

# US Internet access ahead of EU in key areas: study

June 4 2014

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A man uses a computer to browse the Internet in Miami, Florida, on February 1, 2014

A study disputing findings that the US lags in Internet speeds said Wednesday that Americans have better access to broadband than most Europeans.

The University of Pennsylvania study contradicts many previous surveys

that suggest US consumers pay more for Internet access, with lower speeds.

The latest study led by Christopher Yoo of the university's Center for Technology, Innovation and Competition found 82 percent of Americans had access to "next-generation" Internet, with speeds above 25 megabits per second, compared with 54 percent in Europe.

In rural areas, the US led by 48 to 12 percent, the study found.

"The empirical evidence confirms that the United States is performing much better than Europe in the high-speed [broadband](#) race," said Yoo.

"Worries that the US is falling behind are severely misplaced."

The Penn study also found a much wider deployment of fourth-generation wireless broadband technology known as LTE in the US, available to 86 percent of the population compared with 27 percent in Europe.

The findings included some caveats that explain to some degree the varied findings of previous studies.

Penn researchers found US download speeds during peak times averaged 15 Mbps, below the European average of 19 Mbps. They found US broadband was less expensive for speeds below 12 Mbps and that Americans paid more for higher speeds, while consuming more bandwidth.

Another factor is the difference between advertised and real speeds. The study found actual download speeds in the US were 96 percent of what was advertised, compared to 74 percent in Europe.

Other studies offer a different view. The World Economic Forum ranked the United States 35th in terms of Internet bandwidth available per user. And a private survey by broadband testing firm Ookla ranks the United States 32nd in the world.

A 2013 study by the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development also ranked the US low in broadband. But Penn researchers said the OECD used a far slower standard for broadband, "a service tier that is generally regarded as obsolete."

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