



eLearning for Work: The Role of Access, Motivation and Competence in Explaining Uptake

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Background: the eUSER project

- **Project funded under FP6 (Jan 2004 – June 2006)**
- **Improving user orientation of online public service delivery**
- **Looking into online services in three domains:**
 - public administration (eGovernment),
 - lifelong learning (eLearning),
 - healthcare (eHealth)
- **Demand-side survey (10 countries)**
 - Old Member States: DE, DK, FR, IE, IT, UK
 - New Member States: CZ, PL, SI, HU
 - Questions covering access, competence, motivation aspects and experience with online (and offline) services
 - Extensive list of variables about socio-demography and life situation
- **Supply-side qualitative assessment**
 - 25 country reports for EU25.

Note

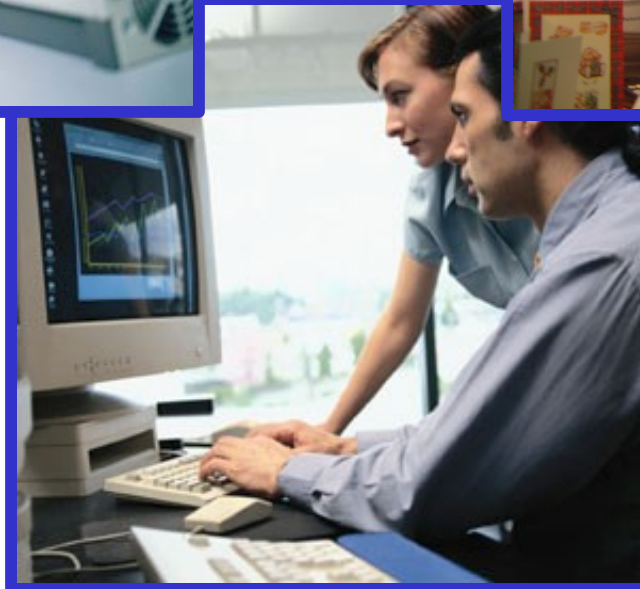
The data included in this presentation are weighted in order to reflect the real distribution according to gender, household type, region and age in the universe of the countries surveyed.

Averages given are means for the total sample comprising the country data from CZ, DE, DK, FR, IE, IT, PL, SI, HU and UK (N=9805), unless otherwise noted.

Mean averages are not weighted for the share of the country in total EU25 population.

Sampling frames exclude people in households without terrestrial phone connection.

The promise of eLearning



The promise of eLearning

- **ESDIS Report:**
 - “e-Learning can make a major impact for social inclusion.
 - It provides access to education and training opportunities for all, in particular for those who have access problems.
 - ICT offers possibilities of bringing knowledge to those who have not earlier been able to participate in education for social, economic, geographic or other reasons.“
- **Two types of potential positive impacts:**
 - to substitute for less efficient, less effective, or more costly types of learning
 - to increase the overall amount of participation in learning
- **Implication:**
 - Risk of a “Deepening Digital Divide” (van Dijk 2005 - e.g. “Mathew effect”)?

