

LITME@WORK

Digital and Media Literacy in Teamwork and Distance Work Environments

DURATION

15/12/2014 – 15/03/2019

BUDGET

1.030.957 €

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

CONTEXT:

The context of LITME@WORK is digital and media literacy (DML) in relation to office work (from clerical work to managerial tasks), focusing specifically on teamwork and distance work. Office work environments and practices are changing due to new organisational models (e.g. distance work, shared office spaces, teamwork) and new kinds of information and communication technologies (ICT) like mobile devices, multimedia content, groupware, cloud computing and big data technologies. These transformations, as visible in “new world of work” (NWOW) initiatives in public and private organisations, create new DML requirements, for instance in terms of engaging in collaborative writing, managing personal and shared information, managing time, and managing a team at a distance.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION:

➤ OBJECTIVES

Based on this context, the research will ask:

- (1) How is DML addressed and practiced in today’s office work and
- (2) How can DML be further integrated in emerging team/distance work structures and practices in order to support efficient, stimulating and meaningful ways of working?

Starting from these overarching research questions, the research will pursue four objectives:

- (1) understanding changing work environments and their DML requirements;
- (2) developing a systemic approach to DML in team/distance office work;
- (3) providing resources for societal and policy stakeholders;
- (4) contributing to research efforts in different fields (DML studies, science and technology studies (STS), sociology of innovation, sociology of uses, human-computer interaction studies, organisation theory, research on job quality and learning at work).

➤ METHODOLOGY

The methodological structure of the work plan is divided into 7 stages articulating 4 'Work Packages':

1. Defining the **theoretical and methodological frameworks** of WP2, WP3 and WP4.
2. **Exploratory research** on the studied organisations, their team/distance work practices and their approaches towards DML.
3. **Research frameworks articulation** (WP1).
4. **Case studies** selection among Belgian public and private organisations that have introduced changes in their work environment with the intention of enhancing teamwork and/or distance work with ICT.
5. **Data collection** coordinated between three WPs and carried out through document analysis (WP2, WP3), in-depth individual interviews (WP2, WP3, WP4), direct observations (WP2, WP4) and questionnaires (WP3).
6. **Analyses and indicators integration** to better define the complementarity of the different analyses, conceptual maps and sets of indicators (WP1).
7. **Analyses and indicators valorisation** by sharing and discussing the findings and their societal and policy significance with all relevant stakeholders (e.g. policy makers, training organisations, HR services, social partners, ICT sector) and through articles in international peer-reviewed journals and presentations in international conferences.



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➤ INTERACTION BETWEEN THE DIFFERENT PARTNERS

Three different but interrelated perspectives of DML competences will be investigated: (1) the social configuration and appropriation of competence frames within and across organisations and policy domains (**Work Package 2**), (2) the relationship between work organization, workplace design and structural conditions for competence utilization and learning (**Work Package 3**), and (3) the relationship between digital media uses and competences in employees' new work practices (**Work Package 4**). **Work Package 1** organizes the theoretical and methodological articulation of WP2, WP3 and WP4. According to his or her specialization, each partner will be in charge of one Work Package.

➤ EXPECTED RESULTS AND PRODUCTS

LITME@WORK will provide an up-to-date, encompassing knowledge of digital and media literacy (DML) in teamwork and work at a distance, which will enhance stakeholders' understanding of DML and their capacity of taking actions in the area.

The following specific research results will contribute to this overall achievement:

1. a research framework for analysing the many aspects of DML in teamwork/distance work practices and environments;
2. an in-depth analysis of the ways in which organisations and policies understand the "(digitally) competent worker", looking at how frames of (DML) competences are configured and negotiated within and across organisations and policies domains, and how these frames shape/are shaped by concrete policies and activities such as describing jobs, recruiting new workers, selecting remote workers, designing training courses and monitoring ICT usage;
3. an up-to-date description of the changing office work competences, practices and structures, with a focus on teamwork and distance work trends;
4. a conceptual map and a set of measurable indicators for DML competences aimed at serving as a resource for societal and policy stakeholders in terms of defining, evaluating, monitoring, recognising and supporting DML in office work.

A project website will be developed as a dissemination channel for data, results, public reports, calendar of public events, etc. The target audiences are the academia, social actors, policy-makers and the public at large (external area of the website). Four workshops will also be organized to report and/or discuss the progress of the project, beside the kick-off meeting and the end conference. A final report will punctuate this research, as well as the publication of several scientific articles and a book.

PARTNERS:

➤ ACTIVITIES

The network brings together partners from the University of Namur (UNamur), the Université catholique de Louvain (UCLouvain), Saint-Louis University-Brussels (USL-B) and University of Leuven (KU Leuven). They represent the three Belgian Regions with a good gender-balance (two women and two men as supervisors). They are experts in different disciplines regarding the 'Work Packages':

- Partner 1 (UNamur) is responsible for WP1 (coordination and dissemination) and is involved in WP4 with partner 2 as expert in ICT uses.
- Partner 2 (UCLouvain) has an expertise in media literacy and media education and is responsible of WP4.
- Partner 3 (USL-B) has a background in reception and use of media and ICT and in mediated participation. He is responsible of WP2.
- Partner 4 (KU Leuven) has an expertise in sociology of organisations and policy-oriented research. She is responsible of WP3.

CONTACT INFORMATION

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