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Best eEurope Practices

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Report on eBest practice in NAS

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Deliverable summary sheet

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Short Description:

The purpose of this deliverable is to present a review and analysis of the NAS cases incorporated into Beep and examine these in contrast to the EU cases.

The policy background in terms of the eEurope+ initiative is first examined. Then attention is turned to the cases in the Beep knowledge base and what these can tell us. This includes both an analysis of case characteristics and a review of cases which incorporates the main lessons drawn from the NAS cases with examples where this is helpful.

Finally, two annexes are appended which, respectively, describe the Beep NAS partners and lists the NAS cases currently in the Beep knowledge base.

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Executive summary

The Beep project started in January 2001 to build a knowledge system of best practice containing some 300 cases. In January 2002 the original partners were joined by partners from nine new partner states with the intention of contributing some 150 best practice cases derived from the new partner area. This report looks at the similarities and differences between the cases contributed by the original partners (mainly derived from EU member states) and the cases contributed by the new partners from the NAS (Newly Associated States). Although this process is limited only to the cases successfully contributed to the knowledge system it is possible to draw some useful lessons from the comparison. Whether these lessons can be relevant to the wider world is a subject for further debate. It should also be born in mind that the new partners may not have had access to a number of interesting cases within their state as most of the original case owners would have been trained within a command led economy where the voluntary sharing of information (particularly learning experiences) may not have been as common as in a market economy.

The NAS cases contributed come from a similar range of backgrounds as the original tranche provided by the EU based partners.

However there are some new experiences noticeable within the NAS cases such as applying for, and using, International (non-EU) funds; coping with culture and legislation derived from a command led economy; coping with poor infrastructures on a wide scale or using First World (American) training materials in a Second (Third) World environment.

These experiences will doubtless be a real asset to the expanded European Union, particularly in relation to its activities in Third World development.

In the project extension, Beep-NAS was able to directly support the eEurope+ 2003 Action Plan which links NAS countries to the EU's own eEurope 2002 Action Plan. NAS countries provided cases which illustrated the unique strengths and weaknesses, opportunities and threats of the various contexts in which they find themselves (which do differ greatly from country to country, despite the fact that they share fundamental common characteristics). BEEP users in NAS countries will find the mix of NAS and EU cases very beneficial, and rich opportunities will be provided for cross border and joint research between NAS and EU organisations which will result in tangible services with much development potential after project termination.

In this report, the policy background in terms of the eEurope+ initiative is first examined. Then attention is turned to the cases in the Beep knowledge base and what these can tell us. This includes both an analysis of case characteristics and a review of cases which incorporates the main lessons drawn from the NAS cases with examples where this is helpful.

Finally, two annexes are appended which, respectively, describe the Beep NAS partners and lists the NAS cases currently in the Beep knowledge base.

Main Deliverable

1 The policy context – the eEurope+ initiative

Most of the Newly Associated States (NAS) are expecting to become full members of the European Union in 2004. As the NAS gear themselves to address the full terms of membership, one important area to consider is 'eEurope' policy, first initiated in December 1999 and then given substance by the European Council Meeting in Lisbon in March 2000 and the publication of the eEurope 2002 Action Plan, agreed by the European Council in June 2000. eEurope has been further updated by the publication of the eEurope 2005 Action Plan in June 2002. Most NAS have also joined up to their own eEurope+ 2003 Action Plan, adopted in Warsaw in May 2000 as an "eEurope-like initiative".

In meeting these challenges, the NAS are facing many new problems particularly in the area of the development of the knowledge-based economy and society, for example in seeking balanced socio-economic development of Europe in the Knowledge Age, so that the European eEconomy and eSociety develop in harmony and in a manner that is mutually reinforcing. This means improving both economic competitiveness as well as social cohesion and well being.

Currently, there are many actions taking place at national level in the NAS which have recognised that they need to learn from best practice in other countries, including from each other. For example, the eSlovenia Action Plan specifically states that "...The introduction of an Information society / Networked economy will not be possible without the transfer of knowledge which can be provided by better ePractices...". In addition it is concluded that, despite the solid ICT infrastructure in Slovenia, the narrowing of the knowledge divide is one of the issues that has to be tackled.

The challenge is, therefore, how to assist and support the NAS in acquiring such knowledge, how to provide them with materials, facilities and skills to learn from and adapt the experiences of others to their own situation and needs. Indeed, at the recent IPTS Workshop entitled 'What Information Society Strategies for Candidate Countries?'¹ it was clearly stated that "While the example of some Western Europe countries could be seen as showing the way forward, the simple emulation of those "best practices" is seen as less and less relevant for Candidate Countries....what is needed instead is learning, or benchlearning...".

1.1 eEurope development

In December 1999 the eEurope initiative was launched by the European Commission to bring the benefits of the Information Society to all Europeans and make Europe the most competitive and dynamic knowledge based economy in the world. This initiative was well received, and the European Council in Lisbon on 23-24 March 2000, and called for an Action Plan to further operationalise this. The eEurope Action Plan 2002² was launched in Feira on the 19-20 June 2000.

During 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 member countries with eEurope by deciding 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.

¹ Institute for Prospective Technological Studies, workshop held 23-25 February in Sevilla.

² eEurope action plan 2002, Prepared by the Council and the European Commission for the Feira European Council, 19-20 June 2000. Note; these objectives were slightly reformulated as to comply with other communications on Job Strategies and Broad Economic Policy Guidelines, <http://www.europa.eu.int/eeurope/>

The eEurope+ Action Plan³ was launched by the Prime Ministers of the Candidate Countries at the Göteborg European Summit on 15-16 June 2001. In twinning with the eEurope Action Plan this will support effective integration of Europe through co-operation and exchanges of experiences and best practice.

The Candidate Countries recognise that the driving force to harness the benefits of the knowledge-based economy required that urgent action be undertaken against tight deadlines. By doing this right, Candidate Countries may well benefit from the experiences already gained in today's EU member states and leapfrog into the Information Society. Alternatively, there is a danger that the social and economic divide currently existing (for some countries more than for others) will deepen through an increasing digital divide. It is clearly stated that the eEurope+ is based on a political commitment, that in no way should be perceived as a substitute for or interfering with the on-going acquis communautaire negotiating process which should lead to the accession of most of the Candidate Countries.

A final report on how well this has been achieved will be presented by the end of 2003. The recent interim report⁴ shows that progress has been made, but that more needs to be done. It is fair to say that still today some of the indicators used are not very well representing what is really going on.

1.2 Key objectives of eEurope+

In the basic eEurope documentation, several actions are identified and, connected to them, targets to fulfil these actions. In the action plan they are, as already mentioned, grouped, ranging from actively changing and stimulating networks ("a cheaper, faster, secure internet") to a more indirect influence ("stimulate the use of the internet" or "investing in people and skills"). The eEurope action plan also identified the supporting framework ("methods") in which these targets are to be achieved: setting up an appropriate legal environment (regulatory framework), supporting new infrastructure and services (depending mainly on private funding) and applying open co-ordination and benchmarking. This new framework for electronic communication services is seen as a priority area.

Following the launch of the eEurope+ Action Plan, key objective number. 0, was added: "Accelerate the putting in place of the basic building blocks for the Information Society."

The Candidate Countries recognised 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. However, the idea behind the objective above is, that 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.

The Key Objectives are:

- Objective 0: Accelerate the putting in place of the basic building blocks for the Information Society
- Objective 1: A cheaper, faster Internet
- Objective 2: Investing in people and skills
- Objective 3: Stimulate the use of the Internet

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

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 this additional objective was included. For this, additional types of indicators were used for reporting and monitoring progress. Also, Candidate Countries included an additional area in this Action Plan that targets action for developing "environment on-line" (see Objective 3).

³ http://europa.eu.int/information_society/topics/international/regulatory/eeuropeplus/doc/eEurope_june2001.pdf

⁴ http://europa.eu.int/information_society/topics/international/regulatory/eeuropeplus/doc/progress_report.pdf

Target Areas under Objective 0 are:

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

1.3.1 Accelerate the provision of affordable communication services for all

It is clear that (the quality and extend of telephone coverage in Candidate Countries is often not comparable with that in the EU countries. Some countries still have dial-up connection failure rates in the range of 10-30%. Some households are still equipped with 'shared-lines' that are unsuitable for use as Internet connections.

The related indicators for this action are: percentage of households that have fixed telephone services, percentage of households that have some form of telecommunications that is capable of providing access to the Internet, interconnection prices and issues such as portability and licensing agreements.

1.3.2 Transpose and implement the *acquis* relevant to the Information Society

The legal framework needs to take into account the nature of an essentially borderless, internet-based information and communications environment. 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. The related indicator is a checklist to identify and list the most relevant *acquis* legislation related to Information Society.

1.4 Objective 1: A cheaper, faster Internet

Objective 1 addresses mainly the issue of access, as access is the first pre-condition to participation. As over the recent years great progress has been made within the EU countries, the gap in uptake is very high.. It is clear that reliable data is needed for comparing the access in the different Member States and Candidate Countries.

Experience from the earlier benchmarking activities in eEurope has taught that indicators should be limited, easy to understand and read and drawing attention to the policy actions of the plan. The activities as proposed in this tender will comply with this.

Target Areas under Objective 1 are:

- Cheaper and faster Internet access
- Faster Internet for researchers and students
- Secure networks and smart cards

1.4.1 Cheaper and faster Internet access

Core in the idea of vast access to the Internet is the ability to do so from home. 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. The table below gives an overview of some of the data readily available for the candidate countries.

Many envisaged applications target non-work-related use; it should therefore be possible to access the Internet at any time and eventually any place. However, the *possibility to use* and *actual use* are not the same; therefore several indicators are needed to capture this issue.

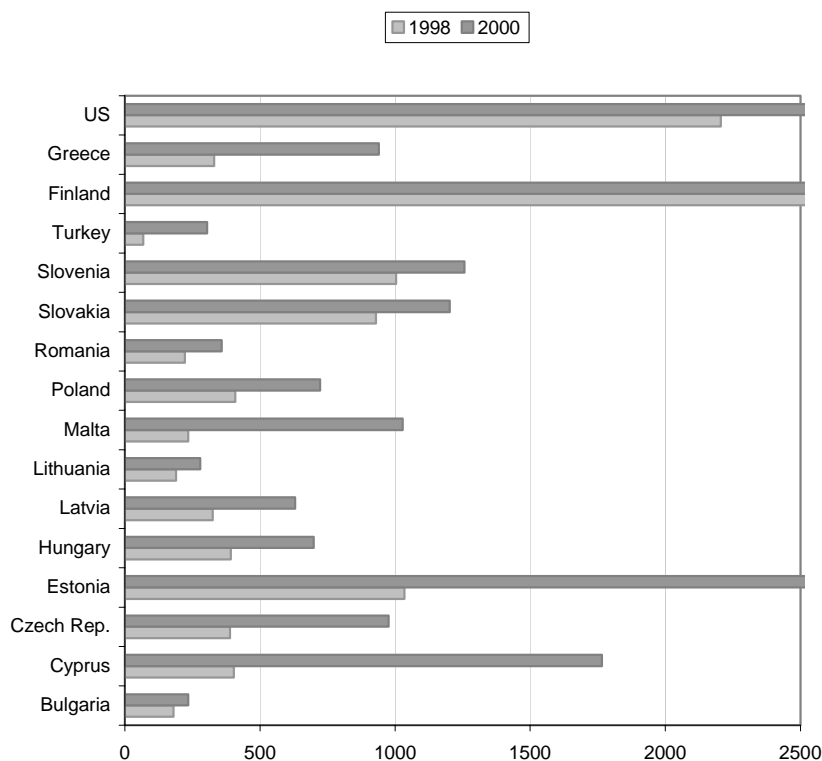
Table: Main telecommunications indicators

	Total lines per 100 inh.		mobile lines per 100 inh. ⁽¹⁾		level (%) of network digitisation		PCs per 100 inh. ⁽¹⁾		Share of PCs (%) in households. ⁽¹⁾
	1999	2000	1999	2000	1999	2000	1999	2000	1999
Bulgaria	38.9	4.0	4.3	8.2	78	80	2.7	4.4	7
Cyprus	62.99	64.72	22.5	26.2	100	100	16.7	28	48
Czech Rep.	57.1	77.6	19.0	29.2	72	83	10.7	13.1	24
Estonia	64.1	2.0	26.8	32.0	47	67	13.5	:	61
Hungary	51.7	60.8	16.2	29.7	75	79	7.4	:	30
Latvia	42.6	46.9	11.2	15.6	40	43	8.2	:	14
Lithuania	39.4	43.0	9.0	11.4	30	33	5.9	:	32
Malta	52.04	52.76	9.7	21.1	100	100	18.1	21.0	
Poland	36.9	44.5	10.2	15.0	97	97	6.2	15.5	23
Romania	23.5	32.3	6.2	12.6	55	50	2.7	3.2	32
Slovakia	47.9	52.9	17.0	21.5	:	67	7.4	:	25
Slovenia	76.1	104.7	31.5	57.4	93	100	25.3	27.3	54
Turkey	30.74	31.37	12.5	19.3	83.81	85	3.2	4.6	:
Finland	130	:	66.8	72.8	:	:	36	:	53
Greece	92	:	31.4	55.7	:	:	6	:	19

Source: ESIS 2001, (1)Eurostat (2001)

One indication is for instance the percentage of (estimated) Internet users. The table below does not only indicate that, but also the rate of progress.

Figure 2: Estimated Internet users per 10000 inh.



Source: ITU Telecommunication indicators

1.4.2 Faster Internet for researchers and students

One of the earliest applications of broadband (and according to some, the actual driver of broadband backbone development) was in national research networks. In fact, the *Internet* evolved from the sharing of computing power through networks between large research institutes in the United States. The vision of one European Research Area - where researchers cooperate in transnational networks using distributed, interconnected computing power (the GRID concept) - can only become reality when research centres throughout the Union link up to a fast research backbone. The current backbone, the GEANT network, connects most member states at speeds of 2.5-10 Gbit/s (see picture below). Speed in some of the Candidate Countries are comparable with that, but not for all. When the Central and Eastern European countries participate in the ERA vision, the speed of their national research networks, as well as the connection to the research backbone will regularly need to be benchmarked.



Indicators used for benchmarking national research networks and schools' networks are defined for the EU-15. Some indicators are already available via Dante, the organisation running GEANT; other information will have to be acquired from the national research network organisations and organisations for schools' networks.

1.4.3 Secure networks and smart cards

EU member states and associated states have a growing appreciation of society's dependence on information infrastructures and the risks arising from this dependency. This is evident with growing concerns about "cyber-crime" which have led many states to modify their penal codes and to create "cyber-crime units". Initiatives such as, for example, the European Commission's Communication on Creating a Safer Information Society by Improving the Security of Information Infrastructures and Combating Computer-related Crime and the Council of Europe's Convention on Cyber-crime have assisted this process, especially in terms of providing guidance and fostering awareness. The current plan to establish a European Network and Information Security Unit is expected to further facilitate a better understanding across Member States and Candidate Countries. 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. Many users indicate that they are hampered by the lack of trust in the security and privacy of data transfer via *Internet*. It is believed that more security technologies will entice users to start using more services on-line. The indicators sought in this field are therefore first of all the reported instances of security problems, but also the availability of solutions: number of public and private CERTs and the percentage of computers equipped with security devices.

