



Information Society
and Media

UNDERSTAND CONFERENCE

**Learning from Benchmarking to make i2010 a reality in
the data analysis, impact on ICT policies, emerging needs**

Bruxelles - 30 March 2006

I2010 – BENCHMARKING

Round table 1: Digital Convergence



European Commission

G. Acchioni: Understand Conference 30/3/2006

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Benchmarking of 2010 - introduction

- **I2010 - 3 priorities**
 - Completing the Single European Information Space
 - Strengthening R&D in ICT and the take up of e-business
 - Achieving an Inclusive European Information society





Benchmarking of 2010 - introduction

- **Benchmarking - monitoring the achievement of the I2010 priorities.**
- **List of indicators**
 - Selected through discussions with Members States and Eurostat
 - To be adopted by the High level group on the 20th of April.
- **Progress will be monitored annually – first edition May 2006**
- **Source: mainly the Community surveys on ICT use by households and enterprises.**





Benchmarking I2010 – 1st pillar

- **Topics covered by the indicators on the 1st pillar**
 - **Development of broadband**
 - **Broadband coverage**
 - % of population covered (ad hoc study)
 - **Broadband take-up**
 - Number of subscribers per technology (survey of operators)
 - % enterprises and household with broadband (Community surveys)
 - **Speed and prices of connection**
 - Subscription numbers broken down by speed (survey of operators)
 - **Multiform platform to the internet**
 - Internet access broken down by kind of device (Community survey on ICT use by households)





Benchmarking I2010 – 1st pillar

- **Use of advanced services** (Community survey on ICT use by households)
 - % of regular internet users
 - % of individuals using specific internet services (including digital broadcasting services, online games and music, e-commerce, internet banking,)
- **Security**
 - Special module of the Community survey: Current indicators not reliable. Proposal to drop security from core indicators and keep topic for household and enterprises survey on ICT usage in 2010.
- **Impact of convergence** (National Accounts, SBS, Groningen database)
 - Weight of the ICT sector of terms of GDP
 - Contribution of the ICT sector to the growth of the economy



DIGITAL DIVIDE FORUM REPORT (DDF) BROADBAND ACCESS AND PUBLIC SUPPORT IN UNDER-SERVED AREAS

- The **report** responds to the request by the White Paper on Space (2003) to set up a Forum on the “broadband digital divide within eEurope”.
- *NOTE: The report deal only with BB gap (supply). It does not tackle other important social, economic, cultural, and political issues related to the digital divide in the larger sense (mostly demand). These issues will be dealt in a separate “e-inclusion” context under i2010.*
- The **Digital Divide Forum** has been tasked with helping the Commission in the field of broadband access in under-served areas.
- The Report has gathered input from stakeholders represented in the **Second Section of the eEurope group** (e.g. industry, consumers, user groups, social partners and other interest groups), and from **studies** launched by the European Space Agency (ESA) and the Commission.
- From July 14th to Sept 16th the report has been open to **public consultation** to stimulate an on-line forum discussion on the best ways to enable broadband access to underserved areas.



DIGITAL DIVIDE FORUM REPORT (DDF)

BROADBAND ACCESS AND PUBLIC SUPPORT IN UNDER-SERVED AREAS

Main findings of the report:

- Commercial deployment in remote and scarcely populated regions constrained by high costs due to distance and population scarcity.
- January 2005: broadband available to > 90% of EU15-urban population but only to 62% of its rural population.
- On average, broadband deployment is currently excluding about 15% of EU15 population. (share increases in new MSs).

Main conclusions of the report:

- *Coverage is currently led by market forces and facilitated by innovation.*
- *Government intervention should be based on a careful assessment of local needs and is best when carried out at the local level.*
- *Initiatives fostering broadband coverage should be framed in a wider information-society approach, with attention demand-related actions (enhancement of skills through training and digital literacy etc.).*
- *The Commission supports the establishment of public/private partnerships that facilitate investment in open infrastructure as long as competition rules are respected.*
- *No silver bullet: large variety of approaches raise questions over legitimacy of public intervention; the "exchange of experiences that work" at the national/regional/local level should be intensified.*
- *need to strengthen monitoring of the various activities.*



DDF POLICY PROPOSAL

Strengthen current policies

- Primarily through [i2010](#) and [national broadband strategies](#), by taking into account the Integrated Guidelines for Growth and Jobs proposed by the Commission for the period 2005-2008 in the framework of the revised Lisbon strategy.
- Public intervention should be based on the rules summarised in the "[Guidelines on the use of Structural Funds for electronic communications](#)"(2003).
- Legislation is also being developed through [state-aid](#) decisions (DG COMP)
- Information Society is one of the key areas for [Structural and Cohesion Funds support](#) in the next programming period (2007-2013). [Rural Development Fund](#) will contribute to this effort for rural areas. ([Barroso proposal](#) for 60 % of SF and 30% of rural dev. fund on Lisbon related actions: expected to be approved by Council/Parliament in December 2005).



