



*A co-operative effort to implement  
the Information Society in Europe*

## **Action Plan**

**prepared by the Candidate Countries  
with the assistance of the European Commission**

**June 2001**

## The context

The accelerated use of information and communication technologies and the advent of the Internet has put very powerful tools within the reach of citizens and governments as well as large and small businesses everywhere. This is resulting in profound changes in the internal organisation of governments and business as well as in skill requirements and work organisation, in the relationships amongst businesses, trading partners, citizens and governments. These technologies have a considerable impact on the whole of the economy and policies, which govern and encourage their use and implementation, are decisive in the modernisation of these economies and contribute to the take-up of new opportunities for employment and inclusion in the new global economy.

At the European Council held in Lisbon on 23-24 March 2000, the Heads of Government and State of the EU-15 set the ambitious goal for Europe for the next decade to become “*the most competitive and dynamic knowledge-based economy in the world*”. It recognised the urgent need for Europe to quickly exploit the opportunities of the knowledge-based economy and in particular the Internet. In response to this need the eEurope Action Plan was launched in Feira on the 19-20 June 2000.

At the European Ministerial Conference held in Warsaw on 11-12 May 2000, **Central and Eastern European Countries recognised the strategic goal set by the EU-15** in Lisbon and agreed to embrace the challenge set by the EU-15 with eEurope and decided to launch an “eEurope-like Action Plan” *by and for* the Candidate Countries as a compliment to the EU political commitments in order to try and broaden the base for achieving the ambitious above mentioned goal. In February 2001, the European Commission invited Cyprus, Malta and Turkey to join the other candidate countries in defining this common Action Plan.

Our initiative, which we name **eEurope+**, **mirrors the priority objectives and targets of eEurope** but provides for actions which tackle the specific situation of the Candidate Countries. It should not be perceived as a substitute for or interfering with accession negotiations.

Like eEurope, the **eEurope+ Action Plan aims to accelerate reform and modernisation of the economies in the candidate countries**, encourage capacity and institution building, improve overall competitiveness and provide for actions which address the specific situation of the Candidate Countries.

## The objectives

**Positive action on the basis of a strong, political commitment** is needed to ensure that the EU Candidate Countries use the full potential offered by the Information Society and avoid a further digital divide with the EU. The implementation of the *acquis* alone is not sufficient. The modernisation of the economy, the changes in business processes, the functioning of governments, and the changing relationships between citizens, businesses, and governments require a broader based policy approach which recognises the potential of these developments, particularly for the Candidate Countries, in advancing their economies and bringing prosperity and new opportunities to their citizens.

This action will also allow the Candidate Countries to work alongside the EU Member States in ensuring that the whole of Europe becomes “*the most competitive and dynamic knowledge-based economy in the world*”, and not only a part of it. Such parallel action will allow players in the EU and the Candidate Countries to co-operate, exchange experiences and best practice, and thereby help the effective integration of Europe.

To facilitate comparison and exchange of information not only amongst the Candidate Countries but also with EU Member States, actions are clustered around the same three main objectives identified in eEurope and the same indicators selected by the EU-15 are adopted for monitoring and benchmarking of progress. However, the Candidate Countries recognise that, if the full benefits of the actions are to be achieved, a further acceleration in the effective implementation and functioning of the *acquis communautaire* in areas related to Information Society is required. This has resulted in the inclusion of an additional, new objective, not previously found in eEurope, that aims to assist in putting in place the fundamental building blocks of the Information Society. Furthermore attainment of the eEurope+ objectives can be significantly enhanced and accelerated through cross-border and international collaboration.

## **0. Accelerate the putting in place of the basic building blocks for the Information Society**

- a) Accelerate the provision of affordable communication services for all
- b) Transpose and implement the *acquis* relevant to the Information Society

## **1. A cheaper, faster, secure Internet**

- a) Cheaper and faster Internet access
- b) Faster Internet for researchers and students
- c) Secure networks and smart cards

## **2. Investing in people and skills**

- a) European youth into the digital age
- b) Working in the knowledge-based economy
- c) Participation for all in the knowledge-based economy

## **3. Stimulate the use of the Internet**

- a) Accelerating e-commerce
- b) Government online: electronic access to public services
- c) Health online
- d) European digital content for global networks
- e) Intelligent transport systems
- f) Environment on-line

## **An operational action plan**

The eEurope+ Action Plan is undertaken on the basis of political commitments by the Candidate Countries, with the assistance of the services of the European Commission. The Candidate Countries regard this assistance as a positive step towards obtaining the support of the European Community for the eEurope+ Action Plan. To this end, the Candidate Countries encourage the Community to provide the necessary support under existing, and forthcoming programmes, in accordance with the procedures to obtain such support, so as to enable the Candidate Countries to pursue the actions identified.

While aiming to avoid any interference with the *acquis* negotiation process, the **clearly identifiable, concrete actions and end target dates** contained within this **common action plan** aim to accelerate the reform and modernisation of the economies of the Candidate Countries. This would have a positive impact on the adoption speed of the *acquis* for telecommunications, electronic commerce, areas of financial and transports services, and many other areas of economic activity, in addition to capacity and institution building and improving overall competitiveness.

## **The timeframe**

The Candidate Countries recognise that the driving force to harness the benefits of the knowledge-based economy requires that urgent action be undertaken against tight deadlines. For this reason Candidate Countries, while acknowledging the marked differences in their economic, social, and industrial environments, have focused on a common key date – 2003 – by which they aim to meet the eEurope+ targets. At that time, the impact of the eEurope+ Action Plan and its results would be reviewed with the aim to determine the need to develop further recommendations and propose policy measures in areas of special importance to the Candidate Countries.

## **Monitoring and benchmarking**

To enable comparison of data for monitoring and benchmarking between eEurope and eEurope+, the Candidate Countries have agreed to use the same indicators which have been selected and agreed by the EU-15, for eEurope. As far as possible, the relevant institutions of the Candidate Countries (notably the statistical offices) will work closely with those of the EU Member States with the aim to develop a common methodology and approach in the collection and presentation of relevant benchmarks.

However, eEurope was launched in the EU at a time when the telecommunications sector had been liberalised, the 1998 telecoms *acquis* was already transposed and implemented, and almost all households had telephone lines. This is not the case in the Candidate Countries. Therefore, in the eEurope+ Action Plan an additional section is being included named “*Accelerate the putting in place of the basic building blocks of the Information Society*”, to address these three elements. For this section, additional types of indicators will be used for reporting and monitoring progress.

Candidate Countries have included an additional area in this Action Plan which targets action for developing “environment on-line”. For this section, indicators would be developed during 2001 by the Joint High Level Committee (JHLC).

Further benchmarks and indicators may also be defined which are of relevance to measuring the progress made in the Candidate Countries for all eEurope+ targets.