1.5 Objective 2: Investing in people and skills

One of the ways to further the goal of eEurope is to enable as many citizens as possible to make use of communications technology by investing in their skills. Without skills, people will only be able to use the most basic services and they will not be able to reap all fruits of the knowledge society. An active investment in this area is necessary, to prevent an increase in the digital divide. The targets for this include providing access to multimedia networks at schools and public centres for citizens to get more familiar with IT, and creation of possibilities for youth, students and workers to acquire skills (key words are: training places, information skills diploma, life-long learning). With regard to skills, the eEurope 2005 action plan reports that almost all schools and companies are connected and that web accessibility guidelines have been adopted and recommended in member states:

Target Areas under Objective 2 are:

- European youth into the digital age
- Working in the knowledge-based economy
- Participation for all in the knowledge-based economy

1.5.1 European youth into the digital age

The eLearning initiative 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. Thus, the main method pursued in this item is getting Internet into the schools and connecting the schools to research networks (partly overlapping with Objective 1b). Most EU countries have already today more than 90% of schools connected: this is much less in most of the Candidate Countries. There is also a need to provide teaching materials, training teachers, altering curricula accordingly and disseminating best practices.

The indicators that were chosen to benchmark this topic are number of computers per pupil, number of computers with Internet connection per pupil and number of computers with high-speed connection per pupil (differentiated in primary, secondary and tertiary schools). The fourth indicator is the percentage of teachers using the Internet for teaching non-IT subjects on a regular basis.

The first three indicators focus on the hard infrastructure and neglect the materials, curricula and training. Research in this field so far suggest that computers help, but that putting the ingredients together for a breakthrough is more difficult than thought. The primary effect of these policies is improvement of education; stimulating a richer broadband (or even a richer narrowband) environment is secondary advantage.

1.5.2 Working in the knowledge-based economy

It is clear that being a knowledge-based economy is more than just having a lot of IT; it also entails using it, and constantly developing skills. 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. In eEurope 2002 this is supported by the following actions: promoting lifelong learning, encouraging more IT training places and courses (with gender equality), creating a European diploma for basic IT skills, increasing teleworking, creating a network of learning and training centres for demand-driven information, and creating more telecenters. In particular applications like teleworking and

telecooperation could in itself stimulate a more rapid integration, as workers in Candidate Countries do not have to migrate towards Member States in order to be able to work for or with institutions and businesses located there (and the other way around).

The main indicators that were chosen for benchmarking this item are the percentage of the workforce with basic computer training, the number of places and graduates with IT-related tertiary educations (split by gender and as a percentage of all curricula) and the percentage of the workforce using telework (split by gender and by type of job (sector/level)) or part of a telework framework agreement.

1.5.3 Participation for all in the knowledge-based economy

In the original text of eEurope, this item was mainly focused at disabled and elderly people. Although this group is still considered important, the definition has widened so that e.g. with no access at home can be included in this item. Because special needs populations are many, various, and small, markets usually have less interest in going out of their way to serve them (except perhaps at high cost) - hence a prima facie case for government intervention. Benchmarking and standards are meant to nudge people into serving special needs markets largely by drawing invidious comparisons between those that cater to such markets and those that do not. The two main indicators that are used in this item are: number of public Internet access points (PIAPs) per inhabitant (including/excluding private initiatives, number of free points and percentage of libraries) and percentage of central government websites that conform to the Web Accessibility Initiative guidelines at different levels (A, AA and AAA). These indicators obviously are to be related with access: the higher the coverage of Internet access at home, the less people would need to have access to PIAPs.

1.6 Objective 3: Stimulate the use of the Internet

The topics in objective 3 are all intended to enhance the use of Internet services. Important factors in these actions are identification, dispute settlement systems and transparency for users of these services. Also, supporting European cultural diversity is seen as an important policy aim.

Target Areas under Objective 3 are:

- Accelerating eCommerce
- Government online
- Healthcare online
- European digital content for global networks
- Intelligent transport systems
- Environment on-line

1.6.1 Accelerating eCommerce

Accelerating eCommerce is seen as one of the main focal points for stimulating the use of the Internet. Many actions to be undertaken entail changes in existing legislation (adopting outstanding EU legislation on copyright, financial services, E-money, and jurisdiction; removing legal obstacles to e-procurement; establishing an e-marketplace for public procurement; and harmonising VAT for bricks and clicks). Some of these changes appear obvious, a necessary overhaul to make pencil-and-paper practices conform to new technological possibilities. Others, such as VAT harmonisation, are not so simple. For example, companies using eCommerce in the United States have vociferously fought the imposition of sales taxes on their business on two largely specious grounds: local taxes are too complex (well, that's what computers are for), and that eCommerce is an infant industry worth subsidising. The other actions would work by stimulating private activity (promoting alternative dispute resolution norms, trust marks, and codes of conduct through private means; co-operating with the Global Business Dialogue) by providing information (improving legal assurance through online information service and awareness; promulgating best practices), or by applying for a domain (".eu") just as new ones are being handed out.

Although in the end the list of actions can just be presented as tick-off boxes, the important question is how the uptake of eCommerce is progressing. Therefore the indicator chosen for this action is the percentage of companies buying and selling on-line (by size and sector, % of turnover, including B2B and B2C).

1.6.2 Government online

As primary stimulators of the creation and development of a knowledge society, it is obvious that governments need to play a leading role (“launching customer”) in the provision of services - be it on the level of information, communication or transaction. The first step in this approach is putting data, public services, EU transactions, and administrative procedures all online. Additional steps that are to be taken are: harmonising online data and its access, promoting open source software, and promoting electronic signatures within the public sector.

Table: Percentage of web sites per sector

	primary, secondary schools	high schools, universities	ministries	local authorities	hospitals	museums	libraries
Czech Rep.	27	86.9	100	12.9	62.2	52.1	7
Cyprus	6	38	100	n.d.	8	11	1
Estonia	37.8	75.8	100	66.8	28.2	26.8	4.3
Hungary	28	30	100	21.42	52.87	19.91	9.5
Latvia	14.1	84.8	100	14.3	8	77.4	2.4
Lithuania	11.6	100	100	16.5	22.1	93.75	17.2
Malta	6	4	35	21	20	21	2
Poland	14.5	90.6	100	51	19	17.7	6.3
Romania	0.5	17.8	62.5	9.2	1.9	1.8	0.1
Slovakia	1.67	100	100	9	11	33.7	75
Slovenia	84	89	100	70	54	45.9	96.9
Turkey	1	100	100	4	6	30	8

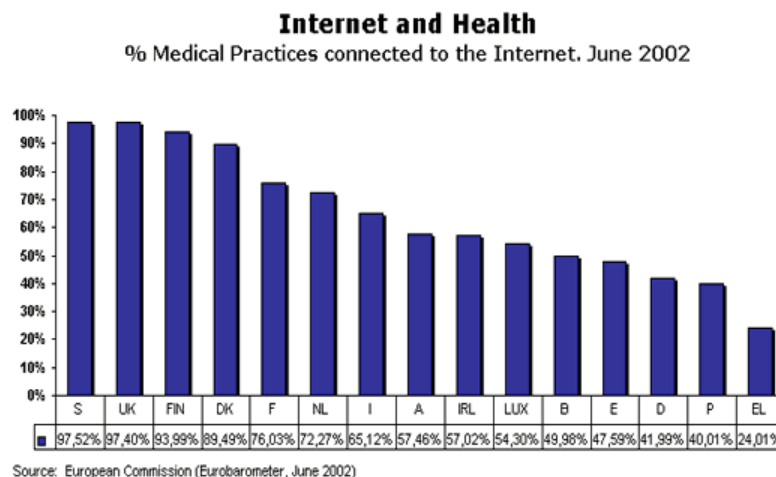
The indicators chosen for this topic are the percentage of basic public services available online, public use of government online services (for information provision or submitting forms) and the percentage of public procurement that is carried out on-line.

1.6.3 Healthcare online

An important driving force of human activity is the desire for optimal health, for better living conditions and improved quality of life. Contemporary nations face the problem of managing their health care systems to assure that patients receive appropriate care for their conditions. The critical objectives now and in the near-term future for the delivery of health services are quality, access and cost containment. This translates to an idealised objective of the consistent and reliable delivery of cost-effective health care with benefits outweighing its risks. Such a system is faithful to the values of the society where the care really takes place and which is as responsive as possible to the individual needs and values of the care recipients. The introduction of new information tools into the health care delivery system provides opportunities to move closer to this ideal goal. It is therefore more than logical that eEurope gives high importance to development and application of eHealth.

eHealth shows promise for improving on the issues of quality, cost and access. In order to appreciate the role of eHealth, one should look at the impact that it potentially has on health policy: facilitating partnerships and cooperation between the government, health sector, health insurers, industry and the consumer; changing the ambition and detail of healthcare policies.

The degree to which this influence can take place depends on a number of factors: the healthcare system itself (public vs. private), ICT-awareness in the sector, the level of ICT-investments in healthcare, the degree to which national government is active in e-government, the local market for ICT-services and -products, the geographical size of a country. One thing is clear: that ICT has progressively taken a more important, pervasive role in the delivery of care.



The basic indicator that this study shall focus on is the number of primary care physicians with Internet access in their consulting room/office (see picture above on status in EU-15). Additional information will be sought on whom they communicate with: pharmacies, secondary care or patients. A second indicator will show what type of information health professionals seek. However, details of this indicator and additional indicators are still to be discussed in the context of the High Level Committee on health, and may be changed as part of the effort in WP1.

1.6.4 European digital content for global networks

This action is focused on two methods: stimulating European content, especially in the public sector, and co-ordinating digitisation programs across EU member states. Better content would accelerate Internet usage, and more interesting imagery would stimulate middle band (100-400 kbps) use (video content is better matched with broadband uses). The first method appears more related to museums et al; the second, to libraries. European tastes may differ (and thus more apt to be motivated by material from museums and libraries). The policies ought to be justified not on the basis of their effect on Internet use, but on their more direct contributions to educational and cultural awareness and development. There is, of course, a world of content beyond museums and libraries -- newly created literature, imagery, audio, video, and other lively arts. Here, the Internet is a double-edged sword, reducing distribution costs but also making copyright infringement easier. Thus, it raises issues related to intellectual property protection (or overprotection) as well as fair usage.

The indicator chosen for this item is the percentage of EU web sites in the national top 50 visited. Sub-indicators can be by type of site, number of personal websites, amount of government information, employment in the on-line content sector and number of hosts per 1000 inhabitants. However, the indicator is deemed inappropriate for this research.

1.6.5 Intelligent transport systems

Economic progress in CEE 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. 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.

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. The activities proposed for intelligent transport systems are very diverse and can sometimes be answered by a simple yes or no for the whole country. The identified actions are: making emergency (112) services widespread, creating a Single European Sky, implementing traveller

information services, realising a Deployment plan for ITS, instituting wireless communications for high-speed trains, setting up a maritime and inland shipping reporting system, and adopting the Galileo precision location satellite system. The suggested indicator for this item is the percentage of the motorway network equipped with congestion information and management systems. However, the indicator in its current definition is deemed inappropriate for this research. Details of this indicator and additional indicators are still to be discussed in the context of the High Level Committee on transport.

1.6.6 Environment on-line

One of the biggest challenges facing Candidate Countries is the implementation of EU legislation and compliance with those laws governing the environment. This is why this action is specifically added to the eEurope+ actions, while it is not prominently present in the eEurope 2002 and 2005 plans. The scale of past environmental liabilities and the gap at the level of environmental protection will require targeted long-term strategies. 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.

The indicators originally associated with this action: degree of implementation of EEA work programme in the country, degree of completeness of environmental data collected following EEA requirements by country, and number of institutions connected to EIONET in the country, are not deemed appropriate for this research.

2 Analysis of NAS case characteristics

At June 1st there were 182 cases identified by the new NAS partners, of which there were 123 cases in process of being validated and entered into the Beep Knowledge. This section reviews the characteristics of the 132 cases where coding has been completed by the new partners. As most of the research is of a secondary nature it has occasionally proved difficult for the coders to allocate a particular characteristic to a case, whilst other characteristics lend themselves to multiple selection (i.e. a case includes more than one version of the characteristic). For this reason the legends on the graphs below show the number of occasions a characteristic was allocated rather than the number of cases that allocated the characteristic

2.1 Regional Setting

Bearing in mind the historical (command driven) setting from which the NAS cases derive it is not surprising that they produce a higher proportion of cases which were led, or initiated by their National governments to address problems on a national scale. Support programmes such as PHARE tend to channel funds through national governments and thereby re-inforce this trend. It is therefore to be expected that more NAS cases would derive from a national setting. Similarly it would not be expected that NAS cases could be derived from trans-national or trans-regional within the EU. Otherwise the distribution of regional settings quite closely matches that of the original partner's cases.

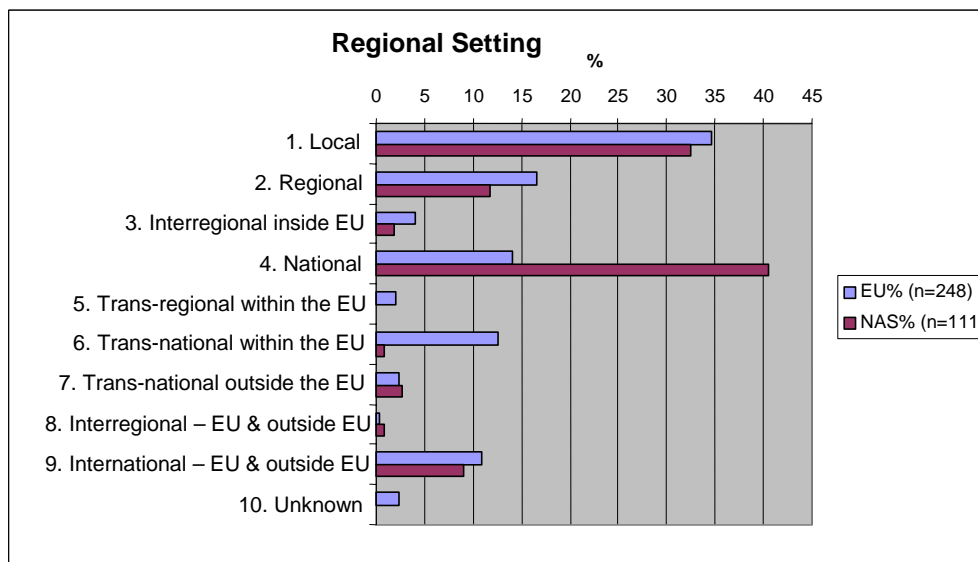


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2.2 Geographic size

The geographic size relates to the type of environment within which the case took place. The most striking difference between NAS and EU cases is the proportion of cases addressing issues in rural areas. Despite the NAS having relatively more rural areas within their borders the cases submitted show a clear preference for activities within cities and more densely populated areas. This must also be because ICT infrastructures are very poorly rolled out in NAS rural areas, even when compared with rural and peripheral areas within the EU. There is thus a distinct shortage of NAS cases addressing the needs of rural areas. It may well be that there is a case for revisiting some of the actions under the TURA (Telematics for Urban and Rural Areas) strand of the 4th Framework programme to see if there are suitable models for replication in the NAS.

