

‘Information Society:’ Mere Metaphor or More?

Presentation of
Robert G. Rogers
Global Information Infrastructure Commission
*Second Preparatory Committee Meeting of
World Summit on the Information Society
Geneva, Switzerland
19 February 2003*

WSIS: Role of Business

“Encourages...the private sector to contribute to, and actively participate in, the intergovernmental preparatory process of the Summit and the Summit itself....”

- *United Nations Resolution 56/183*

WSIS: Business Points of View

1. *Private sector investment is paramount*

What is the 'Information Society?'

- Is it real?
- Is it identifiable?
- Is it describable?
- Is it definable?
- Is it a mere metaphor?

Low WSIS Awareness



Stories about WSIS in Major Business Publications: 0

WSIS: Business Points of View

- 1. *Private sector investment is paramount***
- 2. *Definition of 'information society' is essential***

WSIS: Business Points of View

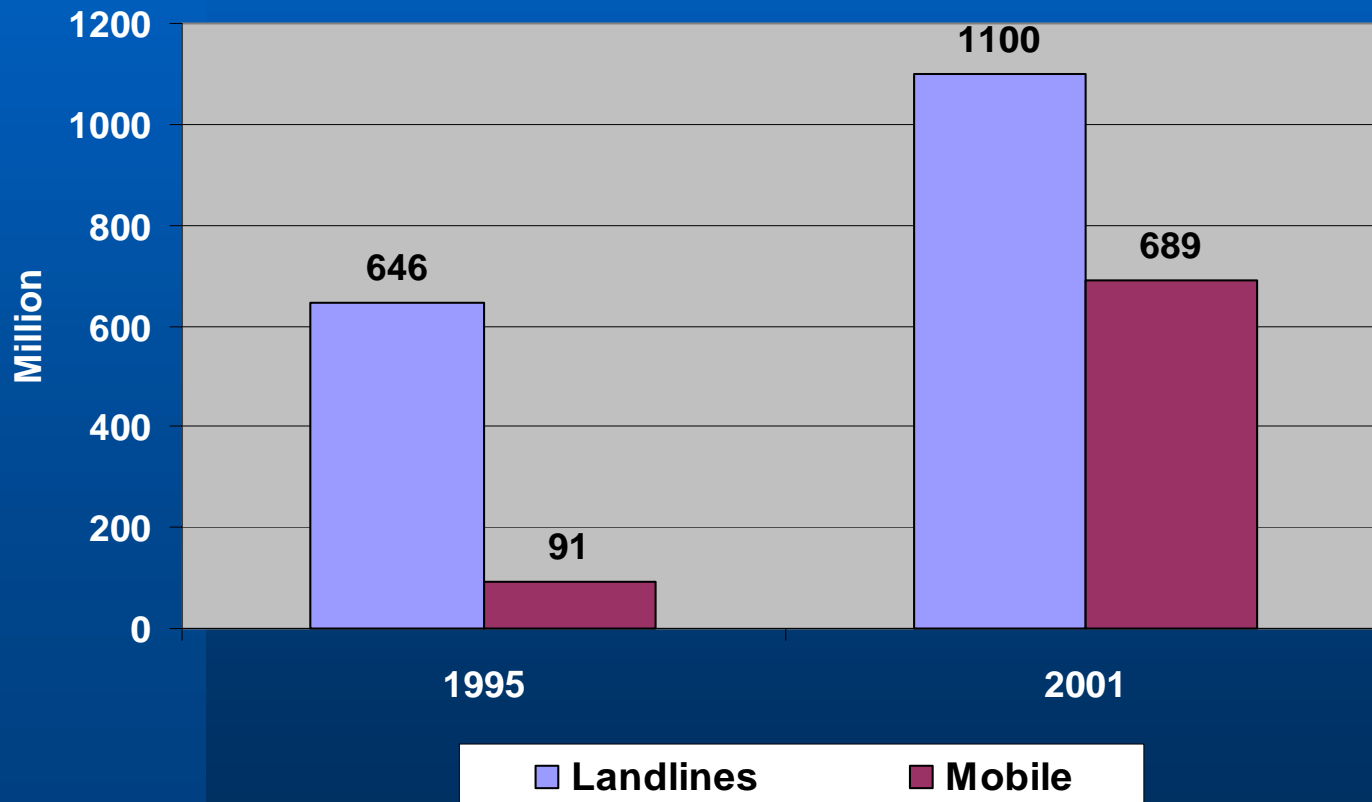
- 1. *Private sector investment is paramount***
- 2. *Definition of 'information society' is essential***
- 3. *'Information society' is an evolutionary concept***

WSIS: Business Points of View

- 1. *Private sector investment is paramount***
- 2. *Definition of 'information society' is essential***
- 3. *'Information society' is an evolutionary concept***
- 4. *Where the world is in the 'information society' evolution can be measured***

