



# Employment

Information Society and Employment:  
Linking European Policies



## Linking European Policies

This brochure has been produced by Information Society Policy Link (ISPL), an initiative of DG Information Society and Media that aims to link information society projects with European policy-makers across a wide range of policy domains.

More than 3000 projects from information society programmes are being analysed, identifying a wealth of concrete results that support EU policies across all of the principal policy areas. By exchanging information and experiences, the Information Society Policy Link initiative helps to leverage the benefits of these activities for European policies. We are here to make the link.

For Project Consortia, we can help you to:

- ❖ Organise policy workshops and events targeted at the European policy community.
- ❖ Make introductions to policy-makers in European institutions and national administrations.
- ❖ Make contact with relevant and complementary projects and initiatives funded under other European programmes.
- ❖ Identify means to further exploit policy aspects of your results, including through further research, deployment and regulation.

For Policy-makers in the EU institutions and Member States, we can help you to:

- ❖ Maintain awareness of information society activities relevant to your policy domain.
- ❖ Identify promising projects and results within DG Information Society and Media's portfolio.
- ❖ Explore ways in which Information Society developments can support the implementation and monitoring of European and national policies.
- ❖ Build a dialogue with DG Information Society and Media on future needs and research requirements.

This brochure is one of a series describing projects' policy contributions and achievements covering around 20 policy areas. A separate series focuses on policy initiatives under i2010, the European Information Society for Growth and Employment. In addition, the initiative organises workshops to stimulate dialogue between researchers and policy-makers on key policy issues.

All publications plus information on policy workshops and other news are available via the ISPL website at:

[http://ec.europa.eu/information\\_society/activities/policy\\_link/](http://ec.europa.eu/information_society/activities/policy_link/)

A great deal of additional information on the European Union is available on the Internet. It can be accessed through the Europa server (<http://europa.eu>).

Cataloguing data can be found at the end of this publication.

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## > Foreword

Sustainable growth and jobs are at the heart of Europe's efforts, under the renewed Lisbon strategy, to create a competitive and dynamic knowledge-based economy and society. Europe must modernise its labour markets and social protection systems, and harness the benefits of information and communications technologies (ICT) so as to seize the opportunities created by international competition, technological advances and changing population patterns while protecting the most vulnerable in society.

From 2007, the EU's efforts will benefit from the European Social Fund and the new PROGRESS programme, which will provide financial support to the EU's Social Policy Agenda. This single programme will cover anti-discrimination, gender equality, employment incentives, and the fight against social exclusion. With less red tape, simpler rules and more decentralisation to the Member States, it will be both easier to manage and better equipped to tackle the challenges of globalisation, Europe's ageing population, and a bigger and more diverse Union.

Job creation also features in the European Commission's i2010 initiative – a European Information Society for Growth and Jobs – the digital economy component of the renewed Lisbon strategy. i2010 has three key pillars: creating an open and competitive single market for information society and media services; increasing EU investment in research and innovation in ICT; and promoting an inclusive information society in Europe. With ICT being a key driver towards improved economic competitiveness, ultimately i2010 will help create more and better jobs whilst also improving the quality of life for all Europe's citizens. In this way, i2010 represents a substantial contribution to modernising Europe's social model.

We welcome this brochure as an illustration of how ICT are having a positive impact on European employment whilst contributing to European policy for a competitive and inclusive society.



Viviane Reding  
European Commissioner for  
Information Society and Media



Vladimír Špidla  
European Commissioner for Employment,  
Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities



## > Challenges for Employment and Social Affairs



Europe's employment and social policies go hand in hand with its economic policies and are a vital component of its modernising agenda.

The European Union aims to ensure that no-one is left behind as it strives to become the world's most competitive and dynamic knowledge-based economy. The framework for achieving this is the Social Policy Agenda, run by the Commission's Employment DG, which links economic, employment and social policies.

Full employment through the creation of "more and better jobs" remains a key policy goal under the renewed Lisbon strategy.

But for this to happen, greater investment is required in skills, e-skills and European research. In particular, the EU has acknowledged the key role played by information and communication technologies (ICTs) in building social and human capital in a knowledge society.