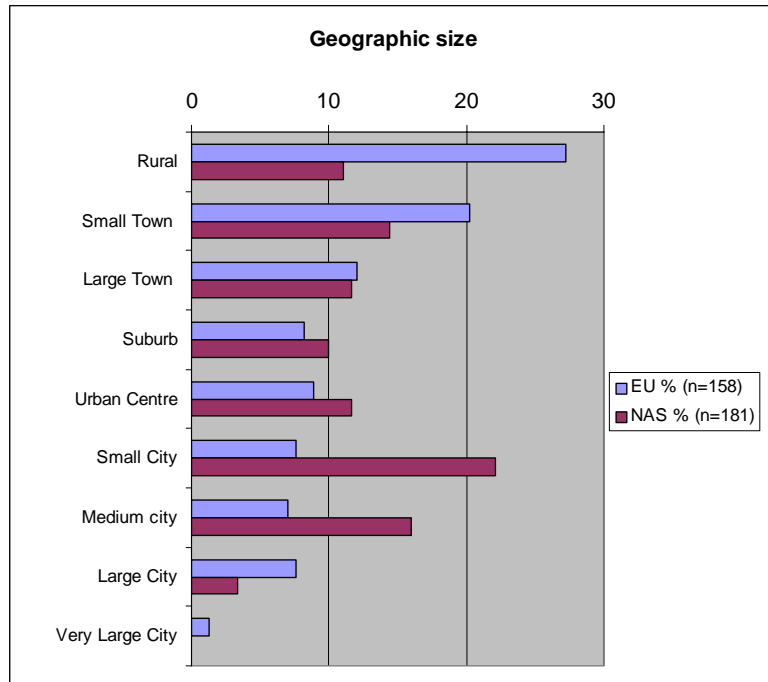


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2.3 Size of Organisation

The spread of contributor organisational sizes is similar in the NAS cases compared to the EU (Figure 3). However, as far as beneficiaries are concerned (Figure 4), there is a clear focus on micro, small and medium sized organisations in the NAS. This is perhaps to be expected as, in the new commercial economy, there are unlikely to be many suitable large organisations for such cases, whereas the smaller organisations are the ones growing fastest and attracting attention and resources. Larger organisations in the commercial sector in the NAS are likely to be converted old command economy companies, in the public sector, or companies owned by or in close collaboration with foreign (and particularly) US corporates.

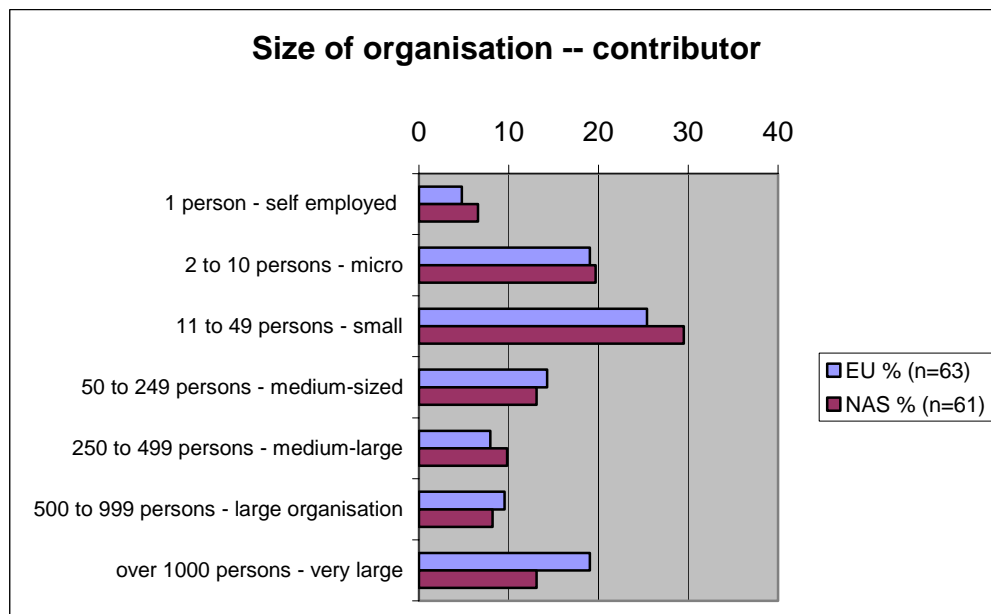


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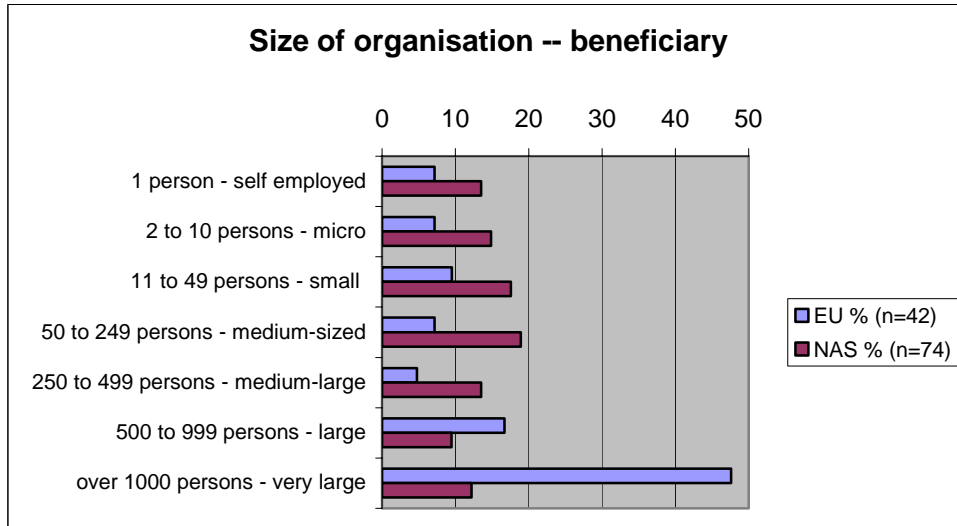


Figure 4 Size of organisation benefiting from a case

2.4 Numbers involved

Similar conclusions are found when examining the total numbers of beneficiaries cases target. The numbers of contributors shows a similar pattern. It is clear that there is a much stronger focus in NAS cases of smaller numbers of beneficiaries.

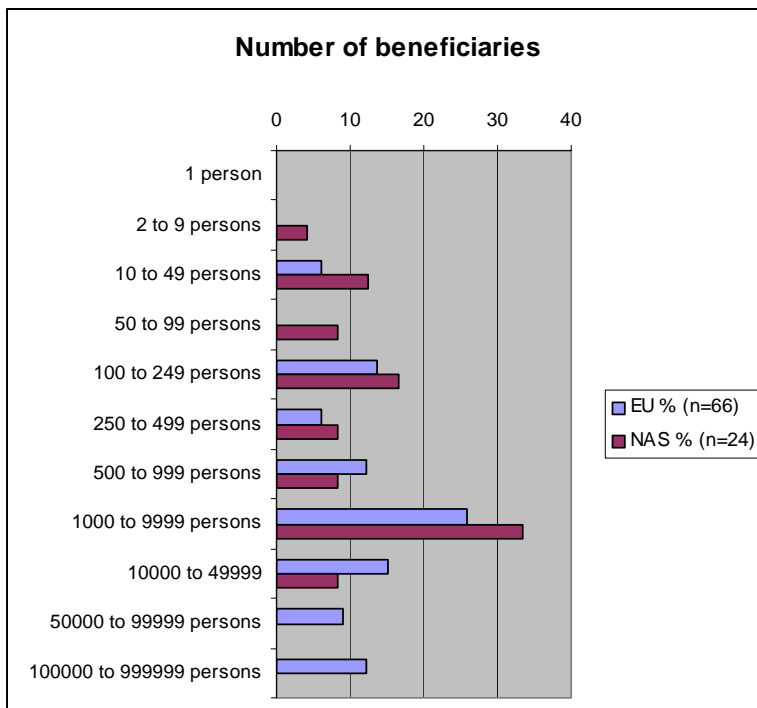


Figure 5 Number of beneficiaries of a case

2.5 Type of organisation

The only noticeable difference between NAS and EU case contributors was in the number of voluntary (not for profit) groups contributing cases. It would appear that there are relatively more not-for-profit groups undertaking projects in the NAS without support from the State or other Institutions. This may be because the NAS have not yet developed suitable mechanisms for establishing and/or managing such funding mixtures, or it may be that the not-for-profit organisations in the NAS maintain more detailed records than in the EU which makes them easier to research. The NAS total does, however, include three religious organisations (monasteries) which have no equivalent in the EU cases. Looking at the beneficiary part of this characteristic, and overviewing the cases in general, it does seem (from the Beep experience only) that the voluntary sector in the NAS is relatively more active than in the EU.

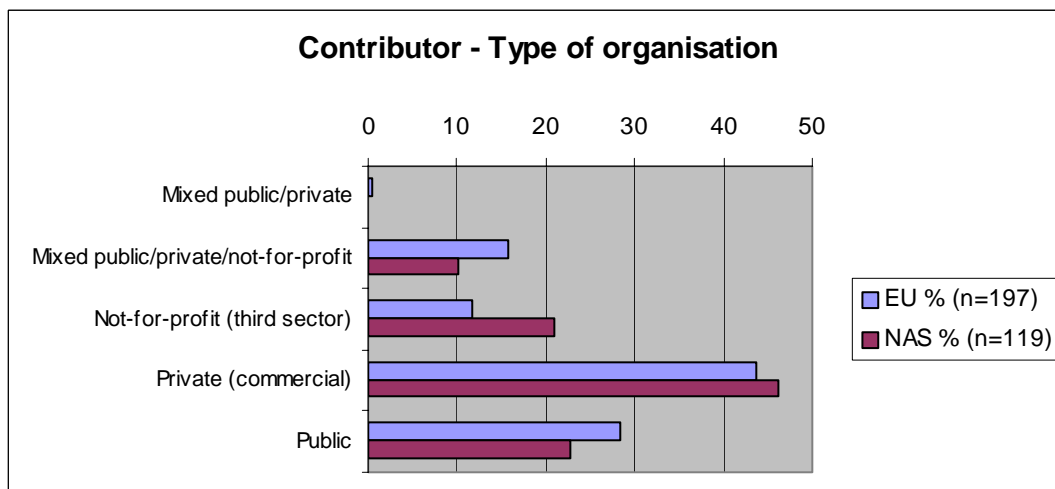


Figure 6 Type of organisation contributing cases

The variety of types of organisation benefiting from the cases suggests a preference (35%) for supporting private enterprise in the NAS cases. This is to be expected as the states continue to move away from a command economy. However the NAS cases do not match the EU level (48%) as there is still an emphasis on third and public sector actions. The proportion of cases addressing the needs of the mixed economy does indicate willingness for public and private sectors to work together, this appears to be particularly true in relation to local, as opposed to national, actions.

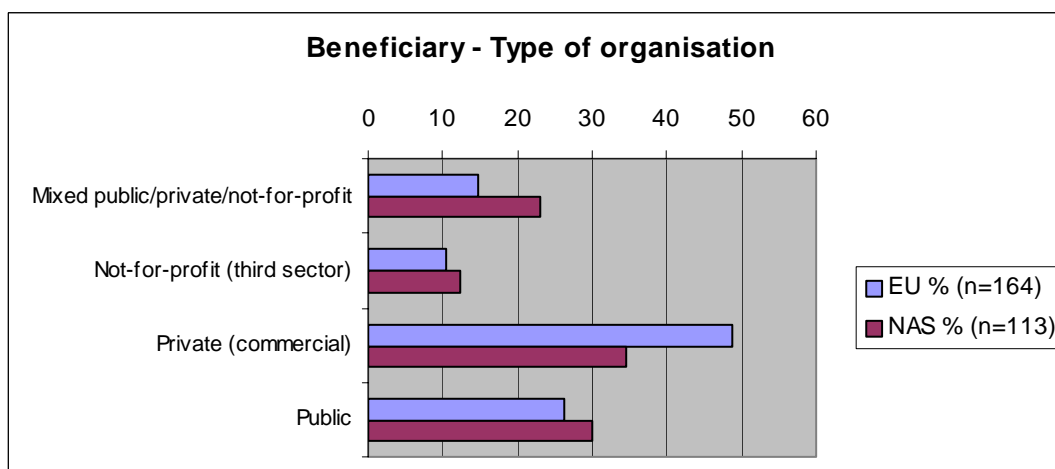


Figure 7 Types of organisation benefiting from cases

2.6 Economic Sector

Analysis of the contributing organisations by economic sector reinforces the above impressions as it shows more NAS cases coming from the voluntary sector (other community and social organisations) plus Health and Social work. This may be due to fewer of these functions being carried out by public bodies in the new NAS. Analysis of the beneficiaries by economic sector shows a similar distribution to that for contributing organisations.

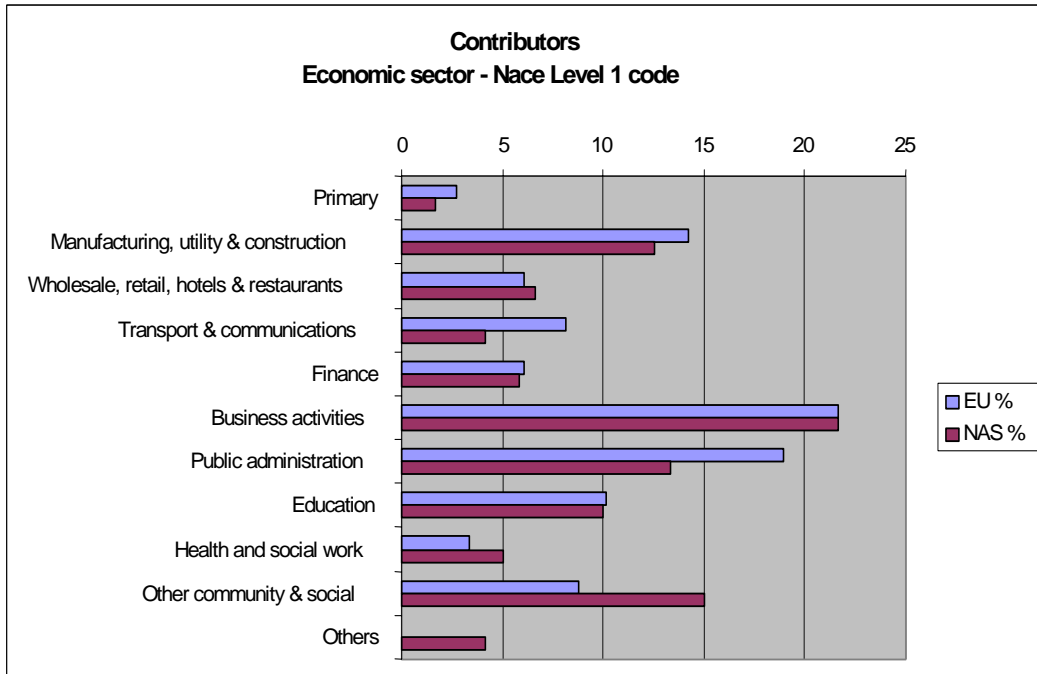


Figure 8 Contributors - Economic sector

2.7 Social groups

However, the emphasis in the NAS cases on social and community work, probably, as noted above, because the public sector does not carry out as many of these functions in the NAS as compared to EU cases, does not extend to targeting particularly weak groups, like the elderly and disabled. In terms of social groups there is in NAS a focus on mainstream family, household and community groups and much less on specific 'disadvantaged' groups where, probably, extra resources and expertise is likely to be necessary. These are resources likely to be available through the public sector in the EU but not yet within NAS. This is thus a potential future growth area for ICT supported initiatives in NAS.

