



**COUNCIL OF
THE EUROPEAN UNION**

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NOTE

from :	The Portuguese delegation
to :	Council
Subject :	Indicators on the broadband internet access - Information from the Portuguese delegation

In all European Union countries and throughout the world generally, we are experiencing a period of intensive use of converging new technological resources for instant sharing of information and content at any time and place.

High-speed internet access has become a key factor in the development of economic sectors. Its multiplier effect and impact in changing behaviour, work processes, relationships between production resources and even distances between components of production and consumption chains will affect all economic sectors and all levels of society. Lack or under-use of it considerably restricts social inclusion and socioeconomic development.

One of the very clear trends emerging for the future development of this powerful and crucial resource is the growing significance, in consumer preferences, of wireless high-speed access: mobile broadband.

Use of such connections is being stepped up as swiftly as technological development allows. In Portugal, for instance, the number of mobile broadband connections has grown at an average of over 17 % a quarter and, in absolute terms, has already this year outstripped the number of landline connections. What is more, use intensity indicators show even greater growth.

We are aware that the key factors in this trend are already being felt, with varying degrees of intensity, in all European Union countries. Paradoxically, however, signs of increasingly widespread, intensive use of mobile broadband are accompanied by a lack of standardised statistical information from which to form a picture, monitor, compare, establish objectives and measure progress being made in this area.

We therefore see an incontrovertible need together to introduce the appropriate common indicators and encourage their application throughout the European Union.

Portugal has been drawing attention to the matter and working with international institutions, in particular the OECD and the European Commission, in order to help resolve the problem; it hopes that the next implementation report will already be able to provide up-to-date information on mobile broadband.

In the belief that it is for the European Union to give a lead here, I would call on the European Commission and all Member States to use their best endeavours to that end, thereby taking another very important step in carrying out the *Lisbon strategy*.
