

FOREWORD

This study examines the role of innovation and information and communications technologies in recent OECD growth performance. It is inspired by the strong economic performance of the US economy in recent years and is thus closely related to the debate on whether a "new economy" has emerged in the United States. The study was carried out in response to a mandate of the May 1999 OECD meeting at Ministerial level. It is not exhaustive, however, and several other aspects of the OECD work on growth are covered in other studies following on the Ministerial mandate. It is also a "work in progress", as further work on growth is to be carried out in preparation for the meeting at Ministerial level that will take place in 2001.

The study was prepared by an OECD team consisting of Alessandra Colecchia, Dominique Guellec, Dirk Pilat, Paul Schreyer and Andrew Wyckoff, with extensive input from Thomas Andersson, Daniel Malkin, Akira Masunaga and Risaburo Nezu. The analysis draws on various background documents, including a joint study with the OECD Economics Department and a recent study by Sam Paltridge on the pricing of Internet access. Statistical support was provided by Sandrine Kergroach-Connan. The study was carried out under the guidance of the Industry Committee, the Committee for Scientific and Technological Policy, and the Committee for Information, Computer and Communications Policy. Helpful input was obtained from forums dedicated to this subject organised in conjunction with the Industry Committee and the Committee for Scientific and Technological Policy. Participants at the meetings of these committees provided valuable comments. The study also benefited from comments within the OECD, in particular from colleagues in the Directorate for Science, Technology and Industry, the Economics Department, the Directorate for Education, Employment, Labour and Social Affairs, and the Directorate for Financial, Fiscal and Enterprise Affairs.

The study is published on the responsibility of the Secretary-General of the OECD.