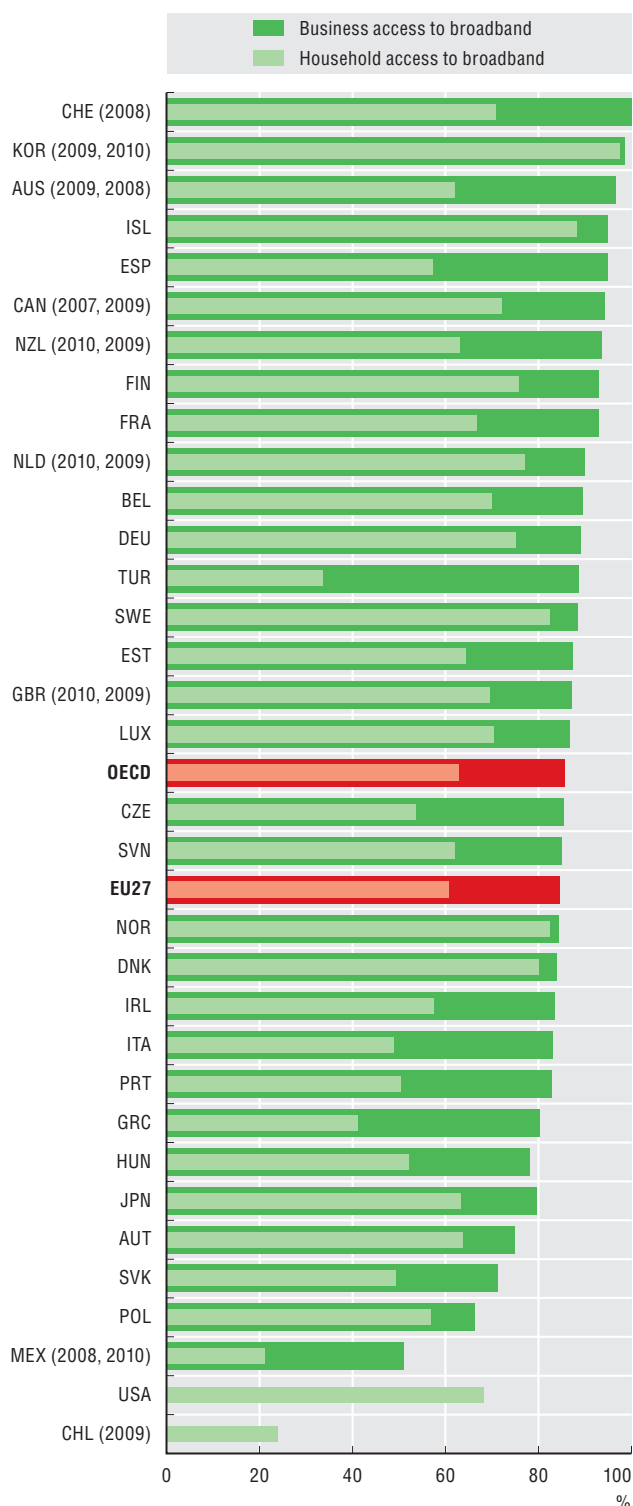


4. TARGETING NEW GROWTH AREAS

7. Access to broadband

Business and household access to broadband, 2010

Percentage of businesses with ten or more employees and percentage of all households



Source: OECD, ICT Database, May 2011; and Eurostat, Community Survey on ICT Usage in Enterprises and Survey on ICT Usage in Households and by Individuals, April 2011. See chapter notes.

StatLink <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/888932486963>

Households and individuals in many OECD countries are now accustomed to using broadband (high-speed) connections at home. At present, more than one household out of two has broadband Internet access in three-quarters of OECD countries. Korea has the largest share of households with a broadband connection via a computer or mobile phone (97%). In OECD countries the share ranges from 21% in Mexico to 97% in Korea, for an OECD average of approximately 62%.

In every OECD country the share of businesses with access to broadband exceeds that of households. In fact, the average is over 20 percentage points higher for businesses than for households. At 100%, Switzerland has the highest penetration rate among business with ten or more employees. The range is from 51% in Mexico to 100% in Switzerland.

Data on regional broadband access, available for 19 countries, show that differences within countries may be large. Geography seems to matter – small countries such as the Slovak Republic, the Netherlands and Denmark have the lowest regional differences in broadband access – but it is not the main explanation. The difference in broadband access between the top and the bottom region is the same in the United States and Germany (32 percentage points) but the territory of the United States is over 25 times that of Germany. Spain and Australia also have the same range of regional differences in broadband access (25 percentage points) but very different sizes and geography.