Telecoms Access

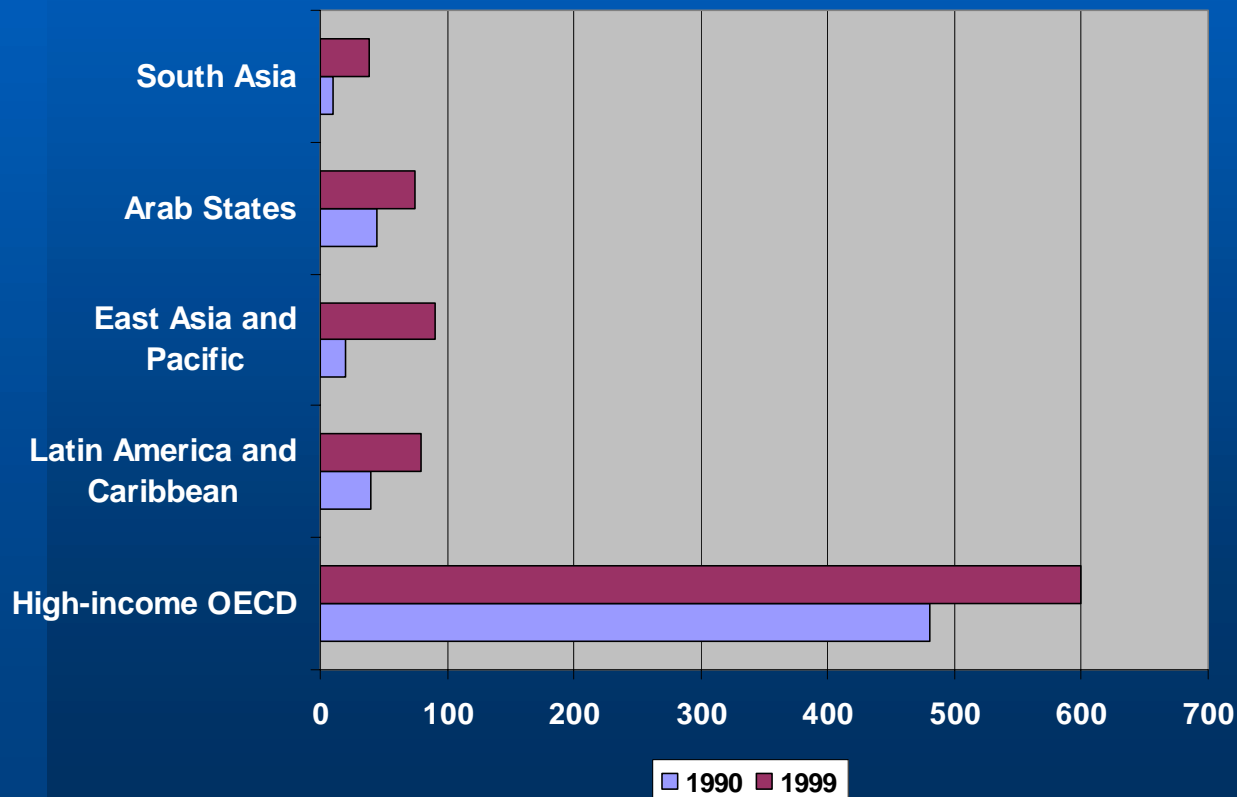
Landline and Mobile Penetration Rates



Source: "Half the World," by Clay Shirky (shirky.com), version 1.01, July 3, 2002

Telecoms Access

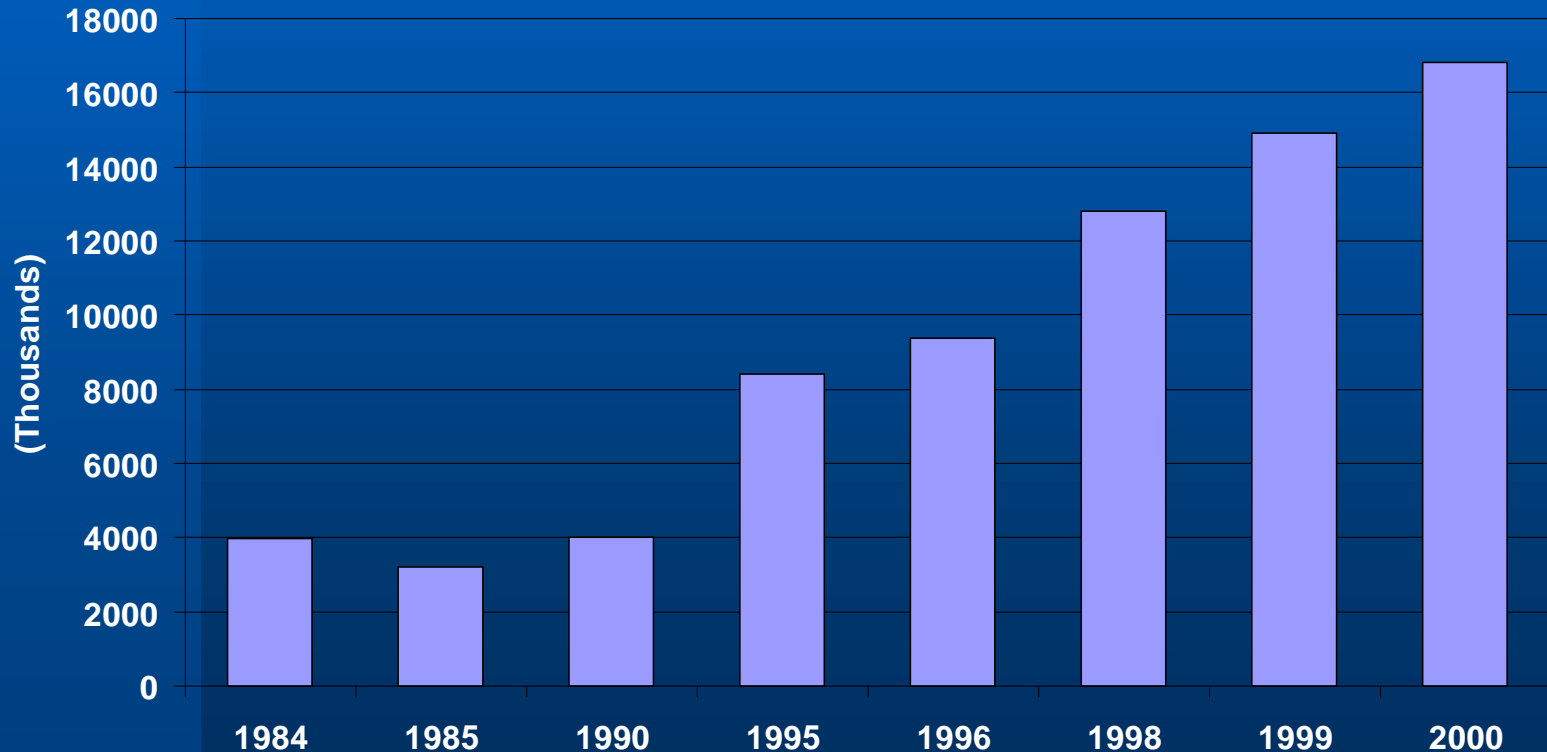
Telephone Mainlines per 1,000 People



Source: UNDP, ITU, The World Bank; 2001-2002 Global Information Technology Report

