



Strategy for an innovative and inclusive European Information Society



The i2010 strategy brings together all European Union policies, initiatives and actions that aim to boost the development and the use of digital technologies in every day working and private life. These technologies - also known as information and communication technologies (ICT) – make a positive contribution to economic growth, job creation and the enhancement of the quality of life. i2010 is part of the Lisbon strategy to make Europe a more competitive and dynamic knowledge-driven economy.

What is i2010?

In 2005, the European Commission launched a new policy framework, embracing all aspects of the information, communication and audiovisual sector. The idea was to seamlessly join individual policy initiatives into a coherent strategy.

This framework is called "i2010 - A European information society for growth and employment". It provides the broad policy guidelines for what we call the emerging "information society" in the years up to 2010.

i2010 aims to:

1. establish a **single European information space**, i.e. a truly single market for the digital economy so as to fully exploit the economies of scale, offered by Europe's 500 million strong consumer market;
2. reinforce innovation and investment in **ICT research**, given that ICT is a major driver of the economy and;
3. promote **inclusion, public services and quality of life** – in other words extending the European values of inclusion and quality of life to the information society.

Digital convergence is changing your daily life!

Have you noticed just how much and how quickly your life has changed in recent years? Gone are typewriters – replaced by personal computers that are becoming ever more powerful and smaller. Almost gone are fax machines - replaced by email and computer-scanned documents. Television is rapidly going digital to keep pace with the higher quality of pictures and sound available from DVD recordings. Even your telephone has been digital for years, though you may not even have noticed it.

In short, what used to be three separate industries based on three separate technologies are now more or less one and the same. Technologies have converged, industries have restructured themselves and traditional market distinctions are becoming blurred: between TV and radio broadcasting, paper and audio publishing or modern on-line and interactive services.

Regulatory changes are now increasingly frequent, as the authorities strive to keep up with structural changes and build the single European market on which our economic competitiveness depends.

"Ensuring that Europe thrives means giving Europeans the tools they need to innovate: world-class ICTs, the right laws and regulations, as well as high-quality and low-cost communications."

*Viviane Reding,
Commissioner for
Information Society and Media*

Achievements

Much progress has been made in the past three years. A few examples suffice to show the breadth of achievements:

- new EU rules have been put in place to include both old and new audiovisual media services from traditional broadcasting to on-demand video;
- proposals to reform EU Telecoms Rules have been launched with the aim to boost competition and make telecom services even more accessible and affordable
- regulation to create a single market for mobile phone use across borders is in operation;
- initiatives to boost online content, including films, music and games in Europe are under discussion;
- major new research and innovation funding initiatives are up and running with two major instruments: the 7th Research Framework and the ICT Policy Support Programme under the Competitiveness and Innovation Programme (CIP);
- ground-breaking public private partnerships - Joint Technology Initiatives - have been launched to finance promising research projects in embedded computing systems and innovative medicines;
- new eInclusion initiatives are on track to enable people to fully participate in the information society, regardless of their individual or social circumstances such as disability or age.

Further information:

European Information Society Portal: http://ec.europa.eu/information_society/

European Commission - Information Society and Media DG:

Information Desk - Email: info-desk@ec.europa.eu, Tel: +32 2 299 93 99, Fax: +32 2 299 94 99

At mid-point in 2008 – which direction?

The Commission has reviewed its i2010 strategy at mid-term to make sure that the policy keeps up with new developments in the constantly changing digital environment.

The new set of actions for 2008-2009 aim to invest more in innovation and research, apply ICT to continue building a Single European Market, address the increasing concerns of users and ensure that Europe remains at the forefront of the race towards a global Internet economy.

For example:

- the Commission will publish a guide explaining Digital users' rights and obligations (2008) to help many Europeans who are still reluctant to use online technologies;
- large-scale projects will help make electronic signatures and electronic identity cards work across national borders, making life easier for businesses, citizens and administrations;
- an initiative on eHealth will seek to promote development and diffusion of innovative eHealth technologies, making healthcare better, more efficient and more adapted to the needs of our ageing societies;
- the Commission will propose measures to promote the contribution of ICT to energy efficiency and sustainable growth.

For more actions and details, see i2010 Internet website: <http://ec.europa.eu/i2010>

In parallel with concrete actions, there will be a discussion looking forward on how to develop Europe's policy beyond the lifespan of the i2010 initiative