

Universal Access to Information & Communication Technology in the Asia Pacific Region

The Asia and Pacific Regional
Preparatory Meeting for the World
Telecommunication Development
Conference

Bali, Indonesia, 25 to 27 April 2001





Topics

- # Asia Pacific Digital Divide
 - Measurement
 - Reasons
- # Initiatives to enhance access
 - National
 - Regional
 - International



Some definitions

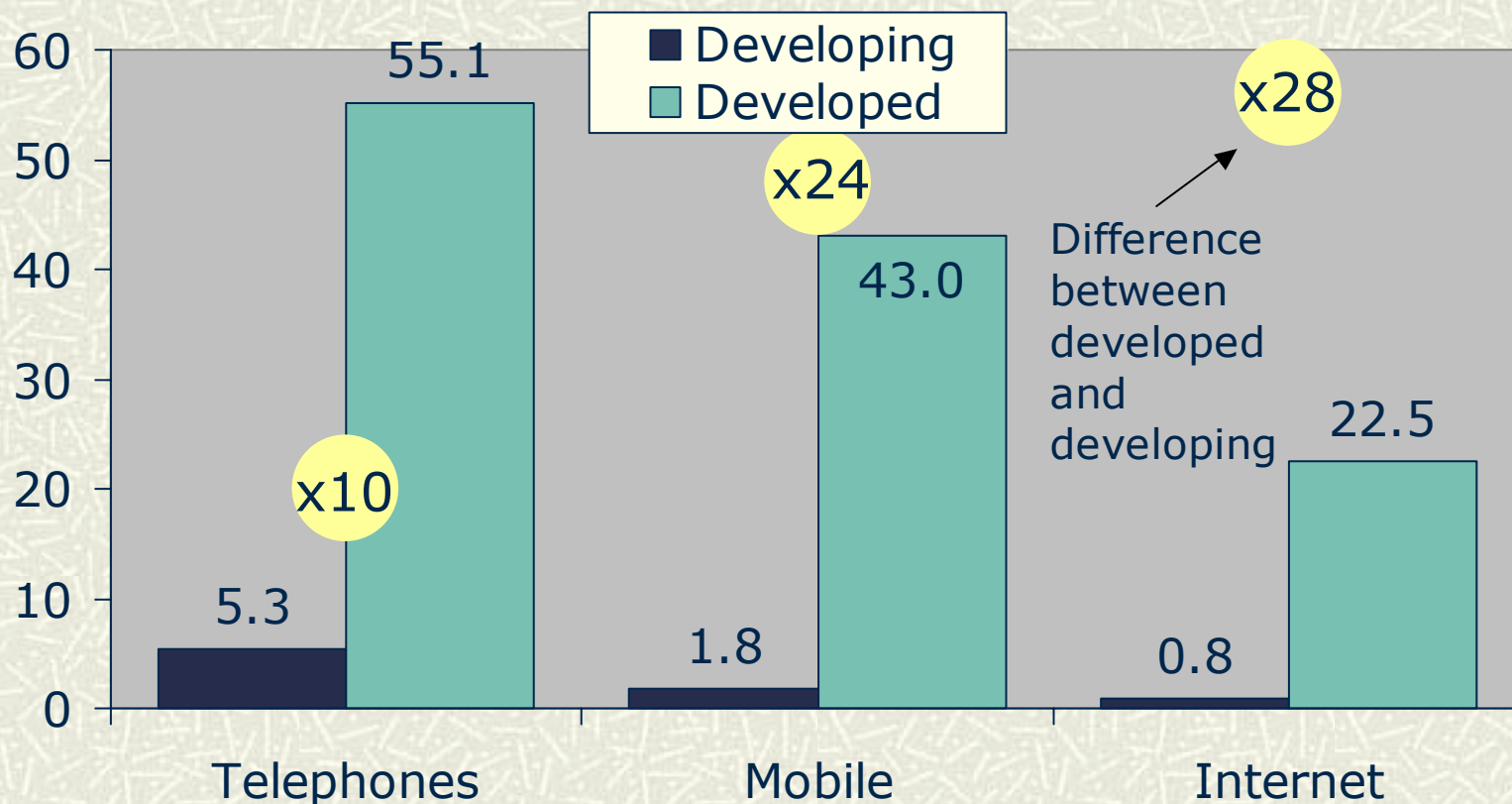
- # Access to ICT
 - Physical ownership / availability
 - Affordability
 - Skills
- # “There will always be segments of any society that will not want to avail themselves of technology...”
- # “In essence, the real difference between the info-poor and the info-rich is the inequality of physical and financial access to ICT and in the actual usage of sources of information in a particular society.”

