
ITU used time distance method to analyze digital divide at the ITU TELECOM

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The mobile phones penetration rate for the aggregate of developing countries only 10 years behind Sweden. Digital divide may be looked upon from different perspectives and measured by several statistical measures: static absolute and relative differences (e.g. indices) as well as by time distances developed by Professor Pavle Sicherl. Empirically, degree of digital divide may be very different in static terms and in time distances.

The statistical measure S-time-distance measures the distance (proximity) in time between the points in time when the two series compared reach the same specified level of the indicator X. Details are available on http://www.gaptimer.eu/overview_of_the_methodology.html

ITU's latest statistics, published at the occasion of the ITU TELECOM WORLD 2009, reveal rapid ICT growth but also highlight digital divide. Analysing the dynamic picture of disparities between Sweden as a benchmark and the aggregates for developing countries it was shown that the time lag behind Sweden was only 10 years for mobile phones penetration rate as against 72 years for that for infant mortality rate.

Thus the potential of technological progress can with additional help from the world community create an opportunity for the ICT sector to become an important instrument to faster reduce world disparities at least in one domain. Further results for about 200 countries will be later available on www.gaptimer.eu.

Link to the ITU report "The World in 2009: ICT Facts and Figures": http://www.itu.int/ITU-D/ict/material/Telecom09_flyer.pdf.