



# ITU Latest Global Technology Development Figures

- **Global mobile penetration now over 100% in four of the world's six regions**
- **Number of mobile-cellular subscriptions approaching 7 billion**
- **Mobile broadband most dynamic market, with 2.1 billion subscriptions globally**

**N**ew figures released by the ITU confirm strong sustained demand for information and communication technology (ICT) services, with uptake spurred by a steady fall in the price of broadband Internet.

ITU's *The World in 2013: ICT Facts and Figures* report predicts that there will soon be as many mobile-cellular subscriptions as people inhabiting the planet, with the figure set to nudge past the seven billion mark early in 2014. More than half of all mobile subscriptions are now in Asia, which remains the powerhouse of market growth, and by the end of 2013

overall mobile penetration rates will have reached 96% globally, 128% in the developed world, and 89% in developing countries.

With many markets saturated, and penetration at over 100% in four of the six ITU world regions, mobile-cellular uptake is already slowing substantially, with growth rates falling to their lowest levels ever in both the developed and developing worlds.

## Internet

ITU estimates that 2.7 billion people – or 39% of the world's population – will be using the Internet by end 2013.

Internet access, however, will remain limited in the developing world, with only 31% of the population forecast to be online at the end of 2013, compared with 77% in the developed world. Europe will remain the world's most connected region with 75% Internet penetration, largely outpacing Asia and the Pacific (32%) and Africa (16%).

Household Internet penetration – often considered the most important measure of Internet access – continues to rise. By end 2013, ITU estimates that 41% of the world's households will be connected to the Internet.

Over the past four years, household access has grown fastest in Africa, with an annual growth rate of 27%. But despite a positive general trend, 90% of the 1.1 billion households around the world that are still unconnected are in the developing world.

Speaking to government Ministers gathered at the Mobile World Congress event in Barcelona, ITU Secretary-General Dr Hamadoun I. Touré said: "We have made the most extraordinary



*Dr Hamadoun Touré, Secretary-General, ITU*

► progress in the first twelve years of the new millennium... and yet we still have far to go. Two thirds of the world's population – some 4.5 billion people – is still offline. This means that two thirds of the world's people are still locked out of the world's biggest and most valuable library. Two thirds of the world's people are still refused access to the world's biggest market place. And two thirds of the world's people are still denied the extraordinary opportunities now available to the other third. Mobile broadband is clearly going to be a vital part of the solution, and we must continue to 'mobilize' to ensure that all the world's people have affordable, equitable access to the Internet."

"Near-ubiquitous mobile penetration makes mobile cellular the ideal platform for service delivery in developing countries," said Brahima Sanou, Director of the ITU's Telecommunication Development Bureau. "Our new m-Powering Development initiative is designed to leverage this potential across markets worldwide, and especially in rural and remote communities."

### Pricing

The cost of fixed-broadband services has dropped precipitously over the past five years, declining by 82% if measured as a share of GNI per capita. But in developing countries, residential fixed-broadband services remain expensive, accounting for just over 30% of average monthly GNI per capita – compared to just 1.7% of average national income in wealthy countries.

Broadband is most affordable in Europe, where a basic subscription costs on average less than 2% of GNI per capita. In some developing countries, that figure rises to well over 50%.

Differences in high-speed broadband Internet access still persist. Star performers in terms of access speeds are the Republic of Korea, Hong Kong (China) and Japan, alongside some surprise top performers in Europe, including Bulgaria, Iceland and Portugal. In Africa, fewer than 10% of fixed-broadband subscriptions offer speeds of at least 2Mbit/s – a situation also reflected in several countries in Asia and the Pacific, the Americas and the Arab world.



*Brahima Sanou, Director of the ITU's Telecommunication Development Bureau*

### Gender

The report also reveals for the first time global figures on the number of women (1.3 billion) and men (1.5 billion) using the Internet. The figures represent 37% of all women, compared with 41% of all men – but the gender gap is more pronounced in the developing world, where 16% fewer women than men use the Internet, compared with only 2% fewer women than men in the developed world. However, despite the disparities, the gender gap continues to close, with access to mobile technology increasingly within reach of women worldwide.

More statistics and a range of comparative charts are available in the full *World in 2013: ICT Facts and Figures* report at: [www.itu.int/ITU-D/ict/facts/index.html](http://www.itu.int/ITU-D/ict/facts/index.html).

The raw statistics used to create the charts in the report are available on demand.

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