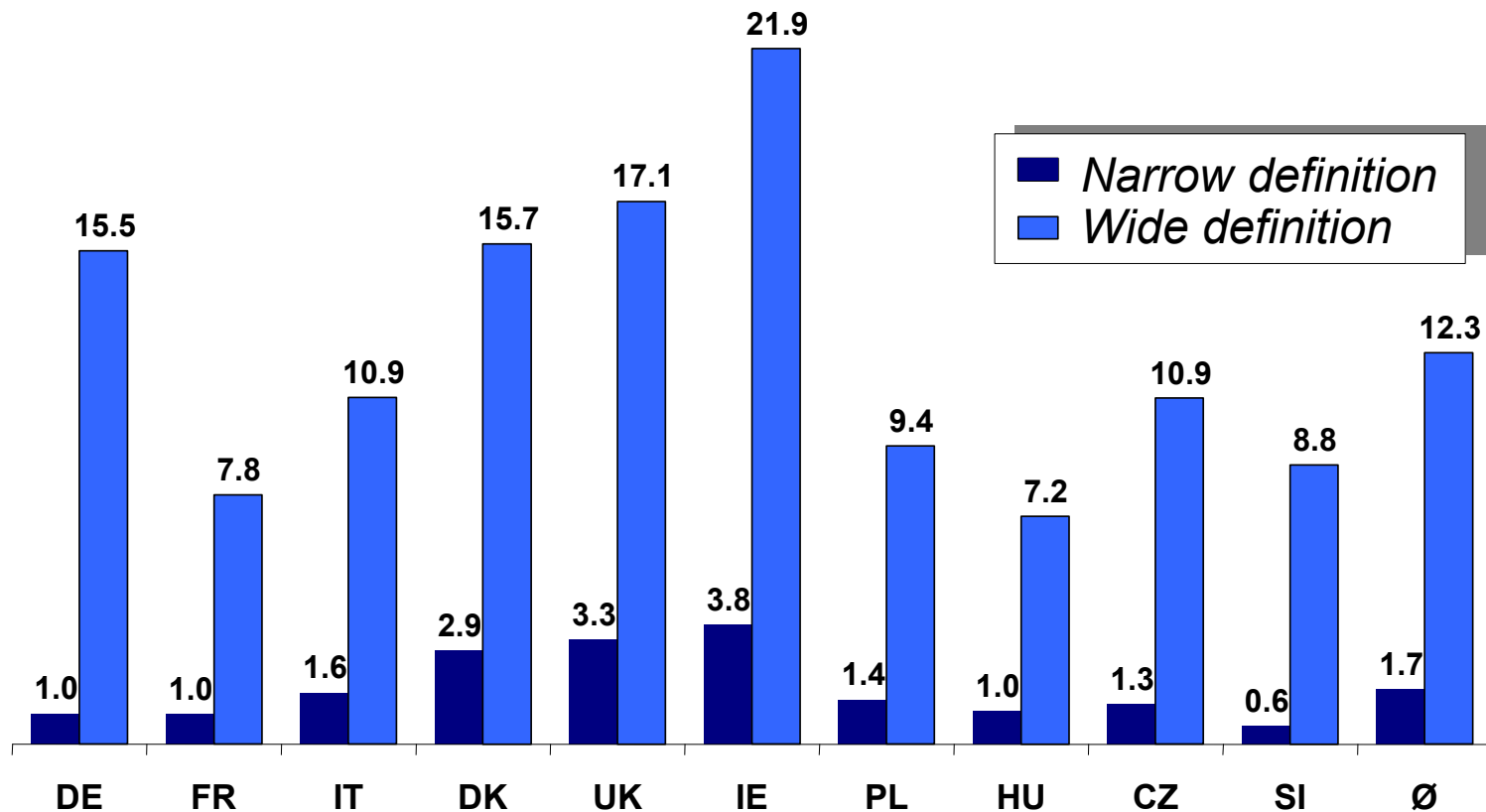
eLearning uptake

- **Wide definition:**
 - Do online research as part of learning course
 - Exchange messages with co-learners about learning related issues
 - Download learning content put online for that purpose
 - Take online eLearning course, i.e. significant part of learning content is being received via the Internet.
- **Narrow definition:**
 - Take online eLearning course, i.e. significant part of learning content is being received via the Internet.

