

State of Broadband report 2016

Tracking progress towards the Broadband Commission's connectivity targets

Advocacy Target 1: Making broadband policy universal – all countries should have a National Broadband Plan or strategy or include broadband in Universal Service/Access definitions

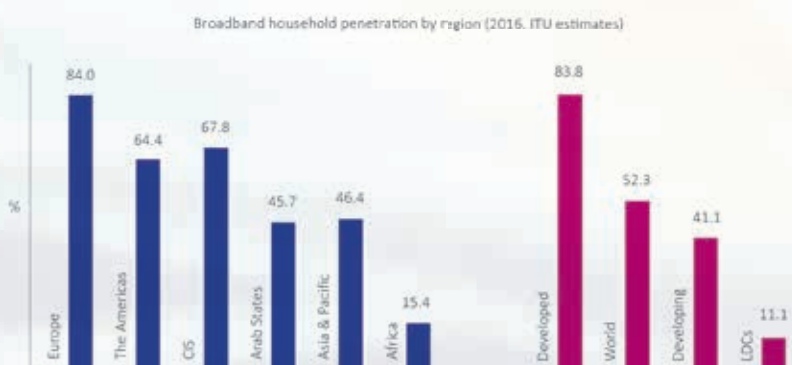
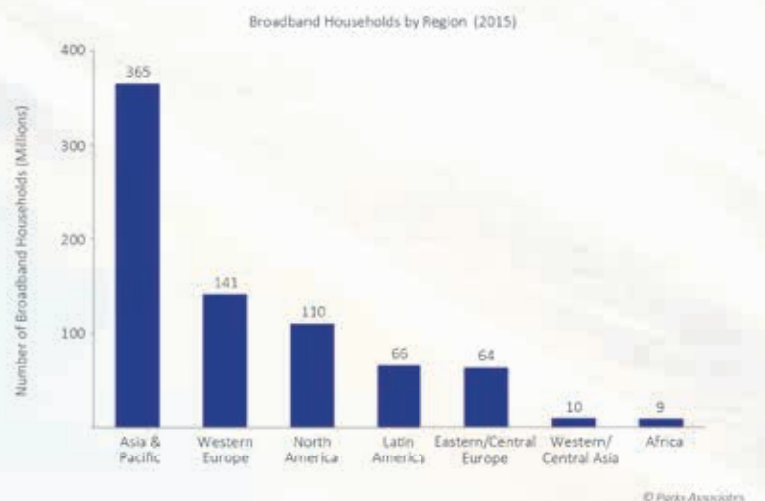
Growth in the number of countries with National Broadband Plans has shown good progress over an eight-year period, but has stabilized over the past three years. Of the 189 countries for which ITU has data, the number of countries with a NBP stands at 151, with 38 without a NBP.

The permeation of ICTs into many different realms of life also raises issues with respect to privacy, confidentiality and ownership of data. According to ITU, 108 countries had introduced some kind of cybersecurity legislation by 2015, of which 82 have adopted specific

arrangements to secure the protection of data and privacy at the national level (including 63 developing or transition economies). However, in Asia and Africa, fewer than four out of every ten countries have introduced data protection and privacy laws.

Advocacy Target 2: Making broadband affordable – entry-level broadband services should be made affordable in developing countries through adequate regulation and market forces

Fixed broadband services are becoming progressively more affordable. Over the past five years, fixed-broadband prices as a share of GNI per capita have dropped by some 65%. By 2015, the majority of countries had reached the Commission's target of offering basic



Source: Parks Associates (top chart); ITU World Telecommunication Development Indicators (bottom chart).

fixed-broadband services at <5% of monthly GNI per capita. In total 83 developing countries had achieved the Broadband Commission's affordability target, but the target had only been achieved in five of the 48 UN-designated Least Developed Countries (LDCs).

Huge discrepancies in affordability persist. A monthly fixed broadband package costs 1.7% of average monthly income in developed countries, compared with 31% of average monthly income in developing countries, and 64% of average monthly income in Africa. Mobile broadband costs 1-2% of average monthly income in developed countries, compared with 11-25% of average monthly income in developing countries.

Advocacy Target 3: Connecting homes to broadband – 40% of households in developing countries should have Internet access (fixed or mobile)

Household Internet access shows strong gains. Globally, 52% of total households will be connected by end 2016, up from 49% in 2015. Internet access for households in developed countries is close to saturation, with 84% of households connected to the Internet. The proportion of households in developing countries with access to the Internet has increased from 38% in 2015 to 41% in 2016, meeting the Commission's target. However, this global average masks strong regional disparities. Boosting household Internet remains a particular challenge – and priority – in Africa.

Advocacy Target 4: Getting people online – Internet user penetration should reach 60% worldwide, 50% in developing countries and 15% in LDCs

By end 2016, 3.5 billion people – or 47% of the world's population – will be online, up from 3.2 billion people a year earlier. At current

growth rates, the Commission's global target of 60% Internet user penetration is unlikely to be achieved until 2021 at the earliest. In the developing world, Internet penetration will reach 40% by end 2016 (up from 24% five years earlier), and the Commission's LDC target of 15% user penetration is expected to be achieved by end 2016. The digital divide in Internet access and use is critically important – both in terms of individual empowerment, education and awareness, as well as in terms of national competitiveness, and the ability to attract inward investment with an educated, digitally literate and competent workforce.

Advocacy Target 5: Achieving gender equality in access to broadband by 2020

ITU estimates that the overall global Internet user gender gap has actually widened slightly, growing from 11% in 2013, to 12% in 2016, with more than 250 million fewer women online globally than men. Internet user penetration rates are higher for men than for women in all regions of the world, with the smallest gaps observed in the Americas (<2%) and the CIS (5%) regions, and the largest gaps found in the Africa (23%), Arab States (20%) and Asia-Pacific (17%) regions. The gap is also growing in LDCs, at 31%, up from just under 29% in 2013.

In the mobile sector, GSMA estimates that 200 million fewer women than men own a mobile phone. Small differences in gender equality access can amount to big differences in opportunity, accentuating and reinforcing existing gender divides in other fields and impacting everything from basic awareness of legal rights and access to healthcare information to education and employment opportunities.