

## Introduction

The last in the series of JANUS workshops will take place in September 2004 in Brussels. While the earlier workshops focused on ICT related or enabled phenomena of the information society, such as eGovernment and the Digital Divide, this final workshop goes beyond this 'inside the information society' perspective. It will look into different paths of economic development in the Knowledge Society today and in the long-run. The central idea behind the theory of alternative development paths is the possibility that regions, countries or even continents might be better off by pursuing paths of development that are not specifically based on high ICT penetration. In such an approach, policy might place less emphasis on the common Information Society pillars, such as ICT infrastructure, eBusiness and eWork. The workshop will address a number of specific questions:

### **Where is the knowledge economy heading in the long-term?**

Using the terms of the theory of long waves in economic development, the current wave or 'Kondratieff cycle' is shaped by ICTs as the basic innovation (also referred to as general purpose technology) and is slowly coming to an end. A new cycle is about to evolve, but what are the most possible candidates for the next basic innovation? Will it be nanotechnology, biotechnology, environmental technology or something completely different? Which will be the industries where the economic dynamism induced by this technology will be felt most? What will be the rising and what the declining industries or even sectors? What will be the needs to be satisfied and what the economic value proposition? The answers to these questions are supposed to provide the global development perspective which provides the framework for country or regional development.

### **Are ICTs as crucial for economic development/growth as recently assumed?**

The second question to be addressed is whether there are alternatives for economic development without putting ICTs – comprising use and production - at the centre of economic activity. Are these technologies as essential in every aspect of life as currently widely assumed in areas such as eBusiness, eGovernment, eHealth etc? Can countries create sufficient economic dynamism in rather low-tech or less ICT intensive industries and sectors? Will those countries be able to keep up with the ICT 'tigers'? Will they become economically dependant on other countries producing ICT products and services?

### **What are the alternatives to mainly ICT oriented development paths?**

The answers to the questions in the last paragraph raise in turn new questions: If ICTs are not the only trajectory to economic growth in the Knowledge Society, what are the others? Are these strategies sustainable or built on short term competitive advantages in labour costs or less stringent standards? What are the risks of taking an alternative path?

### **Is public governance in favour of specific development paths justified, particularly in the domain of ICT?**

JANUS is a policy focused research project and therefore the final objective of the workshop will be to understand socio-economic policy implications. The discussion will focus on the question whether public governance in favour of specific technology trajectories is effective or even useful. How detailed do policies have to be formulated in order to achieve impact without blocking possibilities for alternative paths to develop? Is discretionary RDI policy justified? But the discussion will go beyond the issue of public governance for specific development paths. To use the terms of a key note speaker at the event the main issue is to

understand where we need policy and how to implement **continuity, reform and innovations**<sup>1</sup> in policy to achieve sustainable economic development in the long term.

## Objectives

The workshop aims to discuss the state of the art research on Knowledge Society development paths on a global and European scale from European and international research projects and organisations. It tries to identify global economic development patterns, alternative development paths on country and regional level and finally policy strategies to support these. In detail the workshop's objectives are the following:

- i) To identify a global economic development pattern in the long-term
- ii) To spot the basic innovations/technologies of the next long wave
- iii) To understand whether ICT production and use do provide a national competitive advantage
- iv) To present alternative development paths in old and new EU member states
- v) To examine in what way public governance on regional, national and European level is influencing these development paths
- vi) To answer the question whether public governance is necessary and effective at all
- vii) To make policy recommendation in support of a sustainable Knowledge Economy that go beyond the current information society focus

## Expected Results

It is intended that this workshop will have the following results:

- Consolidation of results of European and other socio-economic research with a focus on economic development paths in the Knowledge Society
- Networking the socio-economic community: Workshop participants will be drawn from old and new EU Member States, European Institutions and the international research community.
- Provision of analysis and extraction of recommendations for policy-makers in the European Institutions, national governments and international organisations
- Contribution to policy recommendations by the European Commission, summarized in a workshop report
- Identification of research gaps

## Participants

Workshop participants will comprise up to 100 stakeholders and experts invited primarily from the following communities:

- Core projects as defined by JANUS, BEEP, EMERGENCE, PRISMA, SIBIS, STAR and TERRA 2000
- Other IST projects of interest
- The wider research community beyond IST

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<sup>1</sup> Miller, Riel (2001) ; Long-run Prospects : Policy Challenges for a World in Transition, OECD Policy Brief

- Representatives from European national and regional governments
- Representatives from international organisations (OECD, EIB) and key international partners of the EU (USA, Canada, Japan, Australia)
- Industry representatives (mainly ICT)
- European Commission

## **Date and Venue**

The workshop will be held in Brussels on 21 September 2004 at the following location:

***Charlemagne Building***

Brussels

Registration will start from 8.30; the workshop will begin at 9:00 and end at 17:00.

Detailed information about the workshop will be posted at: <http://www.janus-eu.org>

The organisation of the meeting is led by Matthias Nöster, who can be contacted at [noester@sfconsulting.net](mailto:noester@sfconsulting.net) or +32 2 227 11 33 tel, +32 2 218 31 41 fax.