

Regional broadband strategy

August 2008

A best practice by Intercommunale leiedal

In December 2006 RESOC South-West-Flanders defined the draft strategic plan for the Kortrijk region 2007-2012. The strategic plan contains ambitions and targets in the domain of economy, welfare, quality of living and education. As result of the BIRD project three broadband strategies were included in the draft plan. These are in line with the recommendations of the Steering Committee of the BIRD project.

The broadband goals in this strategy are:

- By 2009 100% of all businesses should be online
- By 2012 80% of all citizens should be online
- By 2012 50% of all retired citizens should have access and use regional broadband e-care platform services

This best practice describes the strategic importance of the ICT route project that was used to initiate the broadband goals. Because of the BIRD project these goals where then included in the regional strategy.

1 ICT route for the region.

In 2005 and 2006 Leiedal started the study "ICT-traject voor de streek Kortrijk" (ICT route for the Kortrijk region). This study questioned what actions where needed to improve the adaption of new information and communication technologies in the region.

The projected consisted of three phases:

1. Measuring the existing situation. What is the level of ICT use and offer in the region?
2. Drawing the desired state in the future. What is the ICT vision for the region?
3. Describe the necessary steps. What are the actions needed to achieve that goal?

1.1 Phase 1: The existing situation

In 2005 the research bureau Memori (part of the Catholic technical university of Mechelen) organised an online questionnaire in the Kortrijk region.

In this questionnaire the researchers investigated:

- The presence of ICT in the businesses and organisations
- The professional use of ICT
- The impact of ICT on the organisation

The questionnaire was aimed to reach businesses, education and local governments. All these organisations were contacted via e-mail.

1.1.1 Some remarkable conclusions:

These are some remarkable conclusions from the questionnaire.

1. Presence of ICT

The presence of ICT is not restricted to the amount of ICT hardware and software. The ICT skill of employees and organisation, and the engagement of the management are important parameters.

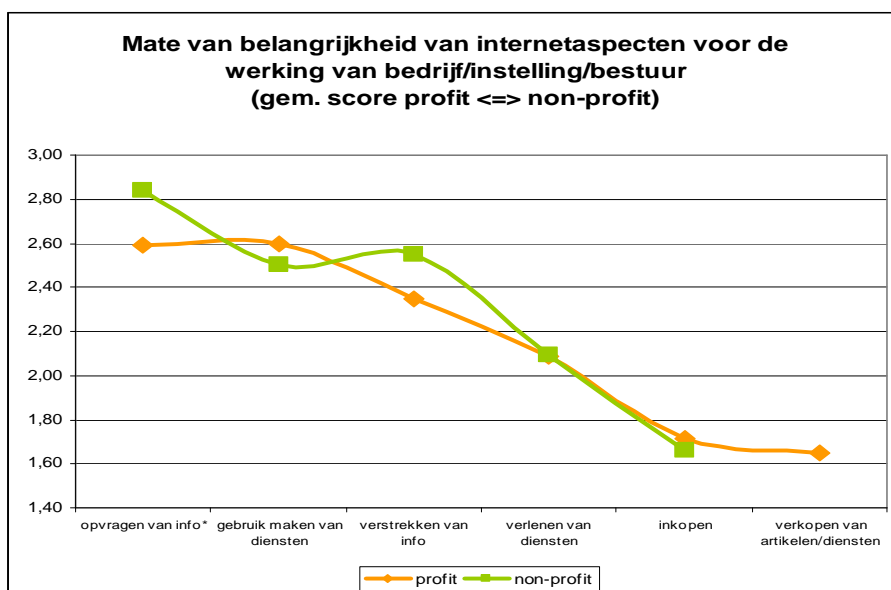
The questionnaire taught us that the presences of a written ICT-plan is of crucial importance. Organisations with an ICT-plan often have a fixed ICT budget and more often have skilled ICT employees.

2. Use of ICT

What is the professional use of ICT?

Some findings:

- The internet is mainly used passively: inquiries for information and use of services is used much more than delivering own services or information.
- The commercial impact of the internet was not recognized much. E-commerce was not used often.