Source: www.nitc.org.my/resources/AccessEquity.pdf



ICT Gap in the Asia-Pacific

Asia-Pacific. Per 100 people. January 2000.

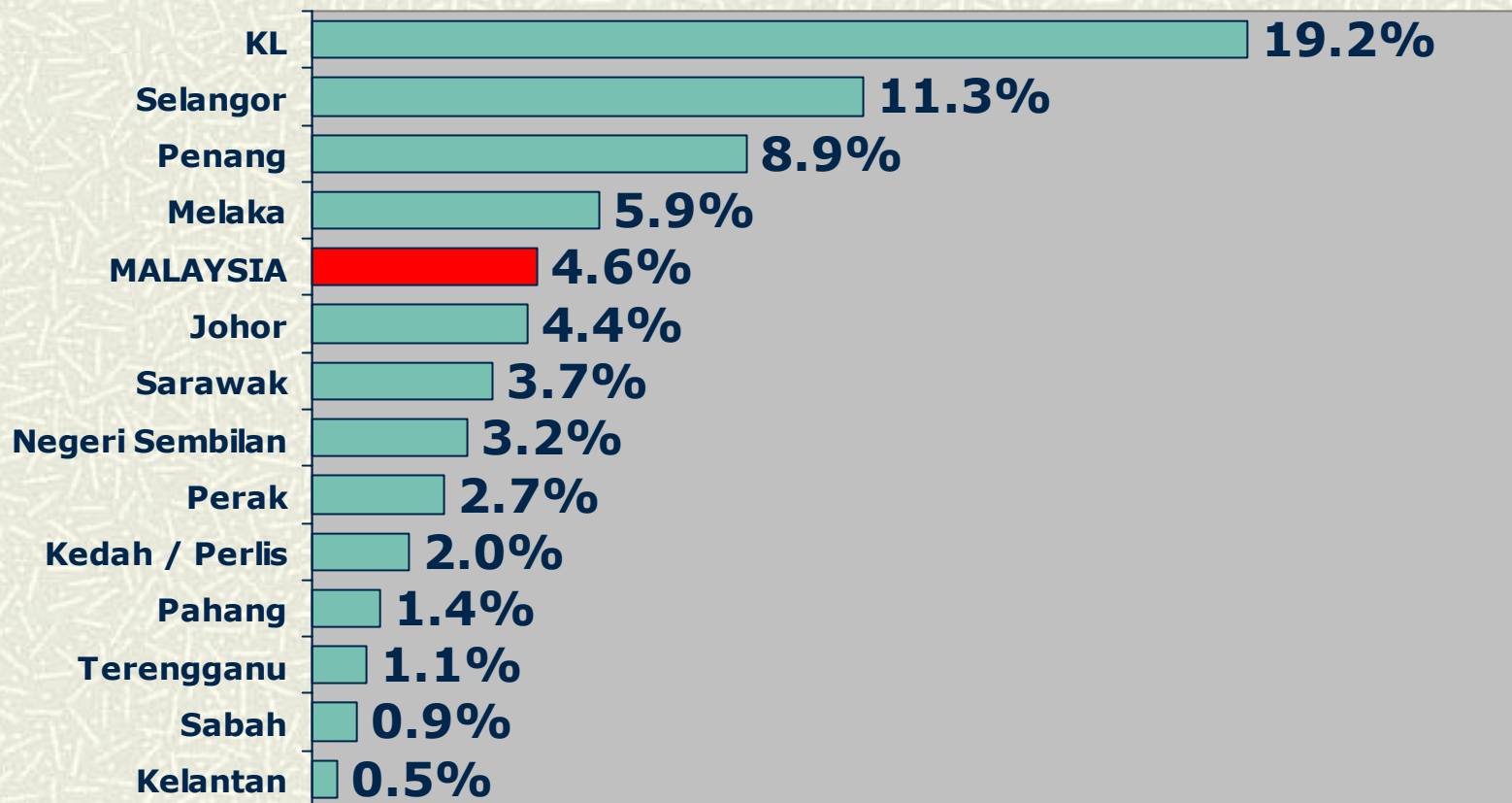


Note: Developed refers to Australia, Japan, New Zealand, Hongkong SAR, Korea (Rep.), Singapore and Taiwan-China; developing are all others. *Source:* ITU.