2.8 ICT Skills

The level of ICT skills amongst the contributors of cases shows some clear differences between NAS and EU cases. These differences are born out by studying the case texts. The NAS cases tend to use more "home-grown" skilled technicians and locally designed software than EU cases. From reading the cases it appears that Linux is more popular as a platform in the NAS cases than in the EU cases. The lower level of change management skills recorded for NAS cases is perhaps an anomaly caused by the case coders looking for a formal qualification in the same way they would for ICT skills. It is clear from the case texts that the contributing organisations are successfully managing dramatic changes on a daily basis.

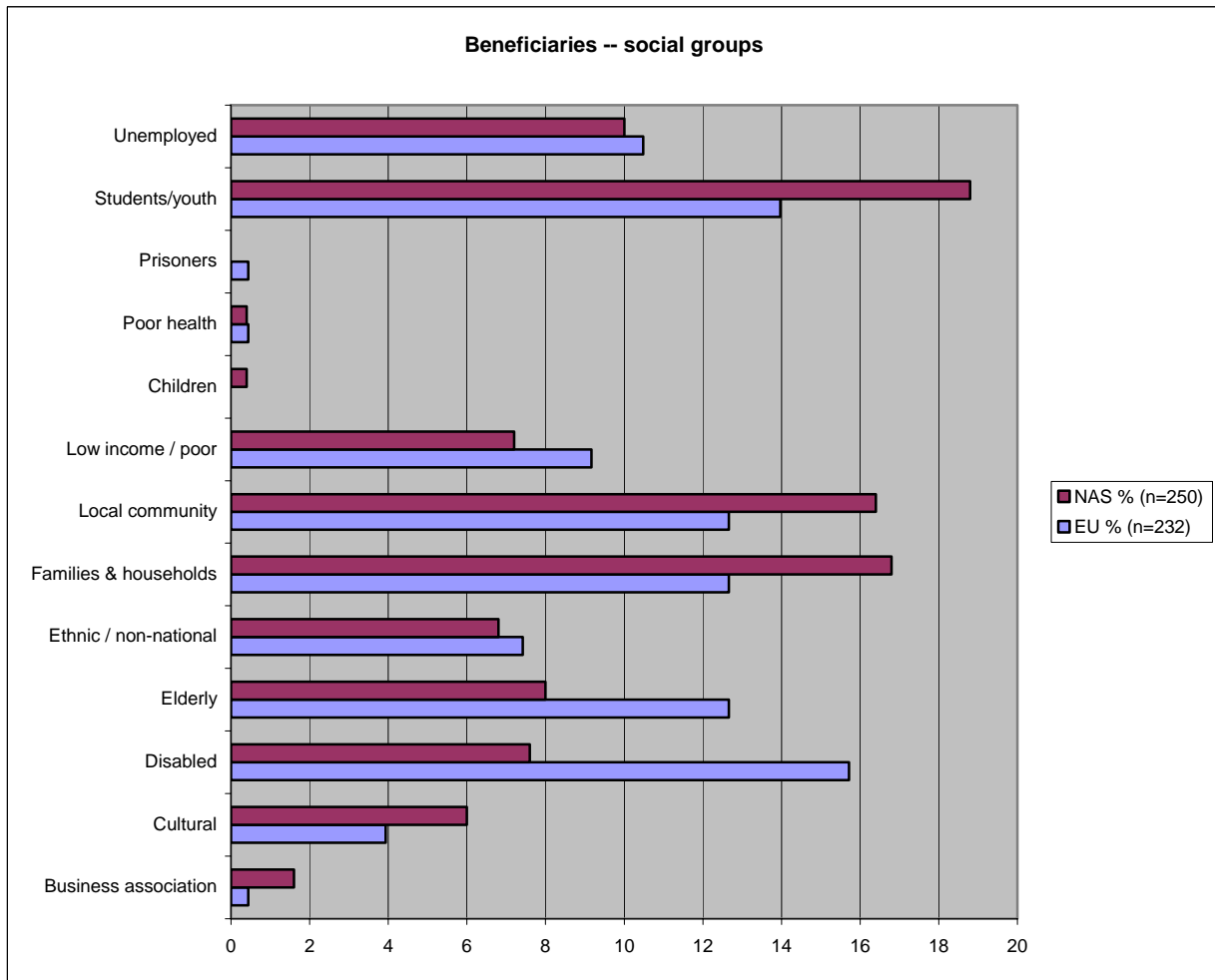


Figure 9 Beneficiaries – social groups

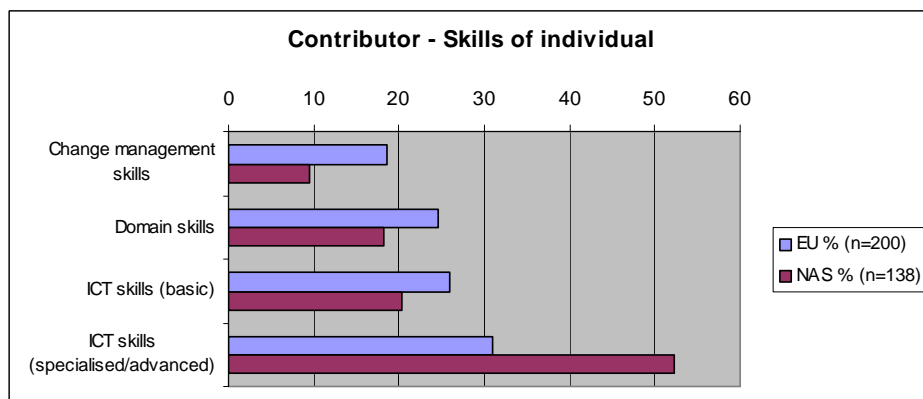


Figure 10 Skills of individuals employed by contributors

There is less difference between NAS and EU cases where beneficiary skills are concerned. The higher level of beneficiaries with at least basic ICT skills (over 50%) in the NAS cases, when coupled with the statistics for contributing organisations, may indicate a general higher level of ICT literacy amongst the NAS population than the EU population. However the increase in basic IT skills recorded by Beep is more likely due to the higher proportion of NAS cases that were conducted within city, town or urban environments where access to computers is easier than in rural areas. It would therefore be unsafe to draw any national conclusions from this finding.

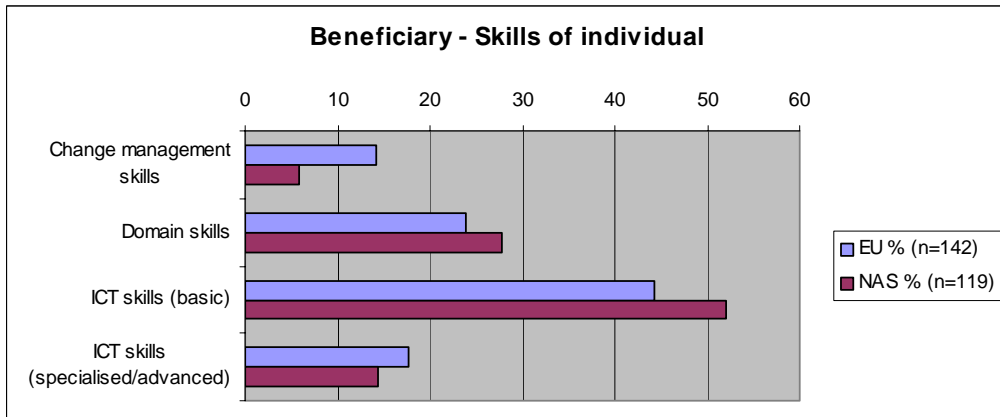


Figure 11 Skills possessed by individual beneficiaries

2.9 Education Level

There is a noticeably higher level of educational achievement amongst the contributors of NAS cases. The NAS coders were well briefed on this issue, as there is often confusion over educational terminology at international levels. The indication is that NAS organisations are able to recruit higher educated staff than EU organisations and this possibly accounts for some of the interesting and innovative solutions demonstrated in their cases. Analysis of the beneficiaries by educational level shows a similar distribution to that for contributors.

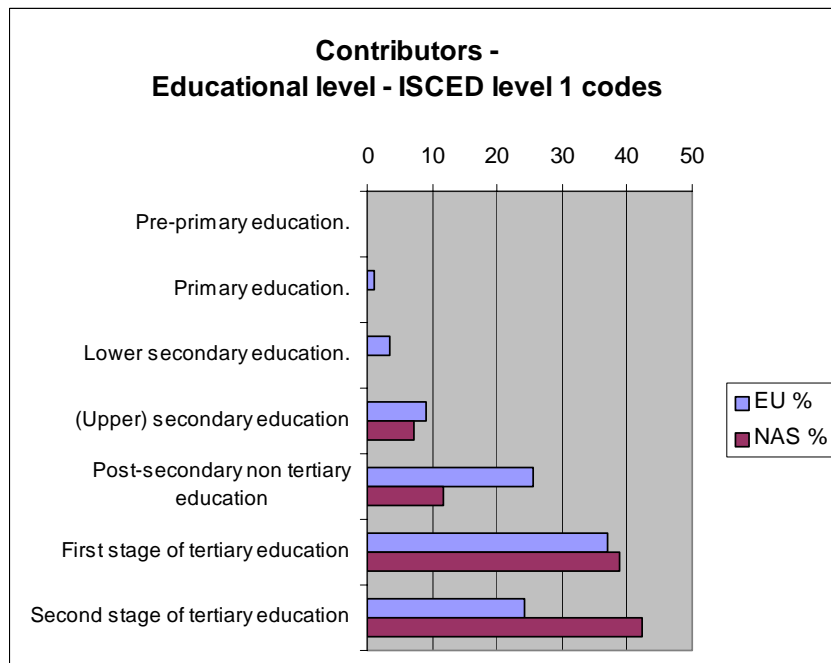


Figure 12 - Education level of contributing organisations

2.10 Occupation

The occupations of the beneficiaries addressed by the cases in the NAS shows a preference for addressing the needs of elementary and service workers. Few cases addressed the needs of legislators, senior officials and managers. This is an area that might prove valuable for future research.

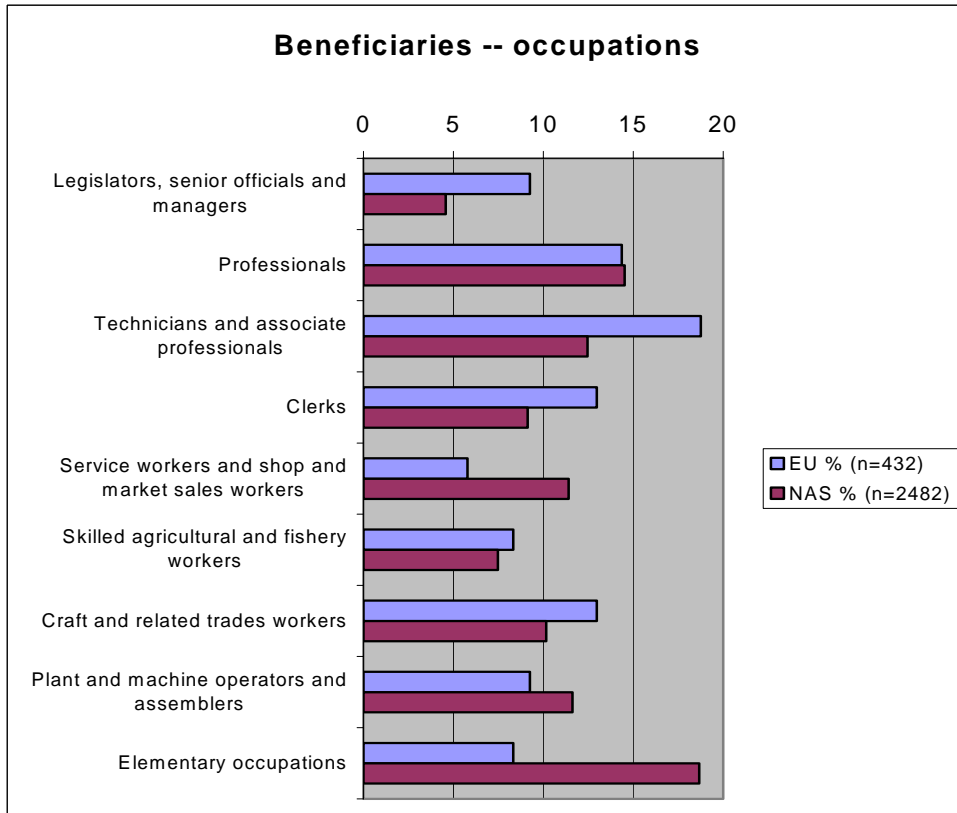


Figure 13 Occupations of beneficiaries.