Access to PC's

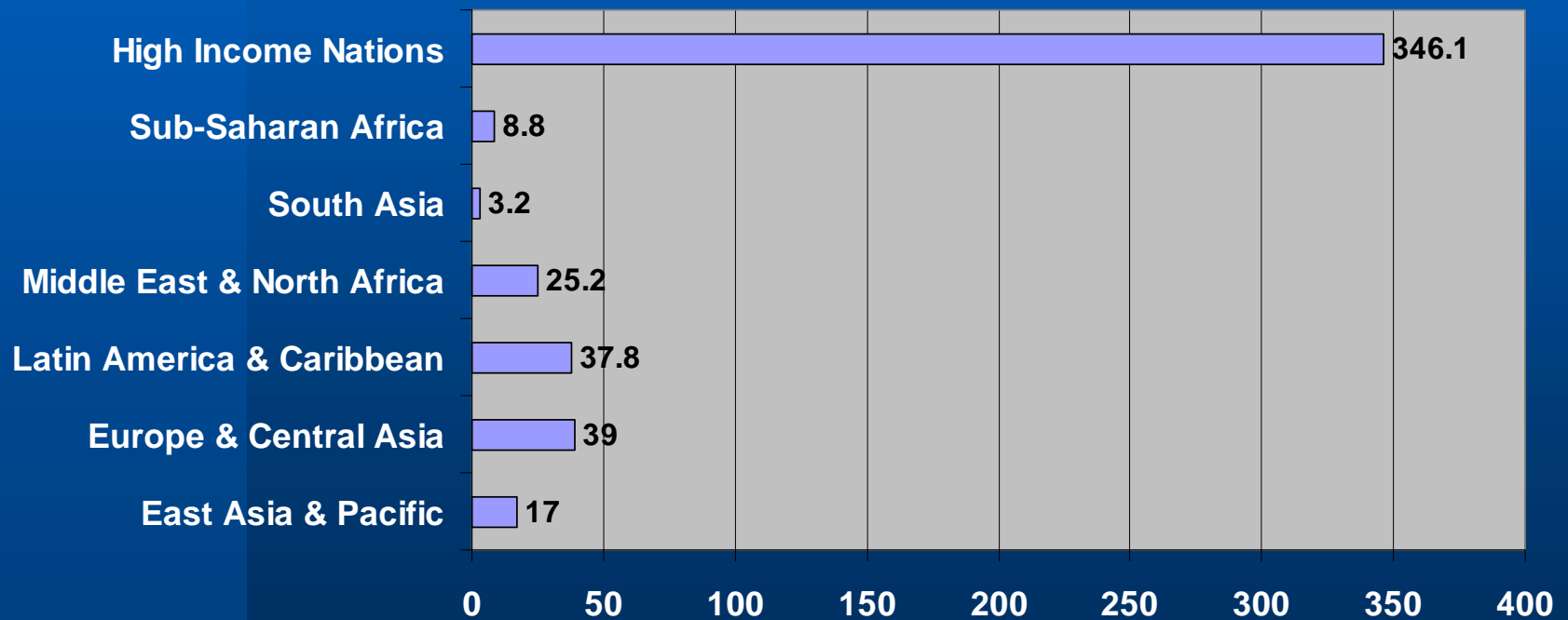
Personal Computer Sales



Source: Consumer Electronics Manufacturers Association (U.S.)