Progress in labour law, work organisation, health and safety, corporate social responsibility and social dialogue has helped the EU to develop its social model. Faced with far-reaching changes in the economy and the labour market, further responses to improving working conditions are needed: fostering economic dynamism and innovation, ensuring social stability and accommodating the needs of workers and those adversely affected by the changes.

At the Lisbon Summit in 2000, EU governments declared poverty in the European Union to be unacceptably high. They set the goal of making a decisive impact on eradicating poverty by 2010. The need for action is all the more acute in the context of enlargement. Since 2003 Member States have co-ordinated their social protection policies within a single coherent framework. Under this plan, national action plans set targets for reducing the number of people significantly at risk of poverty and social exclusion, with measures to help the most vulnerable as one of the priorities.

Equal rights for women and men are a long-standing commitment under the Treaty and are continually being reinforced. Since 1996, gender equality has been factored into all EU policy areas and it cuts across the entire Social Policy Agenda. The Community Framework Strategy on gender equality, which ran from 2001 to 2005, tackled the pay gap between men and women and introduced measures aimed at balancing family and work life and increasing the number of women in decision-making positions.

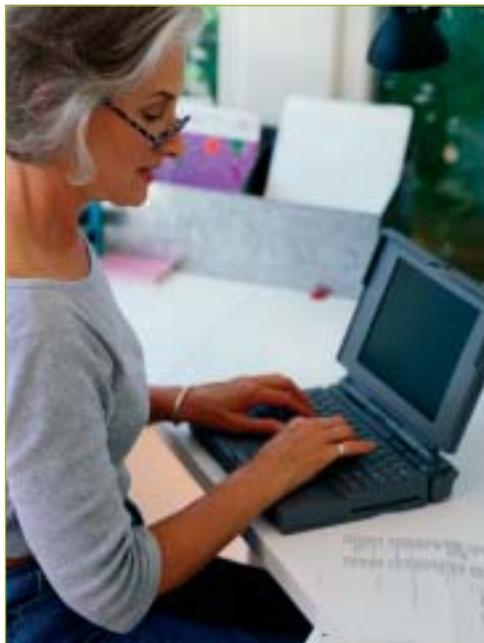
The demographic change is a further important challenge. Over the next 20 years the number of younger Europeans will fall dramatically while those aged over 60 will further increase. These developments will be a serious challenge for the European social model and it will become important to encourage older workers to remain at work longer. Therefore tools are needed, in particular, to adapt working environments and work organisation to facilitate the working life of older workers and also to provide flexibility in choosing between work and retirement activities.

## > Employment and Social Policy

Over recent years EU activities in relation to employment have centred on the European Employment Strategy (EES), a coordinated policy process introduced by EU leaders in 1997. Supported by a set of tools and instruments based on common EU goals and objectives, it promotes the development of a skilled, trained and adaptable workforce and a labour market that is responsive to economic change. It also aims to coordinate EU efforts to create more and better job opportunities.

The Employment Guidelines of the EES have from the start recognised the importance of digital literacy and promoted the connection of schools to the internet. As of 2003 the Guidelines included a considerable number of relevant benchmarks adopted by the Council in the context of the open method of coordination on education (e.g. ensuring that 85% of 22 year olds achieved secondary education, ensuring that at least 12.5% of the workforce participates in continuous education and training). Hence, the employment coordination process actively promotes digital literacy and e-learning.

The Action Plan for Skills and Mobility, adopted in February 2002, aimed to fully open up the European labour markets to all citizens by 2005. By boosting lifelong learning and improving workers' skills (particularly ICT skills) the Action Plan will help to: remove existing barriers to mobility; simplify labour movement between jobs and countries; support the growth of the knowledge and information economy. The European Curriculum Vitae, the European Health Insurance Card and EURES – the European Job Mobility Portal – are among the wide-ranging measures to be introduced.



New proposals for modernising Europe's social model, under the revamped Lisbon Strategy for growth and jobs, are set out in the Commission's new Social Agenda, launched in February 2005 (COM(2005) 33 final). The new agenda focuses on providing jobs and equal opportunities for all and ensuring that the benefits of the EU's growth and jobs drive reach everyone in society. By modernising labour markets and social protection systems, it will help Europeans seize the opportunities created by

international competition, technological advances and changing population patterns while protecting the most vulnerable in society.

