

PREFACE

The publication “Information Society in Portugal 2006” aims primarily to provide a structured set of information on the establishment and usage of the information and communication technologies and to allow a reflection on their contribution for the development of the Portuguese society under the framework of the Lisbon Strategy.

This publication is the result of a solid effort developed by a group of entities that, under the High Statistical Council, gathered their knowledge in order to create a data set that described, as accurate as possible, for each moment of observation, the Information Society conditions of development.

This institutional partnership created after the approval of the “Green Book on Information Society” and enhanced by the goals established on the Lisbon agenda decided by the European Council, was also improved by ongoing reflections from international institutions working in the area and by the statistical programmes defined by Eurostat.

In this context, INE Portugal was obviously an active partner on the supply of indicators, introducing the first surveys for the regular observation of the information and communication technologies usage by households and enterprises, in line with the comparability criteria defined under the framework of the European Union.

The result of the work developed by the different entities is presented in this publication, which includes information on the available infrastructures and their usage by households, enterprises and public administration.

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The current national statistical production for the Information Society area is still focused on the description of the information and communication technologies usage, and less oriented to the evaluation of the related social, economical, technological and cultural changes. The evaluation of these ongoing transformations requires inevitably a broader time span and a new effort concerning the definition of measuring instruments.

This publication, in spite of not being yet an exhaustive and detailed characterization of the Information Society in Portugal, represents a remarkable example of inter-institutional articulation under the framework of the National Statistical System.

It is believed that with this joint effort it will be possible to meet the challenges the National Statistical System is facing in the Information Society field and to deepen this important statistical system for the present and forthcoming societies.

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