Policy recommendations from the

TRANSFORM

Project

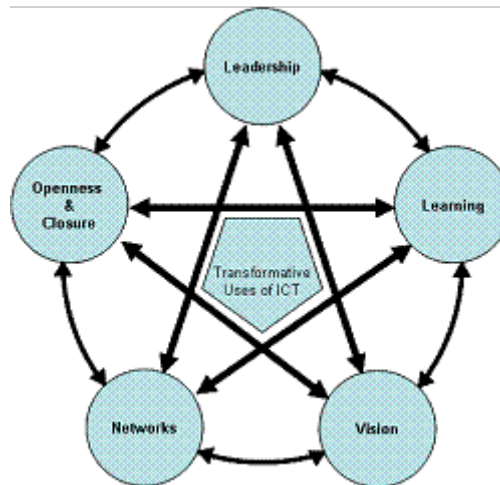Gareth Hughes

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★ Effective use of ICT has the potential to produce considerable social and economic benefits across all types of regions.

★ But, so far, the degree to which different regions have been able to translate this potential into real progress has varied.

★ We need to shift the focus from the availability and uptake of ICT to the uses to which it is put. " It's not what you've got that matters but how you use it".

★ 'Transformative use' relates to doing new things (being effective) – not just about doing the old things better (being more efficient).

★ The ability to harness the transformative potential of ICT depends on the regional innovation culture.

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★ While regional innovation culture (RIC) is somewhat dependent upon endowment, it can also be developed.

★ TRANSFORM has developed 5 'clues' to help regions understand how to develop their RIC:

- Leadership
- Openness
- Networking
- Visions
- Learning

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★ Regions are the most appropriate level for fostering IS and KBE development - not too big and busy, not too small and fragmented.

★ But there is no 'one size fits all' solution – in part because of the variations in the powers and competences of the public authorities across Europe. Moreover …

★ History, geography, culture and other 'soft' factors make a difference, and so each region needs to carry out a careful analysis of its 'endowments' and act accordingly.

★ There is a need for a multi-layer governance process for European IS development in which the regional level has some voice.

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★ Regions need to plan their development in an integrated and strategic manner, concentrating on creating a favourable environment (including a supportive innovation culture).

★ TRANSFORM recommends that regions apply the five 'clues' for the purpose of self-analysis and for focussing the debate among regional stakeholders.

★ The follow-up to the i2010 strategic initiative should adopt a multi-scalar approach – encompassing multi-level and multi-agency cooperation – involving EU, national, regional and local level actors.

★ The successor of the i2010 strategic initiative should place greater stress on transformative uses of ICT and on nurturing the social and cultural environment in which effective uses of ICT can flourish.

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★ TRANSFORM argues that transformation through ICT adoption is a collective action problem - it implies co-ordinating (enrolling, mobilising) a large number of diverse actors – to generate new ideas and to implement them through coordinated, but not centrally directed, action.

★ Experience has been gathered (from RIS, RITTS, RISI) how to address collective action problems using a multi-level, multi-agency, multi-domain approaches and TRANSFORM recommends that the European Commission exploits this fully.

★ EU institutions must continue to emphasise the importance of organisational change, skills development, experimentation, innovation and effective (change) management in the development of the information society and the knowledge-based society. "The message matters".

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★ TRANSFORM recommends that the Commission should consider how it might support the development of schemes and mechanisms for helping to promote/build social capital around transformative uses of ICT including, inter alia, eLearning (ICT-mediated) training courses, 'Summer Schools', Guides to Good Practice, etc.

★ The European Commission needs to recognise that much more effort, money (and time) will need to be channelled into New Member States and their regions to bridge the digital gap and promote the knowledge economy.

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Germany

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Thank you for your attention

You can find more at
www.transform-eu.org

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