Access to PC's

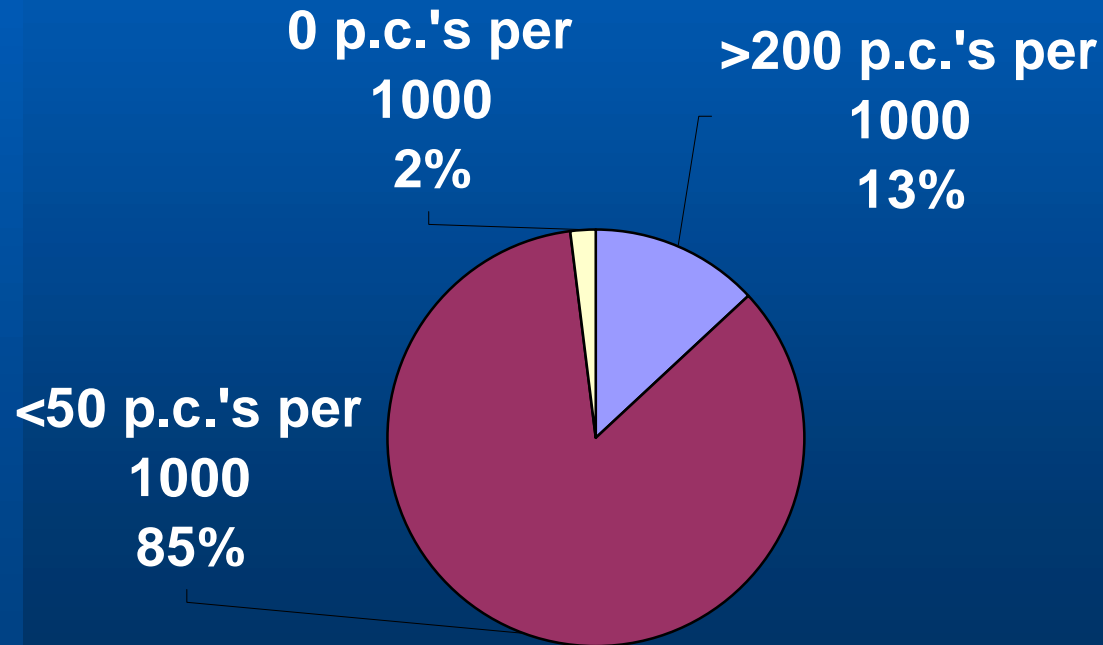
PCs per 1,000 People



Source: 2001 World Bank Atlas

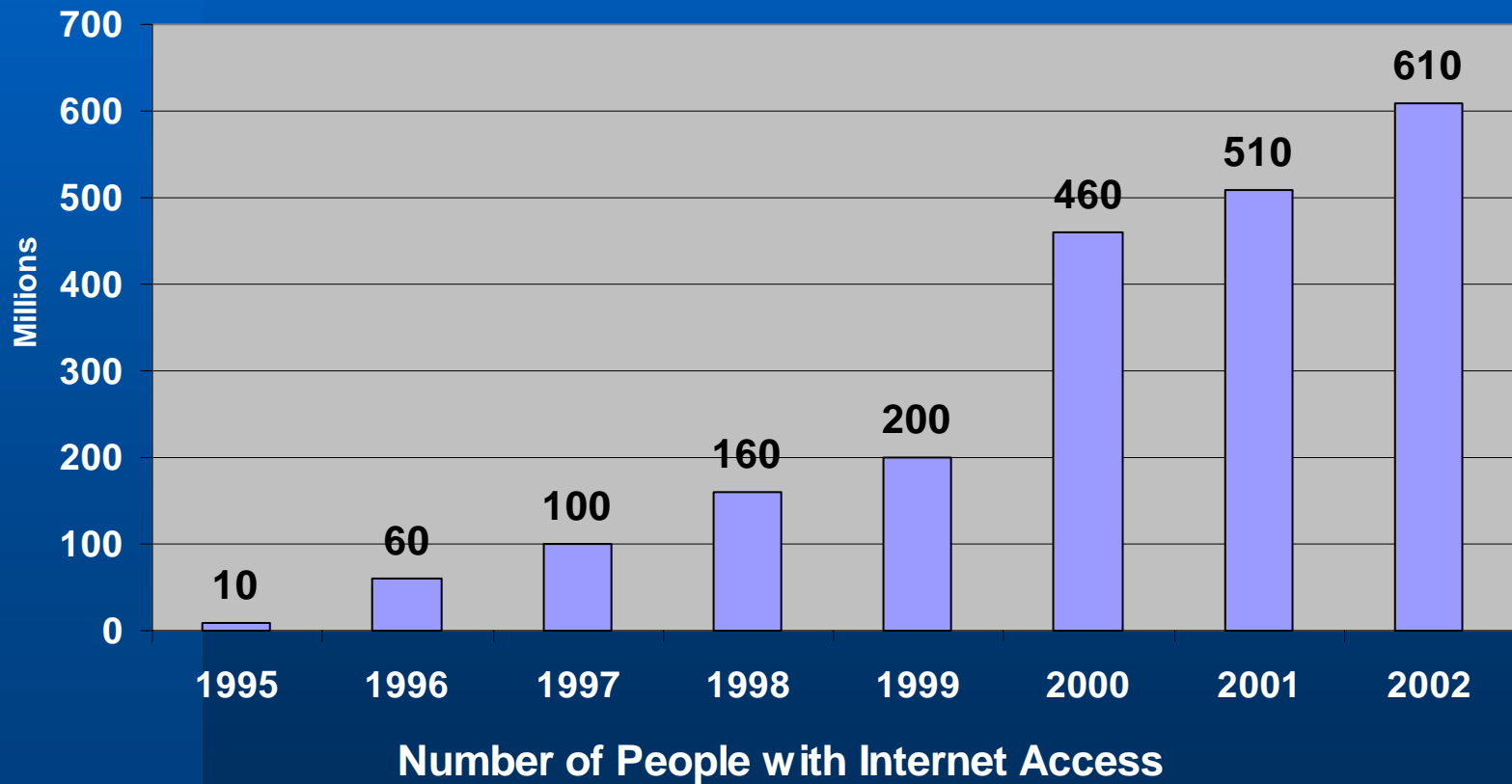
Access to PC's

Population Shares with Access to Personal Computers



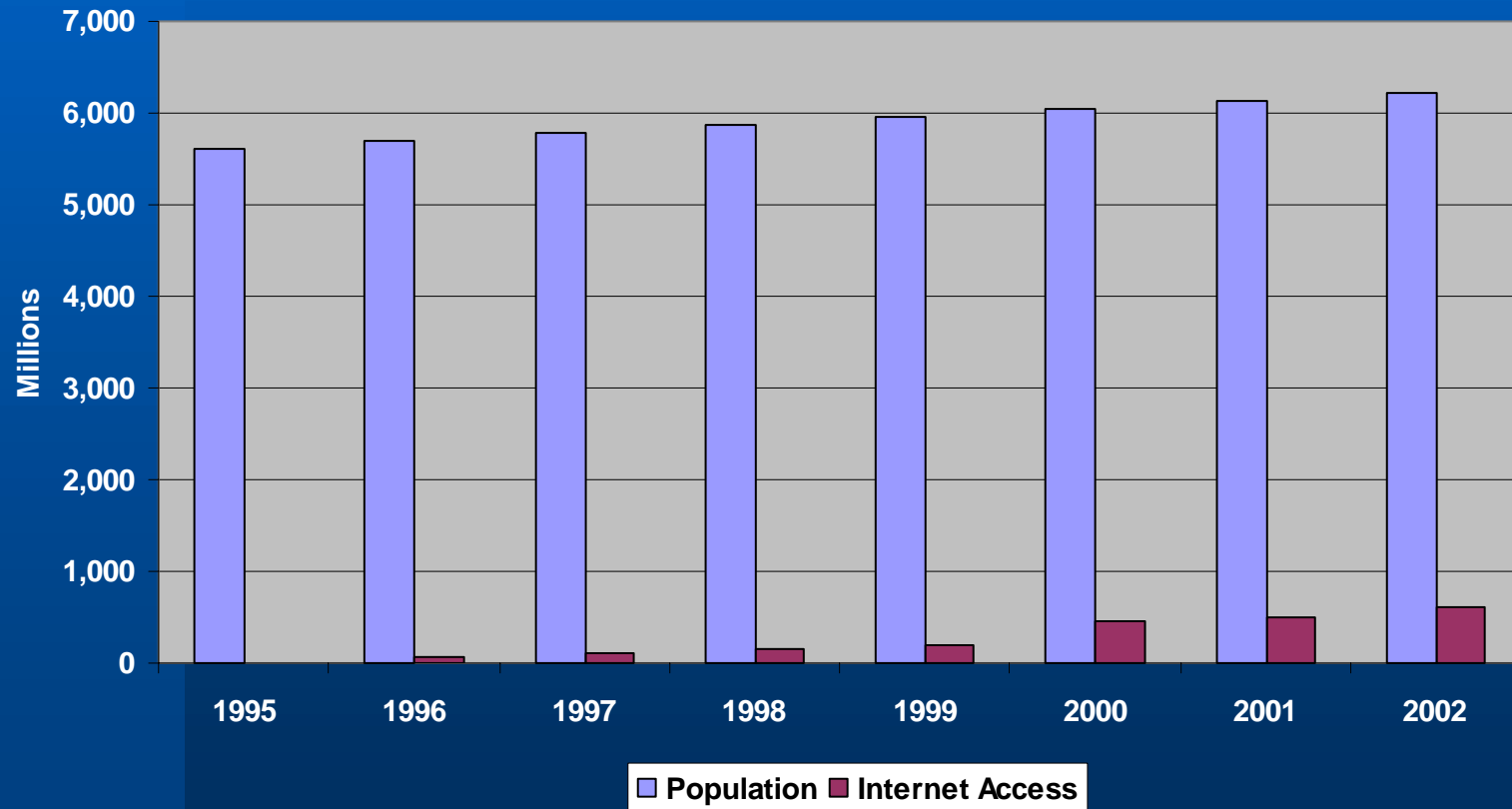