2.11 ICT infrastructure

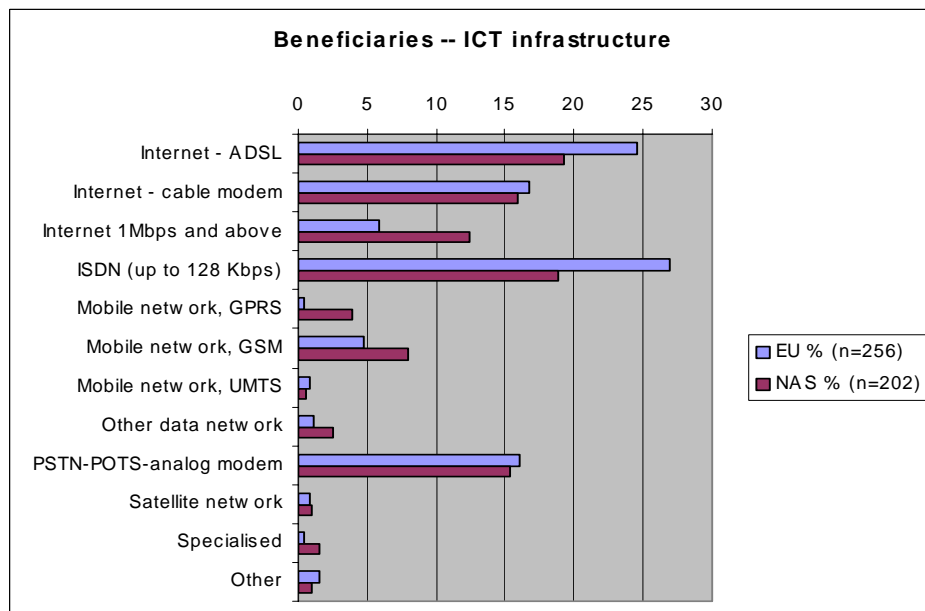


Figure 14 Beneficiaries – ICT infrastructure

The types of ICT infrastructure used in NAS cases are, in fact, very similar to those used in EU cases. The only noteworthy differences are less focus upon ISDN, ADSL and cable modem, perhaps because these technologies are not as widely available in the NAS. However, there is significantly more focus upon broadband internet above 1 mps, as this seems to be the high capacity network presently being focused on the NAS. Also, as is to be expected, there is somewhat more focus in the NAS on mobile infrastructures as rapidly rolled out solutions compared to fixed cable.

2.12 ICT user terminal

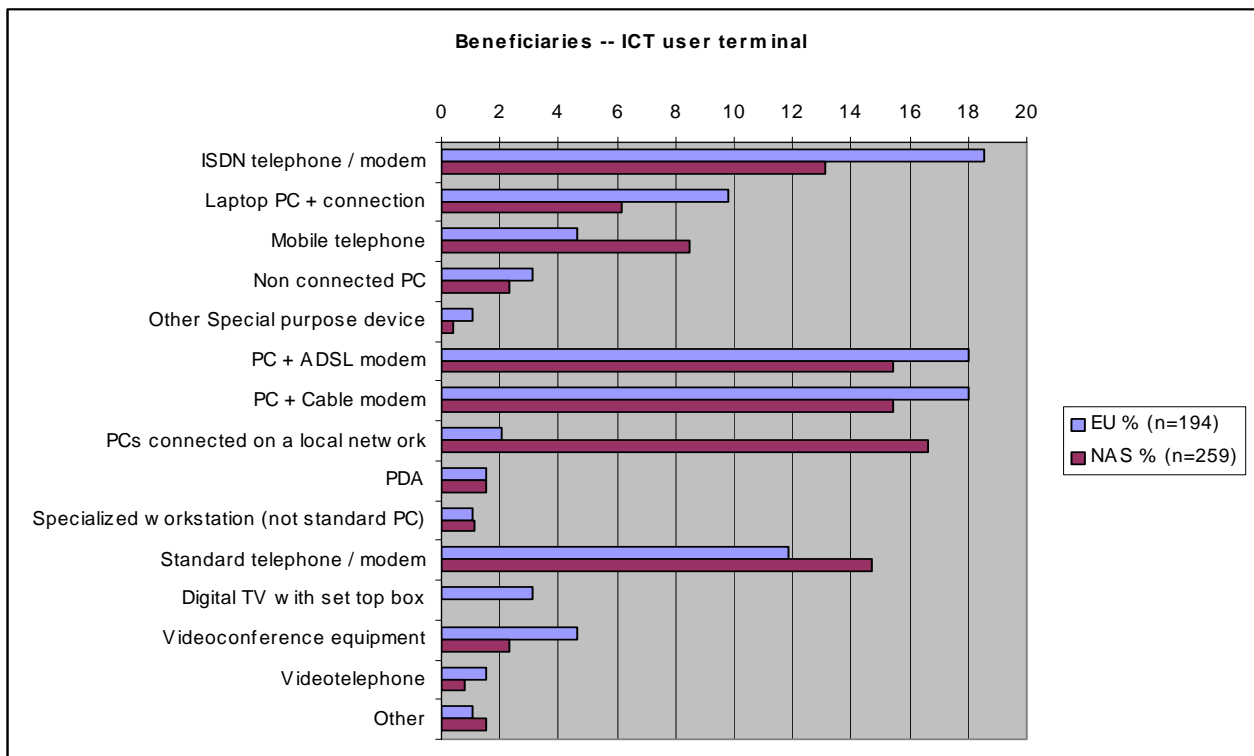


Figure 15 Beneficiaries – ICT user terminal

As with ICT infrastructure, the differences between NAS and EU cases are not great when it comes to user terminals. However, some interesting observations can be made, including, again, the much greater focus on mobile systems and less focus on ISDN, ADSL and cable. There seems to be little experimentation with TV set top boxes in NAS cases, but there is a hugely greater use of PCs connected in a local network. Perhaps this is an relatively early stage of development in digitising businesses.

2.13 ICT applications

There are some interesting contrasts between NAS and EU cases in terms of ICT applications. The figure shows much greater focus in NAS on banking and financial services, the public and community sector and eCommerce applications. These represent, perhaps, the more traditional sectors which are easiest to target and obtain implementation resources. On the other hand, telework, tele-training and tele-teaching are not so well represented in NAS as in EU cases, maybe as these represent more experimental areas which the NAS, although definitely starting to engage, are not as yet so well developed as in the EU. This conclusion is strengthened by the striking lack of knowledge management cases in NAS compared with the EU, as an relatively new application area. Again, it should be concluded that these newer application areas need more focus in NAS in the future.

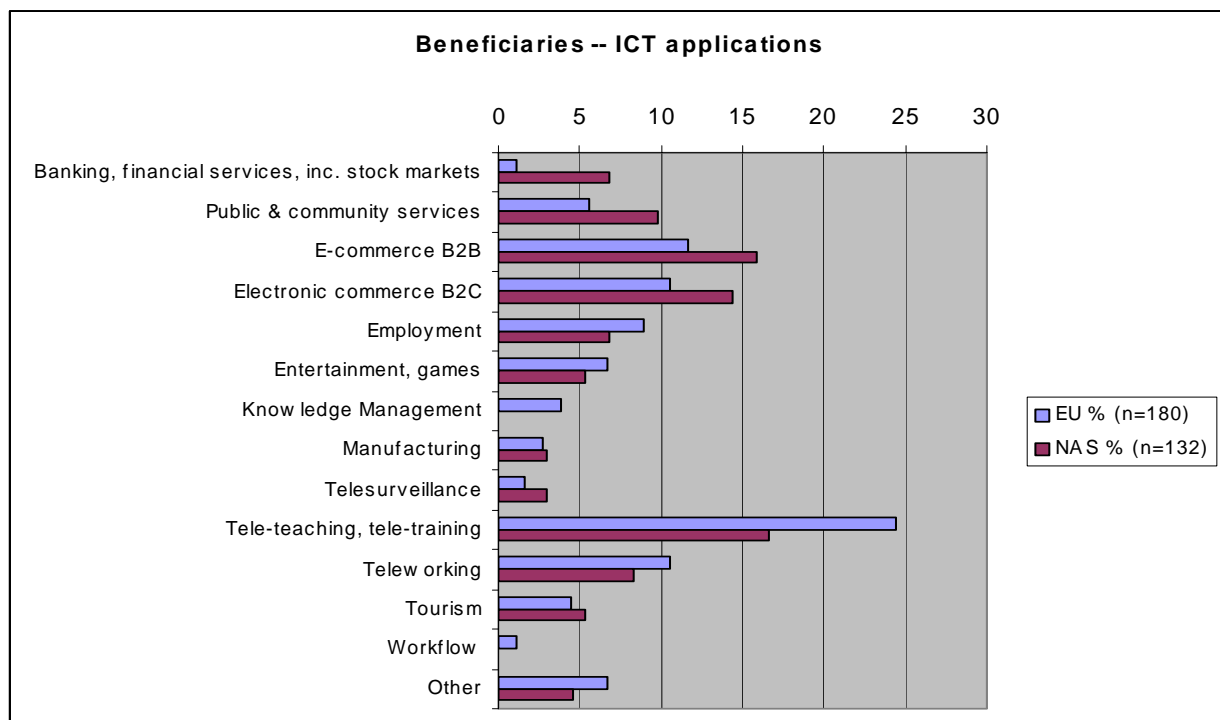


Figure 16 Beneficiaries – ICT applications

3 Review of cases and lessons

3.1 Overview

Within the text of the cases contained on the Beep Knowledge system there are many similarities between the NAS and EU contributions, as would be expected as both sets of partners used the same selection criteria. However reading "between the lines" of the cases does reveal some interesting (though not always statistically safe) differences which could well form the basis of further study and perhaps influence future policy decisions.

The common problems faced by the cases from both NAS and EU contributions could indicate a need for a policy or intervention at European level. Some of the original solutions identified by NAS cases could also have implications for other areas of the Communities work, particularly in external aid programmes. The recent experiences of the NAS, and the working methods adopted within their evolving frameworks, could well benefit other states in transition. The NAS contributions to Beep have therefore added real value to the knowledge system and raised issues worthy of further exploration.

3.2 Domains covered by NAS cases

The NAS partners were each asked to find a selection of cases for each domain therefore the spread of cases between domains is fairly even. Of the 183 cases which have been found, and started researching, 52% come from Domains 1 & 2 (Work and Skills & Digital SME) and 48% from Domains 3 & 4 (Social Inclusion & Regional Development)

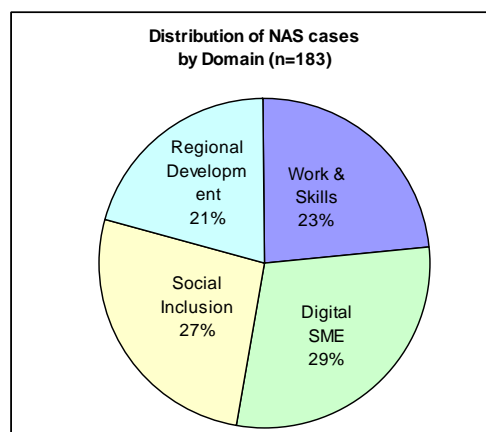


Figure 17 Distribution by Domain (NAS cases)

3.3 Case objectives

Although each case within Beep usually addresses issues relating primarily to one of the four domains, it is often found that the case has implications for more than one objective within that domain and even issues across the other domains. The NAS partners were asked to select a representative sample of cases from each domain (figure 17) which they did. However an analysis of the individual objectives covered by the cases currently in validation shows that a larger proportion of cases include issues relating to objectives in the Social Inclusion and Regional Development Domain than EU cases. On reading the actual cases presented by the NAS partners it becomes apparent that many of their Domain 1 & 2 cases managed to include a social or regional element within them even though this may not have been regarded as their main priority.

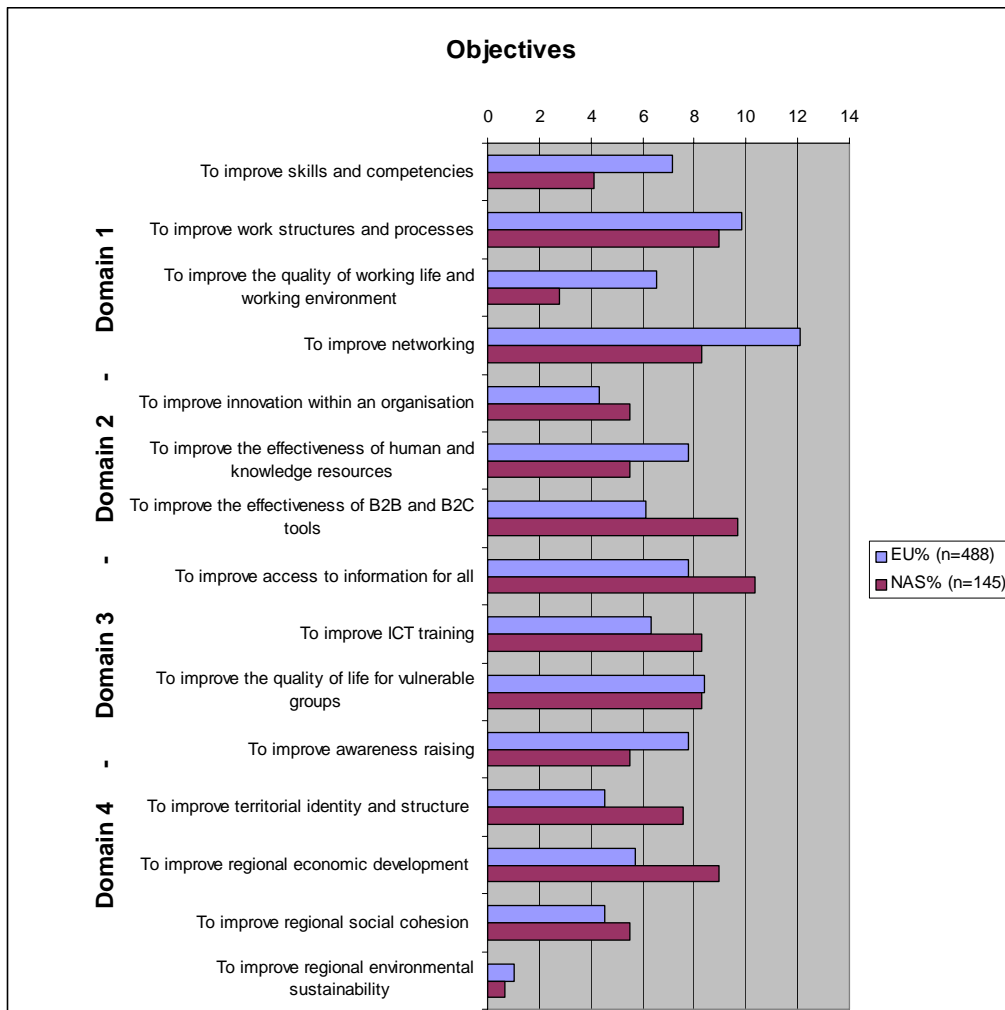


Figure 18 Objectives addressed by NAS cases

Within the EU cases in Domain 3 there have been a few initiatives to improve accessibility of websites, but the only case of a private company actually doing this for it's own benefit without prompting or support from the state comes from Hungary (case 466 below) in Domain 2. This case is typical of the NAS cases where there appears to be a greater inclination to add value to an action by including a social or regional element.

Case 466
Prím Online: making the leading Hungarian IT portal accessible for the visually impaired (Hungary)
 (Private company discovers that, in just four weeks, their web sites can be easily made accessible for the visually impaired without reducing the web content and web functions. As a result it increases it's customer base!)

Two examples from Romania show the way local people form public/private partnerships to address local issues that might well be considered state responsibilities within the EU.

Case 452
eMarket - Electronic system for acquisitions of goods and services (Romania) (An excellent example of an on-line market/auction house for B2B trading in goods and services. Launched in March 2002 through a public/private partnership it has reduced costs and created a dynamic local economy.)

