

<http://www.pocket-lint.com/news/14191/eu-worlds-most-wired-region>

Over half of EU citizens go online regularly

But investment is sorely needed

by Katie Scott published on 24 April 2008

The European Commission's latest figures for broadband usage on our continent make for encouraging reading at a first glance.

Europe is now the world's most wired region with European broadband users at the 100 million mark, which is about 20% higher than in the US and Canada combined.

In fact - the number of regular internet users in the 27 EU countries has now gone above half, and this figure hits 65% in the UK.

And almost 80% of the European internet users are connected to a high-speed broadband connection.

Perhaps not here in the UK, but other European nations are enjoying average broadband speeds of more than 20Mbps.

But there's still some work to be done - 40 million EU citizens are still not online.

In Greece, only one quarter of the population regularly goes online, while this figure goes down to 20% for Romania.

And in fellow ex-Soviet nations - Bulgaria, Poland and Slovakia - citizens are still expected to queue to pay parking fines or renew their driving licences - as opposed to just logging on.

But the EU as a whole is also falling behind on technology R&D, and the EU's 2005 goal of investing 3% of GDP into technology by 2010 is not going to be reached.

So, while more of us are going online, the drive to invest to keep our internet technology up to date is just not there.

