

Statistical bulletin

# Internet access - households and individuals, Great Britain: 2013

Internet access in Great Britain, including how many people have internet, how they access it and what they use it to do.



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Release date:  
8 August 2013

Next release:  
7 August 2014

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# 1 . Main points

- In 2013, 36 million adults (73%) in Great Britain accessed the Internet every day, 20 million more than in 2006, when directly comparable records began
- Access to the Internet using a mobile phone more than doubled between 2010 and 2013, from 24% to 53%
- In 2013, 72% of all adults bought goods or services online, up from 53% in 2008
- In Great Britain, 21 million households (83%) had Internet access in 2013
- Broadband Internet connections using fibre optic or cable were used by 42% of households, up from 30% in 2012

## 2 . Summary

This release explores the use of the Internet by adults in Great Britain and draws attention to how households connected to the Internet in 2013. It provides useful information for those interested in what adults use the Internet for, the type of purchases made online and how homes in Great Britain connected to the Internet.

The Internet has changed the way people go about their daily lives. Almost three quarters of adults in Great Britain used the Internet everyday (73%) in 2013, with 6 out of every 10 adults (61%) using a mobile phone or portable computer to access the Internet 'on the go'.

In 2013, more people than ever before used the Internet for reading newspapers or magazines (55%), to access their bank accounts (50%), to seek health information (43%) or to buy groceries (21%). This release highlights that activities previously carried out on the high street, are now increasingly being carried out online.

This release reveals that adults aged 25 to 34 used the Internet more than any other age group to carry out a wide range of established 'every day' activities, such as purchasing goods or services online (92%), Internet banking (76%) and selling goods online (45%).

The results in this release are derived from the Opinions and Lifestyle Survey. On 14 August 2013, ONS will publish the latest quarterly statistics on adults who have ever or never used the Internet within the [Internet Access Quarterly Update, Q2 2013 statistical bulletin](#). The quarterly estimates are derived from the Labour Force Survey (LFS). The LFS has a much larger sample than the Opinions and Lifestyle survey and therefore allows for more detailed socio-demographic analysis to be undertaken. The Quarterly Update should be used as ONS' official source for the number of individuals in Great Britain accessing the Internet.

ONS first collected statistics on Internet access in 1998. Since then, a number of changes have been made to the Internet Access survey, including the publication of annual results since 2006. Where possible, comparisons over time are made in this release. However, the available coverage for time series comparisons varies, because the questions included in the survey vary each year.

## 3 . User engagement

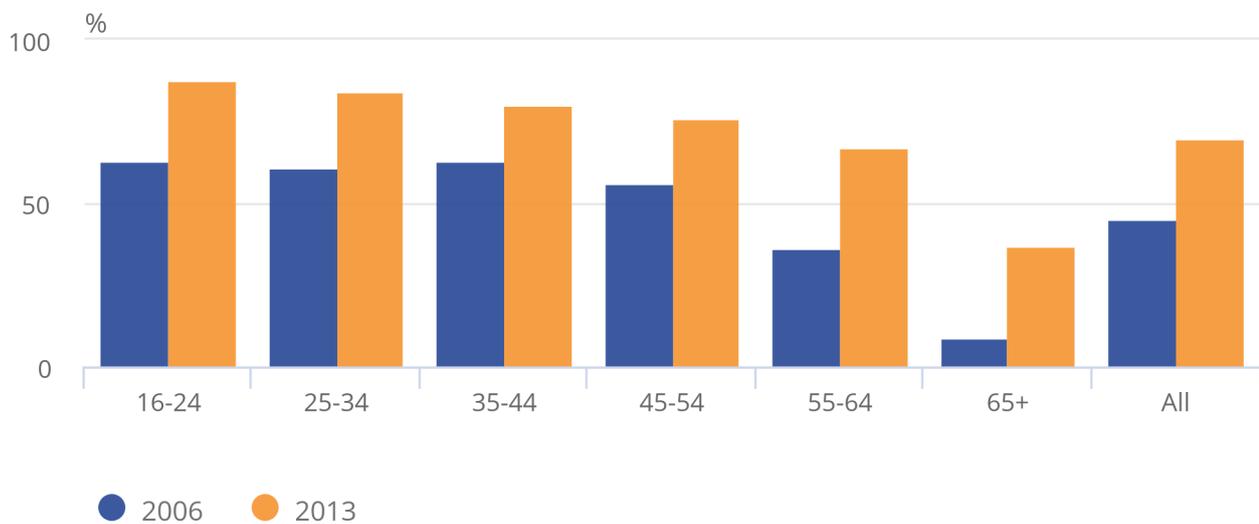
We are constantly aiming to improve this release and its associated commentary. We would welcome any feedback you might have, and would be particularly interested in knowing how you make use of these data to inform your work. Please contact us via email: [esociety@ons.gov.uk](mailto:esociety@ons.gov.uk) or telephone David Matthews on +44 (0) 1633 456756.