ICT Gap within countries

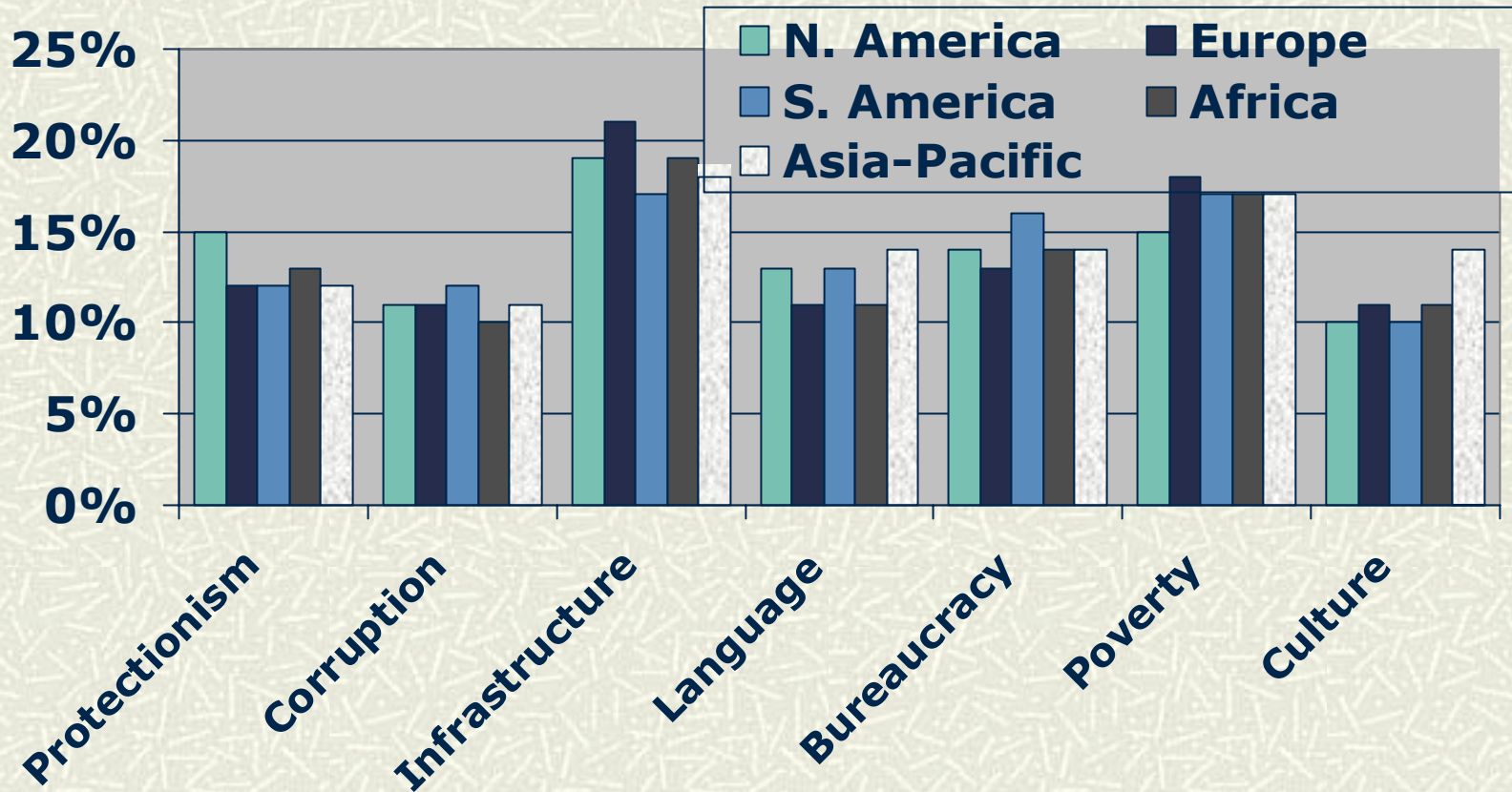
Internet penetration in Malaysian states, 2000



Source: ITU adapted from NITC.