Case 452 (above) was designed to improve the effectiveness of B2B and B2C tools for the company, also improved local infrastructure and identity through association with the local government. This type of informal public/private partnership appears quite common in the NAS. This may be due to the transitional nature of the states where national provision of services is not at the level found in the EU, leaving local people (in both public and private sectors) to supplement what is available by providing local solutions. This form of partnership may often arise through social or "chance" meetings.

Case 453

e-Job - searching for jobs using electronic means (Romania) (Good example of setting up an on-line recruitment service from Romania. Well documented activities, lessons and conclusions.)

Although the above project was to establish an on-line recruitment agency similar to many many commercial operations in the EU it was initiated by a local government agency that contracted out the development work to a private company. The case therefore built in additional support for unemployed adults similar to services provided directly by the state administrations within the EU such as help with writing CVs and job applications.

3.4 Small enterprises find similar solutions

There is a slightly higher percentage of micro enterprises (50 or less employees) represented in the knowledge system for NAS than EU partners. It is evident from the cases supplied that these enterprises share many common problems and have found many similar solutions. These solutions are nearly always based upon the dedication of the business owners rather than support from external agencies. It is rare to find a case where a small enterprise credits its innovation or other success to an external support agency in either EU or NAS cases. In fact an impression that the Beep knowledge system might give to someone without background experience might be that the most active support for small businesses is in the NAS where partnerships are formed more freely between local (not national) public and private organisations. It is not clear in these cases which partner initiates the partnership however.

One common thread with these cases (micro enterprises) is the power of the Internet (World-Wide-Web) to improve marketing and business potential. The original (EU only) knowledge system contained 14 such cases ranging from simple websites to complete e-commerce solutions which had all improved the business activity of the organisation concerned. The NAS partner partners contributed a further 7 cases (including two from religious institutions using the web to raise funds as well as promote their philosophy). The NAS cases, however, were not as successful at implementing full e-commerce solutions, this may be due to poorer banking infrastructure as there appears to be a relatively high level of technical, internet based, skills associated with the NAS cases in general

A typical EU case is from the UK where a small company set up a website to promote their repair and manufacturing services for violins is given below.

Case 294

West Country Violins - a craft nano-business (UK)

(How ICT enabled a husband and wife team to improve their restoration business and expand their market globally.)

It now does about 95 per cent of its business online, selling violins to customers in Japan, Canada, Korea, Taiwan - and recently Honolulu

The NAS cases show a similar level of experience with web based marketing. A pottery producing business saw a dramatic increase in business whilst a small chain of book shops saw a smaller, but steady, increase in sales as it extended its reach into remoter areas of the country. Even small religious organisations found that the web improved their cash flow.

Case 435

Developing the Catbriyur Porcelain brand (Slovenia)

(Example of a family run business that grew through a combination of dedication and the application of ICT. Demonstrates yet again the power of ICT to widen market potential and support rural development.)

After the home page was designed, the sales rose by an incredible 600 %, so that the production can no longer meet the demand. ...direct Internet sales represent about 5 % of the sales and the number is growing.

A small chain of Hungarian bookshops also found that the web helped promote sales, and also widened its market to more remote areas of the country.

Case 472

Libri: ICT-enhanced bookselling to support buyers and employees (Hungary) (Traditional bookshop chain introduces ICT to improve, not replace, customer service. Excellent example of "fitness for purpose" in the world of retail.)

Although the online bookstore is only responsible for 1.5 per cent of Libri's turnover, it provided Libri with the possibility to penetrate into the countryside without huge investment

Even a small monastery found that the web helped not only promote it's philosophy, but also increased income through promotion of it's shop and requests for donations.

Case 403

Strahov Monastery, Prague (Czech Republic) (ICT helping Strahov Monastery make known its spiritual services, abbey life, and its role in the cultural life of society, including the famous Strahov Library and the reopened Strahov Picture Gallery.)

The presentation of Premonstratensians on the Internet brought more money from sponsors and there is some profit from e-shop too. The modern technology and precision of monks makes their website very interesting and good looking.

The Internet has more uses than just the web. Many EU SME cases used it for improving supply chains, working more closely with larger organisations, managing field sales teams or allowing more flexible work patterns. This was not so prevalent amongst the NAS cases where one of the few such cases came from Slovenia and illustrated how a company grew from selling at "flea markets" to using an expanding field sales force.

Case 447

The use of ICT in establishing mobile teams (Slovenia) (Story of how a business in Slovenia started selling videos in the "Flea Market" and grew to need an ICT solution for managing and resourcing it's field sales team. Some interesting points to watch out for if you are in the same process)

The company was founded with the money made on the flea market in Ljubljana and in the first video store in Ravne na Koroškem.
Using laptop computers and mobile phones for the sales force and a database application on the Internet the company was able to provide its growing sales force with the technology, thereby:

- *establishing constant audio (and eventually video) connection with the field teams,*
- *establishing a constant access to all the information about the field team operations,*
- *reducing the time needed for preparing the provisions for the field sales (replenishing the stock daily to compensate for the products sold),*
- *reducing the time needed for processing sales information at the end of each business day,*
- *increasing the financial transparency of field sales.*

3.5 Content - a common problem

Both NAS and EU cases demonstrated the need for content to be paramount when dealing with websites and Information Technology. The Hungarian case 360 Iris-Sulinet highlights the issue eloquently in its lesson learnt section.

Case 360

Iris-Sulinet: hardware and content development in Hungarian public education (Hungary) (A National programme to introduce computers and the internet discovers that it needs to develop and deliver suitable content. Some good lessons learnt.)

Another key success factor was the content development that supports students, teachers and parents in how to use the Internet in a reasonable way. By providing interactive, colourful, exciting educational resources students can explore the bright side of learning while acquiring the necessary computer skills. Furthermore, the rich information source helps teachers to learn about modern pedagogical approaches which are likely to further improve the efficiency of traditional courses

In the Italian case 206 Dschola it was the teachers who had to prepare their own material.

Case 206

Dschola - regional collaborative network of Piedmont schools (Italy) (Supports and facilitates the take up of ICT in rural schools, including safe use of Internet and improved co-operation amongst teachers.)

. The most skilled teachers have had to create their own new training programs.

Even the EU wide project OPUS needed to find and persuade people to write content to make their site effective.

Case 176

OPUS - Training women in the Information Society (EU) (How OPUS developed a package for training providers to train women in IT. Illustrates the changes it brought about, the skills and competencies required and their impact on training provision. A useful model for reference.)

Creation of a web site for training providers on women and the Information Society

** To design, create, maintain and update the project web site.*

** To contact writers and commission articles for the project web site.*

- To continuously adapt material and expand its scope has produced a larger impact.

3.6 NAS use UN and American funds

The NAS cases clearly demonstrate an ability to access international funds. The majority of externally funded NAS cases received some, or all, their income from organisations such as United Nations, World Bank, American USAID and private American charities. In this context "external funds" does not include national and local government funds unless there is a clear indication that these funds include elements of support from external agencies (i.e. not entirely derived from tax or other national income). PHARE (which is normally distributed by government departments) and other EU distributed funds are used by a few of the externally funded NAS cases held on Beep, but the majority (70%+) use non-EU funds. In EU externally funded cases, by comparison, it is rare (approximately 4%) for the funds to have been derived from outside the EU itself.

The United States Agency for International Development (USAID)⁵ provided support for a number of cases including the telecentres project from Hungary shown below. Applications for these funds are formal and usually require the support of the local United States Embassy.

Case 362

Telecentres to serve the local community (Hungary)

(Government led initiative which works well because it combines the discipline of quality control with local freedoms to adapt to real needs.)

The US Agency for International Development also granted a large amount for the spread of telecottages in Hungary. Indirectly, the business sector also sponsors telecottages by providing products and services at significant discount or free of charge.

A less formal approach was taken by a case from the Slovak Republic which obtained funds from the Slovak-American Enterprise Fund (SAEF) as the result of a chance meeting at a conference. SAEF is one of a number of bi-lateral initiatives between America and individual states..

Case 379

Let your job find you - Internet work bourse Profesia (Slovak republic)

(An Internet service demonstrates new approaches to online recruitment helping the unemployed to find a job. Both, the unemployed and the potential employers benefit from improved communication.)

In the summer of the year 2000, the ui42 staff members met with people from the SAEF (Slovak-American Enterprise Fund) when both participated in one of the informal entrepreneur-investor meetings in Bratislava. Both came to terms with each other: a new company Profesia s.r.o. (Profesia Ltd.) starts working as a spin-off of a successful Internet service "profesia.sk" (www.profesia.sk) operated by the ui42 Ltd. company (www.ui42.sk) and the SAEF contribution of capital in December 2000.

Most of the cases submitted for inclusion into the Beep knowledge system that used external funds managed to arrange a mixture of sources. A typical example from Poland is given below.

Case 470

World Wide Web without barriers (Poland) (Polish organisation for disabled people finds success for its clients with IT training, teleworking, etc., through the creation of a community spirit, quality qualifications and staff dedication. Shows the real benefits from adding value to raise confidence and feeling of 'self worth' in clients.)

Financial sources:

- Stefan Batory Foundation
- Health and Social Care Department of Municipal Office
- Canadian Embassy,
- USA Embassy
- Embassy of the Netherlands
- individual donors
- commercial sponsors

A number of cases sought out specific funds from smaller organisations and private individuals. The case below (from Poland again) illustrates how they managed to arrange a mixture by starting up with volunteers and making their actions

⁵ USAID is an independent federal government agency that receives overall foreign policy guidance from the Secretary of State. The agency works to support long-term and equitable economic growth and advancing U.S. foreign policy objectives. They provide assistance in four regions of the world: (Sub-Saharan Africa; Asia and the Near East; Latin America and the Caribbean, and; Europe and Eurasia)
Website - <http://www.usaid.gov/>

known within international communities who might be able to help. (Poland has a strong expatriate community in America)

Case 411

Toward the World and Myself - via Computer (Poland) (A programme, started by volunteers, for helping elderly ladies catch up with IT skills. With the right funding in place they have now expanded to provide a truly valuable experience enabling their clients to enjoy the digital age. Some excellent examples of good practice)

The pathway - Toward The World And Myself – Via Computer is supported by:

The Ombudswoman for Equal Status of Women and Men,

Network of East West Women (NEWW) - New York, USA,

Prof. Gunnara Bohnereta from Canada,

Association members' fees and private people's donations as well as companies' donations

George Soros is a well known philanthropist of Polish origin, so it is not surprising that case 390 (below) obtained funds via his charity

Case 390

Internet for Medical Doctors (Poland) (A Batory foundation, grant initiative for Internet technology implementation among medicine associated professionals.)

The Stefan Batory Foundation is an independent Polish private foundation, funded by American financier and philanthropist George Soros. Funds for the Stefan Batory Foundation's activities are provided by the Open Society Institute - established and financed by Gerooge Soros - as well as other donors in Poland and abroad.

Direct charitable donations are also sought from the general public by some cases. The Czech case (Chance for Children) successfully used the web to encourage and support donors by providing personalised information of the recipient child whilst at the same time promoting the child's talent

Case 409

Chance for children - Virtual childrens home (Czech Republic) (A whole new way of helping abandoned children to develop their talents.)

Potential donors find on the website all the necessary information about the children, their life story and background. Furthermore they learn how they can help and with what. Most important part of the project's benefit lies within personalisation of the help. The help provided is not anonymous. All donors know exactly who and why are they helping with their money.

A number of international companies also provide funds, technical assistance or equipment for ICT related actions. The CISCO Academy particularly supports training actions on a global scale by forming partnerships with national training centres (see section 4.7 below). Hewlett Packard provided hardware for an educational project in Lithuania.

Case 413

Education Support Programme KOMPASAS (Lithuania) Education Support Programme Kompasas creates conditions to representatives of education system to use new information technologies.

The partners of the Education Support Programme Kompasas are:

the Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Lithuania, ,

University Hospital,

Hansabankas,

Hewlett-Packard.

This experience with non EU funds is a real asset that the NAS are bringing with them as they join the Union. It is particularly relevant in the area of Third World development projects where it can be used to add value to (or work alongside) EuropeAid funded projects, or used for facilitating projects that might fall outside the current EuroAid brief.

3.7 NAS more open to importing American training materials

A number of NAS cases used American teaching materials for internationally recognised qualifications such as CISCO and Microsoft. This compares with the EU cases where it is unusual to find projects supporting any qualification which is not 'home grown' other than the ECDL (European Computer Driving Licence). In the UK the educational authorities have not yet formally established the Microsoft and CISCO qualifications as NVQ equivalents.

The CISCO qualification is particularly popular in the NAS with cases from Romania, Hungary and Poland. Romania and Hungary both submitted cases that joined the CISCO Academy, which provided grants and resources to help them get established.

Case 387

Cisco Network Academy Romania (Romania)

Description of how Romania used the Cisco training programme to upskill its base of network administrators in a cost-effective manner by providing an International qualification to its citizens. Includes Cisco case studies.

In Romania Cisco Networking Academy provided approximately 30.000 USD per academy

3.8 NAS are more "creative" with use of funds

With their background of having to survive under a heavily centralised regime it is, perhaps, not surprising that the NAS cases demonstrate a greater ability to support local initiatives which are not included in the original project brief. This is done by 'piggy backing' the initiative alongside some other activity and thus maximising the ultimate impact of the funds.

A classic example of this is case 412, 'Intelligent Campus Programme for the College of Nyiregyhaza (Hungary)', which was funded by American Aid to improve the quality of training provided by establishing a tele-learning network. As the network's physical structure expanded throughout the University in order to deliver the training and administrative functions it was also coupled to environmental sensors and controls resulting in considerable financial savings. Further savings were made by expanding the e-learning administration systems to cover the full University management operations. Similar cases in the EU such as Case 250 Scotland and Case 32 Modem and case 93 Ariadne stuck more closely to their original brief.

Case 412

Intelligent Campus Programme for the College of Nyiregyhaza (Hungary) (An excellent case - how a University used its disadvantaged status to install a complete Intranet solution on the back of a virtual campus. Greatly improved management, real cost savings and better educational services now make this a leading Hungarian University. Much creative thinking!)

The objectives of this case were expressed as:

The most urging task was to enable the infrastructure of the college to host and efficiently serve its staff and students and to provide quality services. To this end the network infrastructure, the phone network and the administration needed development.

The network infrastructure needed more end-points, not only in the college but also in the student hostels to enable students and the staff to use the ICT-enhanced services of the college.

In order to keep pace with the development in higher education services, the focal point of the investment actions was the creation of the Student Information Centre, that is a virtual campus offering multimedia services for students.

The outputs of the case included

The administrative system has been modernised as well in order to meet the requirements of the increasing number of students. On the one hand, the Neptun2000 software has been installed which made the handling of study-related issues (exam subscription, credit point management, etc.) easier and centralised. On the other hand, a library management software has been installed. The general administrative issues have also been computerised thanks to a higher education specific software package.

Thanks to the facility management software the college could optimise the functioning of its buildings. The most visible results of this optimisation can be found in energy management.... Rooms are only heated if they are used... Owing to these features, all the buildings of the college operate now optimally from the point of view of energy consumption. This has great impact on cost efficiency.