## 4 . Computer and internet use

On 15 May 2013, as part of the Internet Access Quarterly Update, ONS reported that 42.4 million people in Great Britain had used the Internet, representing approximately 86% of the adult population. Use of a computer is inextricably linked to the ability of an individual to use the Internet. In 2013, 70% of adults in Great Britain used a computer every day, up from 45% in 2006.

**Figure 1: Daily computer use by age group, 2006 and 2013**

Figure 1: Daily computer use by age group, 2006 and 2013



Source: Office for National Statistics

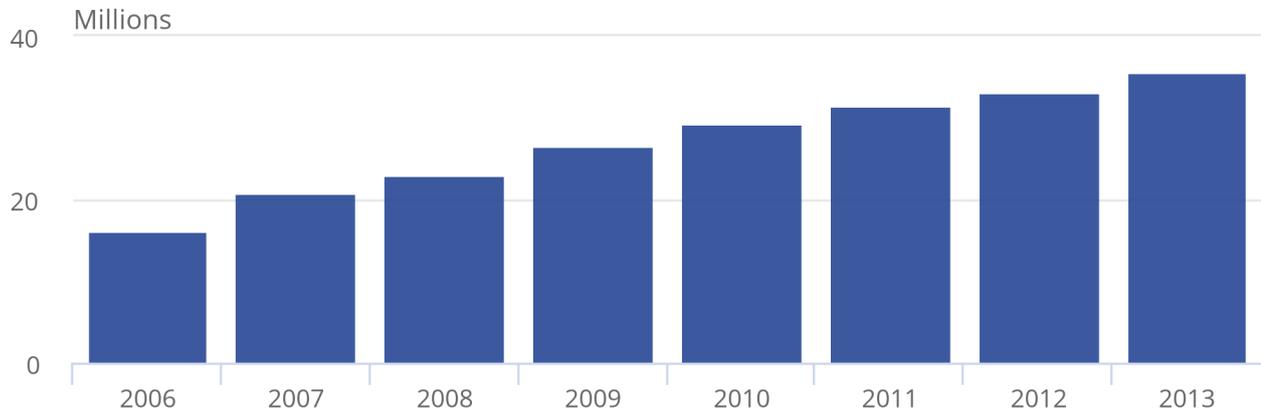
A sizable increase in daily computer use, by age, in the past seven years has been for adults aged 65 and over. In 2006, just 9% reported that they used a computer every day, this compares to 37% in 2013.

## 5 . Frequency of internet use

In 2013, 36 million adults in Great Britain used the Internet every day, or almost every day. This represented 73% of those aged 16 and over and was more than double the number of adults (16 million) that used the Internet daily in 2006 (when directly comparable records began). Daily Internet use has increased by 2.5 million since 2012.

**Figure 2: Daily Internet use, 2006 to 2013**

Figure 2: Daily Internet use, 2006 to 2013



**Source: Office for National Statistics**

Use of the Internet on a daily basis has increased markedly in a short space of time, from 35% of all adults in 2006 to 73% in 2013. Correspondingly, there has been a drop in the number of adults who use the Internet on a weekly basis, from 16% in 2006 to just 9% in 2013.

## 6 . Internet activities

There are distinct differences in how individuals make use of the Internet when analysed by age. As 'early-adopters', it is of little surprise that those adults in the two youngest age groups (16 to 24 and 25 to 34) are proportionately the largest users of many of the Internet activities surveyed.