Internet Access

Internet Access Growth



Internet Access

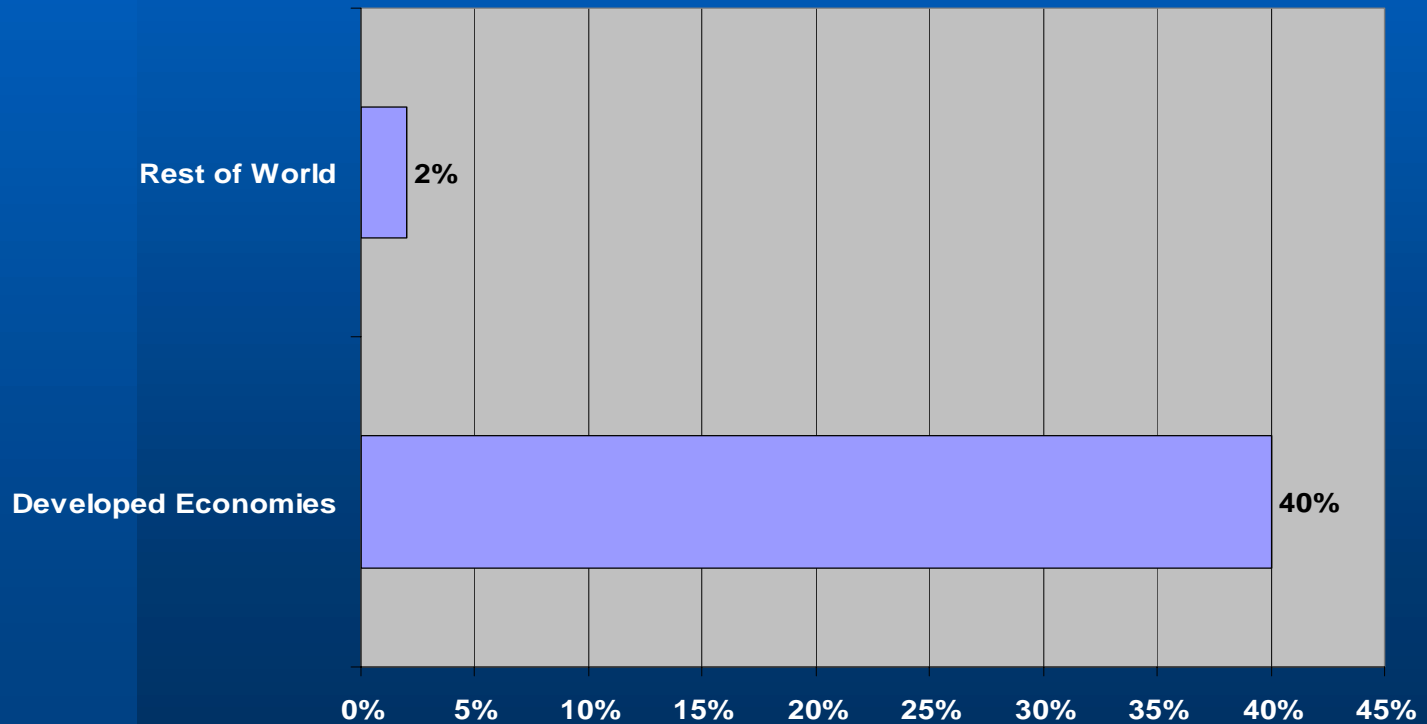
Internet Access v. Population



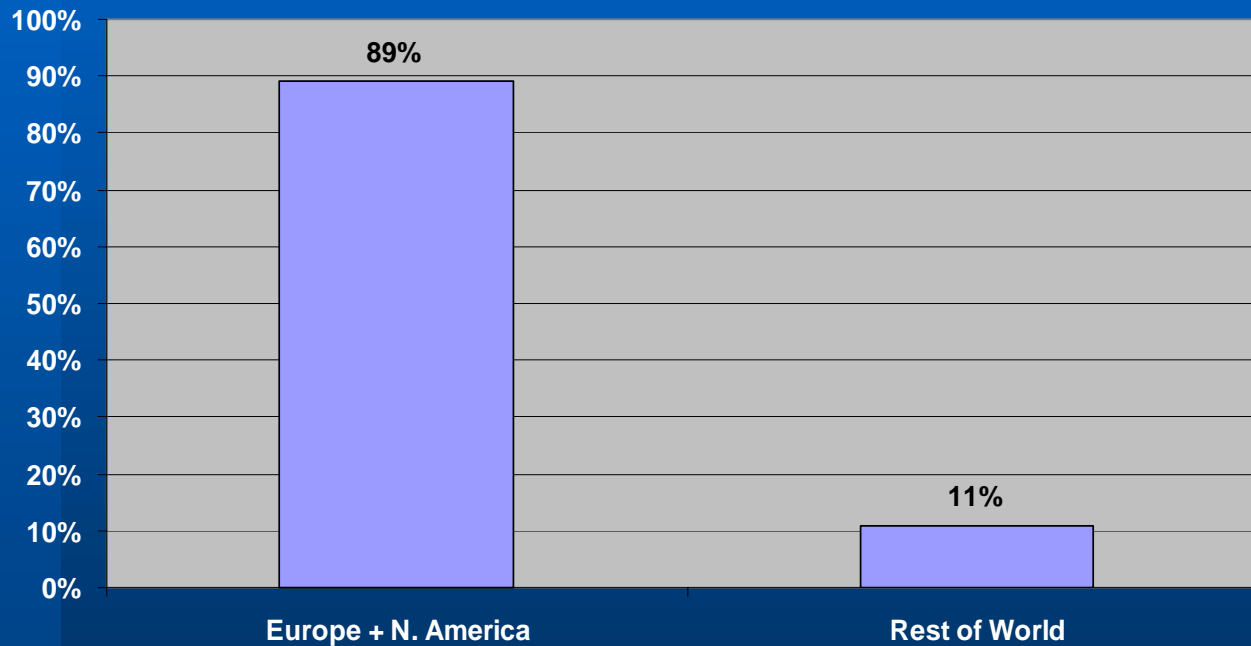
Source: <http://www.ibiblio.org/lunarbin/worldpop> (population data); NUA (Internet access data)