This "flexible" approach seems to be built in from the beginning of a project. For example a project to produce an on-line catalogue for local craft manufacturers (itself a spin off from a tele-working project) included much broader goals in its objectives. Note, the inclusion of social and regional goals within its objectives even at this early stage of development.

Case 458

Local crafts promoted by a web-based catalogue (Slovenia)

Spin-off from a teleworking project demonstrates the power of cooperation and the internet to support local crafts and regional development

Objectives

The main goal of the project was to connect the manufacturers and joint marketing of their products. This would help them increase their sales and recognition. The next step is self-employment, a step forward in realising the broader goals of the Posavje region (defined in the Regional development programme of the Posavje region), such as opening new jobs, reactivation of unemployed, reviving old traditional values, products and customs, marketing products as souvenirs through tourism activities (Posavje is visited by 25 percent of all Slovenian visitors of the spa tourism), tourism marketing means exports and so on.

3.9 Languages for transnational activities

Although there were, proportionally, fewer trans-national projects within the NAS cases than there were with the EU cases (see figure 1), where NAS cases did work across borders they had the advantage of a common language (Russian) which most adults, and certainly most professionals, from within the original Russian Federation have a high level of competence. This compares to the EU cases where there was a choice of English, French, German or Italian to be used as the default language. The case 364 shown below was specifically set up to address the needs of professionals within the NAS group of countries.

Case 364

Facilitating drug related harm reduction in CEE/NIS (Ongoing HIV support project is finding that the Internet, plus common shared languages (Russian & English), allows the project to access specialists in 27 states and thereby develop and provide a quality service.)

The project includes combination of information collection and dissemination and networking through list servers, interactive website and printed materials. In order to ensure equal access to provided information to all the beneficiaries of the project, activities are developed in parallel in two languages – English and Russian.

Nearly all the NAS cases that included Internet websites provided an English version, or were thinking of providing an English version. This was particularly true of any action that involved tourism, but also special interest groups such as the National Women's Information Centre in Poland.

Case 444

OSKa - National Women's Information Center (Poland) (Excellent example of how the Internet can service the information needs of a specific group (women in this case). Good ideas that add real value to a dissemination website.)

OSKA's website – English version

Giving into account the crucial role of easy available and valid information they decided to rebuild the website adding the English version of it. It was especially important because more and more English-speaking people visit OSKA's website in searching for information or cooperation. English website has been rebuilt lately and now it has a new graphic and structure. You can find actual information on women's status in Poland and in the world, comprised from a review of the press, which is done every day. There is also information about OSKA's activities and publications. They also put there statistical data, reports on women in Poland and in the CEE countries. Website is up-dated systematically.

3.10 Coping with a poor infrastructure

The NAS cases do show an awareness of the limitations of the Internet for reaching certain target audiences. Universal Internet access is not yet a reality in most NAS and the cases frequently acknowledge this by including non-web solutions. The experience of two cases illustrates this point. The first, from Slovak Republic, happily resorted to producing and distributing a printed version of the information stored on its website.

Case 379

Let your job find you - Internet work bourse Profesia (Slovak republic)

(An Internet service demonstrates new approaches to online recruitment helping the unemployed to find a job. Both, the unemployed and the potential employers benefit from improved communication)

Since August of 2002, Profesia.sk is being editing a printed weekly newspaper aimed to eliminate the handicap of not having desired access to the Internet.

Another case which recognises the limitations of access to technology comes from Hungary. The original concept was based upon the idea of using the Internet as a buyers market. Hungarian SMEs have had some poor experiences with business consultants, so a web-based solution was developed by the case that reversed the existing process of consultants selling their services to potential clients. The solution allowed the SMEs to request help for particular problems in an open forum environment. Any of the approved consultants could then bid to provide the required help by submitting a personal profile and fee estimate. The SME then selected the most appropriate (or cost-effective) consultant to supply the service. To alleviate the problem of companies not having access to the Internet (or even a computer) complementary systems using telephone, fax or post were introduced.

Case 439

eBu2000: a B2B market tailored to ICT skills (Hungary)

An excellent example of innovative thinking that introduces ICT gradually to create a demand led market. Enables customers to find suppliers instead of suppliers trying to sell.

The most important conclusion of this case is that solutions must be tailored to the readiness and skills of clients. It is not enough to tell and prove for a company that it needs to do business online in order to stay competitive. Those companies that have the necessary ICT skills and infrastructure can use the system through internet. Those companies that have computer but do not have internet access can use phone or fax to post requests or to bid. Moreover, even those companies can use the services in the same way

which do not have computer at all but are interested in online business opportunities.

3.11 Coping with poor legislation

One issue that arose in the NAS cases that did not show up in any of the EU cases is the problem of coping with an unfriendly legal framework, particularly where flexible work patterns and teleworking were involved. This was not a universal problem amongst the NAS cases but it was referred to particularly in Poland where a portal was set up to help promote teleworking and found that it needed to provide practical help to would-be teleworkers and their companies on ways to avoid legal conflict.

Case 446

Telework - Poland (Polish portal supporting and promoting teleworking finds that it needs to help both the potential teleworkers and their potential employers).

For example legal regulations concerning teleworkers, which are obligatory for companies, are very unfavourable for the development of telework. The portal ... can be very helpful in promoting untypical work solutions

In Hungary, on the other hand, government led the initiative to provide opportunities for teleworking by supporting the establishment of tele-cottages

Case 362

Telecentres to serve the local community (Hungary) (Government led initiative which works well because it combines the discipline of quality control with local freedoms to adapt to real needs.)

The PC and Internet penetration of Hungarian settlements with less than 2500 inhabitants is almost zero. On the one hand, this poor performance can be explained by the lack of infrastructural developments. On the other hand, most rural people cannot afford having a PC with Internet connection,

The root of the success of tele-cottages is the cooperation between the civic, governmental and private sectors. However, the civic dominance should prevail in order to guarantee that tele-cottages are neutral. The nature of civic dominance also ensures that money and grants are spent the right way and that only people wishing to make a change are employed.

3.12 Community sites

Although there are very many 'Community' websites in all regions of the European Union, most run by volunteers who struggle to support the initiative financially as a community service, only one case has been successfully recorded and included in the Beep Knowledge system. The Virtual Piotrkowska Street community website from Poland is an excellent example of how one dedicated local resident can successfully establish a viable website in cooperation (not competition) with the local newspaper. Even with that support, and income from advertisements, it is still a struggle to provide up-to-date local information without the active support of the Local Authority. However this is still a good model for many other such sites throughout Europe to follow.

Case 478

Virtual Piotrkowska Street (Poland) - (Privately funded local business portal (community website) benefits traders and the region. Excellent model which highlights problem of funding.)

Portal www.ulicapiotrkowska.pl has already proved to be an excellent ICT tool contributed to promotion of the region and intensification and support for local business initiatives and development. Over only two months over 35 000 Internet users have visited the portal.

More and more enterprises are interested in the programme “Promotions on Piotrkowska”. They want to be visible on the site and to place their banners and announcements there. This form of promotion proved to contribute to increase in sale.

The project is already recognised by the local authority. The author of the project was invited by vice-president of Łódź in order to establish mutual cooperation with local authorities. They decided to appoint working group comprising several officials from Municipal Office, who would work on using the project to promote the city. Unfortunately the government has not done anything with it so far. But the cooperative agreement is expected

3.13 Conclusion

The Beep knowledge system was not designed to provide accurate statistical information for policy makers as it only contains cases which demonstrate good practice or learning potential with the application of ICT in selected areas of activity. Nevertheless the information contained within Beep can be used to enlighten the policy making process, and suggest areas for research, if users are aware of it's limitations. Bearing those limitations in mind the review of the cases submitted for inclusion by the NAS partners does indicate:

- NAS partners are finding similar problems and solutions at the small business level as their EU counterparts
- NAS partners have detailed experiences accessing international funds and especially US funds
- NAS partners are willing and able to combine social and regional elements into commercial activities through public/private partnerships at a local level
- Rural areas in NAS are not so well supported as they have been in the EU
- Infrastructure problems faced by the NAS are similar to those experienced by other member states during previous expansions of the European Community/Union
- There is a large pool of IT literate people in the urban and city areas of the NAS.

Within the narrow confines of the Beep project it is clear that the NAS could prove to be a real asset, adding considerable value and innovation to the larger European Union. NAS experiences also provide an invaluable and living resource of great potential value to other ‘transitional’ economies and societies around the world.

Annex 1 -- Description of the NAS partners

1. Institute of Economics at the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences (IE), Bulgaria. Role: responsibility for collecting and processing 20 cases from Bulgaria and marketing and disseminating BEEP in Bulgaria.

The Institute is a pioneer in investigation, education and training in selected areas of the Information Society and Knowledge Economy, with a strong and successful track record in international and European projects

2. NetU Consultants Ltd. (NETU), Cyprus. Role: responsibility for collecting and processing 20 cases from Cyprus and Malta, and marketing and disseminating BEEP in Cyprus and Malta.

NetU is a leading information technology solutions and services company based in Cyprus which provides high quality business solutions and services through the use of appropriate technologies and the deployment of skilled professional staff across all industry sectors including government, health, education and commercial sectors.

3. Czech University of Agriculture – Faculty of Economics and Management (CUA-FEM), the Czech Republic. Role: responsibility for collecting and processing 20 cases from the Czech Republic, and marketing and disseminating BEEP in the Czech Republic.

CUA-FEM undertakes research, both basic and applied, in the fields of agriculture, management and marketing, social sciences and environmental sciences. All studies are based on and economic and social disciplines, including economics, mathematics, statistics, informatics, agricultural sciences, political science, psychology and sociology, as well as management, marketing, law, finance, and trade.

4. TREBAG Ltd. (TREBAG), Hungary. Role: responsibility for collecting and processing 20 cases from Hungary, and marketing and disseminating BEEP in Hungary.

The activities of TREBAG have a multidisciplinary character ranging from project foundation to the implementation of results and dissemination. The scope of these activities includes management consultancy, quality management, research and development related to electronic commerce, dissemination and demonstration activities and the implementation of technology transfer and innovation chain management and organization and management of various R&D projects.

5. Vilnius Gediminas Technical University (VGTU) Lithuania. Role: responsibility for collecting and processing 20 cases from Lithuania, and marketing and disseminating BEEP in Lithuania.

The VGTU's Business Technologies Department main priorities are information management and information technologies in business and public life, both in Lithuania and in other East European countries, and the challenges of innovation and marketing management.

6. ASM – Market Research and Analysis Centre (ASM) Poland. Role: responsibility for collecting and processing 20 cases from Poland, and marketing and disseminating BEEP in Poland.

ASM is a privately owned Polish consulting firm founded in 1996 and specialised in a wide range of social and market surveys. Main research areas cover public sector agencies, community-based organisations, large and medium sized manufacturing and SMEs.

7. Centre for Urban and Regional Sociology (CURS-SA), Romania. Role: responsibility for collecting and processing 20 cases from Romania, and marketing and disseminating BEEP in Romania.

CURS-SA is a private social research and marketing agency. Its clients include governmental and non-governmental organisations. Research activities include urban and regional research and communities' development, marketing research, and public opinion polling.

8. Technical University of Košice (TUK), Slovakia. Role: responsibility for collecting and processing 20 cases from Slovakia, and marketing and disseminating BEEP in Slovakia.

The Faculty of Economics at TUK was established with the aim to support the ongoing transformation process in the Slovak Republic – especially in the area of finances, investments, banking and business sector, and applications of ICT in private and public sector. International activities especially within EU funded projects are also important. Research is carried out in the Slovak economy in the transformation process, its economic and legal aspects, electronic commerce, socio-economics implications of ICT application, corporate finance, tax and taxation, marketing communication, management, modelling and optimisation of economic processes, and financial mathematics.

9. A.L.P. PECA d.o.o. (ALP PECA), Slovenia. Role: responsibility for collecting and processing 20 cases from Slovenia, and marketing and disseminating BEEP in Slovenia.

Local development organisation A.L.P. PECA is established as a local and regional development agency and a Community Partnership Company, operating in the fields of operation: Business Support Centre, Human Resource Development, Tourism Development Centre and Rural development Centre. A.L.P. PECA has excellent and close working relations with the new eMinistry set up in Slovenia in March 2001, and has already begun to examine eGovernment issues and strategies as part of both its regional development and public service activities.

Annex 2 -- List of NAS cases in progress at 1 June 2003

	Case Title	Case subtitle	
352	Interkl@sa (Poland)	Exciting national initiative that involves many actors and resources in driving the Nation's upgrading of ICT skills and Internet utilisation starting at school level.	
356	European Computer Driving License (ECDL) for the visually impaired (Hungary)		
358	e-learning: Cisco Networking Academy Program in Hungary	Comprehensive e-learning program that provides students with the Internet technology skills essential in the global economy.	
360	Iris-Sulinet: hardware and content development in Hungarian public education (Hungary)	A National programme to introduce computers and the internet discovers that it needs to develop and deliver suitable content. Some good lessons learnt.	
362	Telecentres to serve the local community (Hungary)	Government led initiative which works well because it combines the discipline of quality control with local freedoms to adapt to real needs.	
363	LIBIS-library information system(Lithuania)	The project was developed to automate the main processes in libraries by using means of system administration and user management.	
364	Facilitating drug related harm reduction in CEE/NIS	Ongoing HIV support project is finding that the Internet, plus common shared languages (Russian & English), allows the project to access specialists in 27 states and thereby develop and provide a quality service.	
365	Document workflow in Polfa Kutno (Poland)	Implementation of an automated document workflow system in a Polish pharmaceutical company.	
366	Youth integration into labour market using IT		
367	Youth integration into labour market using IT (Lithuania)	The project was developed to solve an urgent problem of youth unemployment.	
368	"Langas i ateiti" (Window to the future) (Lithuania)	Internet development and people training system	
370	CV online- inovative Internet-enabled recruitment and hiring management (Central and Eastern Europe)	Online and traditional recruitment methodology; recruitment advertising, screening and interviewing and selection services; selling the client to the job-seeker.	
372	"Forming the heart of a new Central Europe" (Hungary)	A regional development portal that incorporates support and dissemination measures. By proactively encouraging transparency and local participation this case demonstrates the support ICT can give to NAS, and other, regions seeking to maximise the potential of EU membership.	
373	Pannon Automotive Cluster - a country-wide industrial network for the automotive sector (Hungary)	A well described case of a successful cluster for automotive parts manufacturers that involves a very wide range of players to add great value.	
376	Spednet - a comprehensive service for transport SMEs (Hungary)	An excellent example of combining Internet, SMS and added value services within a trusted environment to improve the efficiency of commercial transport services in a	

