

COMPUTER AND INTERNET ACCESS BY HOUSEHOLDS

Computers are increasingly present in homes in OECD countries, both in countries that already have high penetration rates and in those where adoption has lagged.

Definition

The table shows the number of households that reported having at least one personal computer in working order in their household. The second part of the table shows the percentage of households who reported that they had access to the Internet. In almost all cases this access is via a personal computer either using a dial-up, ADSL or cable broadband access.

Comparability

Over a very short period, national statistical offices have made great progress in providing indicators of the use of information and communication technology. From an international perspective, the major drawback of official statistics on ICT use is that they remain based on different standards and measure rapidly changing behaviour at different points in time. Most countries use existing surveys, such as labour force, time use, household expenditure or general social surveys. Others rely on special surveys.

Another issue for international comparability is the choice between households and individuals as the survey unit. Household surveys generally provide information on both the household and the individuals in the household. Person-based data typically provide information on the number of individuals with access to a technology, those using the technology, the location at which they use it and the purpose of use.

Statistics on ICT use by households may run into problems of international comparability because of structural differences in the composition of households. On the other hand, statistics on individuals may use different age groups, and age is an important determinant of ICT use. Household- and person-based measures yield different figures in terms of levels and growth rates. Such differences complicate international comparisons and make benchmarking exercises based on a single indicator of Internet access or use misleading, since country rankings change according to the indicator used.

The OECD has addressed issues of international comparability by developing a model survey on ICT use in households/by individuals. The model survey is designed to be flexible; it uses modules addressing different topics so that additional components can be added as technologies reflecting usage practices and policy interests change. The ICT access and use by households and individuals model survey is available on the OECD website.

Long-term trends

Penetration rates are highest in Iceland, Denmark, Japan, Sweden, Korea, the Netherlands, Luxembourg, Norway and the United Kingdom where 70 % or more of households had access to a home computer by 2005. On the other hand, shares in Turkey, Mexico, the Czech Republic and Greece were below 40%. Between 2001 and 2005, the percentages of households with access to a home computer increased particularly sharply in Japan, the United Kingdom and Germany.

The picture with regard to Internet access is similar. In Korea, Iceland, the Netherlands, Denmark, Switzerland and Sweden, more than 70% of households had Internet access by 2005. In Turkey, Mexico and the Czech Republic, on the other hand, only about one-fifth or less had Internet access by 2005.

Data on Internet access by household composition – with or without dependent children – are available for most OECD countries. In general, they show that households with children were more likely to have Internet access at home in 2004.

Sources

- OECD, ICT Database and Eurostat, *Community Survey on ICT Usage in Households and by Individuals*, September 2006
- OECD Key ICT Indicators, www.oecd.org/sti/ictindicators.

Further information

Analytical publications

- OECD (2004), *Access Pricing in Telecommunications*, OECD, Paris.
- OECD (2005), *OECD Science, Technology and Industry Scoreboard*, OECD, Paris.
- OECD (2006), *OECD Information Technology Outlook 2006*, OECD, Paris.

Statistical publications

- OECD (2003), *OECD Telecommunications Database*, CD-ROM, OECD, Paris.

Websites

- OECD Telecommunications and Internet Policy, www.oecd.org/sti/telecom.
- OECD Science, Technology and Industry, www.oecd.org/sti.



