

Spotlight: Canada

A growing economy and well-educated population depend on better Internet services, claim most workers in Canada



Over the past two years, Canada's digitization has accelerated at a pace not seen before.

Canadians' reliance on digital infrastructure became more acute with the digitization of services from healthcare and education to social services and remote work.

According to nearly three-quarters (74%) of Canadian workers, access to fast, reliable Internet is critical to the future growth of the nation's economy recovery and prosperity, ensuring all can contribute.

Canada is now at an inflection point. Governments at all levels and Internet service providers have made significant investments to build Canada's digital infrastructure, and both public and private sectors are investing heavily to digitize their operations.

Some 70% of Canadian workers believe the Government should accelerate its plans to ensure high-speed and reliable Internet is available for everyone in the country.

A further 73% think every citizen should be able to connect to fast, reliable networks when in public places or on the move - regardless of location.

Meanwhile, more than 7 in 10 (71%) respondents say speedy and stable Internet services must be maintained to underpin a well-educated population.

Inclusive infrastructure

During several waves of COVID-19, access to critical services was limited for many Canadians. Nearly half (45%) the workers surveyed agreed a lack of reliable home Internet prevented access to critical services such as virtual healthcare, online education, social care and utility services.

Yet affordability is seen as a pressing problem that could create a bigger digital divide between those with and without access. A large majority of workers (73%) think low-income families are being priced out of Internet services.

Key takeaways



74% : those stating that fast, reliable Internet is critical to future growth of the nation's economy



More than 7 in 10 respondents claim hybrid working patterns must be aided by dramatic improvements to connectivity



73% think low-income families are being priced out of Internet services by the cost of broadband



51% of respondents in Canada say they use the Internet at home to either work or run their own business

As Canadian communities re-open post-pandemic, many workers (72%) anticipate their workplace will adopt a hybrid work model¹. With the shift to hybrid, a large majority of workers (71%) think broadband services must dramatically improve for people to continue to work effectively. While many workers (64%) stated their home connection is either strong or very strong, and 67% stated that the reliability of their broadband quality is good or excellent, home Internet services are under strain.

Many households now support multiple family members working or studying from home, with 48% of workers claiming three or more people under their roof are active online simultaneously throughout the day.

Hybrid work response

Furthermore, remote and hybrid working is more prevalent than ever, with 51% of the Canadian workforce relying on their domestic Internet connection to work from home or run a business. Meanwhile, 6 in 10 (60%) expect their Internet usage during the next 12 months to either grow or stay the same.

Considering this growing online activity, almost a quarter (24%) would like to upgrade their Internet service at some point in the next year.

Nearly half (48%) would like their employer to start paying for their home Internet service.

¹ Cisco Canada (2021) Hybrid Work Survey, Angus Reid. <https://newsroom.cisco.com/press-release-content?type=webcontent&articleId=2206290>

Home broadband usage patterns anticipated over the next 12 months