The new Social Agenda proposes a wide range of actions aligned to two key priorities: (i) employment and (ii) fighting poverty and promoting equal opportunities. To realise these, it calls for partnerships between public authorities at local, regional and national level, employer and worker representatives and NGOs.

In support of this, from 2007 Community Action Programmes in the fields of anti-discrimination,

gender equality, employment incentives and the fight against social exclusion will be brought together within a new single programme known as PROGRESS.

Further European policies and activities relating specifically to social inclusion are described in the *Information Society Policy Link* brochure on Inclusion.

## > Where the Information Society meets Employment

Information and communication technologies (ICT) play a vital role in building Europe's social and human capital in the Information Society. ICT projects have policy relevance across a broad range of employment and social policy related areas such as working conditions, new forms of work, inclusive society, active ageing and gender equality.

ICT enables workers and those looking to (re)enter the labour market to acquire the knowledge and skills, including e-skills, necessary for the modern world. Our working practices can benefit from developments in organisational learning and knowledge management.

Telework and other forms of flexible working enable employers and workers alike to approach work in new, more family- and age-friendly ways. Technology can improve working conditions in other ways too, creating workspaces that stimulate creativity, knowledge sharing and co-operative working, and are adapted to the needs of the older working population.

### Information Society Activities

#### *Research and Development*

The IST Programme supports research into the socio-economic context of ICTs to develop a better understanding of the challenges, future prospects and potential impacts of the knowledge-based economy and society. The work brought together researchers from a wide range of disciplines, and demonstrated the value of cooperation between the "hard" and "soft" sciences in providing new insights on emerging issues.

Social and employment issues addressed by IST projects included: regional sustainable development; knowledge sharing and management; work organisation and new working methods; working conditions and workplace design; social and gender inclusion; and corporate social responsibility.

Under the Sixth Framework Programme (FP6), relevant research was funded across the IST Priority, in particular under the Strategic Objectives on:

- ❖ ICT research for innovative government
- ❖ ICT for networked businesses
- ❖ Technology-enhanced learning
- ❖ eInclusion; and
- ❖ Collaborative working environments

Within FP7, the societal context of ICT will also be addressed through the proposed European Network of Living Labs, an action under i2010's innovation pillar. Living Labs are large-scale testbeds that bring technology into real-life user environments. They pay close attention to the human dimension of technology so as to aid the successful societal deployment of new applications.

A European Network of Living Labs will be a strong pool for making the industrial innovation process more efficient and dynamic by involving citizens and workers in the development of new services, products and societal infrastructures.





#### *Other Activities*

The **eTEN** Programme is concerned with the large-scale roll-out of public interest services, primarily in support of the i2010 initiative. Employment and related applications and services are addressed by projects under the eTEN action lines on eLearning, eInclusion, services for SMEs and eGovernment.

**eContentplus** (2005-2008) is a market-oriented programme supporting the production, use and distribution of European digital content, including its linguistic diversity. This information can often provide a basis for new or improved societal services. Projects focus on pan-European services, information infrastructures and showcases, including industrial and societal applications.

For the future, and with particular reference to the i2010 strategy, the main such instrument will be the **ICT Policy Support Programme**, which is part of the Competitiveness and Innovation Framework Programme (CIP). With a budget of €728 million, it will stimulate converging markets for electronic networks, media content and digital technologies, test new solutions to speed up the deployment of electronic services, and support modernisation of the European public sector.

## > The Working Environment of the Future

**Flexible working environments will be demanded by the workers of the future, and will bring productivity and creativity benefits to us all.**

### Policy Context

The European Union's goals to create more jobs and better quality jobs go hand-in-hand. There is a clear link between quality in work and productivity, and between quality in work and attracting and retaining people in the labour market. To preserve the EU's competitive edge in a more globalised world, and to make the EU a better place in which to live and work, all Member States must continue to improve quality in work.