It is foreseen that a first progress report will be presented in February/March 2002, with an interim report being submitted at the end of 2002. The final progress report would be presented at the end of 2003.

## **Funding**

Funding for actions in the eEurope+ Action Plan will predominantly come from national budgets, private sector investments, relevant programmes and funds made available by the European Union through its existing programmes, and available instruments of international financial institutions such as EIB, EBRD and the World Bank.

PHARE is expected to make significant resources available to support the implementation of the action plan through the PHARE support for economic and social cohesion, a program which is intended to provide assistance to the Central and Eastern European Countries for the preparation of the Structural Funds after accession. The main areas of assistance are human resources development, support to SME's and business-related infrastructure.

Cyprus, Malta and Turkey are expected to make use, inter alia, of the facilities offered by those EU programmes and actions for which participatory rules and conditions have been, or are in the process of being, agreed with the European Union.

It is essential to ensure adequate inter-ministerial coordination so that the priorities that emerge from the eEurope+ Action Plan, are taken up within the National Development Plans of the Candidate Countries.

## Objective 0: Accelerate the putting in place of the basic building blocks for Information Society

### a) Accelerate the provision of affordable communication services for all

#### The Challenge

The expansion of the global knowledge-based economy is happening in a context where most of the Candidate Countries have not yet completely liberalised the telecommunications sector and before transposition and implementation of the *acquis* not only for telecommunications but also for other important areas of the Information Society. The availability of affordable communications services however is a prerequisite for the expansion of the Information Society.

There is a basic **need to ensure that all citizens are offered the possibility of affordable communications services** so that **info-exclusion can be avoided**. Such services need to be made available on the basis of a liberalised communications sector harnessed by an effective, pro-competitive regulatory framework. Although the Candidate Countries have undertaken the basic commitment to liberalise, the preparations for the effective implementation of all relevant aspects of the regulatory framework need to start well ahead of the date of liberalisation and a substantial number of provisions can be put in place well in advance.

#### The eEurope+ Response

Candidate Countries therefore, recognise the need to accelerate the adoption and effective implementation of the *acquis* in the relevant areas of the Information Society, while simultaneously pursuing the targets and objectives of eEurope+.

However, the *acquis* was not designed to promote the achievement of universal access in the EU. The Candidate Countries must find ways, consistent with the *acquis*, to ensure that all citizens have access to good quality and affordable telecommunication services. The solution will probably not rely so heavily only on the fixed networks as was the case in EU countries but rather on a variety of technologies (eg. fixed, wireless, cable).

<b>eEurope+ Action Plan</b>	
<b>Accelerate the provision of affordable communications services for all</b>	
<b>Action</b>	<b>Actor (s)</b>
Accelerate and complete full liberalisation of the telecommunications sector as soon as possible and ensure that authorisations are available where needed. In particular, ensure that carrier selection facilities are available from the same date as liberalisation and number portability as soon as possible thereafter.	Candidate Countries

Transpose and implement the new EU regulatory package for Communications Services as soon as possible once it has been adopted.	Candidate Countries
Enact implementing regulations for the achievement of universal service in telecommunications services and secure the availability of affordable basic telephony service that is capable of permitting access to the Internet.	Candidate Countries
<b>Related Benchmarks</b>	
<p><i>0.a.1 Percentage of households that have fixed telephone services</i></p> <p><i>0.a.2 Percentage of households that have some form of telecommunications that is capable of providing access to the Internet (to be defined)</i></p> <p><i>0.a.3 Interconnection prices</i></p> <p><i>0.a.4 Check list of issues such as portability; licensing agreement; etc</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>(The final lists and details will be agreed by the Joint High Level Committee during 2001 )</i></p>	

## **b) Transpose and implement the acquis relevant to the Information Society**

### **The Challenge**

**Harnessing the potential of the knowledge-based economy** can only be achieved on the basis of a responsive legal framework which takes account of the challenges which the essentially borderless, internet-based information and communications environment poses. The existing EU *acquis*, together with the new EU Regulatory package for Communications Services under discussion in the EU institutions, respond to these challenges.

### **The eEurope+ Response**

Candidate Countries recognise the importance **of providing access to modern telecommunications networks and services for all citizens** and support that the surest way to achieve progress in this area is to accelerate implementation of the *acquis communautaire* for telecommunications.

In addition, for the other components of the *acquis* which are also relevant to ensure the active participation of business and citizens in the new economy, Candidate

Countries intend to transpose and implement, as soon as possible, all those parts of the EU *acquis* that are relevant to the Information Society, not temporarily blocked by continuing exclusive rights, such as data protection, privacy, protection of minors, electronic signatures, intellectual property, copyright to mention but a few.

<b>eEurope+ Action Plan</b>	
<b>Transpose and implement the acquis relevant to Information Society</b>	
<b>Action</b>	<b>Actor (s)</b>
Transpose and implement all those parts of the <i>acquis</i> that are relevant to the Information Society <sup>2</sup> , in particular e-commerce, and which are not temporarily blocked by continuing exclusive rights.	Candidate Countries
<b>Related Benchmarks:</b>	
<i>0.b.1 The check list will identify and list the most relevant <i>acquis</i> legislation related to Information Society</i>	

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<sup>2</sup> List of relevant items will be agreed by Joint High Level Committee during 2001



## Objective 1: A cheaper, faster, secure Internet

### a) Cheaper and faster Internet access

#### The Challenge

It is vital that citizens, business, and government have access to modern communications networks and the services available over these networks. New technology and pro-competitive regulatory frameworks should decrease access prices and increase the availability of high-speed multi-media Internet access. In the absence of full liberalisation, reductions in prices for Internet access can be achieved on the basis of price regulation and benchmarking.

Unbundling of the local loop, the licensing of 3<sup>rd</sup> generation mobile networks, introduction of digital TV networks enhanced with Internet capabilities, and the transition to Internet Protocol version 6 (IPv6) are further measures which broaden the availability of technology on the basis of which competitive service provision provides access to multi-media services.

Infrastructure roll-out needs to be speeded up in the Candidate Countries in order to provide the basic backbone for the Information Society, especially in less-favoured regions. This roll-out will help Candidate Countries to position themselves in the global, seamless information infrastructure and allows quality access to global markets as well as attract investments, particularly from economic sectors which rely on such infrastructure.

#### The eEurope+ Response

Candidate Countries would undertake all possible effort to accelerate the roll-out of high quality infrastructure and, in particular, to ensure that lower prices assist in increasing the quick take-up of high-speed multi-media Internet access made available by new technologies such as xDSL, cable, digital TV, and radio technologies. But also basic telephony services and dial-up Internet access for all remain priority goals for many regions in Candidate Countries where the current infrastructure is sparse.

