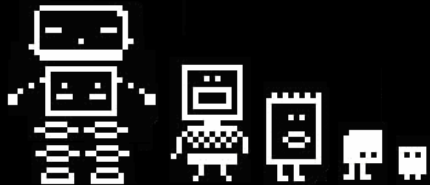


# e-government for all?

an overview of recent  
research and theory on  
digital exclusion in Europe

presentation to 'e-government for low socio-economic groups: e-government and social inclusion - barriers, opportunities and future direction' symposium,  
brussels,  
11\_03\_08



# recognising the multiple levels of ‘ICT use’

- **formal access to a range of different types of hardware**
- **formal access to a range of different types of software/ content**
- **‘effective’ access different types of ICT**
- **spectrums of connectivity**
- **a variety of competencies and ‘multi-literacies’**
- **technical support**
- **social support**

# so what is digital exclusion and why does it matter?

- **temporal resources** (time to spend on different activities in life)
- **material resources above and beyond ICT equipment and services** (e.g. income and all kinds of property)
- **mental resources** (knowledge, general social and technical skills above and beyond specific ICT skills)
- **social resources** (social network positions and relationships – e.g. in the workplace, home or community)
- **cultural resources** (cultural assets, such as status and forms of credentials)

# recognising the continued importance of digital exclusion



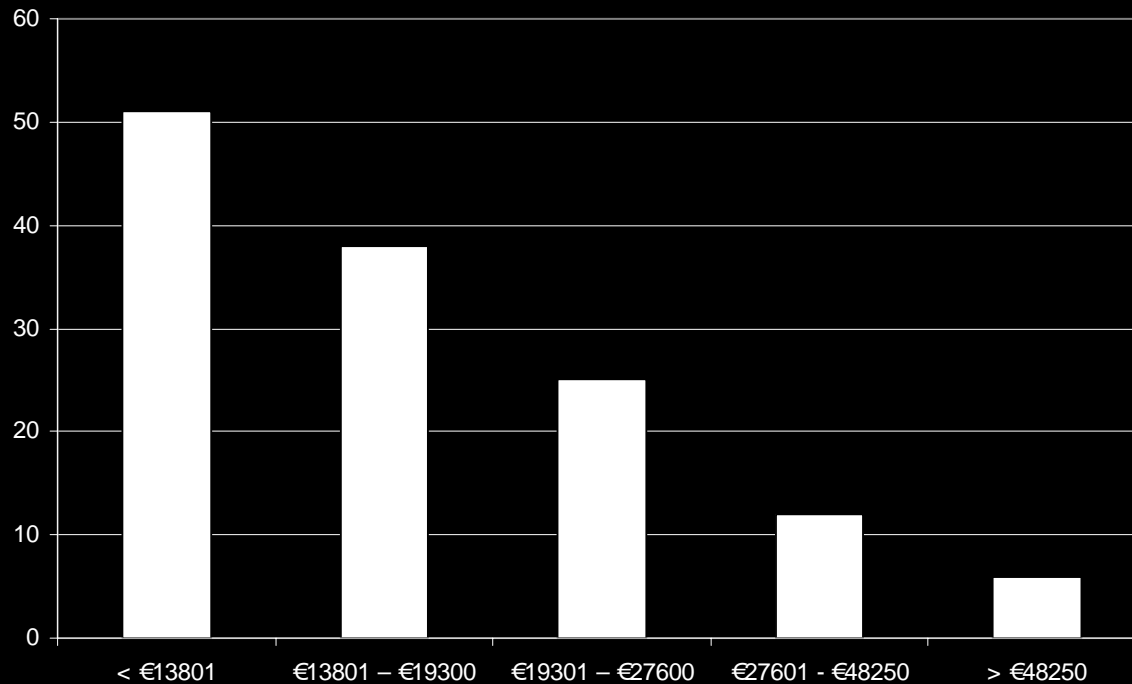
recognising the continued  
importance of digital exclusion



