

Access to Lifelong Learning and the Role of ICT



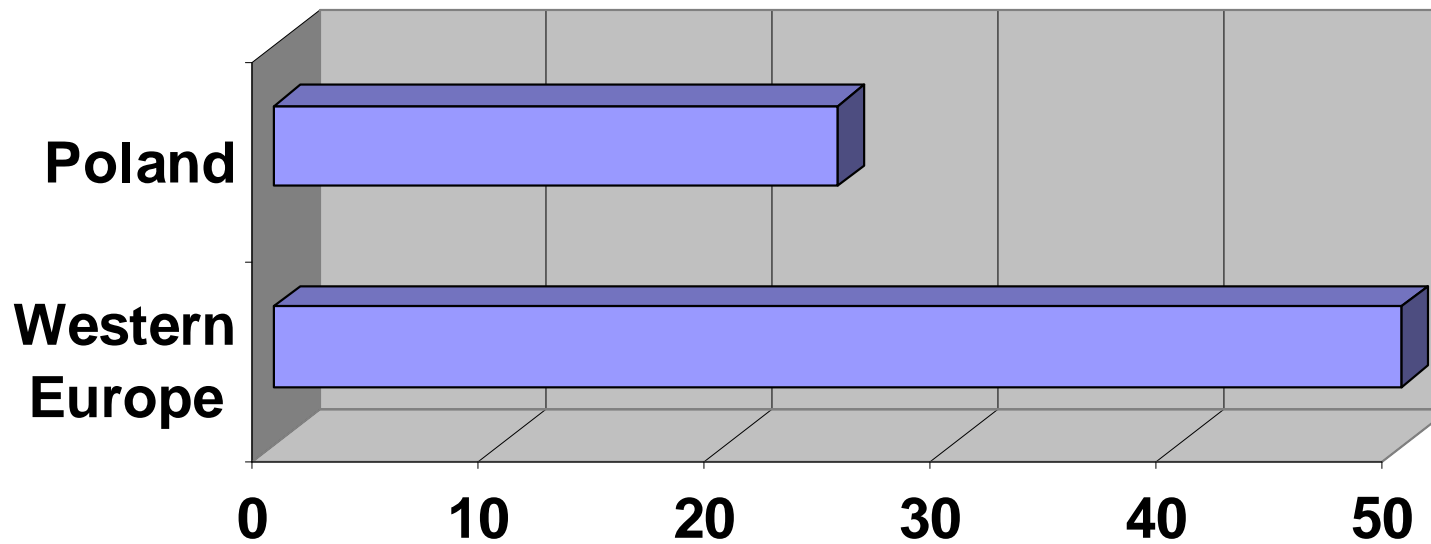
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- By monitoring the effectiveness of the project which we have been conducting in Poland as well as in my own discussions in Hungary and more recently in Romania (April 2005) it seems that the inhabitants of this part of Europe continue to face severe restrictions in access to lifelong learning provided through ICT. These are mainly caused by technical, financial and mental barriers to ICT access.

The first barrier appears to be poor frequency and quality of land lines enabling the use of ICT.

