

# South Korea tops in broadband penetration: study

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An Internet cafe in South Korea. South Korea, where 95 percent of homes have broadband, Singapore and Taiwan are among the top five countries in terms of access to the high-speed Internet, according to a survey released Thursday.

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The United States, where just 60 percent of households had broadband as of last year, ranked 20th in the survey of 58 countries by Boston-based Strategy Analytics.

Five of the top 10 countries or territories in the survey were in Asia and the firm predicted the broadband subscriber base in the Asia-Pacific region will grow on average by a further 15 percent a year between 2009

and 2013.

Strategy Analytics said South Korea's highly urbanized population and its government-backed broadband policy accounted for its high rate of broadband penetration.

Singapore ranked second on the list with household broadband penetration of 88 percent, followed by the Netherlands (85 percent), Denmark (82 percent), Taiwan (81 percent), Hong Kong (81 percent), Israel (77 percent), Switzerland (76 percent), Canada (76 percent) and Norway (75 percent).

Among other Asia-Pacific nations, Australia ranked 11th with 72 percent, Japan ranked 16th with 64 percent, New Zealand ranked 25th with 57 percent, China ranked 43rd with 21 percent and Malaysia ranked 44th, also with 21 percent.

Thailand ranked 51st with seven percent, Vietnam ranked 52nd, also with seven percent, the Philippines ranked 53rd with five percent, India ranked 57th with two percent and Indonesia ranked 58th with one percent.

Strategy Analytics acknowledged that measuring broadband penetration has been a subject of controversy with arguments being made over whether it should be measured by household or per capita.

"Broadband rankings are often the subject of great debate and hand-wringing," said David Mercer, vice president of Strategy Analytics.

"Though our rankings may differ from those of other organizations, it is because we are looking at the appropriate metrics," he said.

"In far too many cases, people are looking at the wrong things," said Ben

Piper, a Strategy Analytics analyst.

"Residential broadband is overwhelmingly consumed on a household basis -- not individually," he said. Reporting broadband penetration on a per capita basis misses the mark, and can provide grossly misleading results."

A survey released Thursday by the Washington-based Pew Research Center's Internet and American Life Project found that as of April of this year, 63 percent of adult Americans have broadband Internet connections at home.

That was an increase of 15 percent from a year earlier, Pew said, and an indication that the economic recession has had little effect on decisions whether to buy or keep a home high-speed [Internet](#) connection.

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