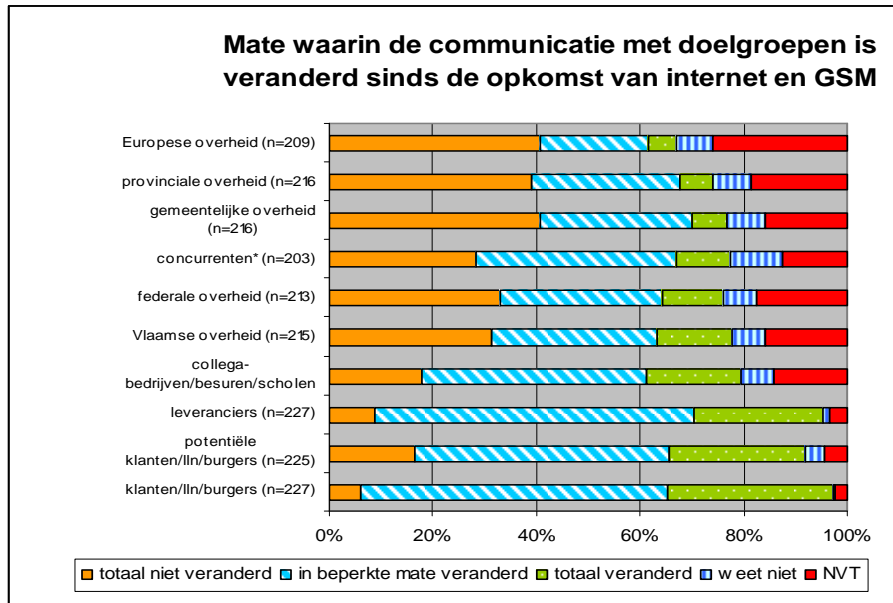


Extract of the study; investigating the importance of internet

3. Impact of ICT

Next to the internet mobile applications like mobile phones often have an equal important role to provide information, deliver services and the buying and selling of products and services.

The use of internet and mobile applications have however had low impact on the communication between different governments.



Impact of internet and mobile applications.

4. Conclusions

- The use of ICT in the region of Kortrijk was below average.
- The region is an early adaptor rather than a trendsetter. The region does well, but not excellent.

1.2 Phase 2: drawing the desired situation.

The results of the inquiry in phase one were used as input for the start of phase 2. The kick-off of this phase was a brainstorm meeting.

Input from the region.

Two target groups were invited to attend the brainstorm; organisations who responded to the questionnaire and the board of a regional ICT organisation 'open Net'.

Some ICT guidelines for the region were presented.

Conclusions by the participants:

- The importance of ICT in creating a creative and attractive region.
- The ambitions of the Kortrijk region should be higher. The region should achieve to be a trendsetter instead of a follower.

Critical success factors:

- Mental sponsoring by the (regional) policy
- A holistic approach should be achieved
- Durable guidance of teachers and education organisations



Input from the academic world and European best practices

In a workshop there was a reflection on the use of ICT-monitoring and the link with the ICT vision.

Agenda for this workshop:

- | | | |
|---|-------------------|---|
| • Presence, use and impact of ICT in the Kortrijk region. | Michelle Lenaerts | Memori (Katholieke Hogeschool Mechelen) |
| • De abundance and necessity of ICT-scores | Sabine Rotthier | Hogeschool Gent |
| • ICT-Monitor Vlaanderen (IBBT) | Pieter Verdegem | R.U.Gent |
| • Shaping the future (Norfolk County) | Tim Anderson | Norfolk County Council (UK) |
| • Observatoire TIC (Lille) | Hélène Rio | Digiport (Lille, FR) |
| • E-city index (Schotland) | Ian Leith | University of Aberdeen (UK) |

1.3 Phase 3: Conclusions and necessary

The conclusions of the ICT route project combined 13 goals for the region:

1. By 2009, 100% of the businesses should be online by the use of a broadband connection.
2. By 2010, 80% of the citizens is online: either by broadband internet, iDTV, mobile device,...
3. By 2012 all governmental and semi-public organisations are connected via a secure electronic network.
4. By 2009, a free wireless network is available in all public locations.
5. By 2010 each citizen and company has its own 'glass file' within their government, by the channel of their choice. A glass file is a personal page with an overview of their running services and applications.
6. By 2010 the citizen and company can make use of online governmental services.
7. The local government shall, by 2010, actively offer the services to the citizens and companies they are entitled to.
8. By 2010 the municipal websites in the region will have 27.500 registered users and 6.000 registered businesses. These users will add information themselves.
9. By 2012 the local governments in the region will as much as possible and in accordance with privacy and security regulations offer the existing information by making use of image databases, map material, business databases, etc...
10. By 2012 local governments will offer the infrastructure to consult and save local and regional information.
11. By 2009 the municipalities will have electronic desks that make use of the electronic instruments (glass file, ...) and provide a personalised and pro-active service.
12. By 2012 50% of the senior citizens in the area will be connected to a digital health care network.
13. By 2012 the local governments will make use of citizen input to make up their policy plans.

2 Take-up in regional policy

Resoc.

Resoc South-West-Flanders is a regional organisation with representatives of government, employer organisation, employee organisation and other regional semi-public organisations.

Strategic plan for the Kortrijk region 2007-2012.

In December 2006 RESOC defined the draft strategic plan for the Kortrijk region. This draft plan currently is reviewed by all municipalities and other organisation of the Kortrijk region for approval. The strategic plan contains ambitions and targets in the domain of economy, welfare, quality of living and education.

Take-up of broadband strategies.

As result of the ICT-route and the BIRD project three broadband strategies were included in the draft plan. These are in line with the recommendations of the Steering Committee of the BIRD project.

The broadband goals in this strategy are:

- By 2009 100% of all businesses should be online
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These goals will continue to be monitored by Resoc.

Confirmation of publishing allowness

Location and Date

ir. Karel Debaere
General Manager