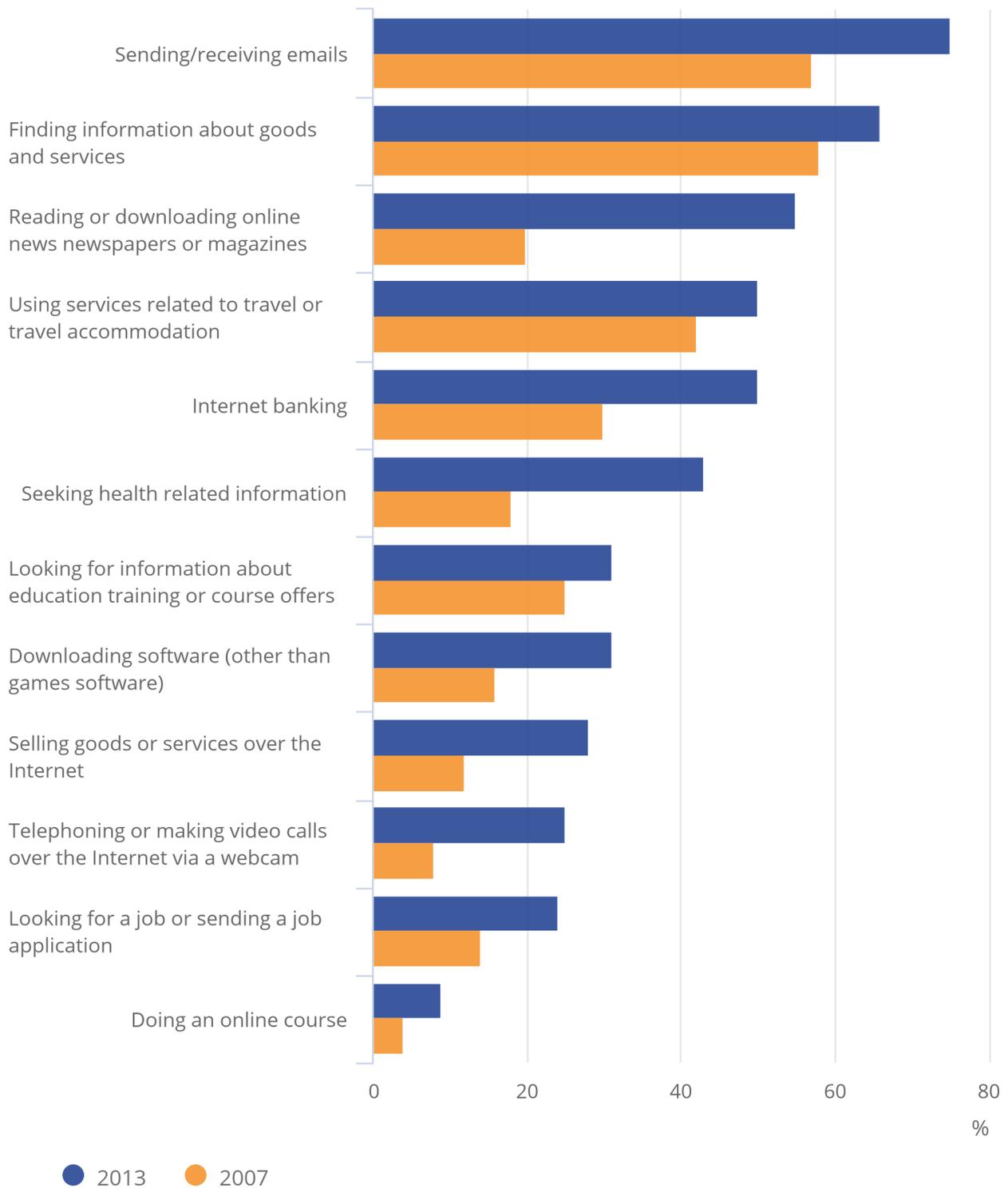
In 2013, adults aged 16 to 24 were most likely to engage in online activities that focused on leisure or recreation; especially new activities such as social networking (93%), consulting wikis (60%), downloading software (55%) and telephoning or making video calls over the Internet via a webcam (40%).

Adults aged 25 to 34 reported the highest level of use in many of the activities surveyed, in particular day-to-day activities such as sending emails (89%) and finding information about goods and services (77%). This trend is particularly evident when considering online banking where over three quarters (76%) of those aged 25 to 34 accessed their bank accounts over the Internet. This compares to only half of all adults (50%).

The Internet provides a popular alternative to many of the traditional ways of completing every day tasks. For example, in 2007, approximately only one in five adults (18%) used the Internet to access health information using websites such as NHS direct. In 2013, 43% of all adults had used the Internet to find health information online. Among those aged 25 to 34 the rate of use increased to nearly 6 in 10 (59%).

