

China's Internet access 'matches' rich world

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File picture from June 2010 showing Chinese children learning how to properly use the Internet. A new study boasts that online access in China is as widespread as in the developed world.

Access to the Internet is as widespread in China, home to the world's largest online population, as it is in developed nations, according to a new study.

About one-quarter of China's 420 million [web users](#) live in rural areas where Internet access exists in 91.5 percent of communities, the People's Daily said, citing the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences study.

About half of the Chinese population still live in rural areas, where the standard of living is far below that of the country's thriving cities.

Across the nation, 70 percent of high schools, more than 60 percent of

vocational schools, about 40 percent of middle schools and 12 percent of primary schools have [Internet access](#), the study said.

Beijing operates a vast system of web censorship, sometimes referred to as the "Great Firewall of [China](#)". It blocks access to any content the communist authorities deem unacceptable, ranging from pornography to political dissent.

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