

Section 7

● Elimination of the Digital Divide and Human Resources Development

1 Elimination of geographic digital divide

In order to achieve the goal of u-Japan Policy, or specifically, that of 100% of the population having access to Broad band Internet by 2010, MIC, in the “ICT Policy Principles of 2006”, announced the support measures to develop broadband infrastructure in relation to the Provisional measures Law for Telecommunication Infrastructure Improvement and the support for developing and promoting the use of regional ICT infrastructure, as specific measures to eliminate discrepancies between urban and rural areas.

2 Promotion of information barrier-free

The “Study Group on Ensuring/Improving Accessibility in the Public Sector” was launched in November 2004, so that everyone including older persons and persons with disabilities can use public websites and web-systems. The Study Group compiled the “Operational Models to improve accessibility of public websites” in December 2005 which presents specific operation models for maintaining and improving web accessibility. MIC will continue its efforts to promote active use of the Operation Models by holding seminars for local government officials in charge of websites.

3 Human resource development

To develop human resources with specialized knowledge and skills in the information and communications field, MIC is implementing a support scheme for ICT human resources development programs, and at the same time, has launched a support scheme in FY 2004 for human resources development centers for ICT security to assist the quasi-public organizations in the development of practical training facilities in order to effectively and intensively train human resources with the capability to accurately respond to information security incidents, such as illicit access and cyber attacks.

In addition, the Ministry has been working on the study/research of advanced ICT human resources development programs, under the cooperation between industry, universities and governments, on abilities required for high-level ICT personnel, such as project managers and Chief Information Officers (CIOs) who are capable of being engaged in strategic informatization in corporations, and on practical methods for training, as well as to development model teaching materials for the development of such human resources.

Section 8

● Promotion of Research and Development

1 Development of R&D Policies in the information and communications field

In order to realize a society in which the economy of Japan can grow sustainably and everyone can live safely and comfortably, it is necessary to maintain and boost the competitiveness of industry by making proactive and strategic investments in the priority areas in which research and development should be undertaken. From this point of view, the Third Science and Technology Basic Plan (approved by the Cabinet in March 2006)

takes two basic stances: 1) science and technology to be supported by the public and benefit society, and 2) an emphasis on fostering human resources and a competitive research environment. The Basic Plan also identifies four prioritized areas, including the information and communication area, and calls on the government to invest intensively in the four prioritized areas, as it did in the Second Basic Plan.

In addition, in the Promotion Strategies for each area during the execution of the Basic Plan, strategically focused science and technologies are to be selected