		region.	
378	E-learning Initiative Based on Cisco Networking Academy Program (CNAP) in Slovak Republic		
379	Let your job find you - Internet work bourse Profesia (Slovak republic)	An Internet service demonstrates new approaches to online recruitment helping the unemployed to find a job. Both, the unemployed and the potential employers benefit from improved communication.	
381	GSM application for fuel distribution (Hungary)	Two companies develop a remote sensing device for a major fuel distributor which pays for itself in just one trip. Combining technologies for a profitable business (and preventing fraud).	
382	Test No.1 (SK)		
384	National Neonatal Hearing Screening Program (POLAND)	Polkomtel's and the Great Orchestra of Christmas charity initiative for non invasive hearing screening of newly born babies.	
386	CASPER, outsourcing for small businesses (Poland)	CASPER - Comarch Application System Provider is an ASP (Application Service Provision) platform dedicated to small and medium enterprises. It provides all the necessary software for proficient payroll and personnel, accounting, and customer relationship management.	
387	Cisco Network Academy Romania (Romania)	Description of how Romania used the Cisco training programme to upskill its base of network administrators in a cost-effective manner providing an International qualification to its' citizens. Includes Cisco case studies.	
388	Wekton - an intranet initiative (Poland)	A small firm initiative to improve supply chains and information flow within the company.	
389	Zelmer (Slovakia)	eCommerce solution on the way to a digital SME	
390	Internet for Medical Doctors (Poland)	A Batory foundation, grant initiative for Internet technology implementation among medicine associated professionals.	
392	IT in Children Hospital (POLAND)	Communal Children Hospital of Torun initiative to implement a complete IT infrastructure.	
393	Teach to the future (POLAND)	INTEL' initiative for IT education of teachers.	
394	Municipal Information System in Pozlovice (Czech Republic)	Council brings complete information service to citizens via website and GSM SMS.	
395	Town of Pilsen Information System (Czech Republic)	Finding a new way to approach the citizens and to improve the accesibility of the municipality.	
396	Rock music festival "Rock for People" (Czech Republic)	Annual open-air rock and world music festival called "Rock for People"	
397	Holiday Information (Czech Republic)	Official information server of Czech Ski Federation - Holidayinfo	
398	Virtual University of Czech Telecom (Czech Republic)	Project improves linkage of continuous learning with career paths and is a base for an use of work/based continuous learning in the company	
399	Czech Tennis Association (Czech Republic)	Publicising news and information about Czech Tennis to the Czech Republic and the	

		world in general	
400	Learning Communities Network - New Tels - (Czech Republic)	This project aims at involving Czech towns and cities in a dynamic European Network to facilitate the transfer of ideas, experiences, good practice and active inter-city initiatives in Adult Education.	
401	AiP Beroun - Digitization Services - (Czech Republic)	AiP Beroun is a company from the Czech Republic specialising in the field of digitization of rare prints, manuscripts and pictorial documents in general.	
402	Aaron Group - Internet Services - (Czech Republic)	Aaron Group offers a full range of services in the Internet area, including: E-marketing; building software applications; dynamic web-hosting, and provision of own Content Management System.	
403	Strahov Monastery, Prague (Czech Republic)	ICT helping Strahov Monastery make known its spiritual services, abbey life, and its role in the cultural life of society, including the famous Strahov Library and the reopened Strahov Picture Gallery.	
404	Bolix IFS applications (POLAND)	Bolix S.A. implementation of integrated management system provided by IFS.	
405	Prepare for an information society - "Infovek" project (SK)	How Slovakia managed to get computers into all its schools through good planning, public awareness and political support. The result prepares the young emerging generation in Slovakia for life and successful inclusion into the information society of the XXI century and encourages ICT skills development in the wider community.	
406	"Ratusz"- IT management of the city (Poland)		
407	Vltava - the on-line bookstore (Czech Republic)	The good way how to get e-music and e-books	
408	T-Zones from T-Mobile - (Czech Republic)	The main objective of the T-Zones project is to reach of deepest interconnection between internet and mobile phones	
409	Chance for children - Virtual childrens home (Czech Republic)	A whole new way of helping abandoned children to develop their talents.	
410	Virtual Information Park (Czech Republic)	Official information resource for the European Survey of Information Society in the Czech Republic	
411	Toward the World and Myself - via Computer (Poland)	A programme, started by volunteers, for helping elderly ladies catch up with IT skills. With the right funding in place they have now expanded to provide a truly valuable experience enabling their clients to enjoy the digital age. Some excellent examples of good practice.	
412	Intelligent Campus Programme for the College of Nyiregyhaza (Hungary)	An excellent case - how a University used its' disadvantaged status to install a complete Intranet solution on the back of a virtual campus. Greatly improved management, real cost savings and better educational services now make this a leading Hungarian University. Much creative thinking!	
413	Education Support Programme KOMPASAS (Lithuania)	Education Support Programme Kompasas creates conditions to representatives of education system to use new information technologies.	
414	Silesia2000 - Regional Information Portal (Poland)	'Silesia 2000' purpose is to provide its visitors with detailed information about the	

		region.	
415	EMERGENCY_112 (Cyprus)		
416	TELEGYN (Cyprus)		
417	OIKADE (Cyprus/Greece)		
418	ODYSSEUS (Cyprus)		
419	ABEKT (Greece)	National library catalogue system designed with librarians to be used by librarians with limited ICT skills. Demonstrates benefit of careful (if slow) preparation.	
420	LOCAL ENFORCEMENT SYSTEM (Malta)	Example of how ICT systems help the civil law (parking fines etc.) become more efficient and transparent.	
421	DITIS (Cyprus)	Using a combination of Internet and SMS messaging this project allows patient to be looked after at home for longer with the most up-to-date information and support available to carers in the field. Improved, and cheaper, health care!	
423	TAXISnet (Greece)	Introducing electronic completion of tax forms in Greece.	
424	Extension of Library and information services to blind and visually impaired users (Cyprus)	How Cyprus included services for Blind people in it's libraries. An excellent breakdown of the resources (hardware and software) used.	
425	INES - providing internet access and value-added IT solutions (Romania)	Internet at Business Class- that's the spirit of INES.	
426	ECDL - better chance to get employed (Romania)	How the ECDL (European Computer Driving Licence) is being used in Romania to ensure quality training and improve IT awareness with links to international ECDL resources.	
427	SNP Petrom - PETROSOFT - training programme for technicians and engineers (Romania)	Example of a traing programme that is redesigned bi-annually using input from intended beneficiaries matched to available resources and company priorities using "home-grown" software.	
428	The use of morden ICT in the process of educating people with special needs (Slovenia)	An example of a centre in Slovenia that supports blind and partially sited people with training and employment. Useful list of concepts and resources	
429	RODA - Romanian Archive of Social Data (Romania)	Public/Private partnership develops archiving of electronic data provided by social research. Comprehensive list of lessons learnt.	
430	Fazole - the virtual internet currency unit (Czech Republic)	One way to pay for goods or services without money	
431	BIOFAKTORY.cz - Distributors Service (Czech Republic)	Distributors service of premixes, additives and special products of animal feeding	

432	Business.nabit.cz (Czech Republic)	A small Czech company develops a service which enables any company to add mobile marketing to its marketing strategy by a few mouse-clicks. Although the product relies on ICT, success still depends upon market knowledge.	
433	Rotary Club Praga Caput Regni (Czech Republic)	The Rotary Club Praga Caput Regni is an organisation comprising leading personalities from various business and professional circles which provides humanitarian services	
434	On line card game (Czech Republic)	The bidding and the elective Marias	
435	Developing the Catbriur Porcelain brand (Slovenia)	Example of a family run business that grew through a combination of dedication and the application of ICT (internet and management systems). Demonstrates yet again the power of ICT to widen market potential and support rural development.	
436	Association for an Information Society - SPIS (Czech Republic)	The main goal of SPIS is to raise awareness of the importance of ICT as the basic instrument for building an effective administration.	
437	E-administration at Higher Education (Czech Republic)	University applies e-administration principles to keep records on each student in PhD study programmes while providing access to information to all people involved (PhD students, supervisors, Faculty management, administrators).	
438	E-Center as promoter of network economy on local/regional level (Slovenia)	On-going project to introduce teleworking centres in Slovenia which draws on other European experiences and will have significant benefits for regional employment	
439	eBu2000: a B2B market tailored to ICT skills (Hungary)	An excellent example of innovative thinking that introduces ICT gradually to create a demand led market. Enables customers to find suppliers instead of suppliers trying to find customers !	
440	CRIPS - PHARE-CONSENSUS - distance training for managers (Romania)	Very well documented "Best Practice" case of distance learning for child welfare workers in Romania applied in a practical manner. Has expanded and developed further and initiated improvements beyond the training field.	
441	e-Tax - Pay your taxes online (Romania)		
442	e-Procurement. Online Auction in public sector (Romania)	An excellent example of e-procurement for government (tenders on-line) with well documented lessons and suggestions for development. Reduced costs by 22% and made transactions transparent.	
443	INDACO - 'Getting digital justice' (Romania)	Private company establishes a functioning computerised system for Romanian Supreme Court of Justice.	
444	OSKa - National Women's Information Center (Poland)	Excellent example of how the Internet can service the information needs of a specific group (women in this case). Good ideas that add real value to a dissemination website.	
445	Polish Virtual University (Poland)	Recently established virtual (on-line) University finds that the prime importance is facilitating the interaction between students/staff and students/students regardless of whether courses are designed "in house" or bought in from the International market.	
446	Telework - Poland	Polish portal supporting and promoting teleworking finds that it needs to help both the	

		potential teleworkers and their potential employers.	
447	The use of ICT in establishing mobile teams (Slovenia)	Story of how a business in Slovenia started selling videos in the "Flea Market" and grew to need an ICT solution for managing and resourcing its field sales team. Some interesting points to watch out for if you are in the same process.	
448	DESPEC - getting the job done using electronic means (Romania)	Imagine you one of the largest wholesale organizations in the world. Can you survive without computers? This case tries to demonstrate that you can't.	
451	FLANCO - distance covered by digital network (Romania)		
452	eMarket - Electronic system for acquisitions of goods and services (Romania)	An excellent example of an on-line market/auction house for B2B trading in goods and services. Launched in March 2002 through a public/private partnership it has reduced costs and created a dynamic local economy.	
453	e-Job - searching for jobs using electronic means (Romania)	Good example of setting up an on-line recruitment service from Romania. well documented activities, lessons and conclusions.	
454	Multimedia Center - provide online information for citizens (Romania)		
455	The use of the "Workplace Delivery" application (Slovenia)	Example of a medium sized company that joins a Just-In-Time supply network for its main customer, and then cascades the process down to its own suppliers. For reference only.	
456	The O.K.M - Improving business process and supply chains (SI)		
457	Unicom Electronic On-Line Bank (Slovakia)	eBanking as an integral part of digital SME's (SK)	
458	Local crafts promoted by a web-based catalogue (Slovenia)	Spin-off from a teleworking project demonstrates the power of co-operation and the internet to support local crafts and regional development	
459	Sinergija development agency –local/regional initiator for introducing ICT (Slovenia)	Small scale project to introduce ICT in remote rural areas needs to take on board cultural differences and battle for funds. Now seeking eRural funds to expand.	
460	Hoedlmayr Hungaria Kft: an innovative vehicle logistics company offering better working conditions and improving business processes by the use of ICTs (Hungary)	The case is about how ICT developments can be used to avoid price cuts due to the pressure coming from clients.	
461	"Mes" ("We") - Employees connecting system (Lithuania)		
462	Nationwide Polish Information Network - OSIM (Poland)	On-line business directory provides an intuitive interface for searching with good results, but finds slow connections force them to limit content to a minimum - which turns out to be a bonus.	
463	Educational information system "IS mokykla"	Information system providing useful information to the general public	
464	Tourist information centre Moravske Toplice as promoter	Small, least developed, region in Slovenia creates a simple website to promote local	

	of tourist provides (Slovenia)	tourism for less than 3,000 Euro and sees a 10% increase. Future development funded through increased business. Excellent model to follow - start small and grow !	
465	TIC Krško -providing tourist information service via web portal (Slovenia)		
466	Prím Online: making the leading Hungarian IT portal accessible for the visually impaired (Hungary)	Private company discovers that, in just four weeks, their web sites can be easily made accessible for the visually impaired without reducing the web content and web functions. As a result it increases it's customer base!	
467	Technopolis: a Hungarian Public Service Company helping the region enter the knowledge society (Hungary)	The case is about how ICT regional development projects are 'marketable' irrespective to the general reluctance of people and businesses.	
468	mBank (Poland)	Poland's first internet bank takes a steady approach to providing services and reaps the rewards of customer focus.	
469	THINK - integration of the disabled people into society	THINK-Towards Handicap Integration Negotiating Knowledge	
470	World Wide Web without barriers (Poland)	Polish organisation for disabled people finds success for its' clients with IT training, teleworking etc through the creation of a community spirit, quality qualifications and staff dedication. Shows the real benefits from adding value to raise confidence and feeling of "self worth" in clients.	
471	www.draudimas.lt (www.insurance.lt) portal- Lithuania		
472	Libri: ICT-enhanced bookselling to support buyers and employees (Hungary)	Traditional bookshop chain introduces ICT to improve, not replace, customer service. Excellent example of "fitness for purpose" in the world of retail.	
474	eGovernment - unified state portal (SI)		
475	E-Scholl's as public access points to the Internet (SI)		
476	Online career market for the logistics industry (Hungary)	Report on how a private company established an on-line recruitment agency for the transport industry.	
477	SYNERGY (Slovak republic)	Well described case of an integrated virtual business services in the professional area that finds many useful lessons, including "keep it simple" and "restrict transparency" !	
478	Virtual Piotrkowska Street (Poland)	Privately funded local business portal (community website) benefits traders and the region. Excellent model which highlights problem of funding.	
479	ISIS, International Software and Information Services Ltd. (Bulgaria)	Focus on the company as a digital unit servicing the knowledge economy	
480	Pannon GSM: e-learning solution for cost-efficiency and better learning management (Hungary)		
839	Virtech Ltd. (Bulgaria)	An e-system solution for inside cooperation	
840	eSchool Ravne as local access point to the word wide web (SI)		
841	Spin – project organized company (SI)		
842	SYNERGY Advisory Office (SK)	Virtual marketplace of paid advisory services	

843	SYNERGY Incubator (SK)	Virtual business project incubator	
844	LABT- Network of the academic libraries (Lithuania)	The project was developed to automate the main processes in academic libraries by using means of system administration and user management.	
845	Internet course for the elderly (Hungary)	Helping the elderly to keep up with their grandchildren.	
847	Virtual office		
848	Business incubator to support local and regional start-ups (Hungary)		
849	Using the GSM system to protect against plant diseases and improve environmental sustainability (Hungary)		
850	Establishment of distance vocational education and training system (Lithuania)	Distance learning center for adults creates conditions to establish distance learning system in Lithuania, consisting of 2 regional distance learning centres and 15 distance learning classes throughout the regional vocational training institutions, easily accessible to regional population.	
851	AIVA SISTEMA e-shop (Lithuania)		
852	Zvejams.lt - fishing portal (Lithuania)		
	Number of entries shown = 123		