Projects encouraging less-favoured regions are a key element in cases of market failures, where private investment alone cannot be profitable. These investments must be made in a way that does not distort competition and is technology neutral. Assistance from international financial institutions (e.g. EIB, World Bank, EBRD) should be considered in this context.

<b>eEurope+ Action Plan Cheaper and faster Internet</b>		
<b>Action</b>	<b>Actor (s)</b>	<b>Deadline</b>
Achieve significant reductions in Internet access tariffs by reinforcing competition and/or through price regulation and clear	Candidate Countries	end 2002

benchmarking at European and national levels.		
Work towards introducing greater competition in local access networks.	Candidate Countries	end 2002
Where necessary and without distorting competition, public financing instruments will give increased priority to supporting the development of information infrastructure and projects, especially in less-favoured regions.	Candidate Countries; European Investment Bank; Private Sector	end 2002
Move towards conversion to IPv6 through pilot implementation in Europe. Key telecom and manufacturing industries will be mobilised together with service providers and users.	Private Sector <sup>3</sup>	end 2002
Reduce prices for leased lines by increasing competition and, where appropriate, by price regulation.	Candidate Countries	end 2002
Work towards introducing digital television services, including internet capabilities, and promote interoperability within the framework of voluntary, industry-led standardisation.	Candidate Countries; Private Sector	end 2003
<b>Related Benchmarks<sup>4</sup>:</b>		
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <i>Percentage of population who regularly use the Internet</i></li> <li>2. <i>Percentage of households with internet access at home</i></li> <li>3. <i>Internet access costs</i></li> </ol>		

## b) Faster Internet for researchers and students

### The Challenge

High speed networks will open up possibilities for collaborative learning and researching and offer substantial potential for innovation. It will offer universities and research institutions in Candidate Countries the possibility of playing an effective role in research projects world-wide (e.g. in areas of health and medicine, industrial processes, climate research, bio-engineering). It will also allow for interactive multi-

<sup>3</sup> In line with eEurope, throughout this Action Plan, references to the Private Sector include non-governmental organisations such as consumer or user organisations, in addition to private industry

<sup>4</sup> For all targets in Objective 1, 2 and 3, the listed indicators are those agreed by the EU-15 and also used for eEurope

media courses world-wide, experimentation with new forms of services and the development of new applications.

Collaborative computing is taking on another dimension and is conceptualised in the idea of the “World Wide Grid” by enabling real-time sharing of computing infrastructure.

Candidate Countries have historically developed strong scientific and academic capabilities which could be brought to bear on these new developments.

### **The eEurope+ Response**

Major networking initiatives are underway in the EU. Candidate Countries must join efforts with their EU counterparts to broaden the scientific base for the benefit of the whole of Europe. The academic capabilities of Candidate Countries can be engaged by making available the necessary networking technology. New forms of learning and collaborative working together within the national, regional, European, and global context will provide new opportunities for the Candidate Countries.

<b>eEurope + Action Plan Faster Internet for researchers and students</b>		
<b>Action</b>	<b>Actor (s)</b>	<b>Deadline</b>
Increased priority will be given to research networking with the objective of establishing Europe as a global connectivity leader in initiating the evolution towards a fully optical backbone with improved capacities in terms of bandwidth and service.	Candidate Countries	end 2002
Work towards upgrading national research networks to ensure that researchers and students in the Candidate Countries benefit from powerful networks, for example using PHARE funds and EIB support, where appropriate.	Candidate Countries; European Investment Bank	end 2002
High speed Internet access and intranets should be established in universities, for example, using PHARE funds and EIB support, where appropriate.	Candidate Countries; European Investment Bank; European Commission	end 2002
Foster World Wide Grid (WWG) technology through developments of middleware and the deployment of testbeds driven by the requirements of a wide range of scientific communities and aimed at the integration, validation and uptake of the relevant technology. Through its research	European Commission; Candidate Countries; Private Sector	end 2003

programmes, the Commission will support the uptake of Grid technologies for scientific work and collaboration in all areas.		
Make research networks available, where appropriate, for use by schools, museums and libraries.	Candidate Countries	end 2003
<b>Related Benchmarks:</b>		
4. <i>Speed of interconnections and services available between and within national research and education networks (NREN's) with EU and world-wide</i>		

## c) Secure networks and smart cards

### The Challenge

**Building trust and confidence in electronic commerce amongst users** is one of the most important challenges for the private sector and for governments. The sensitivity and economic value of the content of information is increasing and safeguarding the privacy of users of electronic transactions is essential as we move forward in the use of electronic commerce. Protecting the security of the networks and the transactions over those networks and the end-user devices is a key policy goal to attain. The economic damage of disruptions to the functioning of the Internet is increasing at a time when the economy is relying more and more on this infrastructure as a backbone to activities of most, if not all, sectors in the economy.

In Europe, smart-card deployment is spreading rapidly although the market remains fragmented and interoperability remains a major issue to address. Further efforts are needed to accelerate, consolidate, and harmonise use across Europe.

### The eEurope+ Response

Candidate Countries are keenly aware that the protection of networks, the attainment of increasing trust and confidence of consumers, and the further development of and European use of smart-cards, needs to be addressed in parallel with measures which stimulate the roll-out of infrastructure. Addressing Internet security issues is, to a certain extent, still in its infancy and many new developments will have to continue to be tackled, in particular through Europe-wide co-operation. Smart-card use is becoming increasingly popular in Candidate Countries and its Europe-wide, harmonised, application will facilitate an increase in consumer trust and confidence.

Smart Cards can also be used as national ID cards which will provide a basis for effective applications both in the public and private sector.

<b>eEurope+ Action Plan Secure networks and smart cards</b>		
<b>Action</b>	<b>Actor (s)</b>	<b>Deadline</b>
<p>Improve the overall security of on-line transactions by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Supporting industry-led security certifications through co-ordination of efforts and mutual recognition, including information security professional certification,</li> <li>➤ Stimulating public/private co-operation on dependability of information infrastructures (including the development of early warning systems).</li> </ul>	Private Sector; European Commission; Candidate Countries	end 2002
Promote the development and deployment of open source software security platforms for effective “plug and play”.	Private Sector; Candidate Countries; European Commission	end 2003
Training of law enforcement, judiciary staff and industry specialists on high-tech crime and security issues (such as combating computer-specific crime, computer forensics, etc).	Candidate Countries; Private Sector	end 2003
Take up the common core specifications for smart cards interoperability and security as soon as they become available.	Private Sector; Standards Organisations; Candidate Countries	mid 2003
Improve human interface of secure card terminals including better usability for people with special needs and support for multiple languages, on the basis of standards being developed in Europe.	Private Sector; Standards Organisations	mid 2002
Availability of cost-effective smart card solutions to enable secure electronic transactions.	Private Sector	mid 2002
Develop and implement a joint strategy for smart card deployment.	Candidate Countries; Private Sector	end 2002
<b>Related Benchmarks:</b>		
5. <i>Number of secure servers per million inhabitants</i>		
6. <i>Percentage of Internet-using public that have experienced security problems</i>		

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## Objective 2: Investing in people and skills

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### a) European youth into the digital age

#### The Challenge

The Bologna Declaration<sup>5</sup>, signed on 19 June 1999 by the European Ministers of Education from 28 countries, including most of the Candidate Countries, sets out fundamental changes to higher education and the educational systems at large. The ministers declared, amongst other things, that “... a *Europe of Knowledge* is now widely recognised as an irreplaceable factor for social and human growth and as an indispensable component to consolidate and enrich the European citizenship, capable of giving its citizens the necessary competencies to face the challenges of the new millennium, together with an awareness of shared values and belonging to a common social and cultural space.”