eLearning uptake

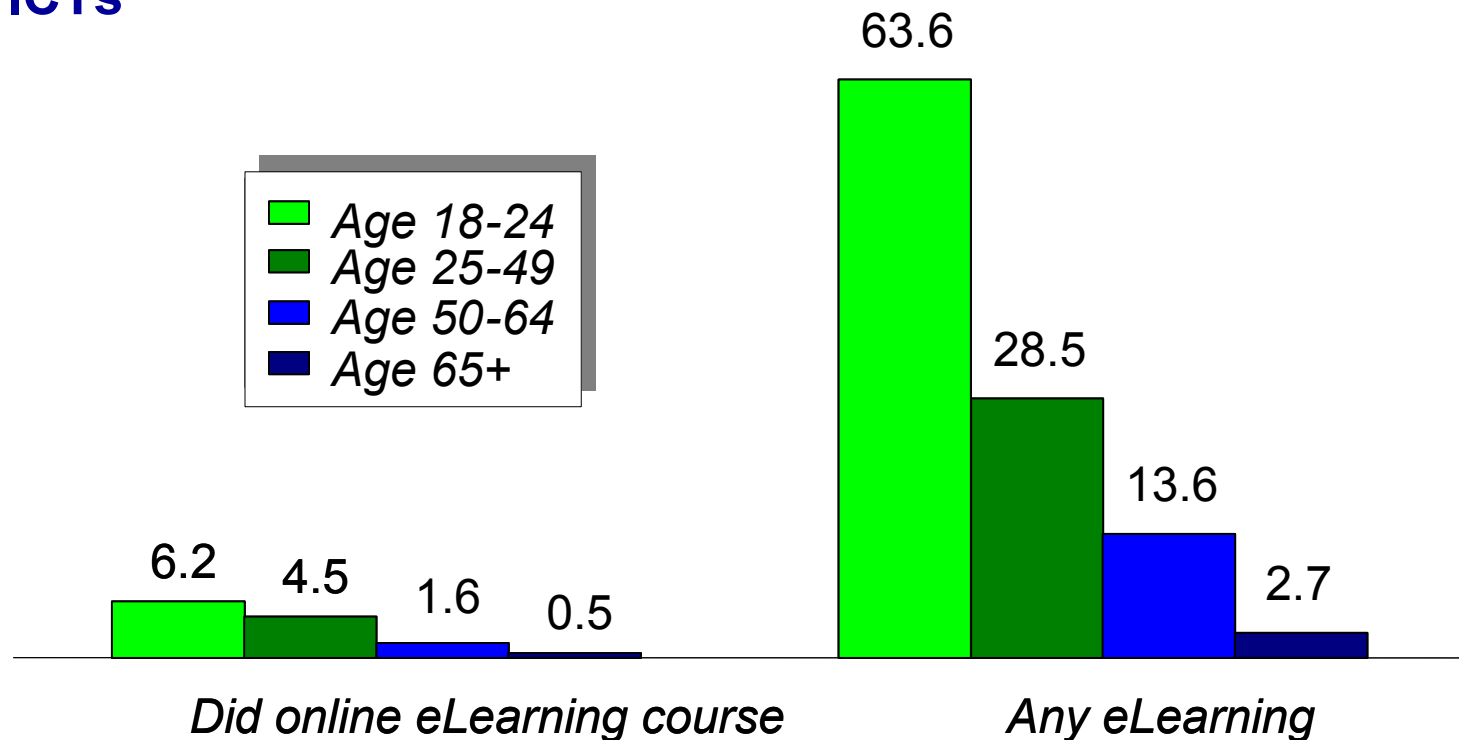
Uptake of eLearning (wide & narrow definition)

(in percentage of total adult population, excluding full-time students)



eLearning uptake (by age)