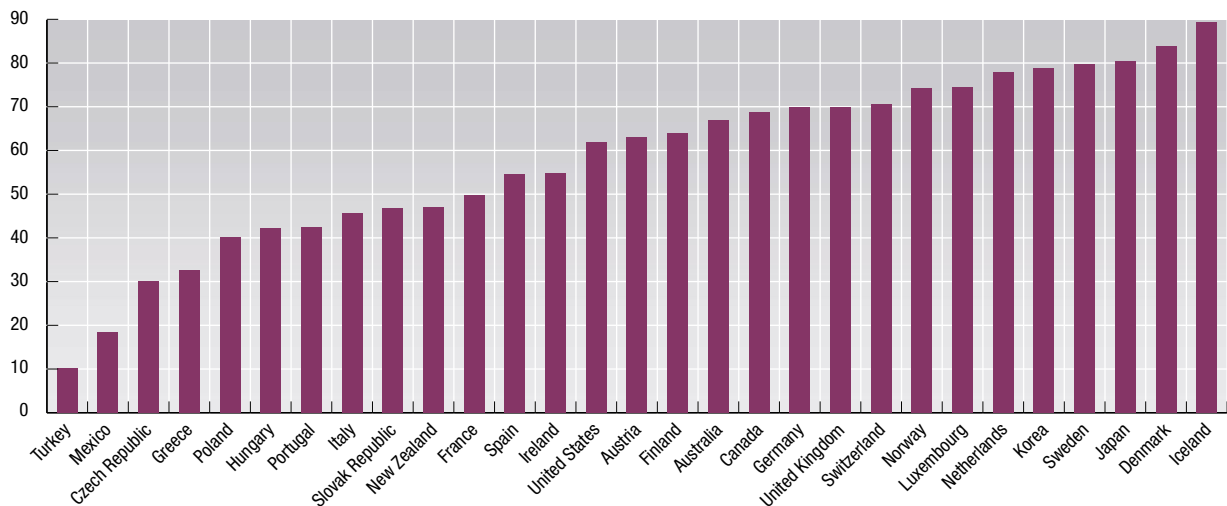
Households with access to home computers and the Internet

	Percentage of households with access to a home computer					Percentage of households with access to the Internet				
	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
Australia	58.0	61.0	66.0	67.0	..	42.0	46.0	53.0	56.0	..
Austria	..	49.2	50.8	58.6	63.1	..	33.5	37.4	44.6	46.7
Belgium	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	50.2
Canada	59.9	63.9	66.6	68.7	..	49.9	54.3	56.9	59.8	..
Czech Republic	..	27.8	23.8	..	30.0	..	..	14.8	19.4	19.1
Denmark	69.6	72.2	78.5	79.3	83.8	59.0	55.6	64.2	69.4	74.9
Finland	52.9	54.5	57.4	57.0	64.0	39.5	44.3	47.4	50.9	54.1
France	32.4	36.6	45.7	49.8	..	18.1	23.0	31.0	33.6	..
Germany	53.0	61.0	65.2	68.7	69.9	36.0	46.1	54.1	60.0	61.6
Greece	..	25.3	28.7	29.0	32.6	..	12.2	16.3	16.5	21.7
Hungary	..	..	..	31.9	42.3	..	..	..	14.2	22.1
Iceland	..	..	..	85.7	89.3	..	..	..	80.6	84.4
Ireland	..	..	42.2	46.3	54.9	..	..	35.6	39.7	47.2
Italy	..	39.9	47.7	47.4	45.7	..	33.7	32.1	34.1	38.6
Japan	58.0	71.7	78.2	77.5	80.5	..	48.8	53.6	55.8	57.0
Korea	76.9	78.6	77.9	77.8	78.9	63.2	70.2	68.8	86.0	92.7
Luxembourg	..	52.6	58.0	67.3	74.5	..	39.9	45.4	58.6	64.6
Mexico	11.6	15.2	..	18.0	18.4	6.1	7.4	..	8.7	9.0
Netherlands	..	69.0	70.8	..	77.9	..	58.0	60.5	..	78.3
New Zealand	47.0	..	..	..	..	37.4	..	..	..	..
Norway	..	..	71.2	71.5	74.2	..	..	60.5	60.1	64.0
Poland	..	..	..	36.1	40.1	..	..	..	26.0	30.4
Portugal	39.0	26.8	38.3	41.3	42.5	18.0	15.1	21.7	26.2	31.5
Slovak Republic	..	..	..	39.0	46.7	..	..	..	23.0	23.0
Spain	..	..	47.1	52.1	54.6	..	17.4	27.5	33.6	35.5
Sweden	69.2	..	..	..	79.7	53.3	..	..	..	72.5
Switzerland	62.2	65.4	68.9	70.6	..	54.7	61.9	66.4	69.8	73.5
Turkey	..	..	..	10.2	..	..	..	..	7.0	..
United Kingdom	49.0	57.9	63.2	65.3	70.0	40.0	49.7	55.1	55.9	60.2
United States	56.2	..	61.8	..	..	50.3	..	54.6	..	..

StatLink <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/657277848147>

Households with access to a home computer

Percentage of all households, 2005 or latest available year



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