The eLearning initiative<sup>6</sup>, adopted by the EU identified 4 priority lines of action: improvement of infrastructures and equipment (Internet access in all classrooms, ratio of 5-15 pupils per multimedia computer), a training drive at all levels (digital literacy for all school leavers, promoting the use by teachers of digital technologies in education, creation of online learning platforms, adaptation of school curricula, access for all workers to digital literacy), development of quality content and services, and networking of schools in Europe.

#### The eEurope+ Response

Education is a national responsibility, however exchange of experience, best practice and adoption of digital technologies can speed up the move towards a European knowledge society.

Candidate Countries consider the eLearning initiative to be also of relevance to them as it allows ways to exploit the strengths and tradition of the European education system while overcoming barriers which hold back the uptake of digital technologies.

Connecting all schools to Internet is one of the most important goals to attain. It will allow teachers and students convenient access to the Information Society. There is recognition that ideally, and as soon as possible, Internet access should be provided in all classrooms and that a sufficiently high number of multi-media computers is available, together with high-speed connections and suitable software and content. However, the scale of this challenge means that this objective cannot be met immediately.

The main aim is therefore to make every effort to achieve this important objective in the shortest possible time. Convenient access will depend to some extent on the current level of Internet connections in individual countries. Combined efforts of the public and private sectors will be brought to bear on meeting the challenge. In this context, the progress will be measured by the mentioned benchmarks.

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<sup>5</sup> <http://europa.eu.int/comm/education/socrates/erasmus/bologna.pdf>

<sup>6</sup> <http://www.europa.eu.int/comm/elearning>

<b>eEurope+ Action Plan European youth into the digital age</b>		
<b>Actions</b>	<b>Actor (s)</b>	<b>Deadline</b>
Provide all schools with convenient access for teachers and students to the Internet and multimedia resources.	Candidate Countries Private Sector	mid 2003
Ensure availability of support services and educational resources on the Internet, as well as e-learning platforms, for teachers, pupils and parents (e.g. access for disadvantaged children, access to digitised cultural heritage, multilingual multimedia learning materials, European open source software initiative, collection of best practice). Support these efforts via the EU's education, training, culture and IST programmes.	Candidate Countries; European Commission Private Sector	end 2003
Provide training to all teachers, in particular adapt teacher curricula and offer incentives to teachers to use and apply new technologies for developing innovative, practical teaching methods. Ensure the exchange of best practice and co-ordinate research efforts through the EU's education, training and IST programmes.	Candidate Countries; European Commission Private Sector	mid 2003
Adapt school curricula by integrating new learning methods based on information and communication technologies.	Candidate Countries Private Sector	mid 2003
Ensure that pupils have the possibility to be digitally literate by the time they leave school. Support pilot projects, exchange of best practice and co-ordinate research efforts, via the EU's IST and education programmes.	Candidate Countries European Commission, Private Sector	end 2003
<b>Related Benchmarks:</b>		
<p>7. <i>Number of computers per 100 pupils in primary/secondary/tertiary levels</i></p> <p>8. <i>Number of computers connected to the Internet per 100 pupils in primary/secondary/tertiary levels</i></p> <p>9. <i>Numbers of computers with high speed connections to the Internet per 100 pupils in primary/secondary/tertiary levels</i></p> <p>10. <i>Percentage of teachers using the Internet for non-computing teaching on a regular basis</i></p>		

## **b) Working in the knowledge-based economy**

### **The Challenge**

As the candidate countries increasingly move towards knowledge-based economies, ICT skills and appropriate, flexible forms of work organisation become a key for employment growth and for ensuring the employability and adaptability of workers across all sectors.

First, the shortage of ICT and e-Business skills, has created a barrier for fully seizing the employment potential and is expected to become also an increasing problem in the Candidate Countries, unless immediate action is taken. Particular efforts should be made to attract women to ICT professions where they are strongly under represented. All workers need digital literacy through life-long learning to adapt to changing skills requirements. An additional challenge lies with the modernisation of work organisation. Productivity gains largely depend on the adjustment of work organisation processes to the higher level of skills and to the greater flexibility made possible by new technologies.

Within the EU, adapting to the challenges of the information society has become a main element of the European Employment strategy.<sup>7</sup>

### **The eEurope+ Response**

Candidate Countries call on social partners and the private sector to work together with their governments to seize the employment potential of the knowledge-based economy and use information society issues as a driver for developing the social dialogue.

Increasing the number of trained ICT and e-business experts in the candidate countries is an important element for enhancing the competitiveness of their economies. Broader action is also needed to ensure life-long learning in digital skills across the workforce and to pay particular attention to the opportunities of ICT training for the re-integration of the unemployed.

The dissemination of a European diploma<sup>8</sup> in basic digital skills should stimulate uptake of certified training and its recognition. Training efforts need to be combined with framework conditions for the modernisation of work organisation, in particular to encourage telework.

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<sup>7</sup> COM (2000) 48 and SEC (2001) 222; documents may be consulted at:  
[http://europa.eu.int/comm/employment\\_social/soc-dial/info\\_soc/esdis/documents.htm](http://europa.eu.int/comm/employment_social/soc-dial/info_soc/esdis/documents.htm)

<sup>8</sup> The eEurope Action Plan calls on EU-15 and the Commission to establish a European diploma for basic IT skills, with decentralised certification procedures, by end 2001. To meet this objective, a number of EU Member States are promoting the European Computer Driving Licence (ECDL).