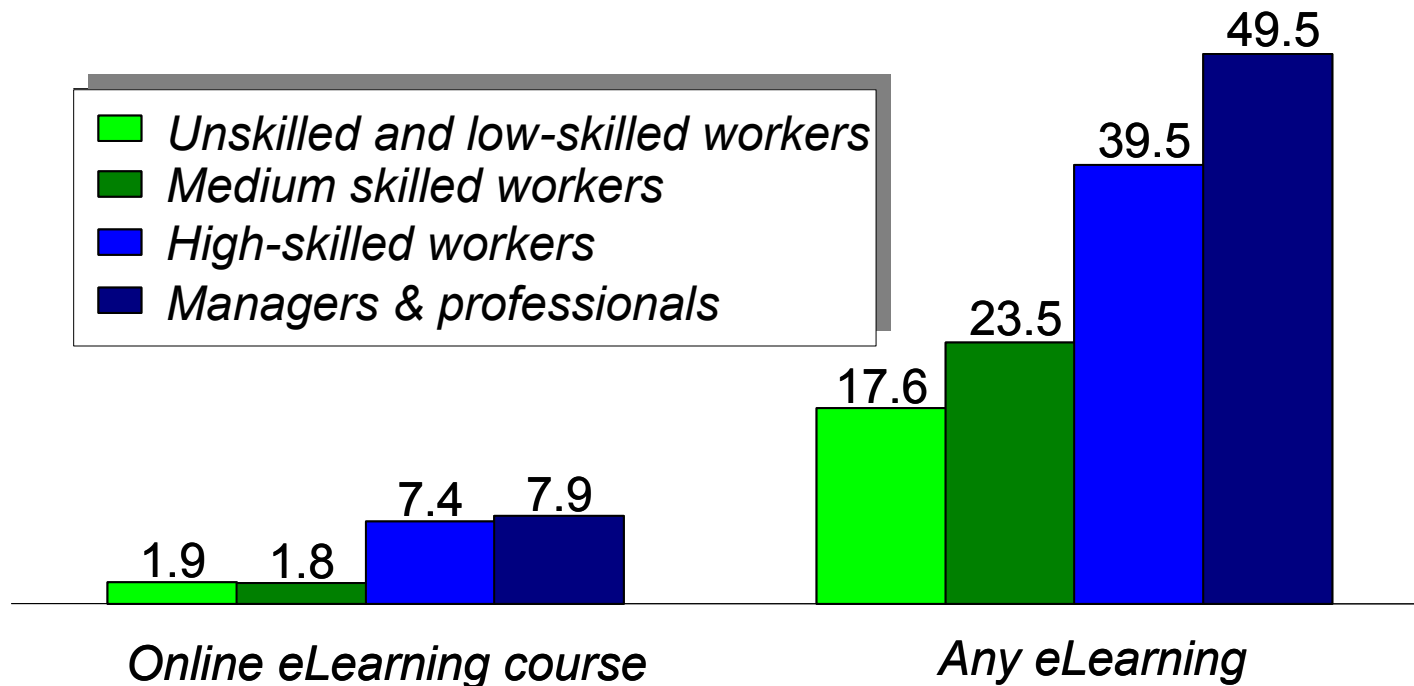
- eLearning users tend to be people who feel confident in using ICTs



Source: eUSER Population Survey Spring 2005
Base: Total population. Six-country averages

eLearning for work (by occupational status)

- eLearning users tend to be high-qualified and have a high income and good job



Source: eUSER Population Survey Spring 2005
Base: all in paid work. Sixcountry averages

Where do we stand today?

- Need for widening and intensifying participation in lifelong learning among Europeans
- Political push for making every citizen participate in lifelong learning
- Supply on the market is maturing
- eLearning users tend to be satisfied
- Usage is taking off

however ...