Better and more flexible working conditions will both help create more jobs and enable people to work more productively throughout their entire working lives. Studies have shown that by improving quality in work, the groups the EU needs most – like women and older workers – will find it easier to take up employment. The Social Agenda, the European Commission's social policy plan until 2010, underlines the need to promote quality.

Quality is also one of the overarching objectives of the European Employment Strategy (EES). Through European coordination, the EU provides a framework for Member States to think about quality when drawing up national policies and legislation. It acts as a platform for ideas and for learning, encouraging countries to take concrete action. The EU improves quality in work directly through Community funding, social dialogue and legislation. It also supports the efforts of bodies such as the International Labour Organisation (ILO) to promote decent work for all as a global goal.

### Contribution of ICT

Information and communication technologies (ICT) are one of the keys to more flexible, high-quality ways of working. They offer alternatives to traditional ways of organising work, allowing people to work remotely from one another, individually at static locations or on the move.

New working environments are necessary both in traditional industries and in new media-rich and knowledge-rich industries. Typical examples of the former are in situations where connection to data resources and the back-office needs to be provided in a seamless way, or where the actual work is performed 'on the move' and so requires advanced mobile environments. The latter are far more interdisciplinary, dynamic and flexible than ever before, and only by combining resource efficiency and productivity with creativity and innovation can Europe achieve full competitiveness.

The research requirement for new working environments is much wider than technology, connectivity and test beds. New working environments entail wholly new ways of doing things, bringing together technological innovation, application innovation and the societal innovation of the knowledge economy. Research projects are, in effect, 'Living Laboratories' where the innovation meets the needs of 'real' people in real environments, leading to systemic solutions that fully take into account the usability perspective. The research is discovering as well as solving the problems. Research on such Living Labs will be supported under FP7 as a contribution to the i2010 initiative. The results will contribute strongly to evolving policy as well as technology.



## A Vision of Mobile Working

Before we can solve technical problems, we have to discover the problems to be solved. Project **MOSAIC** aimed to accelerate innovation in mobile work environments by shaping future research and innovation activities in Europe. It studied mobility at several levels. Generic scenarios considered broad trends and new types of workplace organisation, while sectoral analyses looked at specific scenarios and roadmaps in healthcare, engineering, construction and rural development.

One of its major insights is that many of the issues are not technological. Policy, social and legal issues join organisational ones in developing mobile workspaces. For instance, **MOSAIC** recommends the development of 'agile' and networked workplaces, where the infrastructure is in place to move tasks as necessary. It also recommends the development of 'living labs', so as to allow researchers to see what actually happens in a real work environment and how people work within it. Combined with rapid software prototyping, this will allow the development of technologies and applications that really work.

The collected results have been published in a book, *The Future Workspace*, which can be downloaded from the project website.

## Research for Flexible and Mobile Working

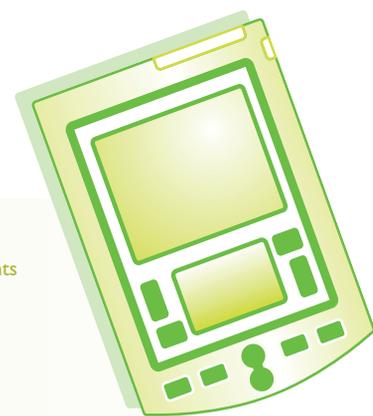
A number of FP6 projects have made contributions in this area as part of the Aml@Work cluster.

The technological challenge of flexible, mobile working is that access to a service may be required at different times, across different networks, from different places and using different devices. For useable services it must be the machines and not the users that sort out all the variability. The **CASCOM** system plans easy and seamless access to semantic internet services anytime, anywhere, and using any device, making use of intelligent agent technology and peer-to-peer mobile service environments. The project will deliver a full proof-of-concept implementation, and a demonstrator for selected healthcare applications.

Project **MOBILIFE** also addresses the system problems relating to different end-user devices, available networks, interaction modes, applications and services. Working from the evolving capabilities of 3G systems and beyond, it looked at how to make systems self-aware and self-configurable. Systems will also benefit from automatic user interfaces that enhance the user experience and minimise his or her active effort, and from group-awareness that enables individuals to relate to one another, and share and interact with each other.