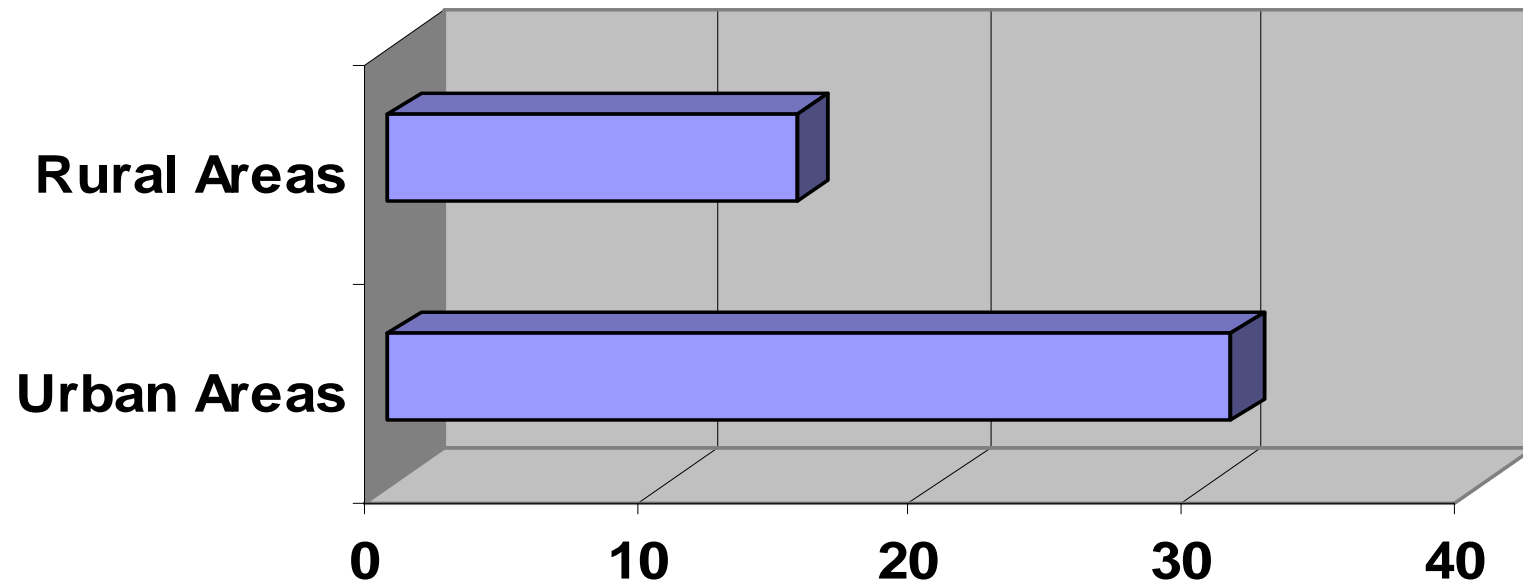


Frequency of Land Lines (number of phones on 100 inhabitants)



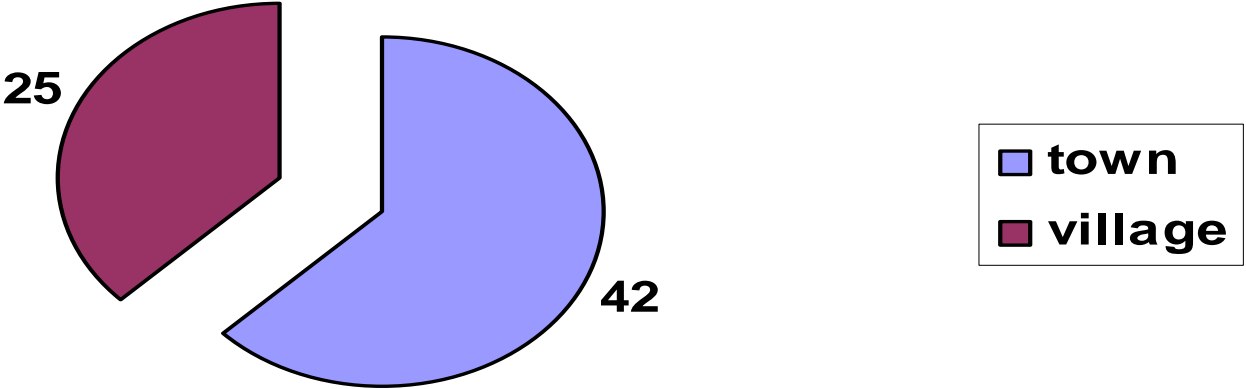
Source: Z. Kotowski, R. Kotowski, R. Woodward, Telematics in the Education of Polish Village, CASE Foundation

Frequency of Land Lines in Poland (number of phones on 100 inhabitants)



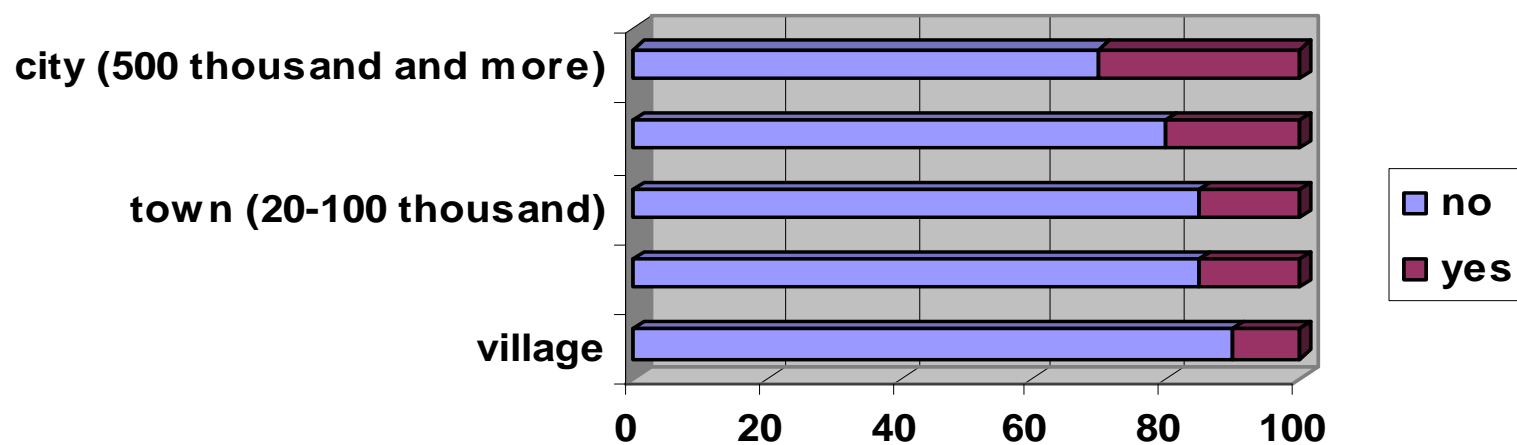
Source: Z. Kotowski, R. Kotowski, R. Woodward, Telematics in the Education of Polish Village, CASE Foundation