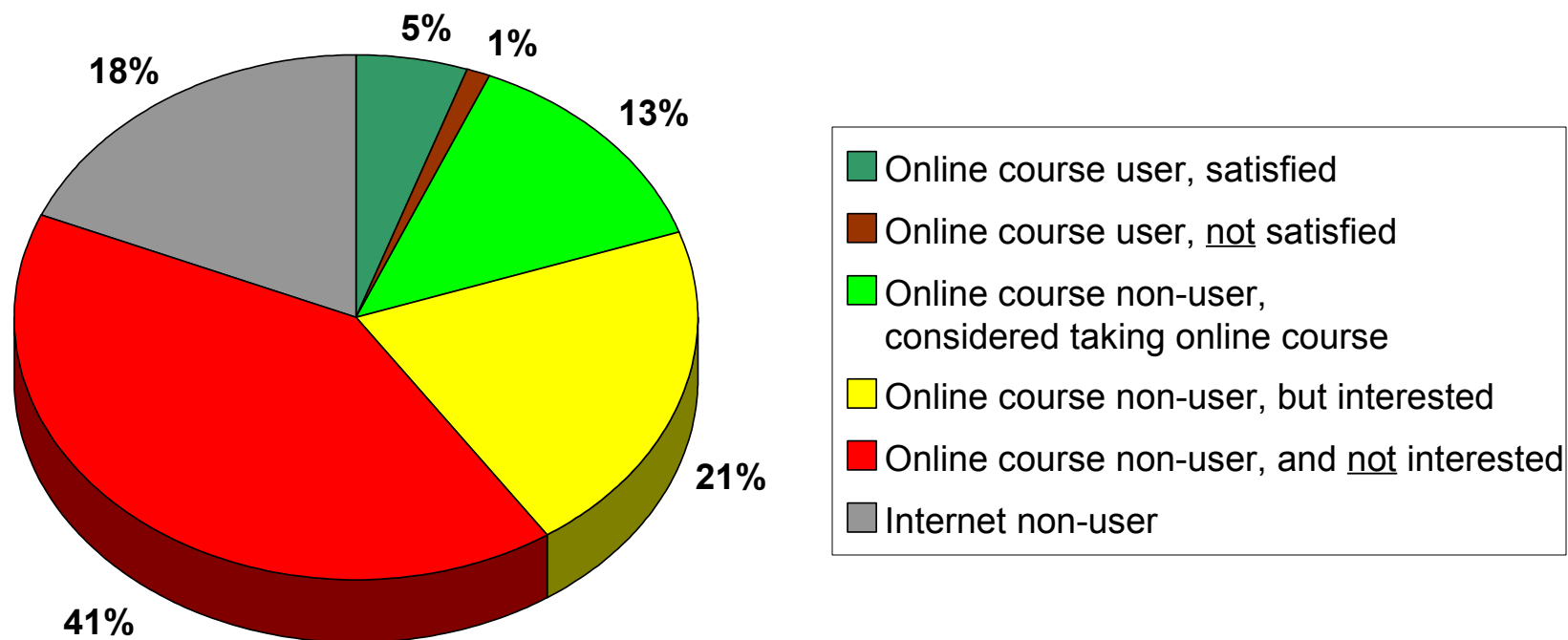
However:

- **Technological feasibility drives online eLearning services**
- **Widespread assumption that eLearning services, once put online, will automatically meet demand**
- **eLearning users are usually those who are at the forefront of technological developments anyway (high-qualified, high income, good job)**
- **Often strong preference for traditional delivery channels among today's learners**
- **Lack of understanding of barriers to the uptake**

Barriers to uptake of eLearning

eLearning Courses: Uptake and Interest

(in percentage of persons engaged in adult education)