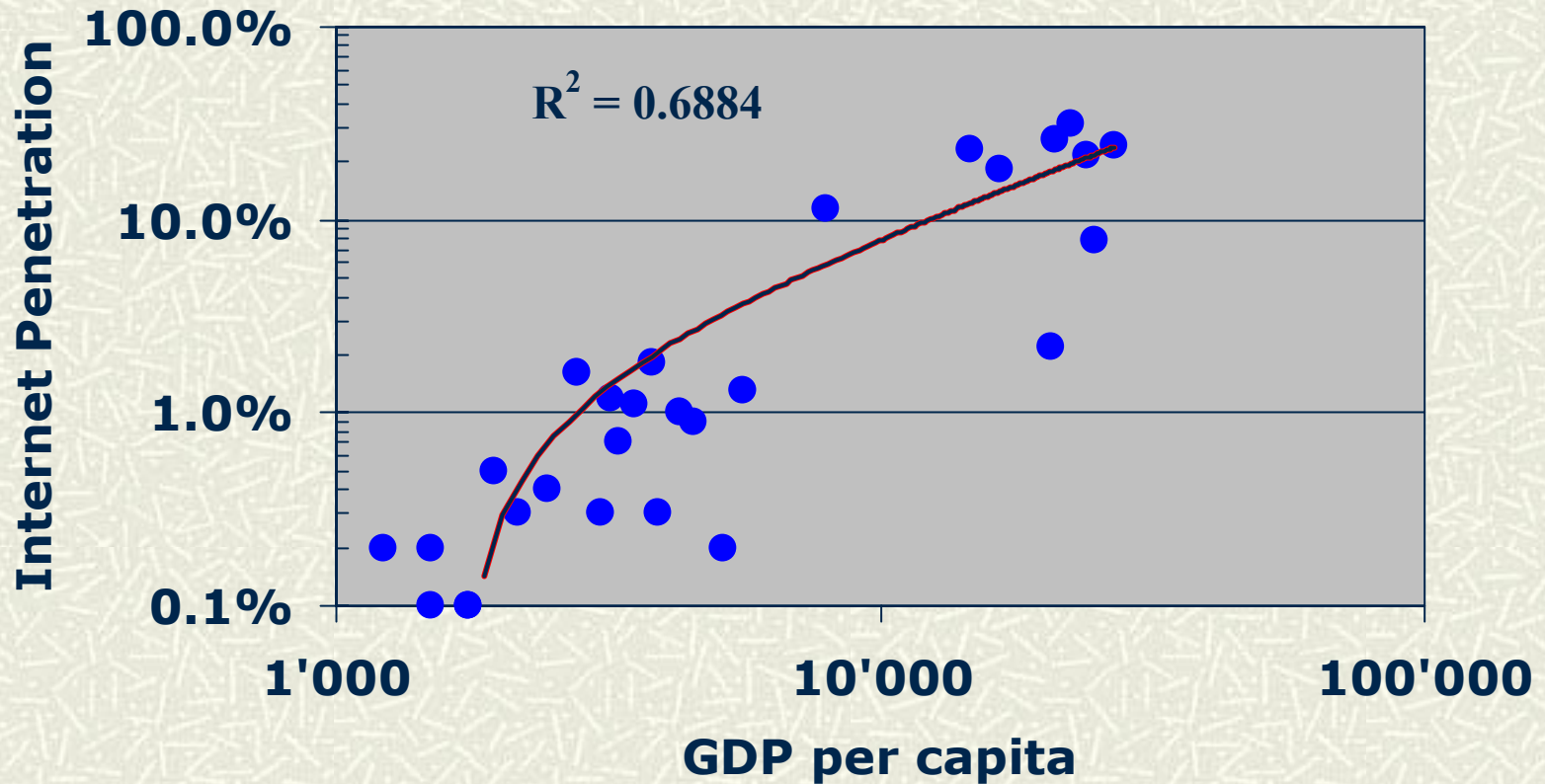
Obstacles to bridging the Digital Divide