Figure 3: Internet activities, 2007 and 2013

Figure 3: Internet activities, 2007 and 2013



In 2013, with reports of decreased physical newspaper readership, there has been media interest in how people will access the news in the future. Over half of all adults (55%) used the Internet to read or download the news, newspapers or magazines in 2013, compared to only 20% of adults in 2007. Those aged 25 to 34 (72%) were most likely to read or download news online. Almost half (49%) of 55 to 64 year olds reported that they now access news online.

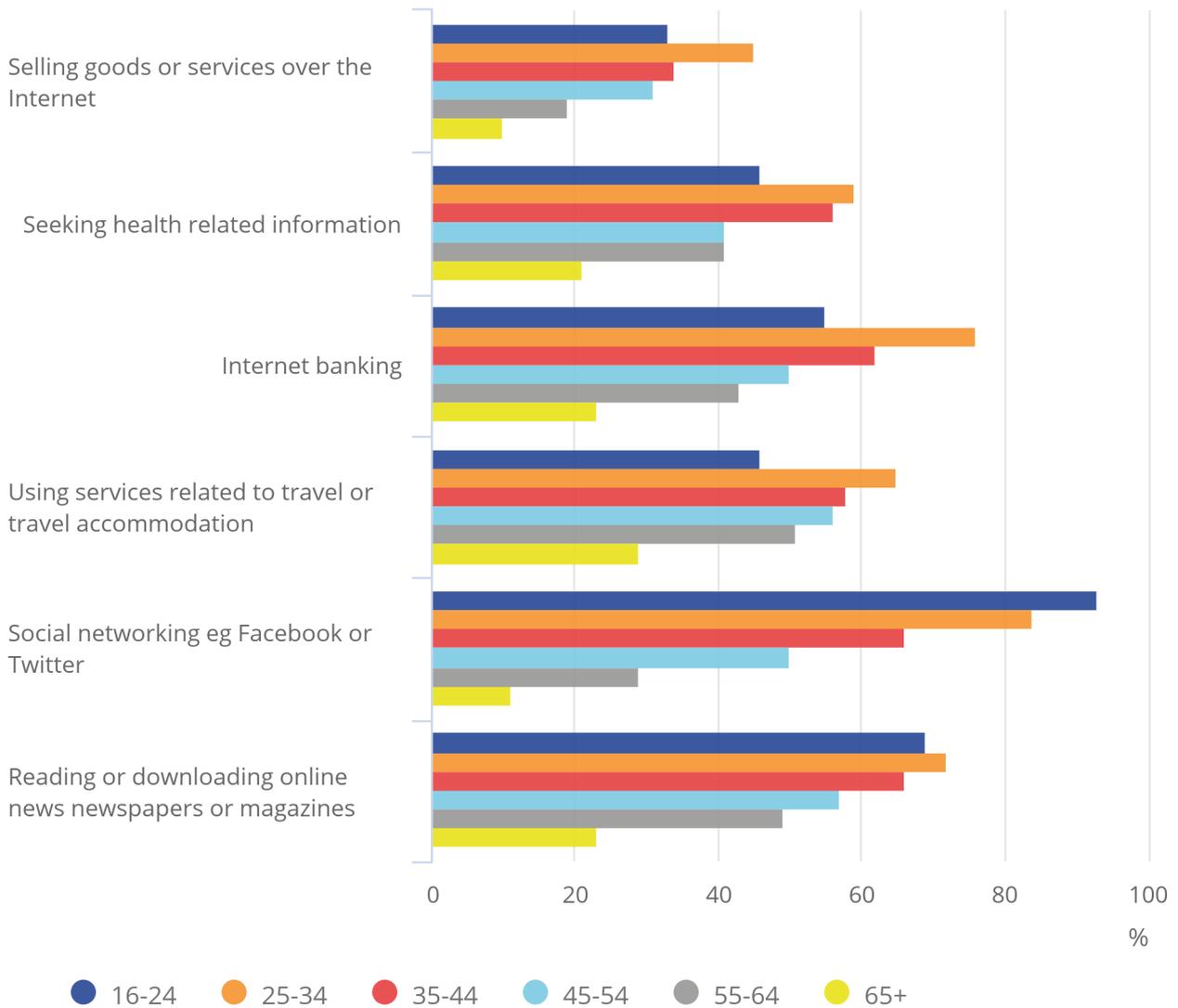
Social networking has been one of the major success stories of the Internet age and its use continues to grow. In 2013, over half (53%) of all adults participated in social networking, up from 48% in 2012. Almost all adults aged 16 to 24 (93%) have used social networks, but it is important to note that its use is not solely confined to the youngest age groups, with one in every two adults (50%) aged 45 to 54 year olds now reporting that they partake in social networking.