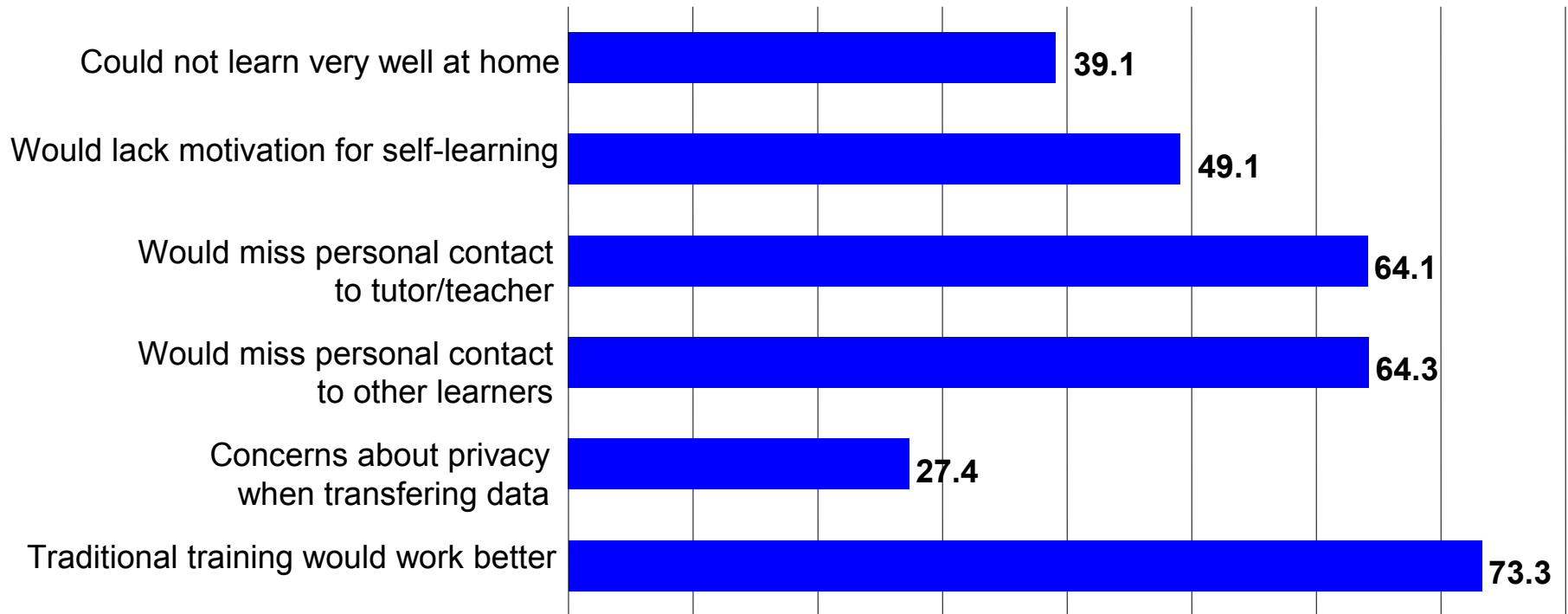


Barriers to uptake of eLearning

Reasons for lack of interest in eLearning

(percentages of adult learners saying that they cannot imagine taking an eLearning course, Overall sample)