Source: Global Information Infrastructure Commission



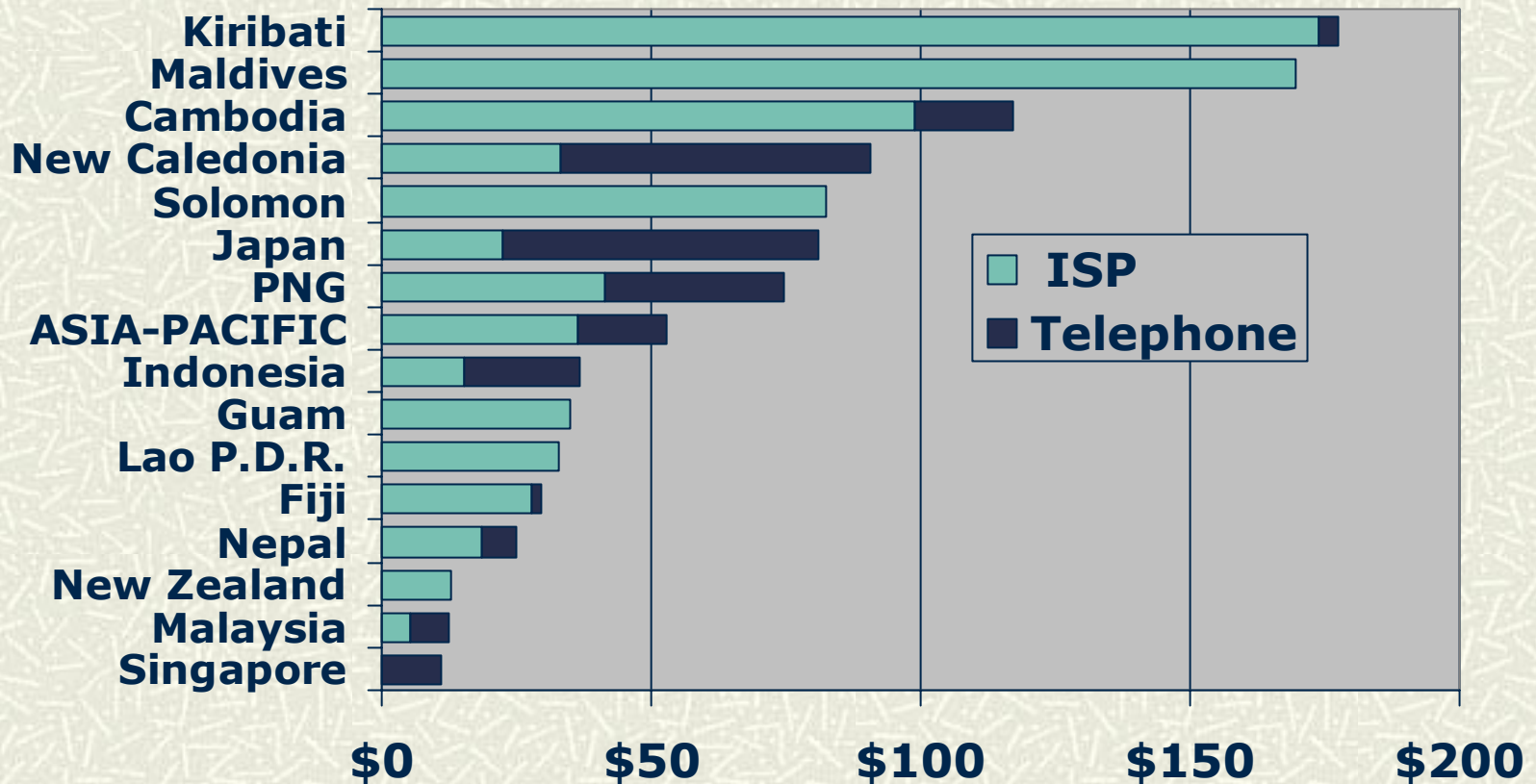
Income barrier





Tariff barrier

Thirty hours of Internet access, October 2000, US\$

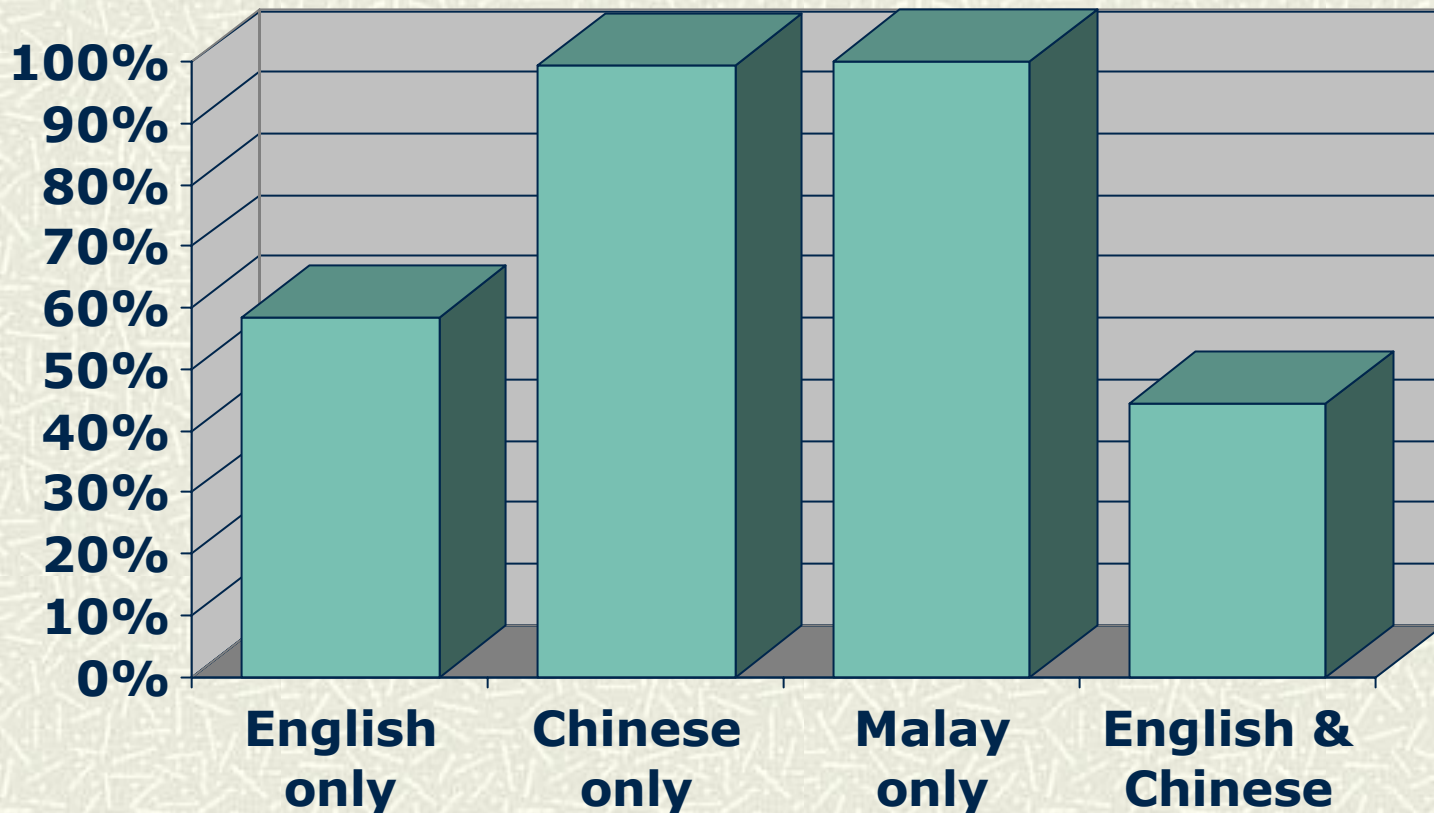


Source: ITU



Socio-cultural barrier

Singapore. Never use Internet (by language).



Source: ITU adapted from CABSAT/NETWATCH.



National policies

- # National ICT plans
- # Liberalization
- # PC ownership subsidies
- # Universal access
- # Skills development
- # Digital legislation
- # Local content



National ICT Plans

- # Elevate ICT to top of agenda
- # Specify policies and actions that are relevant to country
- # Roadmap



Liberalization

- # Open up infrastructure and services market
- # Allow full service operators
- # Liberalization of the VSAT market in Nepal has led to a sharp drop of Internet tariffs and consequent rise in users





Personal Computer (PC) Ownership

- # Reduce or eliminate tariffs on PCs
- # Provide incentives for purchasing PCs
 - Republic of Korea
 - Singapore
 - Malaysia





Universal access: Diversity of models





Skills development

- # Most effective way of developing ICT skills is to 'wire' schools
- # ICT human resource requirements
- # Private sector





Digital legislation

- # Acceptance of electronic forms
- # Security, confidence
- # Crime, copyright
- # Convergence



Local content: Pondicherry, India



Knowledge Centre staff at Embalam village explaining use of RealAudio

- # Weather reports
- # Fish stocks
- # Entitlement, nutrition, job, women databases
- # Agricultural info
- # Entertainment



Regional initiatives

- # APT AII - Asia-Pacific Summit on the Information Society
- # [e-ASEAN](#)
- # e-APEC



