante. In this way the policy criteria and the analytical criteria, which do usually walk parallel paths, are going to mutually support each other and possibly overlap. The aim is to read the state-of-the-art in order to get the necessary understanding to support further, effective, consistent policy actions.

At the time of the G7 project *A Global Marketplace for SME* (1995-99), which initiated the practice of policy exchange within the G7 Policy Group, the approach was horizontal, probably the only feasible one within a very wide, flexible, intercontinental policy group at the very beginning of the debate about electronic commerce.

At this time, when the focus is shifting from generic policy awareness on systemic issues to a more targeted set of policies all over the European countries, DEEDS wants to support a constructive policy exchange by introducing a vertical approach to policy assessment.

DEEDS provides the setting to an exercise as informal as advanced, because its technical limitations (in terms of space/time extension of the survey, of sources' homogeneity, and 'from-insider' selection of the relevant documentation) allow to escape the technical boundaries of a wide-reach, standard and neutral assessment, and to try experimental analysis.

POLICIES FOR SMEs IN THE DIGITAL ECONOMY. METHODOLOGY AND ASSESSMENT

PATRIZIA FARISELLI AND PIER PAOLO PATRUCCO – NOMISMA

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DIGITAL ECONOMY: POLICIES EXCHANGE AND DEVELOPMENT FOR SMES



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SURVEY ON POLICY ACTIONS AND ASSESSMENT

1ST POLICY GROUP MEETING

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