DDF POLICY PROPOSAL website for regional and local authorities (Virtual Broadband market)

- **Provide active assistance by using a website for regional and local authorities with the aim to:**
 - bring together relevant **information** relating to **policy and practice**, including official documents concerning **regulation**, decisions regarding **public interventions**, case studies of **successful applications**.
 - act as a tool for the **exchange of best practices** and a source of information for regional and local authorities.
 - allow local and regional authorities to publish information about the extent of **demand for BB in under-served areas**, and their plans for tackling the problem.
 - provide **information to a large number of operators** about **open tenders** and plans of public intervention, facilitating the assessment of demand by operators regardless of the technology provided.



Communication on “Bridging the Broadband Gap”

- **Adopted by the commission on 20st March 2006 (COM 2006 129)**
http://europa.eu.int/information_society/eeurope/i2010/digital_divide/index_en.htm
- **Annexes: 2 Staff Working Papers**
 - DIGITAL DIVIDE FORUM REPORT:
BROADBAND ACCESS AND PUBLIC SUPPORT IN UNDER-SERVED AREAS
 - Responses to the public consultation
- **Press conference on 21st of March 2006**
- **Commissioners Reding, Neelie Kroes, Danuta Hübner, Mariann Fischer Boel, (Commissioners for Information society and Media, Competition Policy, Regional Policy and for Agriculture and Rural Development)**



Communication “Bridging the Broadband Gap” Main messages

- **Broadband coverage** is crucial for fostering growth and jobs in Europe
- **Rapid progress** in broadband take-up across Europe in past 3 years
- The broadband **penetration rate** (end 2005) estimated at **13%** of population (25% of households), almost 60 million lines in the EU
- **Fast growth hampered in EU’s less-developed areas**: low/uncertain returns on investment due to population scarcity and distance.
- In 2005, broadband was available to about **60% of businesses and households** in the **remote and rural areas** of the EU15, and more than **90% in the urban areas**: gap greater in the new Member States.
- Where deployment of broadband hampered by **market failures** in rural and remote areas, **well-targeted state aid** may therefore be appropriate.
- **EU Structural Funds** play a vital role in stimulating investments in broadband infrastructure and services
- New **Rural Development policy**, money is now being increasingly focused on creating new business opportunities in the countryside: small scale infrastructure, on-line services, training, e-business support etc.



Communication “Bridging the Broadband Gap” Main recommendations

- **Strengthening national broadband strategies**, clear targets, reflect regional needs, strategic and integrated approach in making use of EU and national funding in less-developed or rural areas (synergy complementarity of funding);
- **Exchange of best practices**: setting up of a website as a single meeting point for local/regional authorities and industry players:
 - Facilitate **networking**, and enables exchange information and gather experience on **best practices**, case studies, benefits of BB etc.
 - Provide **information on broadband infrastructure, services and equipment** including maps on existing BB infrastructures and services (where available);
 - **Facilitate aggregation of broadband** among regions
 - **Repository** of IS/ICT strategies and investment plans, and information on open call for tender etc
 - **Information on regulation, state aid cases and financing issues**
 - Information on market place (service providers) operating in Europe.
 - Large “**Broadband for all**” **conference** at the start of 2007 to showcase the benefits of broadband services to the rural communities.



Management of I2010: eInclusion subgroup

- An **eInclusion subgroup of i2010** being set up in preparation of the 2008 European Initiative on eInclusion announced in the i2010 Communication
- will **advise the i2010 Advisory Group** and the Commission on the preparation of the 2008 European Initiative on eInclusion
- The subgroup builds upon the work of the eInclusion Expert Section of the eEurope Advisory Group
- Composed of **MS representatives** (representing Ministries with a leadership role in eInclusion)
- Subgroup can invite **stakeholder expert representatives** for participation in its discussions (regional stakeholders may be part depending on issues at stake).





Further information

- **I2010:**
http://europa.eu.int/information_society/eeurope/i2010/i2010/index_en.htm
- **Digital Divide:**
http://europa.eu.int/information_society/eeurope/i2010/digital_divide/index_en.htm

