IT&C INDICATORS EVOLUTION IN ROMANIA AND OTHER EUROPEAN COUNTRIES

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SUMMARY

In June 2005, the European Commission set out a new strategic framework for the Information Society, i2010. This report provides the first overview of the state of the Information Society since i2010 was adopted and a check on progress since the launch of eEurope 2005 in 2003. The report is largely based on the 2004 surveys of Households and Enterprises that were developed by Eurostat and the National Statistical Institutes of the EU Member States. The report covers the whole EU25 plus the candidate and EEA countries. The present paper presents data of Telecommunications Infrastructure, computer and Internet usage in urban and rural settlements, e-education, e-government, enterprises, IT usage, and e-commerce and why a lot of people don’t access the Internet.

The paper is the result of the study of 2004 surveys of Households and Enterprises that were developed by Eurostat and the National Statistical Institutes of the EU Member States, and other statistical papers from Romania and USA. Telecommunications infrastructure - the most widespread technology to access the Internet in Accessing and Candidate Countries is via a dial-up fixed line connection. Although still few in number, new technologies are gaining a foothold, in particular, Cable TV networks and wireless telephony. Cost - the cost of a computer and the cost of the Internet connection were cited as reasons for not accessing the Internet by 11% and 8% of respondents respectively. Skills - it was found that approximately 11% of all respondents claimed to have no exact knowledge of what the Internet actually is. On average, 23% of the people claimed that they do not know how to use a computer. Technical Reasons - some of the people who responded to the eEurope+ survey stated that the Internet was too complicated to use even though many had not used the Internet before. Promotional campaigns and public events could be used to create awareness of the Internet and stimulate usage.

The importance of the existing state and semi-public infrastructure in rural areas cannot be underestimated, for example, by aggregating their demand for broadband, high speed Internet access can be brought to parts of a country previously considered unprofitable by telecommunications operators. Regional and local government should be supported in bringing the benefits of ICTs to their people. Schools, colleges and community centers can be used to great effect in bringing ICT awareness, access and training to the rural population. Experience during eEurope+ shows that investment in PIAPs can help close many aspects of the digital divide: this investment should therefore continue.

BIBLIOGRAPHY