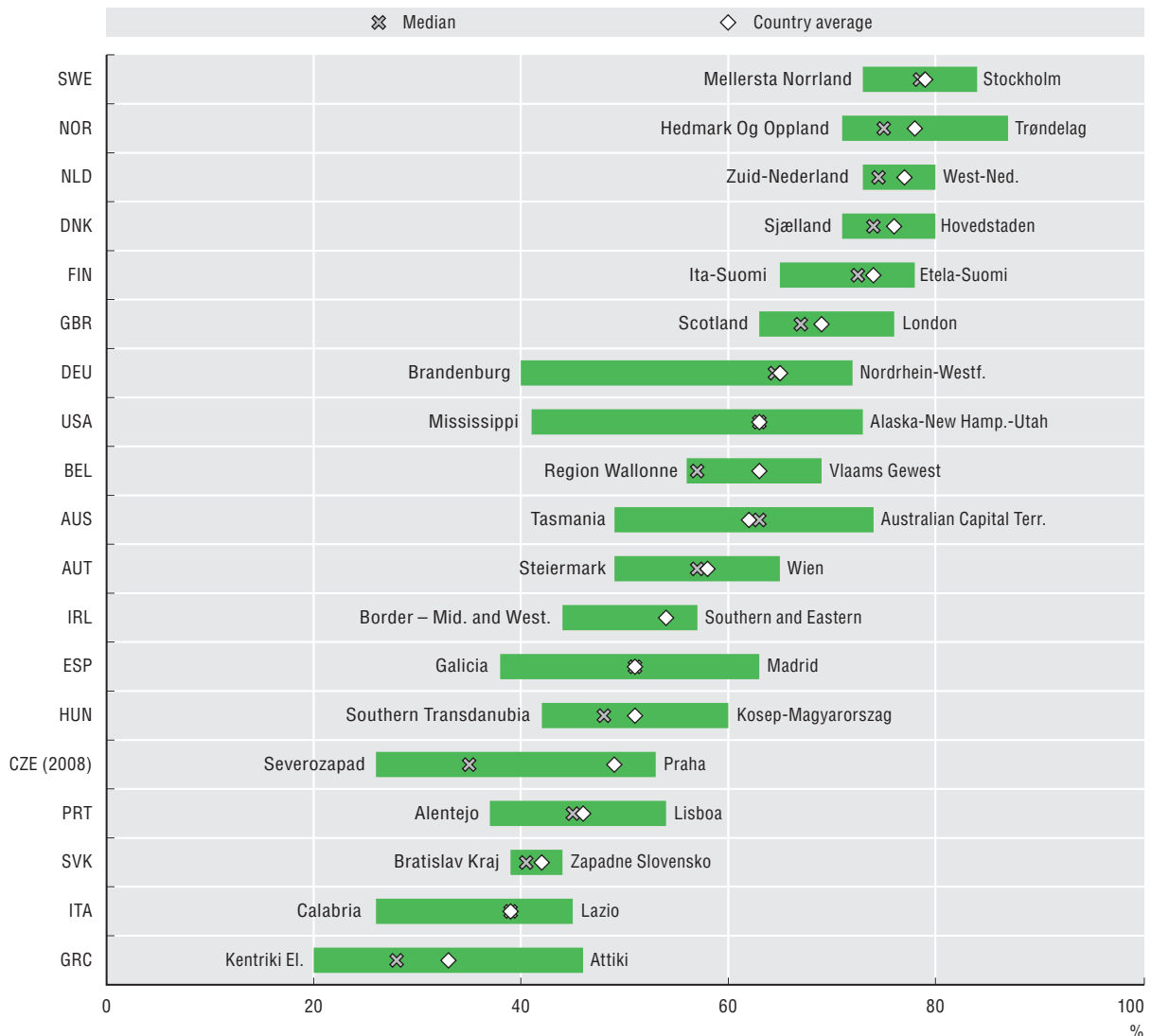
Definitions

The *OECD Guide to Measuring the Information Society 2011* defines broadband as an Internet access service – including optic fibre cable, some mobile phone access (e.g. UMTS, EDGE), power line, satellite and fixed wireless – with an advertised download speed greater than or equal to 256 kbps.


Since 2010, the OECD and the United Nations' International Telecommunication Union (ITU) broadband statistics are categorised as fixed (wired) broadband subscriptions and wireless broadband subscriptions. Fixed (wired) broadband subscriptions include: DSL, cable modem, fibre to the home/building subscriptions and other fixed (wired) broadband subscriptions such as power lines. Wireless broadband subscriptions include: satellite subscriptions, terrestrial fixed wireless subscriptions, terrestrial mobile wireless subscriptions (the sum of active mobile broadband and dedicated mobile data subscriptions).

Households with broadband access, by region, highest to lowest, 2009

Percentages, sorted by country average



Source: OECD, Regional Database, April 2011. See chapter notes.

StatLink  <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/888932486982>**Measurability**

There is no universally adopted definition of the threshold speed for broadband. In addition, advertised speeds are often very different than the actual speeds users may experience. As a result some countries define broadband in terms of technology (e.g. ADSL, cable, etc.) rather than speed.

Policy makers have an interest in the take-up of various broadband speeds because some services are better utilised and provide greater customer experience at higher speeds. In the past, broadband has been classified by advertised broadband speeds but there are several initiatives underway that seek to measure the actual speeds on broadband lines using a combination of hardware and software solutions. These advancements in measurement will help policy makers better understand which areas have more robust connectivity and which other may need additional investment to support the emergence of new, innovative services.



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