<b>eEurope+ Action Plan Working in the knowledge-based economy</b>		
<b>Action</b>	<b>Actor (s)</b>	<b>Deadline</b>
Give the labour force the chance to become digitally literate through life-long learning.	Social Partners; Candidate Countries; Private Sector	end 2003
Significantly increase information technology training places and courses and promote gender equality in such courses (both in work and in educational institutions), using PHARE funds where appropriate.	Candidate Countries; Social Partners; Private Sector; European Commission	end 2003
Encourage the dissemination of a European diploma for basic information technology skills.	Candidate Countries; Social Partners; Private Sector	end 2002
Support greater flexibility in the workplace, e.g. teleworking and part-time working, where appropriate through agreements by Social Partners and backed up by Candidate Countries.	Social Partners; Candidate Countries; Private Sector	mid 2002
Promote a network of learning and training centres for demand-driven information and communication technology training and retraining of postgraduates.	Social Partners; Candidate Countries European Commission,	end 2002
Set up public Internet access points in public spaces and/or establish multimedia, multi-purpose tele-centres in communities providing access to training and e-work facilities, where appropriate using PHARE Funds.	Candidate Countries Private Sector	end 2002
Offer appropriate information technology training to long-term unemployed to facilitate re-entry into the workplace, where appropriate using PHARE Funds.	Candidate Countries; Private Sector; Social Partners	end 2003
<b>Related Benchmarks:</b>		
<p>11. <i>Percentage of workforce with (at least) basic IT training</i></p> <p>12. <i>Number of places and graduates in ICT related third level education</i></p> <p>13. <i>Percentage of workforce using telework</i></p>		

## c) Participation for all in the knowledge-based economy

### The Challenge

As the knowledge-based economy advances, the exclusion from ICT becomes more and more a barrier to economic, employment and social opportunities and to using public services. Disadvantaged areas and groups are at higher risk of lagging for various reasons including low-income and poverty, lack of ICT infrastructures, awareness and training opportunities, or difficulties of access because of disabilities.

On the other hand, ICT can overcome barriers of distance, distribute more equally knowledge resources and generate new services for citizens with special needs, in a more targeted, flexible, and pro-actively enabling way than is possible by traditional forms of assistance. Thus, the risks of the digital divide need to be transformed to digital opportunities by actions focussed at disadvantaged groups and areas.

Accessibility to ICT and on-line information and services, taking particularly into account the needs of people with disabilities, is a precondition for ensuring an Information Society open to all. In this respect, governments have to take a lead to ensure equal opportunities of access.

There is also a need to broaden the knowledge on info-exclusion in the Candidate Countries, based on the collection of data, on demographic trends, the socio-economic situation as well as the rights of people with disabilities and access to assistive technologies.

### The eEurope+ Response

Candidate countries support the active role and participation of disadvantaged groups and areas. In this context particular emphasis will be put on people with disabilities. Further developments of information technologies can facilitate accessibility to information for disadvantaged groups, play a significant role in the education of children with disabilities and facilitate employment for disabled adults. Therefore, it is essential when developing relevant national action plans that the needs of all, whatever their age, are taken into account to ensure equal opportunities and to avoid discrimination in reform and in the modernisation of economies and societies.

<b>eEurope+ Action Plan Participation for all in the knowledge-based economy</b>		
<b>Action</b>	<b>Actor (s)</b>	<b>Deadline</b>
Policies to avoid info-exclusion will be more effectively co-ordinated at European level through benchmarking of performance and exchange of best practice between the Candidate Countries and EU-15.	Candidate Countries; European Commission	end 2002
Work towards adoption of "Design for all" standards for accessibility of information	Private sector; Candidate	end 2003

technology products, in particular to improve the employability and social inclusion of people.	Countries European Standardisation Bodies, European Commission	
Review relevant legislation and standards to ensure conformity with accessibility principle.	Candidate Countries	end 2003
Adoption of the Web Accessibility Initiative (WAI) guidelines for public websites <sup>9</sup> .	Candidate Countries; European Commission	mid 2002
Ensure the establishment and networking of national centres of excellence in design-for-all.	Candidate Countries	end 2002
<b>Related Benchmarks:</b>		
<p><i>14. Number of Public Internet Points (PIAP) per 1000 inhabitants</i></p> <p><i>15. Percentage of central government websites that conform to the WAI accessibility guidelines at level A</i></p>		

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<sup>9</sup> See <http://www.w3.org/WAI>

## Objective 3: Stimulate the use of the Internet

### a) Accelerating e-commerce

#### The Challenge

Electronic commerce is progressively developing in Candidate Countries, mainly as a business-to-business trading means. It is strongly related to the industrial restructuring path in which most of Candidate Countries are heavily investing. As such, the transformation of the economy, growing foreign investment, a rapidly developing European-oriented market and strong interdependencies with EU-based companies offer modernisation and leapfrogging opportunities in particular in the area of inter-business trading. Strong impacts on industry and services organisation patterns, as well as on their business models are to be expected and supported. Some sectors already offer best practices as do, for instance, the automobile or the banking sector. Hopefully, others should follow rapidly.

As found in the EU, the business-to-consumer area has followed a slower path for various reasons including in particular those relating to average income per household in Candidate Countries. Nevertheless, improved communications infrastructures and access, acceptable usage costs, and a strong entrepreneurship mindset of emerging SMEs could lead to fast developments and a growing demand. Secure payment systems, strong delivery logistics, electronic signature, dispute resolution are among the various necessary conditions to be settled, so as to guarantee the sustainability of these developments.

#### The eEurope+ Response

The adoption of the relevant acquis underlying the legal basis for electronic commerce is key to the development of the market. Active involvement in discussions in international organisations and business fora will assist in broadening the global understanding and implementation of the new concepts (in particular self-regulation and co-regulation) which are required to accelerate transborder transactions. In parallel, special actions are required to assist SME's in embracing the new opportunities and have access to global markets.

<b>eEurope+ Action Plan Accelerating e-Commerce</b>		
<b>Action</b>	<b>Actor (s)</b>	<b>Deadline</b>
Boost consumer confidence in e-commerce in partnership with consumer groups and industry. Promote alternative dispute resolution, trust marks and effective codes of conduct by working with stakeholders to develop general principles and by creating appropriate incentives.	Private Sector, European Commission, Candidate Countries	mid 2002

Stimulate increased flexibility in e-commerce regulation by building more on co- and self-regulation, inter alia through co-operation with relevant business groups such as the Global Business Dialogue. <sup>10</sup>	Candidate Countries; Private Sector; European Commission	mid 2002
Encourage SME's to "Go Digital" through coordinated networking activities for the exchange of knowledge on, best practices, e-commerce readiness and benchmarking. "Reference centres" could help SMEs to introduce e-commerce into their business strategies.	Private Sector; European Commission; Candidate Countries	end 2002
Stimulate the establishment of an infrastructure for e-commerce as well as the use and mutual recognition of electronic signature.	Candidate Countries Private Sector	end 2002
<b>Related Benchmarks:</b>		
<i>16. Percentage of companies that buy and sell over the Internet</i>		

## **b) Government on-line: electronic access to public services**

### **The Challenge**

eGovernment brings administrations closer to citizens and businesses through the use of the Internet. Electronic public administration can make a major contribution to accelerating the transition to the knowledge-based economy in the Candidate Countries by stimulating access to and use of basic on-line government services. Furthermore, by contributing to a transformation of the organisation of the public sector, eGovernment can improve public services, making them faster, as well as more accessible and responsive.