Internet Access

Per Capita Internet Access



Internet Hosts

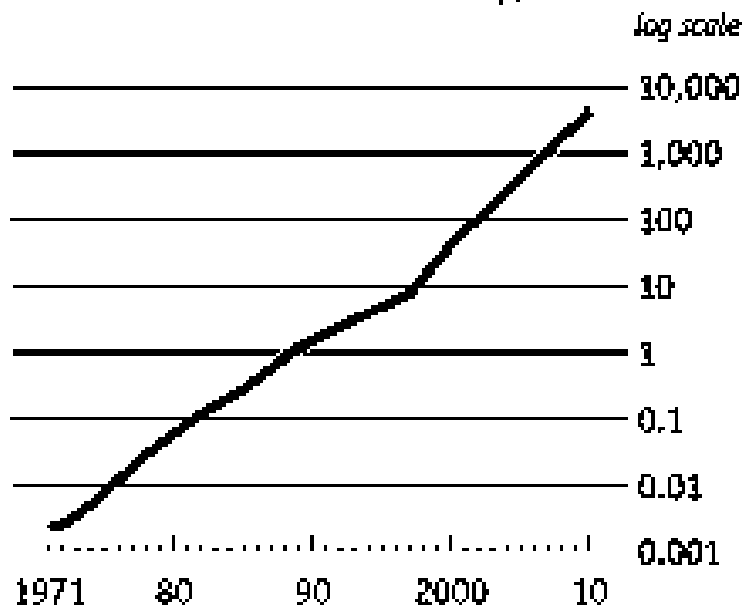


In 1997 there were 267 times as many Internet hosts in North America as in Africa. In 2000 this ratio stood at 540-to-1.