Global Initiatives

- # G-8 DOT Force
- # UNDP Digital Opportunity Initiative

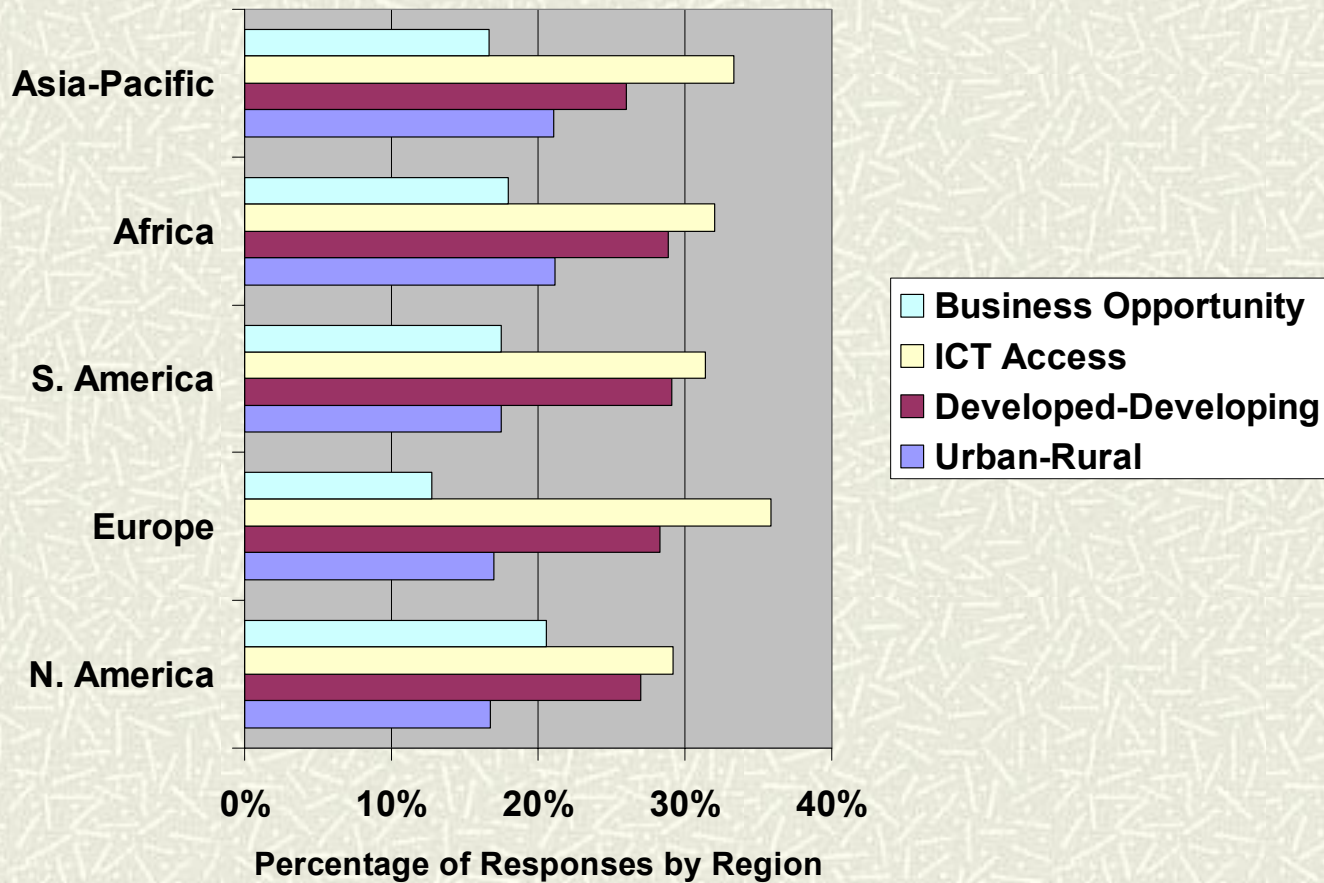


Next Steps

- # What should ITU Development Sector role be in reducing the Digital Divide?