Thanks to satellite location systems such as Galileo, computers and mobiles can now know where they are, and this considerably widens their potential for useful, flexible working services. The **LIAISON** project plans to turn emergent technologies, applications and services into actual business cases, so that European key actors can fulfil the needs of workers for seamless and personalised location-aware services. It will combine numerous existing standards and techniques, enhance the system with new technology and define a platform for end-to-end solutions.

Focusing on mobile network operators, **MULIMOB** aims to enhance awareness of the multilingual and multicultural issues affecting the European single market. It is working with the mobile and music industries, among others, to stimulate a rapid take-up of innovative ideas for user-friendly and cost-effective multilingual services for mobile users and workers. Essentially, the project has started a dialogue and a thorough discussion between the European actors on this subject.



## > PROJECT DETAILS

**CASCOM** - Context-Aware Business Application Service Co-Ordination in Mobile Computing Environments

✉ keller@dfki.de • 🌐 www.ist-cascom.org

**LIAISON** - Location Based Services for the Enhancement of Working Environment

✉ remi.challamel@space.alcatel.fr • 🌐 http://liaison.newapplication.it

**MOBILIFE** - Mobile Life

✉ mika.klemettinen@nokia.com • 🌐 www.ist-mobilife.org

**MOSAIC** - Mobile Worker Support Environments: Aligning Innovation in Mobile Technologies, Applications and Workplaces for Location-Independent Cooperation and Networking

✉ hans.schaffers@telin.nl • 🌐 www.ami-communities.eu/wiki/MOSAIC

**MULIMOB** - Multilingualism and Mobility Specific Support Action

✉ helene@mulimob.org • 🌐 www.mulimob.org

## > Finding Sufficient ICT Skills

**With skill shortages threatening to become a brake on the growth of Europe's information society, studies point to ways to improve employability and career prospects for IT professionals.**

### Policy Context

The future success of the European Information Society depends not only on having the best technological solutions but also on having appropriately qualified people to design and implement them. There is already a significant deficit in key ICT skills in Europe, to the extent that skill shortages are emerging as a potential barrier to future progress. This affects both the ICT sector directly – which accounts for around 600,000 enterprises and 5.3 million jobs – and other sectors, such as manufacturing, aerospace, automotive, health and public administration, where use of ICT is key to greater productivity, innovation and competitiveness.

Improving the availability of e-skills involves actions both at European and national levels, in several areas. The primary areas are education & training, industrial & labour policies, but also domains such as immigration and taxation.

The European policy mission is twofold: to enhance the competitiveness of the ICT sector, and to facilitate the efficient uptake of ICT for European enterprises in general.

To support these efforts, in 2003 the Commission established the European eSkills Forum. The Forum has prepared four issue papers and a synthesis report "eSkills in Europe: Towards 2010 and Beyond", which was presented in September 2004. A declaration was adopted, supporting the analysis and the recommendations of the Forum, inviting the EU to adopt a comprehensive strategy for improving ICT skills and training, and recognising that the way forward is through multi-stakeholder dialogue and partnerships for actions.

The work of the eSkills Forum is being continued by the ICT Task Force, a stakeholder group set up under the i2010 strategy to advise the Commission on how to create a more favourable environment for the ICT sector in the EU. Skills and employability is one of the issues being addressed by the Task Force. Its work, together with the outcome of discussions at the European eSkills Conference in Thessaloniki in October 2006 will be used to prepare a long-term strategy for ensuring adequate e-skills in Europe. This could take the form of a Commission action plan on "eSkills for Competitiveness, Employability and Workforce Development" in early 2007.

### Enhancing Career Prospects for ICT Professionals

The development and deployment of enough, sufficiently skilled people is not, of course, a technology issue in itself. Nonetheless, the ICT community can provide a significant contribution by bringing tools, methods, organisation and insight to bear both on the issues themselves as well as on the various initiatives formulated for resolving them. In this way the EC's funded programmes have made and will continue to make their impact on the development of policy.