PC owners in Poland (%)



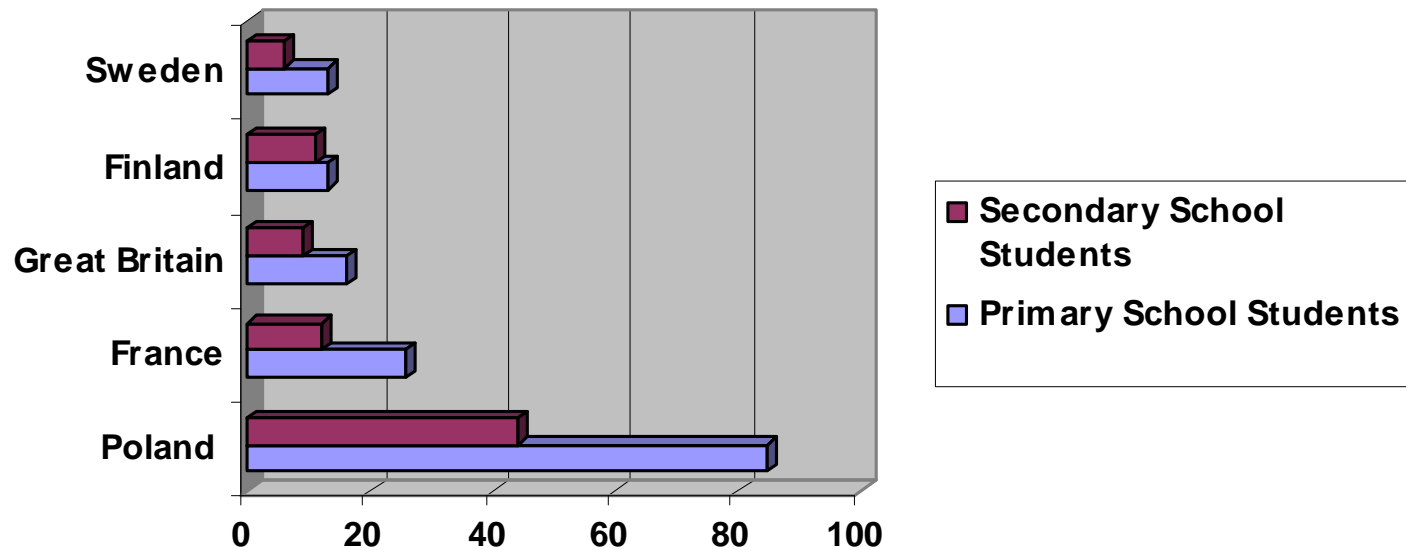
Source: Central statistic Office, 2004

Access to the Internet and Permanent Residence (%)



Source: www.waw.org/pl/eeurope/e-europe.html

The Number of Primary and Secondary Schools Students to Fall on the One Computer



Source: Z. Kotowski, R. kotowski, R. Woodward, Telematics in the Education of Polish Village, CASE Foundation

- Even greater barriers in access to lifelong learning provided through ICT are generated by the prices of tele-computing services - in Poland and other Central and East European countries significantly higher than in so-called old EU countries

- Telephone and Internet Charges of Land Line and Mobile Line and Monthly Income of the one Member of Rural Family 483 PLN (120 Euro)

Type of service	Type of Line	Cost of 60 minutes + VAT	% on relation to the monthly income
Telephone connection (modem)	Land Line NETIA	7 PLN	1,4
ISDN	Land Line NETIA	7 PLN	1,4
Packet 'Lump payment for 100 minutes'	Land Line NETIA	8 PLN	1,6
Telephone connection (modem)	Land Line TPSA	7 PLN	1,4
ISDN	Land Line TPSA	7 PLN	1,4
Neostrada (no limited time)	Land Line TPSA	119 PLN – 291,58 PLN (cost depends on connection capacity)	24,6-60,3
Packet '5 hours per month'	Land Line TPSA	2,41 PLN	0,4%
'Blue Connect' per month	ERA GSM	128,78 PLN	26,6

Source: Own calculations based on: L. Klank, Income Differentiation of the Polish Farmers, in: Eastern European Countryside 2005/10 and data collecting by Iwona Leśniewicz in TPSA and NETIA

In addition to technical and financial barriers in using the internet for education there are also mental barriers. Many can be mentioned but probably the most significant is something which may be described as a poor level of IT awareness:

- political and business elites in many less developed EU countries have not yet become aware that easier internet access (both in the technical and particularly the financial sense) in rural areas, is as important a component of their communal infrastructure as access to clean water or to a doctor;
- rural inhabitants, including local government representatives and small rural entrepreneurs, have not yet developed the sense that modern tele-computing media create new chances for improved quality of work and life through a significant increase in opportunities of getting better employment and income.