

Information and communication technologies in enterprises

January 2010

Istat disseminates the main findings of the survey on the use of information and communication technologies (ICT) in enterprises with at least 10 persons employed working in industry and services. The data refer to the use of ICT in January 2010, while those on electronic commerce and the use of online services offered by the Public Administration refer to 2009.

Since 2009 data are reported according to the new classification of economic activities Nace 2007. With reference to 2010, activities which are included in the ICT sector in accordance with the definition adopted by Eurostat, are also identified. In order to make the presentation of information consistent with that adopted in Europe, we will refer to the data regarding all activities with the exclusion of financial services, which will be handled separately. In 2010 the survey has included a section regarding ICT security¹.

Main results

The adoption of basic information and communication technologies in enterprises with 10 employees in industry and services is now widely established: in January 2010, 95.1 percent of companies claimed to use computers and 93.7 percent have a connection to the Internet. The use of computers involved four out of ten persons employed (Table 1a).

In January 2010 the use of networks regarded an average of 24.4 percent of companies for Intranet and 17.3 percent for Extranet; open source operating systems were used by 15.9 percent of firms, while digital signature was used by 23.6 percent of them (Table 1a).

In general, wide differences emerged between small companies (10-49 persons employed) and larger ones (with more than 250 persons employed). The use of Intranet regarded 21.3 percent of small firms, and the larger shares depended on the company size, the top share was 74.4 percent, and it was registered in large units. Similarly, the use of Extranets was registered in 15.1 percent of small businesses and 54.6 percent of big ones. The open source operating systems were used by 13.9 percent of small and by 49.3 percent of large enterprises; digital signature respectively, from 21.7 and 50.0 percent (Table 1b).

The use of the Internet via fixed broadband connections regarded 83.1 percent of firms (Table 2a). 84.0 percent of firms was connected to the Internet via broadband connections (including fixed and mobile ones); the fast mobile connections were used by 18.6 percent of firms.

¹ Complete information on ICT usage at European level (Eurostat) and latest publication are available at the following link: http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page/portal/information_society/introduction.

In 2009, eight out of ten enterprises used online services offered by the government (Table 3a).

In January 2010, 63.2 percent of enterprises with 10 and more persons employed used electronic transmission of data between enterprises in a format that allows their automatic processing; in addition, enterprises that exchange information on supply-chain management (SCM) with suppliers or customers used mainly website (16.4 percent) compared to electronic transmission allowing automatic processing (e.g. EDI-type systems, XML, Edifact, etc.) used by 10.8 percent of them (Table 4a).

Enterprises sharing electronically and automatically information about sales orders received or purchase orders sent (either electronically or not) within the enterprise between different functions were, respectively, 40.8 and 33.9 percent. Moreover 21.9 percent of enterprises used software application for sharing information with other internal functions (accounting, production, marketing, etc.) and 23.4 percent to share information about their own clients (CRM software application) (Table 5a).

Just over one out of three companies made online purchases and 5.0 percent online sales (Table 6a) with higher figures for specific activities as accommodation (48.3 percent), publishing (40.9 percent) and telecommunications (18.3 percent).

About three out of ten enterprises have an ICT security policy formally defined, with strong differences among economic activities and among firm size: from 81.6 percent of financial services activities to 5.3 percent of enterprises operating in food and beverage sector; from 25.9 percent of small enterprises to 78.7 percent of large ones (Table 7a).

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