Aiming to get to grips with the issues here, the **INDIC@TOR** project under IST-FP5 investigated ways to improve employment prospects and career development among ICT professionals. Working across seven European countries, it examined individual, job-related and organisational factors that impact on employability in the different phases of a working career, and formulated practical recommendations on 'best practice' employability strategies. These were then disseminated to individual ICT professionals, SME managers, ICT industry associations, policymakers, and ICT training experts.



Despite variations between countries, a general profile of ICT workers in Europe emerged. Most enjoy satisfactory health, are well educated and have a good relationship with their supervisors. More worryingly, perhaps, was the discovery that SMEs in Europe's ICT sector lack the necessary resources to develop their employees, and suffer from the absence of a skills development culture. To overcome these deficiencies, the INDIC@TOR partners devised a series of recommendations for both employees and companies to enhance the employability of ICT workers.

The study recommends ICT professionals to acquire more education, gain management experience, and build a positive and developmental relationship with their line manager. They should also master one area of expertise before moving to another, and develop networks with individuals in other organisations as well as their own. Employers, meanwhile, should enhance the learning value of ICT jobs, and increase the time and opportunities available to employees for learning new skills and applications. Facilitating interaction between ICT professionals in different parts of the organisation, and providing opportunities for gaining supervisory and management experience should also be beneficial.

## Crossroads to Success in the IT Job Market

**change2IT.com** is an innovative online recruitment service to assist talented individuals to follow a career in IT. The service targets both candidates wanting to develop their careers and find a job within the IT marketplace, and companies looking for qualified IT people.

Candidates are able to complete a personal profile, providing information on their skills and background. They also take a personality assessment test which provides useful input on their suitability for a number of IT-related positions. Employers place their adverts and specify their requirements using similar criteria. An advanced search mechanism identifies and ranks the most suitable opportunities for each candidate and matches them to the most appropriate vacancies.

The concept was developed under the eContent project MULTITRAIN and international deployment of the service is currently being validated within a follow-on project under eTEN. The change2IT.com service was an IST Prize Nominee in 2005.



### > PROJECT DETAILS

**change2IT.com** - Enhancing ICT Skills In Europe

✉ [keratidis@atlantisresearch.gr](mailto:keratidis@atlantisresearch.gr) • 🌐 [www.change2it.com](http://www.change2it.com) and [www.jobical.com](http://www.jobical.com)

**INDIC@TOR** - A Cross-Cultural Study on the Measurement and Enhancement of Employability in Small and Medium Sized ICT Companies

✉ Use <http://www.indicator-ict.com/contact.html> to obtain country contacts • 🌐 [www.indicator-ict.com](http://www.indicator-ict.com)

## > A Better Balanced Life for All

**With European society facing unprecedented social change, research is throwing light on how ICT can contribute to gender inclusion and work-life balance.**

### Policy Context

Helping both men and women balance their work and family life is a crucial step in the effort to meet the combined challenges of gender inequality, low employment rates and demographic ageing. Policies to promote gender equality and a better work-life balance make jobs more attractive and contribute to the well being of workers. Furthermore, evidence shows that they also contribute to the competitiveness of enterprises and sustainable growth. EU legislation has had a positive impact on improving the balance between work and family life.

Through the European Employment Strategy, the EU provides Member States with guidelines and recommendations to attract more women into the workforce and narrow the gaps between men and women in the areas of employment, unemployment and pay. It calls on countries to modernise work organisation, allowing a better reconciliation between work and family life. It also encourages the provision of accessible and affordable care facilities for children and other dependants. Much of the EU's legislation on working conditions tackles the issues of gender equality and work-life balance, while the European Social Fund (ESF) also offers financial support for relevant measures.

Gender equality and reconciliation policies, together with other factors, have contributed to a relatively strong increase in female employment in recent years. The employment rate of women in the EU-25 rose from 52.9% in 1999 to 55.7% in 2004, and the target of 60% by 2010 could be reached if trends continue at the same pace.



The social dialogue plays a key role in modernising work organisation and the social partners are therefore crucial to making gender equality and reconciliation of work and private life a reality on the ground. In 2005, the social partners adopted a framework for actions on gender equality to contribute to the creation of more and better jobs, increase social cohesion and promote better implementation of EU legislation. Priority areas include: addressing gender roles and stereotypes; promoting women in decision-making; supporting work-life balance and tackling the gender pay-gap.