There has been significant growth, in the last six years, in adults selling goods or services online. In 2007, only 1 in 10 adults (12%) used sites such as eBay or Gumtree to sell goods online. This had more than doubled by 2013, with 28% of adults selling goods over the Internet. Of those aged 25 to 34, just under half (45%) reported that they had now sold goods or services online.

Using services related to travel and travel related accommodation is one of only three activities favoured by those aged 55 to 64 to a greater degree than the youngest age group aged 16 to 24; at 51% and 46% respectively. In total, one in every two adults (50%) indicated that they used the Internet for this activity.

Figure 4: Internet activities by age group, 2013

Figure 4: Internet activities by age group, 2013



Source: Office for National Statistics

## 7. Unemployment and the use of the internet

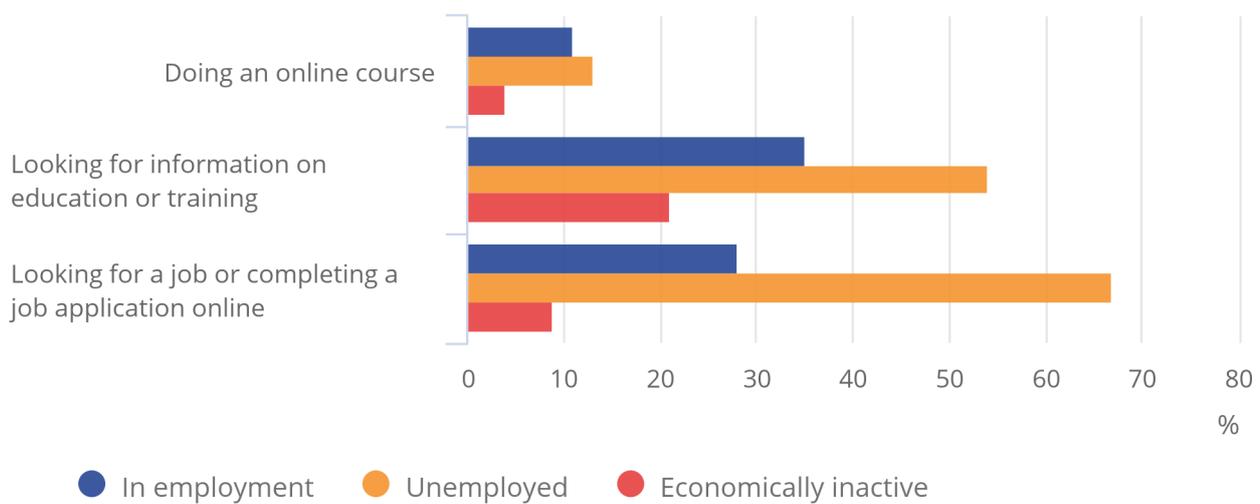
The Internet has become a key tool for those looking for work.

In 2013, two thirds (67%) of unemployed adults had looked for a job or submitted a job application online. Just over half of unemployed adults (54%) reported that they had looked on the Internet for information about education, training or courses.

Approximately two thirds (67%) of those who were unemployed indicated that their computer skills were sufficient if they needed to start a new job. This figure compares to 72% of adults currently in employment.

**Figure 5: Using the Internet to seek employment or training by economic status, 2013**

Figure 5: Using the Internet to seek employment or training by economic status, 2013