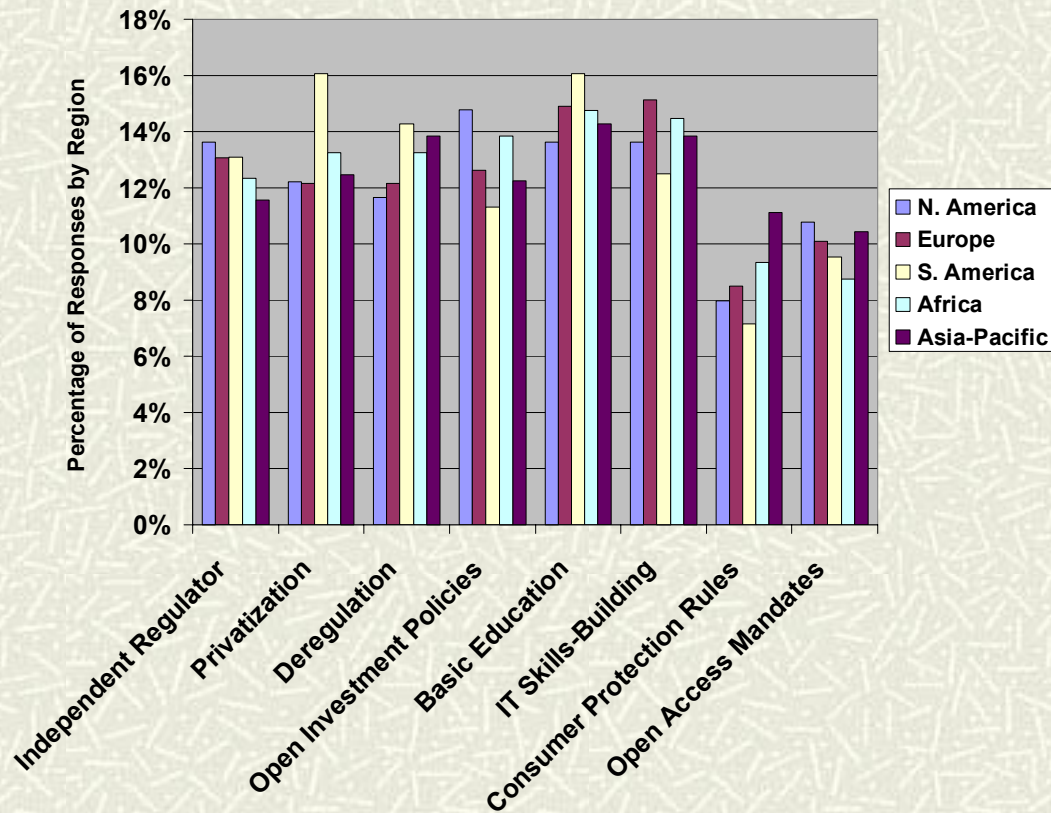


What does Digital Divide Mean?



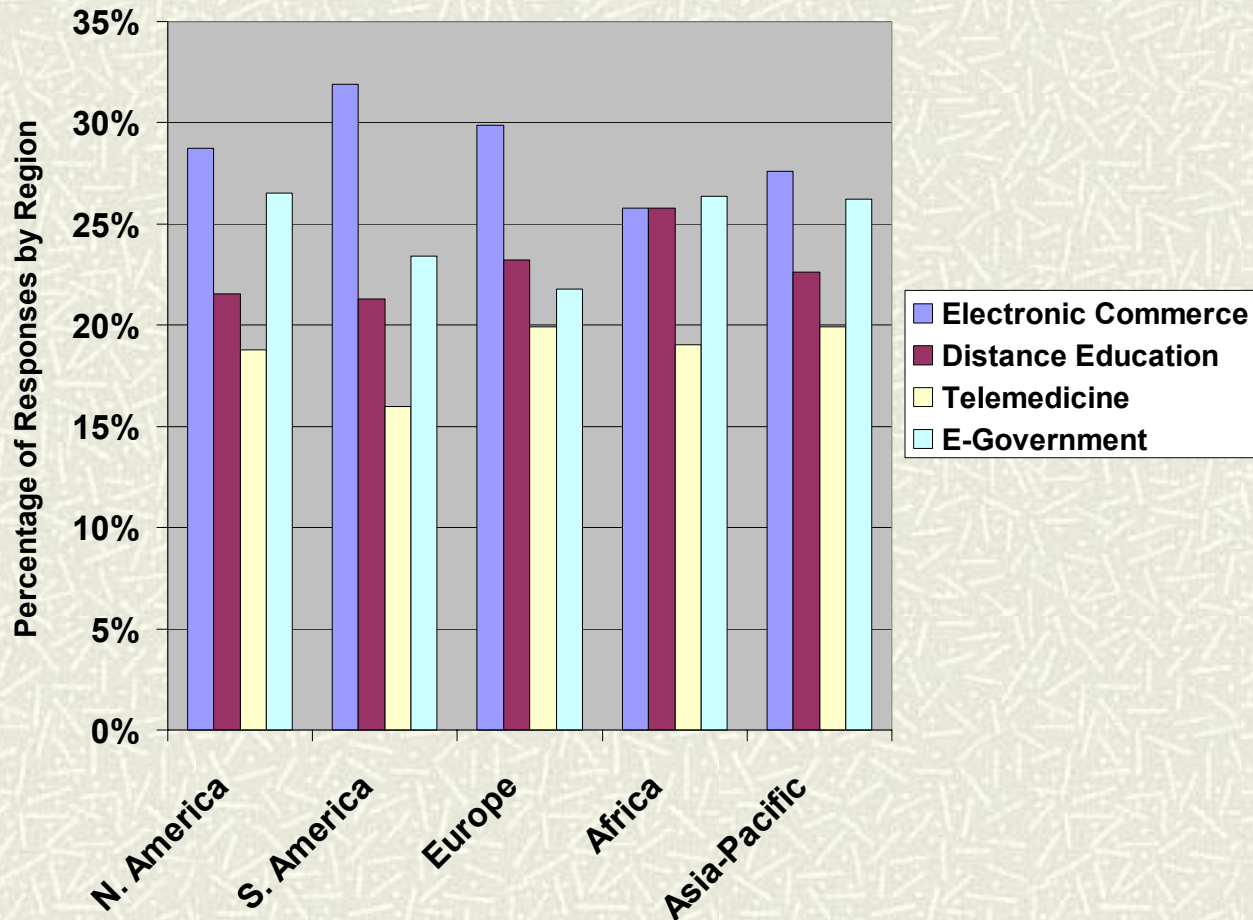


Needed Public Policy





Digital Bridge Applications





Who Should Bridge the Digital Divide?