Businesses in the Candidate Countries can also benefit from less administrative burden, which can therefore contribute to efficiency and economic growth. Even more importantly, a more transparent and interactive government could also stimulate the participation of citizens in the democratic process.

The changeover to electronic interaction involves major changes to the internal workings of administrations which can be complex to manage. The challenge for administrations is therefore to adapt themselves and introduce innovative ways of working, including proper and stable partnerships with the private sector.

<sup>10</sup> [www.gbde.org](http://www.gbde.org)

## The eEurope+ Response

Candidate Countries recognise the importance of improving access, dissemination and exploitation of public sector information and ensuring that citizens have easy access to essential public data, as well as promoting online interaction between citizens and government.

Candidate Countries lend great importance to the exchange of good practices with EU Member States in this area. Participation in European conferences and workshops and association to the existing working groups to benchmark progress on bringing basic public services online could further enhance collaboration and exchange of best practice.

<b>eEurope+ Action Plan</b> <b>Government online - electronic access to public services</b>		
<b>Action</b>	<b>Actor (s)</b>	<b>Deadline</b>
Essential public data online including legal, administrative, cultural, environmental and traffic information.	Candidate Countries Private Sector	end 2002
Candidate countries to pursue generalised electronic access to main basic public services <sup>11</sup> .	Candidate Countries	mid 2003
Simplified online administrative procedures for business e.g. fast track procedures to set up a company.	Candidate Countries; European Commission	end 2002
Promote the use of open source software in the public sector and e-government best practice through exchange of experiences across Europe.	Candidate Countries	end 2002
Promote the use of electronic signatures within the public sector	Candidate Countries	end 2002
Establish an e-marketplace for public e-procurement.	Candidate Countries	end 2003
Availability of Internet access terminals in public places such as museums, libraries, community centres, etc.	Candidate Countries; Private Sector	end 2002

<sup>11</sup> [http://europa.eu.int/comm/information\\_society/eeurope/documentation/impact/index\\_en.htm](http://europa.eu.int/comm/information_society/eeurope/documentation/impact/index_en.htm)

<b>Related Benchmarks:</b>
17. <i>Percentage of basic public services available on-line</i>
18. <i>Public use of government on-line services – for information / for submission of forms</i>
19. <i>Percentage of public procurement which can be carried out on-line</i>

## **c) Health online**

### **The Challenge**

Health care systems in the Candidate Countries are under pressure due to a number of factors, such as developments in medical technologies, higher expectations of people receiving care, diffusion of information technology, changing disease patterns and an ageing population, which all cause general changes. These pressures will have a tremendous impact on the financing of health care systems.

The situation is becoming even more complex with the increasing availability of information, especially through the Internet, about risks to health, diseases and therapies.

The appropriate use of on-line technologies to increase the availability of quality health information amongst citizens could lead to a paradigm shift towards preventive medicine that could substantially reduce, in the long-term, the societal and administrative costs of diagnosis and treatment.

### **The eEurope+ Response**

Candidate Countries recognise the important role of putting in place an efficient and comprehensive health information system. This system, would be based on the establishment of a national telematics infrastructure, including regional networks, that would eventually allow for the remote delivery of care and information to people in their own homes and the remote exchange of consultations and information amongst primary and secondary health care providers.

Furthermore, a shift towards preventive health requires that the general public, as well as health professionals, have access to quality health data and information that is easily available through the internet. The core quality criteria for the development of national or regional web sites should therefore be adopted for new implementations of health related web sites.

Collaboration and exchange of information on health policy and strategy, health indicators and service provision at institutional and professional levels with EU Member States is particularly welcomed by the Candidate Countries as it could contribute to the development of an effective and efficient health care system for all European citizens.

<b>eEurope+ Action Plan Health online</b>		
<b>Action</b>	<b>Actor (s)</b>	<b>Deadline</b>
Develop a health telematics infrastructure, including regional networks, for primary and secondary healthcare providers.	Candidate Countries; Private Sector	end 2003
Implement the core quality criteria for health web sites established by EU member states, at national or regional level.	Candidate Countries; Private Sector	end 2003
Establish links with EU Public Health networks and databases.	Private Sector; European Commission; Candidate Countries	end 2003
<b>Related Benchmarks:</b>		
<p>20. <i>Percentage of health professionals with Internet access</i></p> <p>21. <i>Use of different categories of web content by health professionals</i></p>		

## **d) European digital content for global networks**

### **The Challenge**

The enlargement process extends significantly the cultural diversity, the heritage and the linguistic richness of Europe. Europe has a strong base on which it can build a dynamic digital content industry - a long established print publishing sector, an extensive cultural heritage and linguistic diversity which can be exploited as well as a significant, growing audio-visual sector.

For the Candidate Countries the uptake of new technologies for the creation of new content, the digitisation of materials, ensuring lasting accessibility and the development of new services will be of the utmost importance from an economic point of view. In addition, the availability of high quality information services offered by public and private operators will allow citizens in the Candidate Countries to be well informed about market opportunities, developments in government at local, national and European level and/or cultural events. The content industry could benefit directly from this wealth and transform it in economical value while generating educational and cohesive benefits to all citizens in an enlarged Europe.

Candidate Countries are interested in participation in EU programmes and initiatives to promote European digital content<sup>12</sup>.

<sup>12</sup> <http://www.cordis.lu/econtent/>



## The eEurope+ Response

Candidate Countries will respond to this challenge by: improving access to and expanding use of public sector information, enhancing content production in a multilingual and multicultural environment and increasing dynamism of the digital content market.

The work of the Candidate Countries in this area intends to build on the experience of the EU Safer Internet Action Plan<sup>13</sup> to promote safer use of the Internet by combating illegal and harmful content on global networks.

<b>eEurope+ Action Plan</b> <b>European digital content for global networks</b>		
<b>Action</b>	<b>Actor (s)</b>	<b>Deadline</b>
Stimulate the development and dissemination of European digital content on global networks and promote the linguistic diversity of the information society, including action to support the exploitation of public sector information and establish European digital collections of key databases.	Candidate Countries; Private Sector; European Commission	mid 2002
Awareness raising of a safer use of the Internet and interactive technologies in the audio-visual sector, including parental control systems.	Private Sector Candidate Countries	end 2002
<b>Related Benchmarks:</b>		
22. <i>Percentage of EU websites in the national top 50 visited</i> <i>(Further benchmarks and indicators will be discussed in the JHLC during 2001)</i>		

## e) Intelligent transport systems

### The Challenge

Recent economic progress in the Candidate Countries has been accompanied by traffic growth, resulting in an increasing demand especially for road, air and maritime transport. Traffic growth is not only domestic, but also interregional due to the pivotal location of these countries. This traffic growth should have a major influence on the deployment of Intelligent Transport Systems.