recognising the continued  
importance of digital exclusion

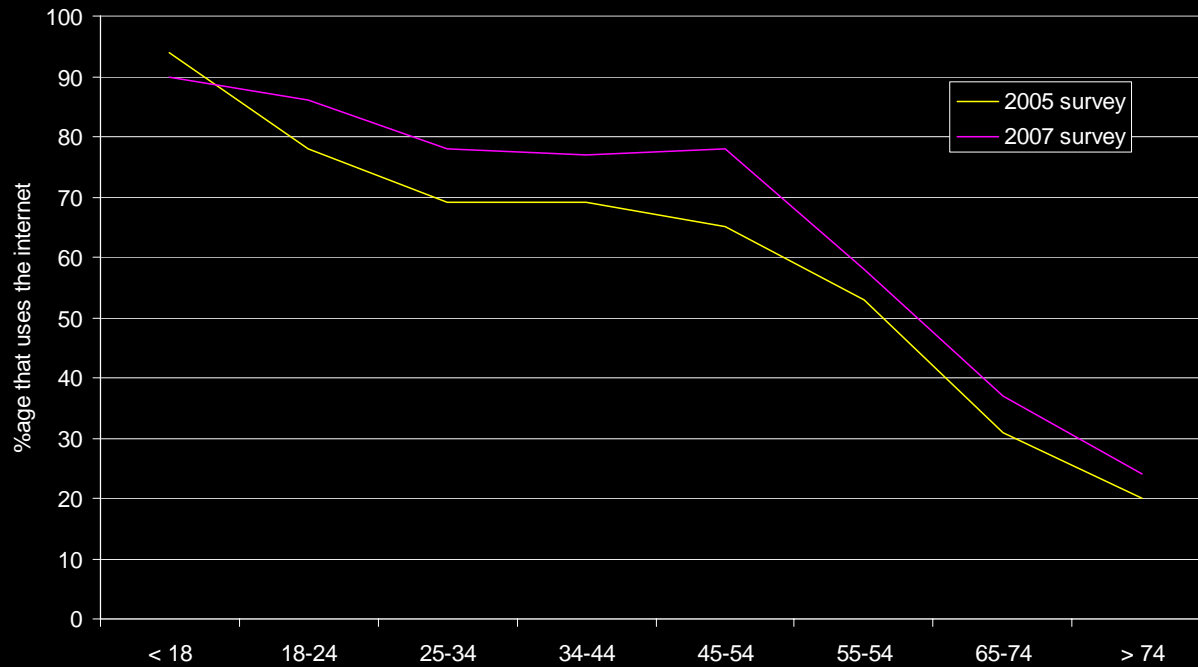


# recognising the continued importance of digital exclusion



percentage of UK adult population (age 16 years or over) who has never made use of the internet (ONS 2007)

# recognising the continued importance of digital exclusion



# recognising the continued importance of digital exclusion

- income/ socio-economic status
- education
- family structure
- age
- race
- gender
- geography/ rural-urban location
- culture / social participation

“nearly all related studies agree that the fundamental solution lies beyond a mere consideration of information availability and infrastructure; they call for governments to interfere with the deep-rooted factors which have directly or indirectly caused this situation” (Yu 2006)

# towards an altered understanding of inclusive e-government

enabling all individuals to make informed and empowered choices about the uses of ICTs *whilst* ensuring these individuals have ready access to the resources required to enable them to act on these choices

# beyond digital exclusion: a charter for change

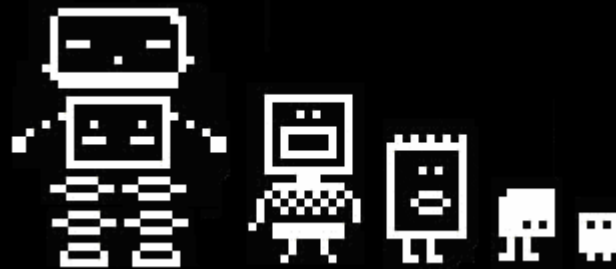
- **Entitlement one:** All individuals are able to exercise an empowered and informed choice about their use or non-use of e-government and other ICT-based practices
- **Entitlement two:** All individuals have ready access to the requisite social and technical support, skills and know-how to support their use of e-government and other ICT-based practices
- **Entitlement three:** All individuals have ready access to e-government content and services which are relevant and useful to their needs and interests
- **Entitlement four:** All individuals have ready access to a full range of ICT hardware and software required to engage with e-government and other ICT-based practices.

# beyond digital exclusion: a charter for change

- Challenge one:** to start from premise that individuals from all sectors of society can be digitally excluded – not just those who are considered socially disadvantaged in general, or just those who make no use of ICT
- **Challenge two:** to remember that there is a diverse and wide range of technologies which can be considered as ICTs – not just computers and the internet
  - **Challenge three:** to draw upon the diverse and wide range of activities for which ICTs can be used
  - **Challenge four:** to strive to extend the range of ICT-mediated activities through the involvement of all social groups in the production of digital content and services
  - **Challenge five:** to find ways to make the full range of ICT-based activities visible and viable to all individuals – regardless of their current engagement with ICT
  - **Challenge six:** to seek to match the affordances of ICTs with the everyday needs, interests and desires of individuals

# beyond digital exclusion: questions to consider

- who should take a lead?
- how do we ensure ready access to hardware and software?
- how do we ensure ready access to relevant content and services?
- how do we ensure ready access to skills, social and technical support and know-how?
- how do we ensure individuals can exercise an empowered choice?



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