

2003 EAEPE conference:

**The Information Society
- Understanding Its Institutions Interdisciplinary**

November 7-10, 2003, Maastricht, the Netherlands

Call for Proposals

In the emerging Information Society intangibles are key factors in shaping the economic dynamic. These intangibles such as knowledge or social relations and the institutions that create and sustain them, therefore become center stage in analysis of the economy. Now that, for instance, interactions can take place between parties who are not (geographically, or temporary) proximate, social and economic interactions between both humans and organizations undergo a process of change. The Internet is crucial in facilitating, shaping and sustaining these interactions, but implications for economic and social interactions go beyond what the Internet triggered in ways we are still trying to understand. Insights from technology studies and history (of technology) highlight the contingent nature of many technological innovations, and the important role played by the 'social' and institutions. This emphasizes the need for an interdisciplinary understanding of the Information Society.

Institutions, however, not only restrict development of and behavior in the Information Society but rather institutions are the sine qua non for the Information Society to function. Institutions of the formal kind, for instance intellectual property rights and technical standards, play an important role in the information society but so do institutions of the informal kind in promoting conventions in communication and communities. Economic and societal environments change; interactions on a micro level are affected. The kinds of issues that emerge are wide ranging. For instance, how do organizations behave in an Information Society? How does the geography of an Information Society change, and how does that affect actors? Is the creation of knowledge and new technologies in an Information Society different from a Fordist society, if so how? Do the dynamics of certain sectors of the economy – such as the financial sector – change, again if so how? Are some economies more affected than others? What are the implications for less developed regions and countries; can they hope to catch up? Likewise, will excluded groups fall further behind? Or will an 'e-society' be an inclusive one?

This conference aims to analyze the institutions of the information society and welcomes scholars from all social sciences with an interest in understanding the economic significance, broadly conceived, of the information society.

This theme will be discussed in both the plenary sessions and a number of parallel sessions. We urge people to send in abstracts related to the theme of the conference but abstracts that do not directly relate to this year's theme are also welcome. Research Areas Coordinators are encouraged to propose sessions for the conference, but others may also propose sessions. In addition to the submission of abstracts, therefore, proposals for complete sessions are encouraged.

The conference will be held at the Faculty of Economics and Business Administration & MERIT / Infonomics, University of Maastricht, Tongersestraat 53, Maastricht, the Netherlands.

Luc Soete & Wilfred Dolfsma,
Local organizers

Submission of Proposals:

Participants may submit proposals for papers or sessions and indicate to which research area the proposal belongs or is closest to (see www.eaepe.org or the newsletter). For papers, send in a 600-1000 word abstract to groenewegen@few.eur.nl by March 28 of 2003. For sessions, accompany the abstracts of the separate papers with a short description of how the session coheres together.

You must register for the conference upon acceptance of your abstract for the programme.

A final version of accepted papers will be requested by August 31 of 2003, in order for papers to be included in the proceedings, published on CD-Rom.

See www.eaepe.infonomics.nl for information concerning the conference.

For questions concerning the sessions please contact John Groenewegen, programme organizer, at: groenewegen@few.eur.nl ; for other questions w.dolfsma@fbk.eur.nl