

A growing area of attention within European companies is that of Knowledge Intensive Business Services (KIBS), with a specific focus on business and information services. Due to increasing disruptive changes in the traditional document lifecycle by new applied technologies such as digitalization as well as more decentralized ways of working, there is an exponential increase in the amount of information and documents. In addition, the shift to multi-channel (paper, web, mail, apps etc.) communication with customers and other stakeholders makes it difficult to adapt to this megatrend.

Decentralized ways of working will enhance workplace and worktime independency and as such will cause implications for the way we (need to) work. For example, central and decentralized (but authorized) document availability or the change to more workflow than task-driven business & document processes. In order to cope with these changes, clarification is needed on the way people, organizations and providers need to adapt and create solutions and services for this new and important challenge. Technology and mobility may bring effectivity and efficiency to the workplace, but the proper choices in structure and user-interface, amongst others, need to be made to enable (end-)users to handle knowledge and information in an optimal way.

Actual workflow processes need to be fundamentally redesigned, to create solutions to some important megatrends like the explosive growth of mobility and communication, sustainability (by trying to reduce the usage of resources) and the demographic change of a growing and ageing population. As a consequence, major implications in the area of KIBS are expected. Questions will arise such as:

in which way does the increasing load, availability and transparency (like social media) of information ask organizations to work differently; or
which industries will be impacted most by these information lifecycle changes; and
how can innovative business services create a sustainable competitive advantage to cope with that?

To formulate answers to these questions and to generate further opportunities for solutions proposed by (combinations of) European companies and knowledge institutes to the worldwide megatrends, there is a generic need for fundamental research in the total value chain of information and business services. Exploration of this already started in the B2C environment, driven by enhanced customer tooling such as search engines like Google. However, within the B2B environment, where the production industry just started to add service value to their products, this is relatively unexplored. Obviously key to the success of this fundamental research is to increase the productivity of our human capital within the given boundaries of these megatrends.

With "Business Services Innovation" on the European agenda as one of the most important contributors to increase productivity, industries will find it easier to add value to their traditional products and/or help them to shift from a product centric to a service centric approach. At the

moment there is a lack of knowledge in Europe on how to capture, scale and internationalize services that contribute to our competitiveness in continuously-changing markets. To support knowledge intensive business services (KIBS), research and innovation need more attention from international scientific knowledge institutes and companies in an open structure and setting.

The important role of the technological component in developing innovative services is obvious. Any innovation should however be built upon promising business models and a network of relationships. These business models and relationships are being developed for the business-to-business market as well as for business-to-consumer markets.

From this point of view, "business services" have to be addressed within the EU Research Programme as a fundamental engine of our future international competitiveness. This endorses and boosts both the scientific research and educational development around the KIBS area. The impact of this on the social themes, the worldwide megatrends and scientific research aligns perfectly with the strategic direction of the Dutch government (locally, regionally, nationwide and internationally) as described in *'Netherlands 2020: back into the top 5'*.

With this position paper, we would like to express the need felt by European industry to give "Information and Business Services" a prominent place, to facilitate the fundamental exploration of future trends within this essential field.

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Kind regards,

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