GaWC Data 2016

The data gathering strat8 (D./P6(s)0.002 Tc -0.022 Tw 0 -1.11 TJ0.078 Tw -193④4 -1.17 Td[(b)-1 (u)4 (t s Substitute firms were identified for each sector (ranking just below the top 75 and 25) to cover for situations where a firm had disappeared (e.g. been taken over) over the course of the data collection.

Note that although our starting point is firms, the information we collected defines firm networks with very different levels of corporate integration. Alongside tightly organized global firms operating under a single corporate flag (e.g. PricewaterhouseCoopers), there are also 'firms' that are in fact *groups* of firms (e.g. Leading Edge Alliance Group). In the latter case, the firm is in fact an alliance of medium-sized firms constituted as a network in order to compete globally with the very large firms leading this sector. Furthermore, some – if not most – service firms have developed service portfolios that straddle the sectoral boundaries adopted in our selection of firms. Several firms in the Leading Edge Alliance Group, for instance, also provide financial and business advisory services to their clients. The world's major global services firms have even developed into across-the-board providers of professional services. PricewaterhouseCoopers, for instance, is best known as one of the 'Big Four auditors', but has in practice become a fully-fledged professional services network also providing legal, consulting and financial advisory services. In case of such overlap, firm networks were allocated to what is generally recognised as their 'core business'. Thus in spite of also providing other services, both Leading Edge Alliance Group and PricewaterhouseCoopers are included here as firm networks in the accountancy sector.

A few of the larger firms have branches in many hundreds, even thousands, of cities and towns. The data collection has been restricted to the more important cities for two reasons. The first is analytical: the more cities included, the more sparse the final matrix