

Internet use and access

The share of Internet users did not increase in 2011.

Following the rapid expansion of Internet use in previous years, the share of users who have used the Internet in the last three months and the share of those who use the Internet at least once a week declined in 2011 (67% and 64%, respectively, of the population aged 16–74), while the share of everyday users remained unchanged (54%). In terms of Internet use, Slovenia has been close to the EU average since 2005, but not in all user groups. Last year, the share of less-educated Internet users shrank significantly (by a high of 9 p.p.), as did, to a certain extent, the share of older users (55–74 years). These are the only population groups characterised by a much lower share of Internet users than in the EU as a whole. In the preceding two years, the gap to the EU average had been closing in both groups, most strongly among the less-educated. Last year's reversal of trend (with the share of Internet users in the EU growing further in both groups) widened this gap again to the highest level in the whole last six-year period for which data are available. Last year's changes could, at least partly, reflect the impact of the economic crisis on Internet usage among people who were most affected by the crisis. This is also indicated by data on Internet use by activity. The share of Internet users shrank noticeably in the group of retired and other inactive persons, and slightly also in the unemployed and students. Slovenia also stands out in a relatively low share of Internet users among less educated and older people in comparison with some new EU Member States that already boast a higher prevalence of Internet use than Slovenia. Most of these countries already outpaced or surpassed Slovenia on this indicator last year (the Czech Republic, Hungary, Malta, Latvia), while Estonia and Slovakia have had higher Internet shares since as early as 2007.

Amid a rapid spreading of broadband Internet connections in 2011, the number of households with Internet access increased further in 2011.

The share of households with Internet access at home reached 72% in 2011. The increase (by 4 p.p.) was again attributable to a higher share of households with broadband Internet access (by 5 p.p. to 67% in 2011), which increasingly use advanced technologies. The share of households with the otherwise still prevailing connection over the telephone network (xDSL) thus declined, while the share of users of more advanced broadband connections (optical network, wireless WiFi connection, 3G modem) doubled, for the first time reaching 2nd place among broadband connections. The share of Internet access over cable network or mobile phone (3G) also continues to grow. In terms of households with Internet connection (including

broadband connection), Slovenia follows the EU average. Internet access is characterised by similar features as Internet usage. Among the main reasons for not having Internet access Slovenian households state that they do not need it; that they don't have proper skills; or that the costs of connection and equipment are too high. In Slovenia all these reasons are much more pronounced than in the EU. Only households in the first two income quintiles stand out in comparison with the EU. This is again a sign of a relatively significant impact of education/qualifications and income situation in Slovenia on Internet access and use. To prevent a deepening of the digital divide, which could have negative implications for economic and social development, it is necessary to continue the efforts to attract all population groups by increasing Internet affordability and with proper training. Furthermore, it is also necessary to extend the provision of important, user-friendly e-services. In the context of affordability, it is essential to ensure sufficient competition and efficient supervision of providers.

Internet access and usage by enterprises are high; however, a weakness is the lack of automated data exchange with buyers and suppliers.

All enterprises¹ in Slovenia with Internet access use a broadband connection, much as those in the EU. Their share increased again in 2011 (by 7 p.p. to 92%), being higher than in the EU (85%) in all enterprises regardless of size. Given the high availability of the Internet, the share of enterprises that interact with other institutions (other enterprises, public authorities, financial institutions) in electronic form is also high, as expected. Slovenia also has a higher share of enterprises with a fully automated data exchange with public authorities and financial institutions, which appears to be related to the relatively high availability of e-services in these institutions.² There are more possibilities to improve the competitive advantages with the increased use of information-communication technologies between enterprises. Specifically, the share of enterprises with a fully automated data exchange with buyers and suppliers is well below the EU average. Also, Slovenian enterprises avail themselves of e-invoices to a much lesser extent than those in the EU. In these areas, Slovenian enterprises also lag significantly behind most new EU Member States. This could be related to a lower degree of Slovenian enterprises' integration in international flows as regards formal ownership compared to their counterparts in other new Member States, for example through foreign direct investment which usually contributes to a faster introduction of new technologies.

¹ Enterprises with 10 or more employees, except those in the financial sector.