ICT Costs & Capabilities

1 Moore's law

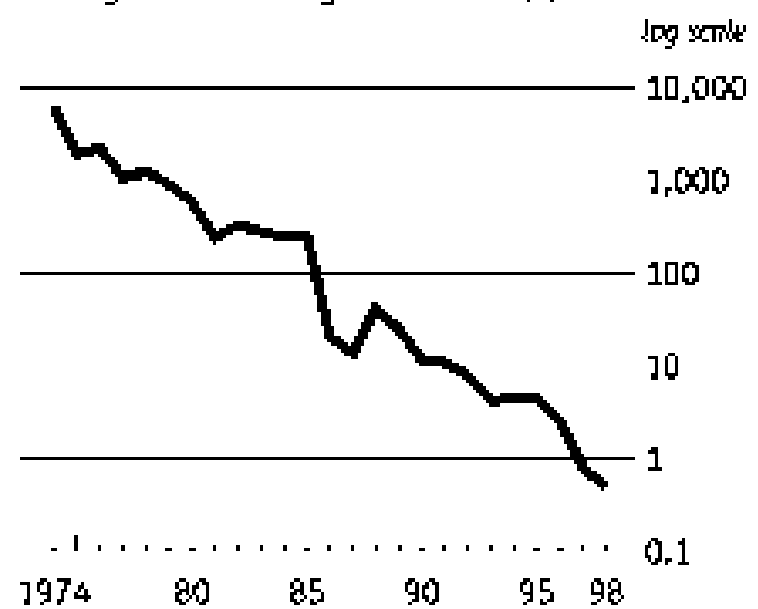
Number of transistors on RAM chip, m



Sources: Intel; The Economist

2 Cheap memories

Average cost of 1 megabit of DRAM, \$

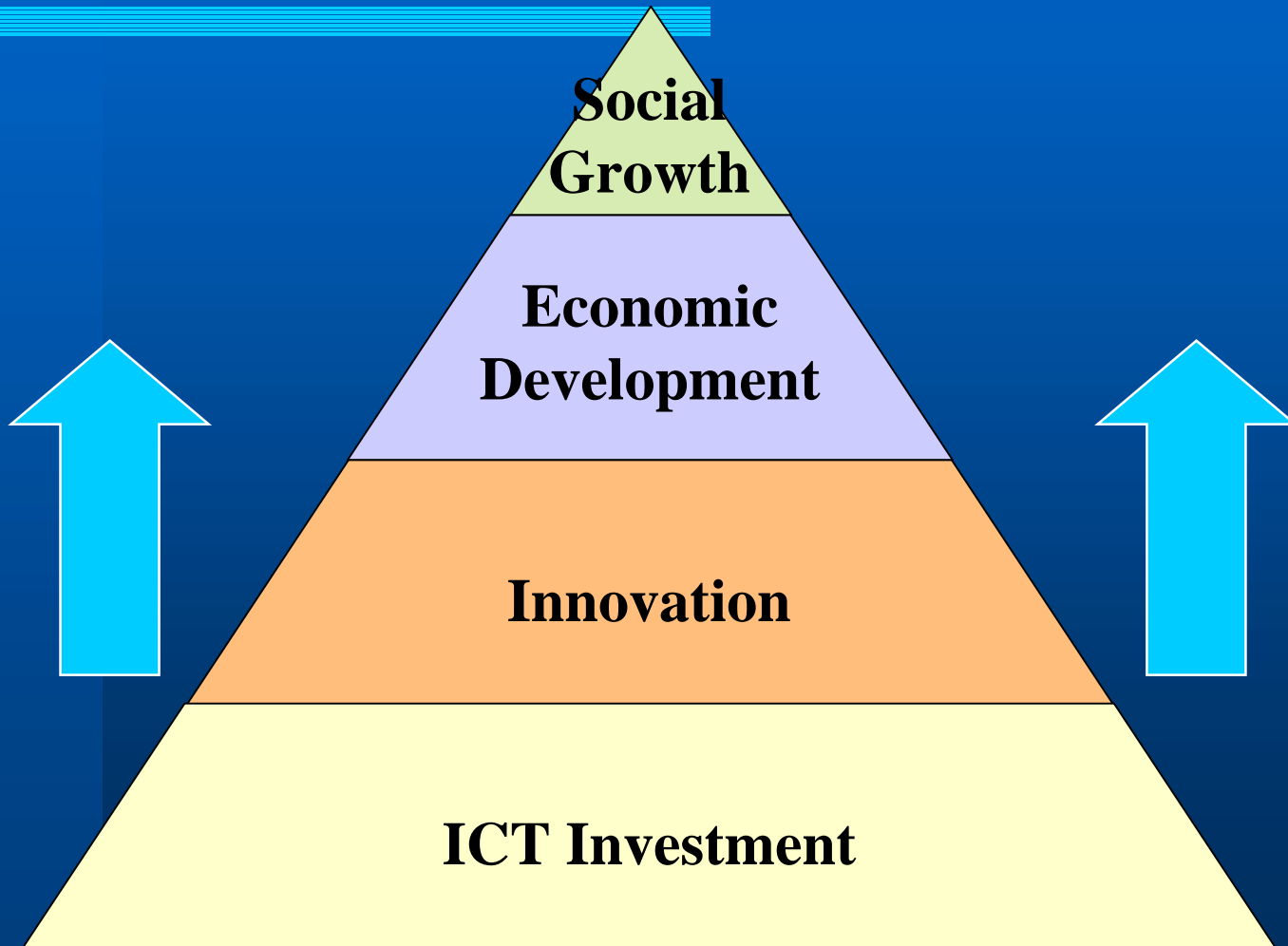


Source: Rockefeller University

WSIS: Business Points of View

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- 2. Definition of 'information society' is essential***
- 3. 'Information society' is an evolutionary concept***
- 4. Where the world is in the 'information society' evolution can be measured***
- 5. Prioritization and focus are needed***

ICT Investment: Why?

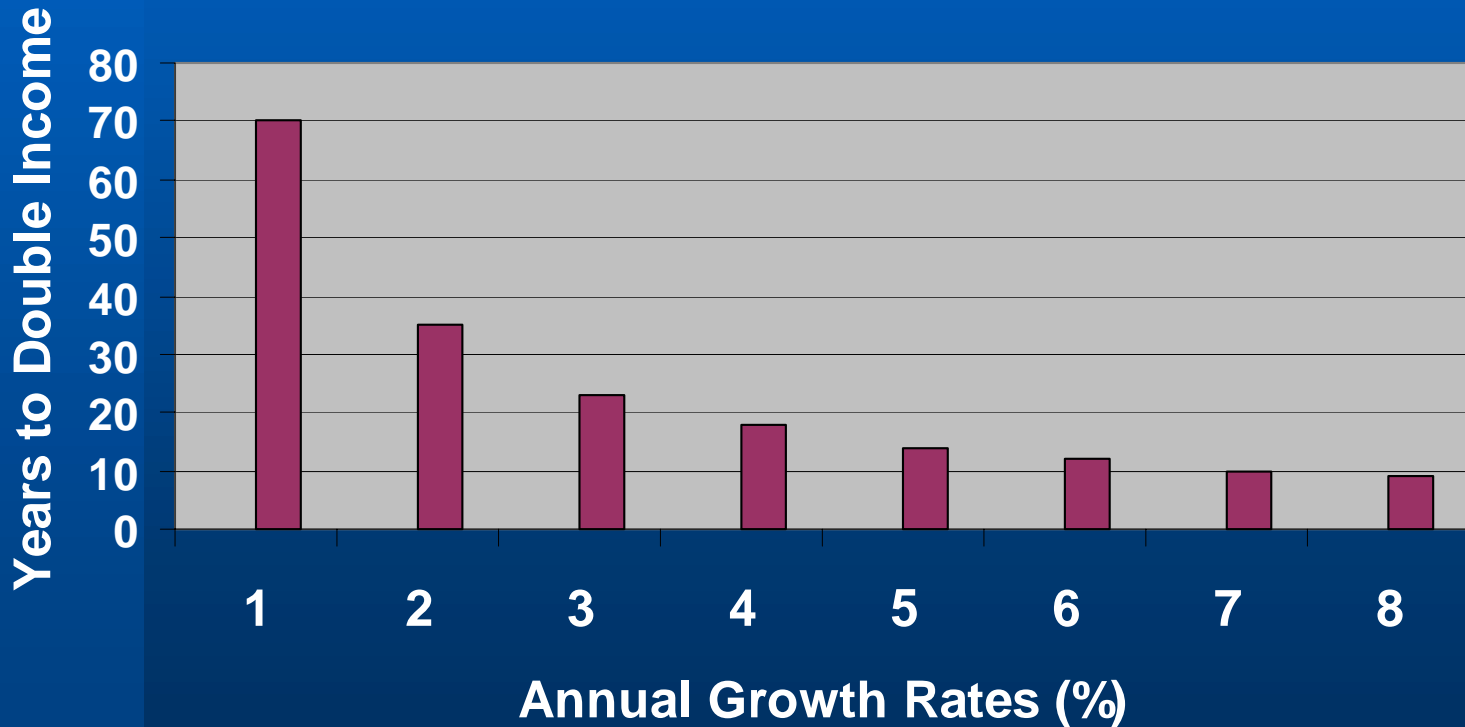


WSIS: Business Points of View

-
- 6. ICT investment leads to economic and social growth*

WSIS: Productivity Counts!

