

# Global broadband quality improves but UK is lagging

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Countries with broadband on their national agenda had the highest broadband quality. Photo: Matthew Bowden via Wikimedia Commons

(PhysOrg.com) -- A global survey reveals that 62 out of 66 countries analysed had improved their speed of broadband connections since last year, with South Korea coming top of the Broadband Quality Study 2009.

A global survey reveals that 62 out of 66 countries analysed had improved their speed of [broadband](#) connections since last year. [South Korea](#) tops the Broadband Quality Study 2009, conducted by a team of MBA students from Oxford's Saïd Business School and economists from the University of Oviedo.

South Korea rose just above last year's broadband quality leader Japan with a 72 per cent improvement in its quality score over the past year. In South Korea, 97 per cent of households are now able to receive broadband services and receive the best quality of broadband services.

Other global broadband leaders in descending order are Japan, Hong Kong, Sweden, Switzerland, Holland, Singapore, Luxembourg, Denmark and Norway. The UK lags behind at 25th in the broadband quality table.

The research team found that broadband quality is linked to a nation's advancement as a knowledge economy and countries with broadband on their national agenda had the highest broadband quality.

Sweden has the highest quality broadband in Europe, rapidly catching up with Japan and South Korea. It is also closing a broadband quality gap in its own country with residents outside the most populated cities enjoying better quality than those in the cities, which bucks the trend elsewhere.

New data from the study highlights the extent of the digital quality divide between urban and rural areas and, for the first time, compares the quality of fixed and mobile broadband services.

The cities with the highest broadband quality were in Japan - with Yokohama in first place and Nagoya, Sappora, and Osaka in the top ten. Other top cities included Kaunas in Lithuania, Seoul in South Korea, Malmo in Sweden, Wuhan in China, Uppsala in Sweden, and Sofia in Bulgaria.

Alastair Nicholson, Associate Fellow at the Saïd Business School, said: 'The broadband quality study in 2008 helped to establish a better understanding of the driving factors and the socio-economic impact of broadband quality. New web applications will continue to increase demand for improvements.

'This year, by comparing the broadband quality of countries in the same stage of economic development, we have a view of which countries are over-achieving for their stage of development. The UK has a BQS above the threshold required to deliver a consistent quality of experience for the most common web applications today, such as social networking, streaming low-definition video, web communications and file sharing, but as the new generation of technology comes in we need to question whether we should upgrade our networks to get ahead of the game and reap economic benefits in the future.'

The research team included Weigang Fu and Sudeep Jain, both MBA students at the Saïd Business School. The research was sponsored by Cisco.

The team used more than 24 million records from actual broadband speed tests conducted by users around the world in May 2008 and from May to July 2009 through [www.speedtest.net](http://www.speedtest.net). They calculated statistical averages for each country of several key performance parameters used to determine the quality of a [broadband connection](#).

Provided by Oxford University ([news](#) : [web](#))

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