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<sup>13</sup> <http://www.europa.eu.int/ispo/iap/>

Intelligent transport systems are starting to be recognised as a new option for the operation and management of transport networks. They are at the intersection of two strong currents of change: the in-depth transformation of the economic system and an alternative to only build new infrastructure to cope with traffic demand.

The deployment of Intelligent transport systems and services for all modes of transport is expected to significantly contribute to improving traffic efficiency, safety, and environmental protection. The development of a multi-modal transport network within the territory of the Candidate Countries, providing similar traffic management services than in EU, is a prerequisite to the completion of a pan-European transport network.

Some challenges in this context are:

- the extension of the single European sky and the creation of the European Common Aviation Area, specifically towards creating and enhancing interoperability between the countries' Air Traffic Management systems
- the setting-up of a Danube-wide platform to implement River Information Services (RIS) – providing harmonised information services to support traffic and transport management in inland navigation, including interfaces to other transport mode.

### The eEurope+ Response

Candidate Countries recognise that intelligent transport systems infrastructure should be considered together with the upgrading of existing infrastructure or the building up of new infrastructure, and not in a separate stage. The development of realistic, long-term national plans and strategies for the implementation of intelligent transport services would be emphasised by the governments of the Candidate Countries.

One area of importance is to provide high quality data and enable the provision of traffic management services on the pan-European corridors. Some solutions to enhance safety, for example, location determinants of wireless callers through number 112 would be considered, in the first instance, as part of feasibility studies.

<b>eEurope+ Action Plan Intelligent transport systems</b>		
<b>Action</b>	<b>Actor(s)</b>	<b>Deadline</b>
Prepare development plans for the implementation of intelligent transport services.	Candidate Countries	end 2002
<b>Related Benchmarks:</b>		
<p>23. <i>Percentage of the motorway network (vs. total length of network) equipped with congestion information &amp; management systems</i></p> <p><i>(Further benchmarks and indicators will be discussed in the JHLC during 2001).</i></p>		

## f) Environment-on-line

### The Challenge

One of the biggest challenges facing the Candidate Countries is the implementation of EU legislation and compliance with those laws governing the environment. The sheer scale of past environmental liabilities and the gap at the level of environmental protection in the Candidate Countries compared to the situation in the EU will require targeted long-term strategies. On the other hand, Candidate Countries also possess vast areas of untouched nature which contribute considerably to biological diversity in the whole of Europe.

To keep these assets and at the same time to develop and manage an economically and environmentally sustainable framework, Candidate Countries would need to develop effective collaboration on specific issues with the EU.

Candidate Countries and the EU are currently ratifying agreements providing for their participation in the European Environment Agency (EEA) and the European Environment Information and Observatory Network (EIONET). Membership in the EEA will produce benefits for both the Candidate Countries and the EU.

### The eEurope+ Response

Candidate Countries undertake the further development of the EIONET network for monitoring and data collection to enable access to reliable on-line data. This is necessary for effective participation in the EEA and to enable comparative analysis amongst all countries.

<b>eEurope+ Action Plan Environment on-line</b>		
<b>Action</b>	<b>Actor(s)</b>	<b>Deadline</b>
Promote the further development of the European Environment Information and Observation Network (EIONET) for the collection, monitoring and reporting of environmental data compatible with on-going networks in Europe, in particular with the EEA.	Candidate Countries	end 2002
<b>Related Benchmarks:</b>		
24. <i>Degree of implementation of EEA work programme in the country</i>		
25. <i>Degree of completeness of environmental data collected following EEA requirements by country</i>		
26. <i>Number of institutions connected to EIONET in the country</i> <i>(Indicators will be discussed by the JHLC during 2001).</i>		

## **Annex**

### **List of National Information Society Related Websites in the Candidate Countries**



## List of National Information Society Related Websites in the Candidate Countries

### BULGARIA

Government portal ( <http://www.government.bg> ): Information about Members of the Cabinet and their programme, links to the respective Ministries, search function (in government decisions), records from press conferences, discussion forum, public registers, services etc.

Ministry of Transport and Communications ( <http://www.mtc.government.bg> ): The Telecommunication Law and its extensions, strategy for Information Society Development, National Program for Information Society Development, the structure of Coordination Council on the Information Society, Action Plan of the Coordination Council on the Information Society. The website for the Information Society Promotion Office for Bulgaria will become available mid-June ( <http://www.ispo.bg> ).

Bulgarian Association of Internet Providers ( <http://www.bai.bg> ).

Bulgarian Research and Educational Network ( <http://www.acad.bg> ).

All websites mentioned above are also available in English

### CYPRUS

Press and Information Office ( [www.pio.gov.cy](http://www.pio.gov.cy) ): General information about Cyprus. Government, Ministries, Departments and related organisations. International Relations Cyprus and EU, and links to other government web sites.

Ministry of Interior (The Civil Map) ( [www.pio.gov.cy/ministry\\_interior](http://www.pio.gov.cy/ministry_interior) ): All forms, applications, instructions related to the Ministry of Interior and its Departments. Rights and obligations of citizens. Services offered by the departments of the Ministry. Available only in Greek.

Ministry of Communication and Works ( [www.mcw.gov.cy](http://www.mcw.gov.cy) ). General information about the ministry, mission, the Minister, weekly program of the Minister, organisational chart of the ministry, Citizens Information Service, Departments of the ministry, news, tenders of the ministry, legislation, contact information and monitored authorities.

Ministry of Education and Culture ( [www.moec.gov.cy](http://www.moec.gov.cy) ): General information about the ministry, mission, the Minister, weekly program of the Minister, organisational chart of the ministry, Departments of the ministry, news, tenders of the ministry, legislation, contact information and activities of the ministry.

Cyprus – EU Accession negotiations ( [www.cyprus-eu.org.cy](http://www.cyprus-eu.org.cy) ): Brief history of Cyprus and EU, negotiation procedures, benefits of EU accession, EU assistance, Cyprus position papers, news and developments, documents.

All websites mentioned above are available in Greek and English, unless otherwise stated.

### CZECH REPUBLIC

The Office of the CR Government ( <http://www.vlada.cz/> ): Comprehensive information on Members of the Cabinet and their programme, links to the respective Ministries, search function (in government decisions), records from press conferences, etc. It also includes information of the CR Government Council for State Information Policy ( <http://www.vlada.cz/1250/eng/vrk/rady/rady.htm> ). Available in English.

