

1. Why is a globally competitive aerospace industry central to the achievement of Europe's economic and political objectives?
2. How does Airbus manage corporate integration? As Airbus stands for the European Union microcosm with all its cultural differences, challenges, stakes, etc. what are the key success factors and barriers that helped Airbus in this challenge?
3. Transnationality is a main characteristic of Europeanized firms. Identify the key operational assets of Airbus.
4. Why has innovation become crucial for the European agenda? Find examples in the Airbus case.

Answers:

1. The aerospace industry is important to the European objectives. If you look at the history of Airbus, Airbus Industrie began as a consortium of European aviation firms that joined together to compete with American companies, e.g. Boeing. Airbus was established by Aerospatiale France and Deutsche Aerospace. Then a Spanish firm joined. This cooperation between these countries had an effect on the R&D costs. They could keep the costs low.
On the other side the EU was interested in making Airbus bigger and more competitive than Boeing.
2. There have been some problems with support money that Airbus have had from government. But after all Airbus is doing great and they are encouraging their staff.
3. The key operational assets of Airbus are the diversity of cultures and languages from all the member countries which creates a corporate culture which is built on innovation, creativity and free-thinking. This all reinforces transnational working patterns. An important value to the company is the cultural diversity and European progressive integration.
4. The need for innovation and continuous technological development is crucial for customer satisfaction and company competitiveness.
The harmonization of industrial policy favours innovation and R&D, and clearly helps industry to maintain market share.
Due to a high degree of innovation, it is also an economical aircraft.
Because competitors and customers are relatively scarce in this market, research and development programmes are needed.