

Internet Accessibility Continental Comparison

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GLOBAL INTERNET ACCESS

In 1995 less than 1% of the world's population was online. Today it is close to 40%



Upwards of

3.7

Billion internet users worldwide

1

Over 70% of users live in 20 countries.

2

China, India, the USA, Brazil, Japan and Russia have more users than the rest of the world combined.

3

China has 721 million users, 19% of world, only 52% of population are users.

5

Iceland is the most connected country on earth (100%). Eritrea the least (1.1%).

4

India has the fastest growing rate of change increasing by 30.5% in 2016.

INTERNET USER

The ITU defines an internet user as an “individual who can access the Internet, via computer or mobile device, within the home where the individual lives”. Thus, it only records people living in a house where there is access, it does not indicate actual use or the amount of use nor the age of the user and therefore includes young children.

Internet Access: Africa



Population: 1,256,50400
54 fully recognized countries and two
with limited recognition Western
Sahara and Somaliland



Internet access

388,376,491 current
internet users – 23.1%
penetration.



Households

Continental average
10.7% of households
have internet access,
almost half of the
recognized amount
needed to benefit the
economy.



Cost



Users pay up to 40 times
more than in developed
countries for access.
Internet contributes 1.1%
of GDP (world average
4%).




Mobile devices

Nearly 1 billion mobile
phone subscriptions (600
million unique
subscribers), many users
switch sim cards. Users
tend to be wealthier,
educated and urban.



Internet Access: Asia and Middle East



Population: 4.4 billion
48 fully recognized countries and
Special Autonomous Regions.



Internet access

2.08 billion current internet users – 47% penetration, big disparity N.Korea 0.1% vs Bahrain 98%



Households

Continental average 47.6% of households have internet access. Very mixed some countries (Bahrain, Qatar, Japan)very high others (Afghanistan, Turkmenistan, Laos) very low.



Cost

Differing infrastructure leads to disparities, access in Myanmar and Laos is 10 x cost of access in Singapore.



Mobile devices

Over 4 billion mobile phone subscriptions (3 billion unique subscribers). Includes some areas where 2 or more subscriptions are the norm (Macau > 3 subscriptions average, HK, UAE, Maldives and Bahrain >2).

Internet Access: Europe



Population: 822.7 million
44 fully recognized countries and four
dependent territories.



Internet access

659,634,487 current
internet users – 80.2%
penetration.



Households

Continental average 85%
of households have
internet access, 83% with
broadband access.



Mobile devices

1.15 billion mobile phone
subscriptions, 660 million
subscribers. Ownership
widely distributed.



Cost

Some of the cheapest
access in the world but a
few pockets of high cost.
Roaming charges
abolished in 2016.

Internet Access: North and Central America and the Caribbean



Population: 584 million
23 fully recognized countries and 15
dependent territories.



Internet access

445,731,810 current
internet users. Average
76.2 penetration (NA
81.1%, CA 59.7%
Caribbean 45.4%).



Households

Continental average 70%
of households have
internet access, highest
US 88.5%, Haiti 12%.



Cost

US has some of highest
costs in the world for
broadband services.



Mobile devices

712 million mobile
phone subscriptions (300
mil subscribers). Nearly
100 percent penetration
in USA and Canada with
numerous multiple sim
holders.



Internet Access: South America



Population: 426.5 million
12 countries and two dependent territories.



Internet access

278,596,721 current internet users – 65.3% penetration.



Households

Continental average 61.5% of households have internet access. Highest is Chile 77.8% lowest Guyana 39.6%



Cost

Relatively cheap in urban areas, rural areas significantly more expensive.



Mobile devices

Over ½ million mobile phone subscriptions, 270 million separate subscribers. Chile (92%) highest subscriber ratio, Ecuador lowest (54%).



Internet Access: Oceania



Population: 40,479,846 million
14 countries and 11 dependent territories.



Internet access

28,180,356 current internet users – 69.6% penetration.



Households

Continental average 57% of households have internet access, Australia has over 85% while Tonga has 7.3%.



Cost

Heterogeneous, Australia and New Zealand relatively cheap but problems in distribution means costs in some remote island areas very expensive.



Mobile devices

Over 43 million subscriptions with 26 million subscribers. Australia and New Zealand nearly 100% penetration.



PROBLEMS OF ACCESSIBILITY INDICATORS



1

Few standardized, systematic or reliable figures. Data hosted by commercial and Intra-governmental agencies – need systematic approach.

2

Definitions are problematic – Identification as a 'User' merely notes an option to access, not actual use.

3

Mobile or cell phones a better indicator especially with spread of 4G and later 5G.

4

Limited data on bandwidth. Some studies indicate that despite widespread use there is still a digital divide of bandwidth.

Sources Data from the following organisations was used to calculate the figures used.

- Internetworldstats.com
- Internet Live Stats.
- I.T.U.
- GSMA continent reports on Africa, Pacific Asia and South America.
- World Bank.