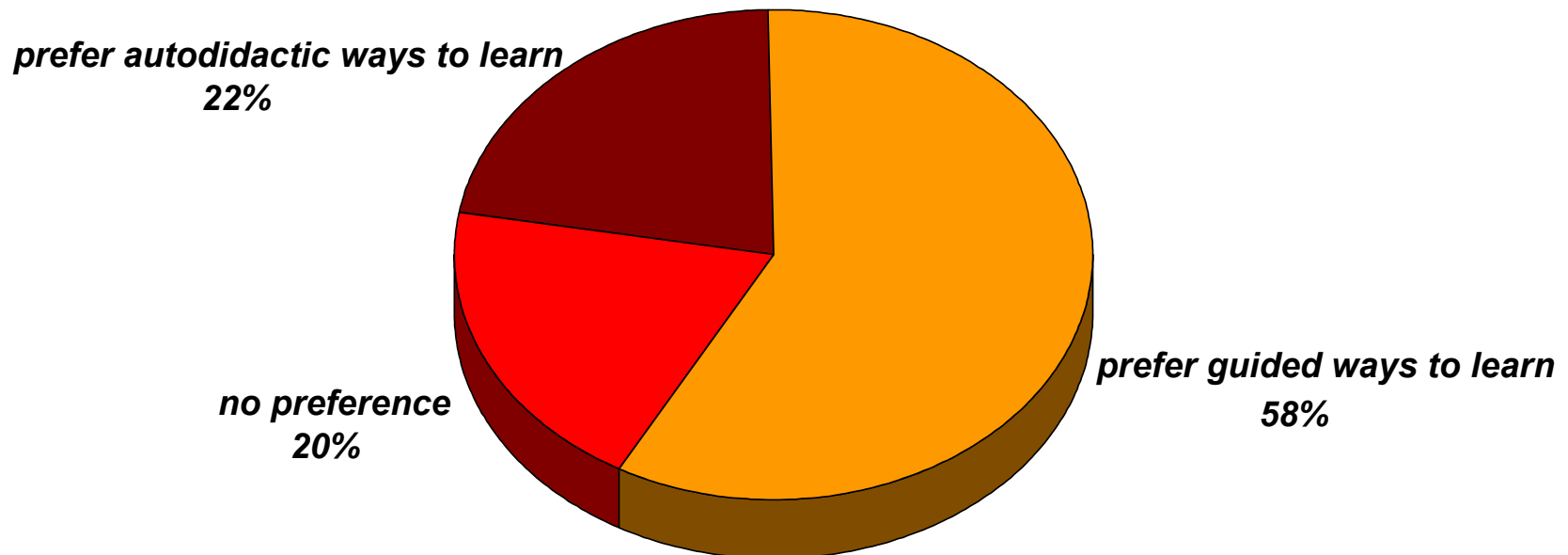
Does this factor apply



Perceived best ways to learn

Priority for ways to learn: autodidactic vs. guided learning

(total population, overall sample, all 10 EU countries)



What needs to be done?

- **Improving user orientation**
 - “The user, the individual has to be placed at the centre of future developments for an inclusive knowledge-based society for all.”
(IST Programme Work Plan, 2003)
- **Focus not only on usability, but on overall orientation of supply to needs of (actual as well as potential) users**
- **Better understanding of user needs and preferences**
- **Need for verified typologies of users and non-users**

Increasing uptake

Five types of citizens according to

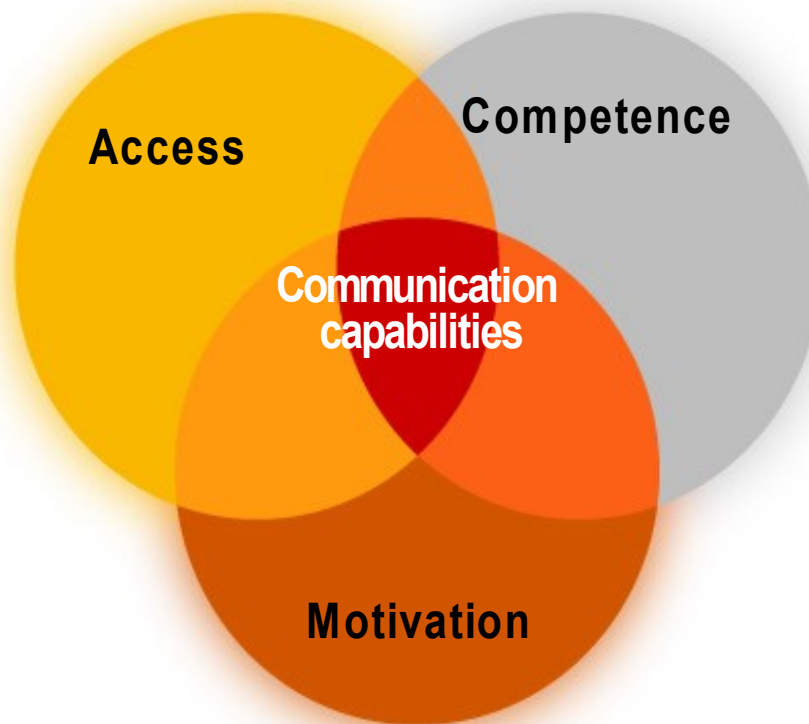
- participation in education/learning
- access to and usage of the Internet
- use of the Internet for education/learning

	online (Internet user)	offline (Internet non-user)
participating in education/learning	(A) eLearner, online	(B) eLearner, offline
not participating	(C) Non-learner, online	(D) Non-learner, offline

eLearning as
„a killer application“?