### Contribution of ICT

Addressing and improving gender equality and work-life balance in the European Union is not primarily, of course, a technological problem, but one of attitudes, opportunity and policies. Nonetheless, the ICT community is well placed to develop tools and methods for investigating the factors bearing on our life choices, and to execute that research with a view to informing EU policy. In that way, policy can be built on firm foundations grounded in real-life experience. ICT systems and products can assist the independence of both men and women in social and working life, facilitating their freedom of choices about child rearing and the balance of work and family life. ICT solutions targeting other areas, such as remote working, health-care monitoring, lifelong education and support to disadvantaged groups, all have a dividend in terms of gender equality and work-life balance.

### Equal Access to Communication and Media Technologies

Focusing on gender issues in ICT, **SIGIS**, a project under IST-FP5, looked at how to bridge the gender gap so as to ensure women have equal access to communication and media technologies. Research generated a wide range of case studies covering different levels of both public and private organisations and a diverse mix of inclusion strategies.

## Building Social Capital through ICT

Although there is evidence that ICT can be a critical energiser of social and economic regeneration as well as overall quality of life, the specific impact of ICT on interpersonal and community-based social relationships (known as 'social capital') is not as well understood. By collecting, analysing and presenting the available knowledge in a systematic way, **SOCQUIT** aimed to support evidence-based policy-making in this field. The project developed a decision support software tool, analysed socio-economic data and provided recommendations to business, R&D and policy stakeholders.

SOCQUIT concludes that one of the biggest opportunities for ICT to increase quality of life is probably through their impact on citizens' social life. Research has shown that social relationships have a big influence on perceived quality of life. As ICT is developing more and more in the direction of a social network and communication technology, it seems to be a good enabler for social contact. The effects of ICT on social interactions seem to be three-fold:

- ❖ **ICT strengthens social interaction:** People can contact each other more easily because ICT can take away constraints of time and space.
- ❖ **ICT weakens social interaction:** ICT could draw people away from real-life contacts with family and friends. Furthermore, by facilitating global communication and involvement, it reduces interest in the local community.
- ❖ **ICT supplements social interaction:** People use ICT to maintain existing social contacts by adding electronic contact to telephone and face-to-face contact.

These were studied across four scenarios: employment, ageing society, local initiatives, and migrants.

The message arising from this research is broadly positive. SIGIS's researchers found that despite the under-representation of women in the ICT sector, important changes are bringing technology into the home, education and the workplace. As a result, women are increasingly using computers, the internet, mobile phones and other systems. The researchers suggest that women can be attracted by the activity rather than the technology itself.

SIGIS's case studies highlighted the success of a number of local initiatives recruiting more women into computer science courses and also increasing the visibility of those women who are working in specialist roles.

Their final report appeared in August 2004, and a book is in preparation. The resulting knowledge base is being used to develop analytical tools to help policy-makers, industry and the voluntary sector improve their efforts to get more women involved with ICT, both as designers and users.

## Understanding the New World of Work

**WORKS**, an IST-FP6 project, is looking at how to improve our understanding of the major changes in work in the knowledge-based society. Taking account of the global forces and of the regional diversity within ICT, the project is investigating the evolving division of labour within and between organisations and the related changes at the workplace. The implications for the use of skills and knowledge, for flexibility and for the quality of work, as well as the impact on occupational identities, time use and learning of individuals are all being investigated. Particular attention is being given to the role of social dialogue and the way institutions shape ICT.

Outputs will include training initiatives for researchers on comparative research; dedicated initiatives to involve the scientific community beyond the project; and applying gender mainstreaming throughout all aspects of the project.

## > PROJECT DETAILS

**SIGIS** - Strategies of Inclusion: Gender and the Information Society

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**SOCQUIT** - Social Capital, Quality of Life and IST

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**WORKS** - Work Organisation and Restructuring in the Knowledge Society

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[http://ec.europa.eu/employment\\_social/](http://ec.europa.eu/employment_social/)

### Europe's Information Society: Thematic Portal

[http://ec.europa.eu/information\\_society/](http://ec.europa.eu/information_society/)