

Spotlight: South Korea

While digital transformation is well under way in the country, a large majority of workers want Government and service providers to expedite the promised upgrades



The Korean Government intends to implement a “digital economy transformation”, providing best-in-class data, networks and Artificial Intelligence (AI) throughout society.

As part of its wider Digital New Deal strategy, plans involve further improvements to core infrastructure. This entails a 5G national network spanning all major towns and villages in the country’s 85 cities including Seoul, and a program to continuously improve 5G thereafter.

5G specialised networks will be applied early to core services, with anticipated industrial and social ripple effects so they can be utilised in all areas of daily life. In addition, large-scale projects are on the table for five key areas of AI.

Connectivity for all

With more than 7 in 10 workers (73%) stating connectivity is crucial in their daily lives all eyes are on the Korean Government to implement promised improvements to the national network. In fact, 68% of Korean workers want policymakers to accelerate the program described above.

Despite the desire for faster, reliable connection, many respondents are acutely aware it should be affordable for all: around 2 in 3 (67%) believe universal access is set to become a major financial issue.

Workers also observe wider societal issues in the drive for better digital services. The ability of fast and reliable Internet is viewed as critical to economic growth by 74%, while 70% state it’s vital to having a well-educated and informed population.

Key takeaways



73% of workers in Korea say fast, reliable Internet service is crucial to their day-to-day life



68% say speeding up plans to create better connectivity nationwide is vital



68% of respondents actively use their broadband at home for four hours or more each day



52% of respondents would like to see plans accelerate to ensure high-speed and reliable Internet is available to everyone

Around 1 in 3 (33%) people plan to upgrade their Internet service in the next 12 months, although 44% state they would not be willing to pay a higher monthly fee for it. Of the 45% who don't expect to upgrade during the year to come, around 1 in 6 claim increased cost is dissuading them.

Helping hybrid work

A large majority (70%) believe services must greatly improve to allow people to work from anywhere. With more than 1 in 4 (27%) workers saying they log on at home to work or to run their own business, this is becoming an important consideration for the Government, employers and service providers alike.

Accessibility is a key component too, with 64% of respondents saying they were unable to access critical services such as online medical appointments, online education, social care and utility services during lockdown, due to an unreliable broadband connection.

Security is also key: 49% of workers permanently performing their role remotely - compared to 36% of hybrid employees, and 38% of respondents overall - report they'd be willing to pay more if safer Internet connection was guaranteed.

Home broadband usage patterns anticipated over the next 12 months