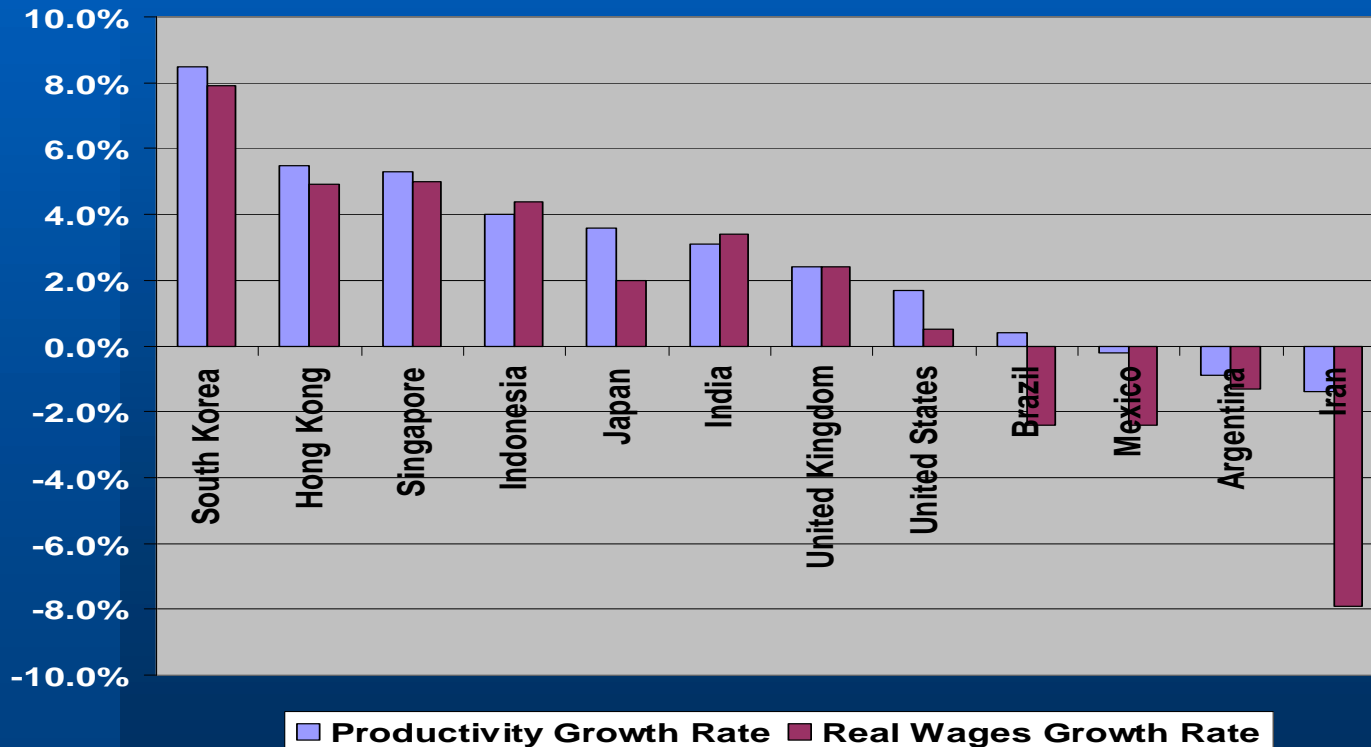
ICTs + Innovation → Productivity Growth → Income Growth



Source: *Economics*, 3d ed., Stiglitz and Walsh, 2002

WSIS: What Business is Saying

ICTs + Innovation → Productivity Growth → Real Wage Growth



Source: World Development Report, 1994

WSIS: Business Points of View

- 6. ICT investment is an essential precursor to economic and social growth*
- 7. Productivity growth is key to development*

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WSIS: Business Points of View

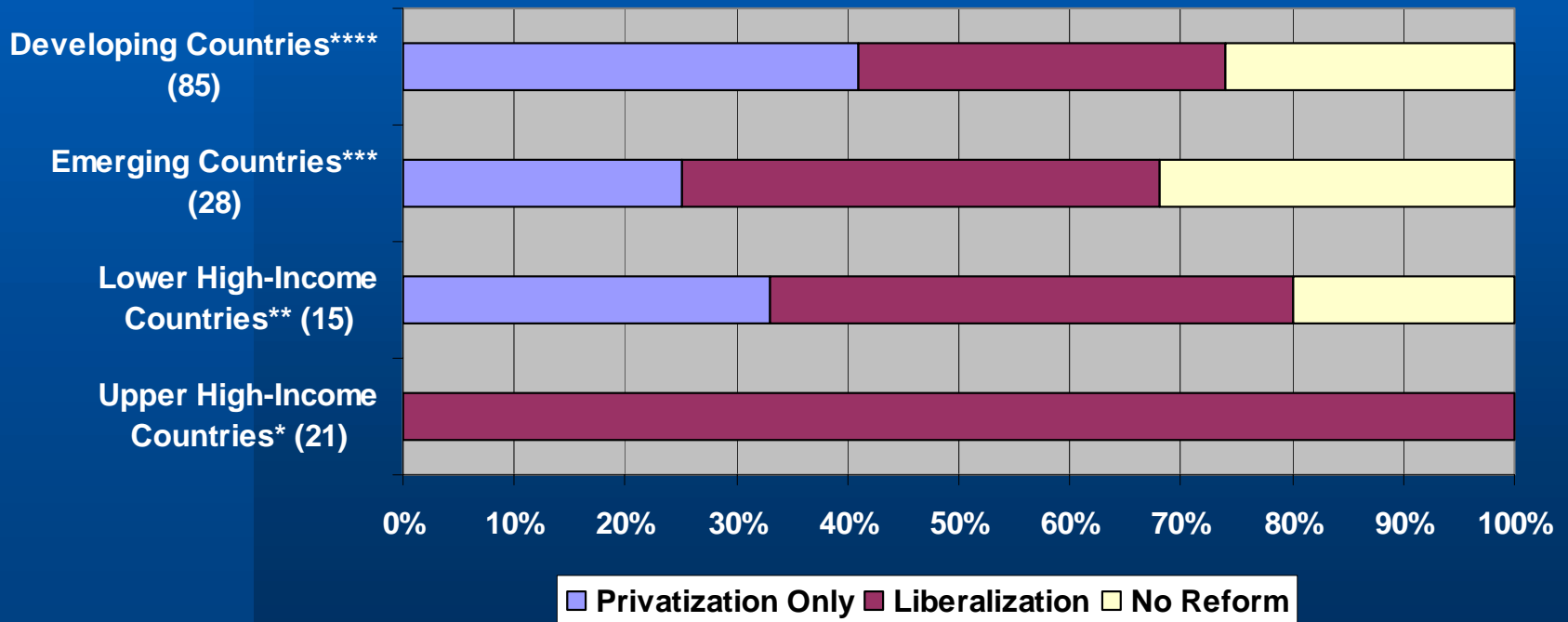
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WSIS: Business Points of View

- 6. ICT investment is an essential precursor to economic and social growth*
- 7. Productivity growth is key to development*
- 8. Investment-inviting public policies are needed*
- 9. Investment-inviting policies favor competition*
- 10. Pro-competition policy pillars are deregulation, privatization, liberalization*

Role of Policy Frameworks

Share of Countries Having Undergone Sector Reform



*Real GDP Per Capita >US\$000: 20; **>10; ***>3-10; ****<3

Source: 2001-2002 Global Information technology Report, Ch. 11

WSIS + Business: The Promise

- Heightened demand for ICTs
- Enhanced global commerce
- National economic growth
- Enhanced social well being
- Reduced poverty