The Office for Public Information Systems ( <http://www.uvis.cz/> ): New website, currently under preparation. Access to basic documents related to State Information Policy, standards, information from abroad, links to information resources. Available in English.

Czech Forum for Information Society ( <http://www.info-forum.cz/indexe.html> ): The Forum is intended as a public dialogue on information society issues. Available in English.

Czech Telecommunication Office ( [http://www.ctu.cz/index\\_a.htm](http://www.ctu.cz/index_a.htm) ): Site presents the origins of the Czech Telecommunication Office, its mission and activities. List of legal acts and implementing provisions. International activities. Available in English.

Central website address ( <http://www.centralni-adresa.cz/cadr/index.htm> ): The official information system on public procurement and auctions. Link to the Public Administration portal (Prototype version) which is to become an integrated site to get information and/or use the services of public administration bodies. Available only in Czech.

## ESTONIA

State portal of the Estonian Republic ( [www.gov.ee/en](http://www.gov.ee/en) ): Integrates and coordinates national information systems. Information about the state, Parliament, Government (including Estonian Government of Ministers Session Information System) and related organisations, state politics, www-services.

State Information Systems ( <http://www.riik.ee/infosystems> ): Coordination of state IT-policy actions and development plans in the field of state administrative information systems.

Estonian Informatics Centre ( [www.eik.ee/english/index.html](http://www.eik.ee/english/index.html) ): Supporting agency for the coordination and development of information society.

## HUNGARY

The Government of the Hungarian Republic ( <http://www.meh.hu/> ).

The Office of the Government Commissioner for ICT ( <http://www.IKB.hu/> ).

The Inter-Departmental Committee for Information Technology (in Hungarian) ( <http://www.lth.hu> ).

## LATVIA

«One stop shop» for Information Society in Latvia is held by the Department of Informatics, Ministry of Transport. The relevant web site is ( <http://www.sam.gov.lv> )

## LITHUANIA

In the near future, material relevant to information society issues will be placed in a special website ( [www.ivpk.lt](http://www.ivpk.lt) ).

At the moment national websites related to the issues of information society in Lithuania are:

Information Policy Department of Ministry of Internal Affairs: in Lithuanian only ( <http://www.vrm.lt/index1.htm?padaliniai.htm> )

Parliament's Commission of Information Society Development – on the website of Lithuanian Parliament: mostly in Lithuanian ( [www.lrs.lt](http://www.lrs.lt) )

INFOBALT, the Association of Information Technology, Telecommunications and Office equipment companies of Lithuania: ( [http://www.infobalt.lt/index\\_en.html](http://www.infobalt.lt/index_en.html) ) In Lithuanian and English.

Lithuanian Academic and Research Network Litnet: in English ( <http://www.ktl.mii.lt> )

## MALTA

Government of Malta ( <http://www.gov.mt> ).

Central Information Management Unit ( <http://www.cimu.gov.mt> ).

From these sites, links to relevant IS sites will be found

## POLAND

The website of the Polish Forum for Information Society ( <http://www.kbn.gov.pl/cele/index.html> ), the advisory body to the Council of Ministers, presents the basic Polish documents related to the Information Society development in Poland as well as the activities of the Forum.

The Information Society website maintained by the State Committee for Scientific Research (KBN) ( [http://www.kbn.gov.pl/gsi/index\\_eng.html](http://www.kbn.gov.pl/gsi/index_eng.html) ) presents the strategy "Aims and Directions of the Information Society Development in Poland" adopted by the Council of Ministers in 2000, other documents related to the Information Society development in Poland, links to the websites of European Information Society (documents, programmes, etc.) and provides information on the IST programme. Some essays and interviews could also be found.

The website of the Ministry of Posts and Telecommunications ( <http://www.ml.gov.pl/english/documents/index.html> ) presents the list of ministerial licences, regulations and documents; among them the latest "ePoland - The Strategy of an Information Society Development in Poland for 2001-2006".

The Polish Information Processing Society website ( <http://www.pti.org.pl/english/index.html> ) provides information on the Society activities. It also presents some useful links to the Polish, foreign and international organisations active in IT related issues and provides information on the European Computer Driving License.

The Interkl@sa programme website ( <http://www.interklasa.pl/portal/index/strony> ) presents the wide range of initiatives related to the education aspects of Information Society. It gives an overview of the actions undertaken, links to some educational web sites and many institutions active in this field.

## ROMANIA

The Government of Romania ( <http://www.guv.ro/> ).

The Ministry of Communications and Information Technology ( <http://www.mcti.ro/> ).

## SLOVAK REPUBLIC

The Office of the SR Government ( <http://www.government.gov.sk/> ): Comprehensive information on Members of the Cabinet and their programme, sessions of the Government, documents, etc. Available in English.

The Ministry of Education ( <http://www.education.gov.sk/> ): From the ministry site, the web pages of the Council of the Government of the SR for Information Technology is available ( <http://www.education.gov.sk/svs/oit/rvisk.htm> ). Available mainly in Slovak.

The Ministry of Transport, Posts and Telecommunications of the SR ( <http://www.telecom.gov.sk/> ): General information about the ministry. Access to basic documents related to State Telecom Policy, Telecom Law, etc., links to information resources. Available in Slovak, English version is under preparation.

National Office ISPO Slovakia ( <http://www.ispo.sk/> ): Web site is intended as a public dialogue on information society issues and National Action Plans Support, links to information resources. Available in English.

The Slovak Society for Computer Science ( <http://www.informatika.sk/> ): Besides the society activities, the site contains also some documents related to Information Society development: a proposal of the national policy (prepared in co-operation with Ministry of Education), information about activities of the working group on electronic signature, progress in implementation of the ECDL programme. Available in Slovak only, at this time.

## SLOVENIA

Government (the English extensions should be provided not later than June 2001).

Ministry for the Information Society ( <http://www.gov.si/mid> ): Telecommunications law and its extensions, national Information Society policy

Government centre of informatics ( <http://www.gov.si/cvi> ): Strategy of e-commerce in public administration (in English also); Public key infrastructure agency

Civil Society

Society Informatika ( <http://www.drustvo-informatika.si> ): Translations of key information society documents; ECDL contact point

## TURKEY

eEurope+ web site ( <http://www.bilten.metu.edu.tr/eEurope+> ): Includes links to other major websites related with the various subjects. In Turkish. English will be available soon.

Scientific and Technical Research Council of Turkey ( <http://www.tubitak.gov.tr> ). In Turkish and English.

Office of the Prime Minister ( <http://www.basbakanlik.gov.tr> ). In Turkish. English will be available soon.

State Planning Organisation ( <http://www.dpt.gov.tr> ). In Turkish and English

Telecommunications Authority ( <http://www.tk.gov.tr> ). In Turkish and English