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## **EXISTING "INFORMATION SOCIETY" COMPARATIVE DATA**

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## EXISTING “INFORMATION SOCIETY” COMPARATIVE DATA

### Introduction

1. In preparation for development of OECD indicators on government use of information technologies (IT), the PUMA Secretariat has undertaken a preliminary scan of existing comparative data on IT, so as to build on and avoid duplication with existing work.

2. This paper seeks to provide an overview of the results of this preliminary scan as background for the working group’s consideration of development of comparative indicators. Sections in italics indicate issues where follow-up action may be appropriate. The scan suggests that a substantial amount of data exists or is being developed regarding the development of IT infrastructure and services within the economy, regarding citizen access to and development of the Internet, and related to its growth and potential within the field of electronic commerce. **Data is much less developed in relation to government use of IT.** A table summarising the types of comparative international indicators currently in existence is contained in **Annex A**.

### Some existing data

3. Concerning government IT indicators, the OECD **Committee on Information, Computer and Communications Policy** (ICCP) has published comparative information on the number of computers within 10 governments in 1997. Its working party on Indicators for the Information Society, composed of representatives of national statistical agencies, has expressed an interest in further developing indicators of government use of IT, and in co-operating with PUMA on such a project. At this stage, however, ICCP resources are being devoted primarily to development of indicators related to business and household use of IT, the growth of the IT sector within the economy, and of electronic commerce in particular.

4. The **International Data Corporation/World Times** also publishes an annual “Information Society Index” comparing society-wide indicators of IT use across 48 countries. Some limited data is also collected on government PC ownership. However, the report is sold at a cost of US \$12,000 per copy, and there are strict confidentiality restrictions that impede dissemination and use of such information.

5. The most significant initiative to collect information on government use of IT is the **UNESCO/COMNET** survey now under way, involving 185 countries. The survey touches on many of the same issues that are of interest to the OECD – i.e., elements relating to citizen access, government provision of on-line information, services and consultation. PUMA is planning to time development of its survey to build upon the results of the UNESCO/COMNET survey (the survey is available at <http://www.comnet.mt/globsurv/selangqs.htm>), once those results become available later in the year. In this way, issues related to definitions or formulation of questions, comparability of data, or availability of information can be assessed. The OECD survey can be adjusted to attempt to reduce any difficulties that may arise, and go into further depth in cases that appear feasible and analytically useful. The OECD survey could also attach the results of the UNESCO survey on an individual basis for each OECD

government that responds to the UNESCO survey, in order to ensure that such results are consistent with the response to the OECD survey.

*Preliminary discussion of how aspects of the UNESCO survey may best be built upon for use in the OECD survey is planned at the 17-18 June OECD working group meeting.*

6. Apart from the UNESCO survey, **many governments** have collected data on the extent of IT use within their own governments, and the upcoming meeting will be geared toward learning more about the availability, potential comparability of and interest in such data, so that an OECD survey may take this information into account in developing its format, definitions and methodology. The Secretariat has been able to undertake a very limited scan of such existing data through selected government publications, particularly those available on-line. **Annex B** provides an outline of some of the areas where such data exists or may be sought, and could be used as a framework for preparation for the June 17-18 meeting on government IT indicators.

*Governments may use this annex table to indicate and submit information to the Secretariat regarding the extent to which such data is already available within their governments, without having to go through the process of providing the actual data to the OECD at this early stage.*

7. Some studies that potentially could provide support for development of comparative OECD work involve **benchmarking** of Web sites and use of information technologies across different public authorities within a particular country. Such studies have been undertaken in Denmark, Germany, Italy, the United Kingdom and the United States. PUMA could make such reports available (to the extent that there is agreement from the countries concerned and the institutions that carried out the study) through its “Strengthening Government-Citizen Connections” Web pages that will be launched shortly.

*Many of these studies have been carried out independently of the government and do not necessarily represent the government’s point of view. Nevertheless, if there is interest in doing benchmarking work of government Web sites in the future, it could be useful for the Secretariat to review their methodologies and to build upon them to develop a cross-country comparative framework for carrying out Web site benchmarking work in the future.*

**Annex A – Existing “Information Society” comparative data collected by international institutions**  
(Research in progress; based on data obtained from Web and available reports)

<u>Available data</u>	OECD	EU	IDC	Headcount	NUA	<i>Network Wizards</i>	ITU	World Bank	UNESCO
<b>Information infrastructure</b>									
Internet infrastructure indicators	X								
hosts/domain names	X	X				X		X	
access providers		X	X						
IT use in economy	X								
teleworking		X							
Electronic commerce	X								
\$ volume of commerce	X		X						
number of "buyers"			X						
Use of EDI		X							
IT use in government									
number of Pcs	X		X						**
<b>Citizen Access (general)</b>									
Daily newspapers/1,000 pop.)								X	X
Radios			X					X	X
TVs			X				X	X	
Cable & Satellite TV	X	X	X				X	X	
Telephone main lines	X		X				X	X	
Mobile telephones			X				X	X	
Fax		X	X				X		
PCs	X	X	X				X	X	
PCs with modem	X	X	X					X	
PC/Internet user demographics	X					X			
Number of internet users by country*			X	X	X				

\* Numerous entities have attempted to measure the number of people connected to Internet through a wide range of methodologies. A few of the better known surveys are cited above, but this table does not intend to list them all or to delve into a comparison of methodologies.

\*\* A new UNESCO survey in progress will collect a range of data on government use of IT. Copies to be provided.

**Annex B – Availability of data on IT use in government collected individually by countries**  
(research in progress)

	Australia	Belgium	Canada	Denmark	Finland	France	Germany	Italy	Japan	Korea	Luxembourg	Netherlands	Norway	Sweden	Switzerland	United Kingdom	United States
Available data																	
<b>Government use of electronic communication</b>																	
Number of PCs/100 government employees			X			X	X		X	X						X	X
Budget for information systems					X				X	X						X	
Electronic mail				X								X					
% with public electronic mailboxes																	
Intranet												X					
Web sites				X			X										X
provision of information				X	X		X										
interactive				X			X										
provision of services				X	X		X										
electronic discussion groups																X	
<b>Citizen access to government services</b>																	
Number of internet users by country				X		X				X		X				X	
PC/Internet user demographics	X		X	X		X				X		X		X		X	X
Access to computers/Internet in schools			X	X		X				X							
Access to Internet in public libraries				X													
Other public access to computers				X													
<b>Government services provided on-line</b>																	
Filing of tax forms				X													
Applying for passports																	
Telemedicine																	
Electronic delivery of social benefits																	
Use in education																	
Permit & license procedures									X								
Availability of electronic forms																	
<b>Citizen perceptions regarding electronic access to government</b>				X										X		X	X
<b>Government electronic commerce and procurement</b>																	
Procurement databases on-line			X														
Electronic purchasing on the Internet																	
Use of EDI by government																	