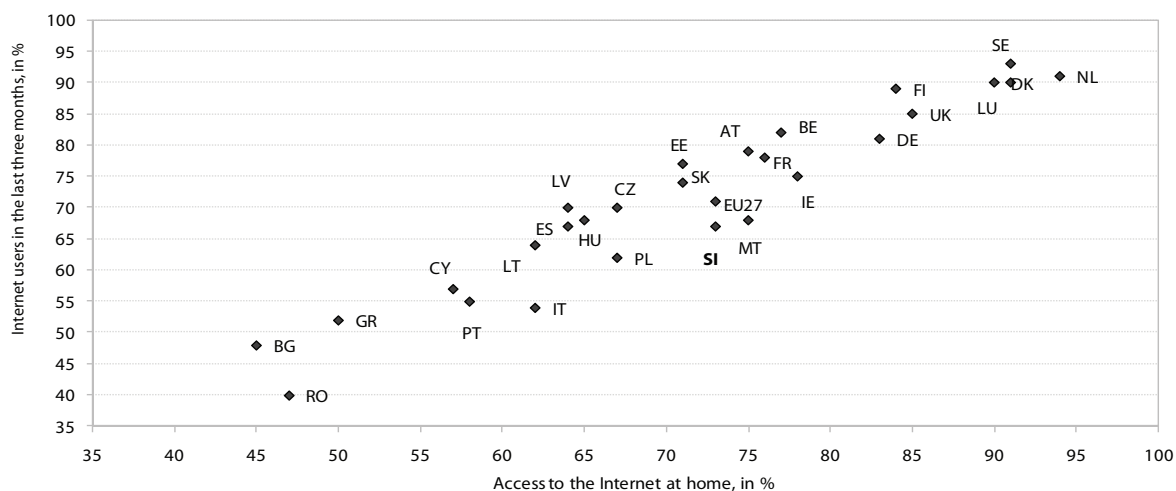
² The prevalence of e-government services in Slovenia is 95%; in the EU as a whole 84% (data for 2010).

Table: Internet usage and access by households and individuals, Slovenia, 2005–2001¹, in %

	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	EU 2011
Households with Internet access at home	48	54	58	59	64	68	72	73
Households with broadband Internet access at home	19	34	44	50	56	62	67	68
Internet users in the last three months (16–74)	47	51	53	56	62	68	67	71
Regular Internet users ² , total (16–74 years)	40	47	49	52	58	65	64	68
By age:								
16–24 years		81	83	91	95	97	98	91
25–54 years		54	57	60	68	76	76	76
55–74 years		12	12	16	20	26	25	40
By education:								
Low (or unskilled)		19	23	28	36	41	30	45
Secondary	40	47	49	52	56	65	67	71
Higher		87	88	86	92	93	93	92

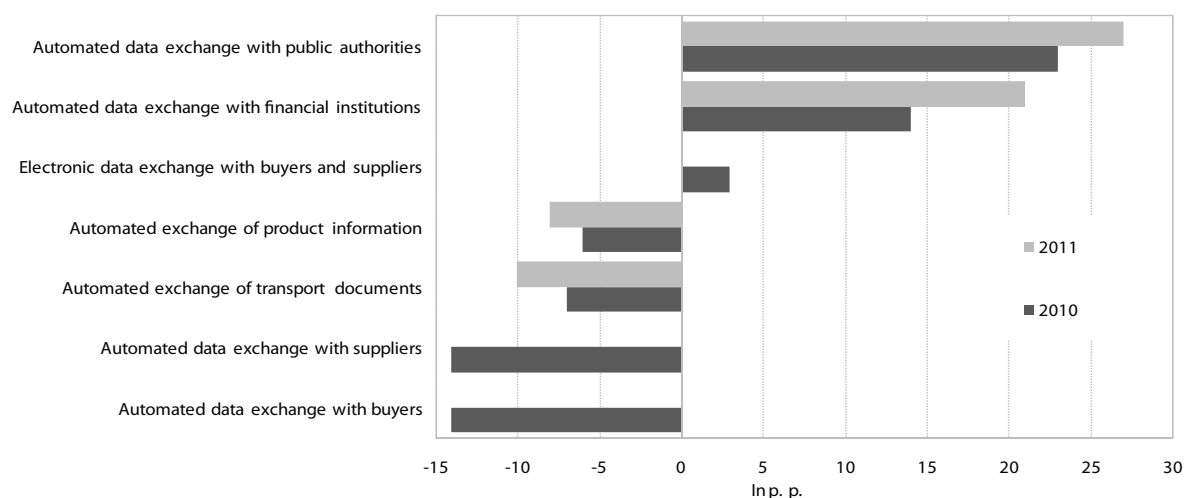
Sources: SI-STAT Data Portal – Information Society (SORS), 2012; Eurostat Portal Page – Information Society, 2012.
Notes: ¹ Data for all years refer to the first quarter of the year. ² Those using the Internet at least once a week.

Figure: Internet usage and access by households and individuals, EU, 2011¹



Source: Eurostat Portal Page – Information Society, 2012. Note: ¹ Data refer to the first quarter of the year.

Figure: Electronic integration of enterprises with other institutions – gap between Slovenia and the EU average



Source: Eurostat Portal Page – Information Society, 2012. Note: A positive value means a higher share of such enterprises in Slovenia than in the EU as a whole.