Requirements for using online public services

Communication Capabilities



Source: Viherä 1999

Factors determining eLearning uptake

- Equipment: PC, Internet
- Connection (bandwidth)
- Training offers at suitable times and places
- Employer-provided training
- Affordability
- Access to eLearning at home, at work, at other places
- Special needs

Access

Competence

Demand for eLearning

Motivation

- Learning capabilities
- Required modes of training
- ICT user experience
- Digital literacy
- Access to help from household members, family, etc.
- Language

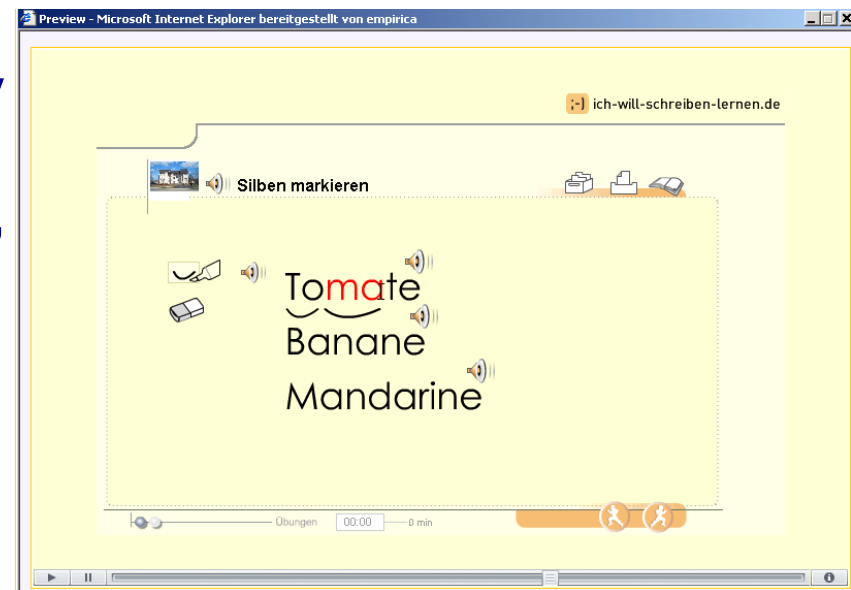
- Willingness to learn (intrinsic/extrinsic motivation)
- Expected benefits from learning
- Quality of past learning experience
- Preferred modes of training provision
- Attitudes to technology and the Internet
- Quality of online experience (functional)
- Quality of social experience

Preliminary conclusions

- eLearning users tend to be those who are at the forefront of technological developments anyway
- Considerable interest in eLearning courses, but also scepticism
- eLearning users tend to be satisfied with online offers
- Evidence that eLearning does indeed extend the reach of training offers
- Learning is a social experience, heavily contextualised: just making skills acquisition easier through ICTs will not suit learners' real life needs and preferences
- More efforts needed to use technology in innovative ways for increasing motivation for lifelong learning
- Without well-targeted intervention, eLearning is unlikely to support and increase social inclusion!

How eLearning can improve social inclusion: The case of APOLL (Germany)

- Objective: Exploit the Internet to help combat illiteracy
- Target group: Functional illiterates, age 16-25
- Background: Young illiterates under-represented in presence courses
- Funded
- Online web portal APOLL (Alfa-Portal Literacy Learning) piloted in 2003, fully operable since 2004.
- Key factor: Users remain anonymous, but are individually supported using case histories
- Success: 5000 registered users, low drop-out, very good resonance
- www.apoll-online.de



Thank you for your attention!

More information:

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Visit the eUSER website at www.euser-eu.org