Source: Office for National Statistics

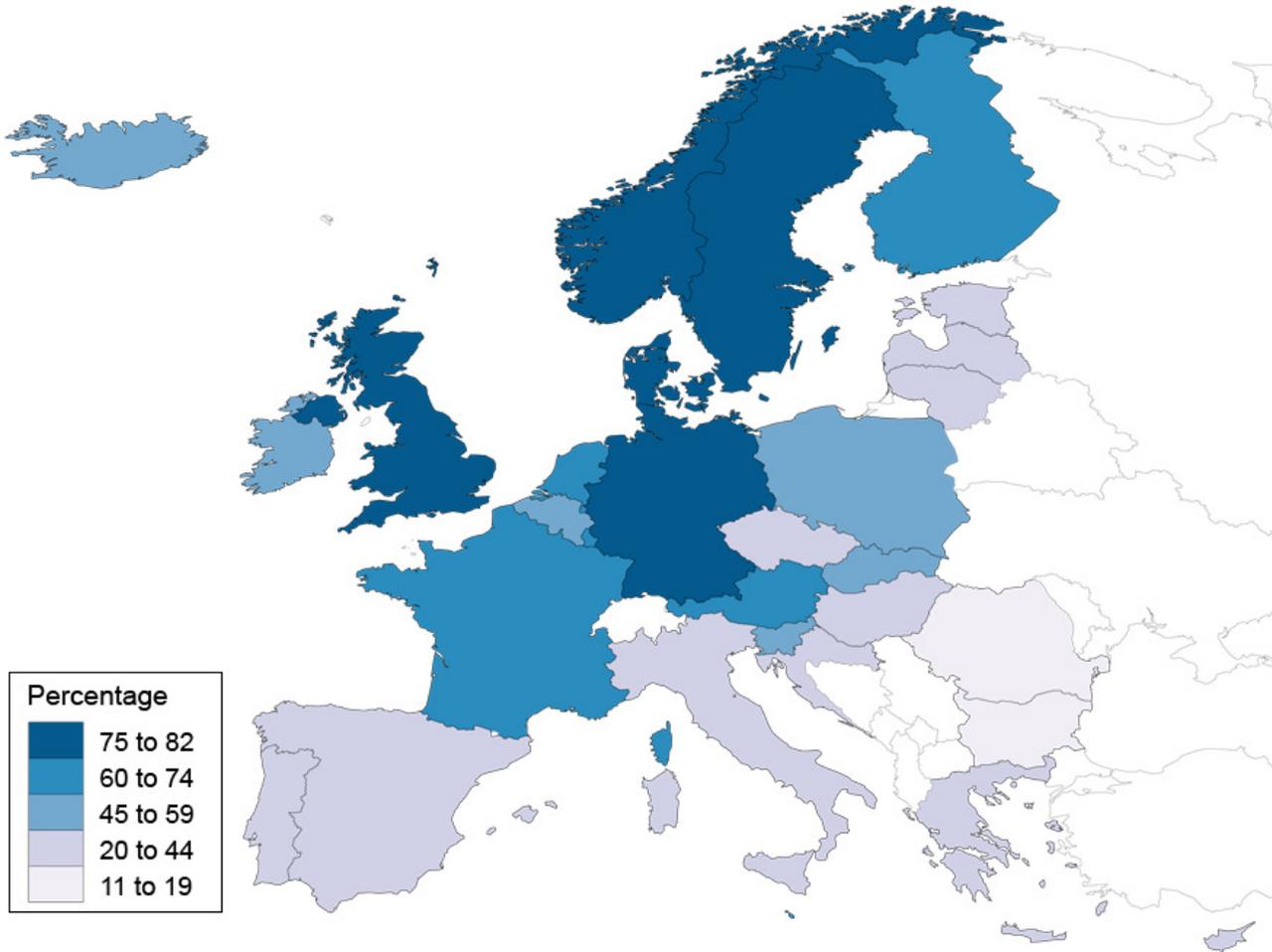
Notes:

1. Base: Adults (aged 16+) in Great Britain.

## 8 . Internet shopping

The convenience of Internet shopping has proved very popular for consumers. The Eurostat report ‘ [Internet use in households and by individuals in 2012](#) ’ which published data relating to UK residents aged 16 to 74 (rather than for all adults, including those aged over 74 years, in Great Britain which is the basis of this statistical bulletin), compared rates of online shopping across the EU. It reported that the UK had the highest rate of online purchasing, with 82% of Internet users buying online, slightly ahead of Norway at 80%, followed by Denmark and Sweden both at 79%.

**Map 1: Internet purchasing by individuals in the last 12 months by country, 2012**



Source: UNEP (2013): UNEP Environmental Data Explorer.  
United Nations Environment Programme. <http://geodata.grid.unep.ch>.  
Contains National Statistics data © Crown copyright and database right 2013.

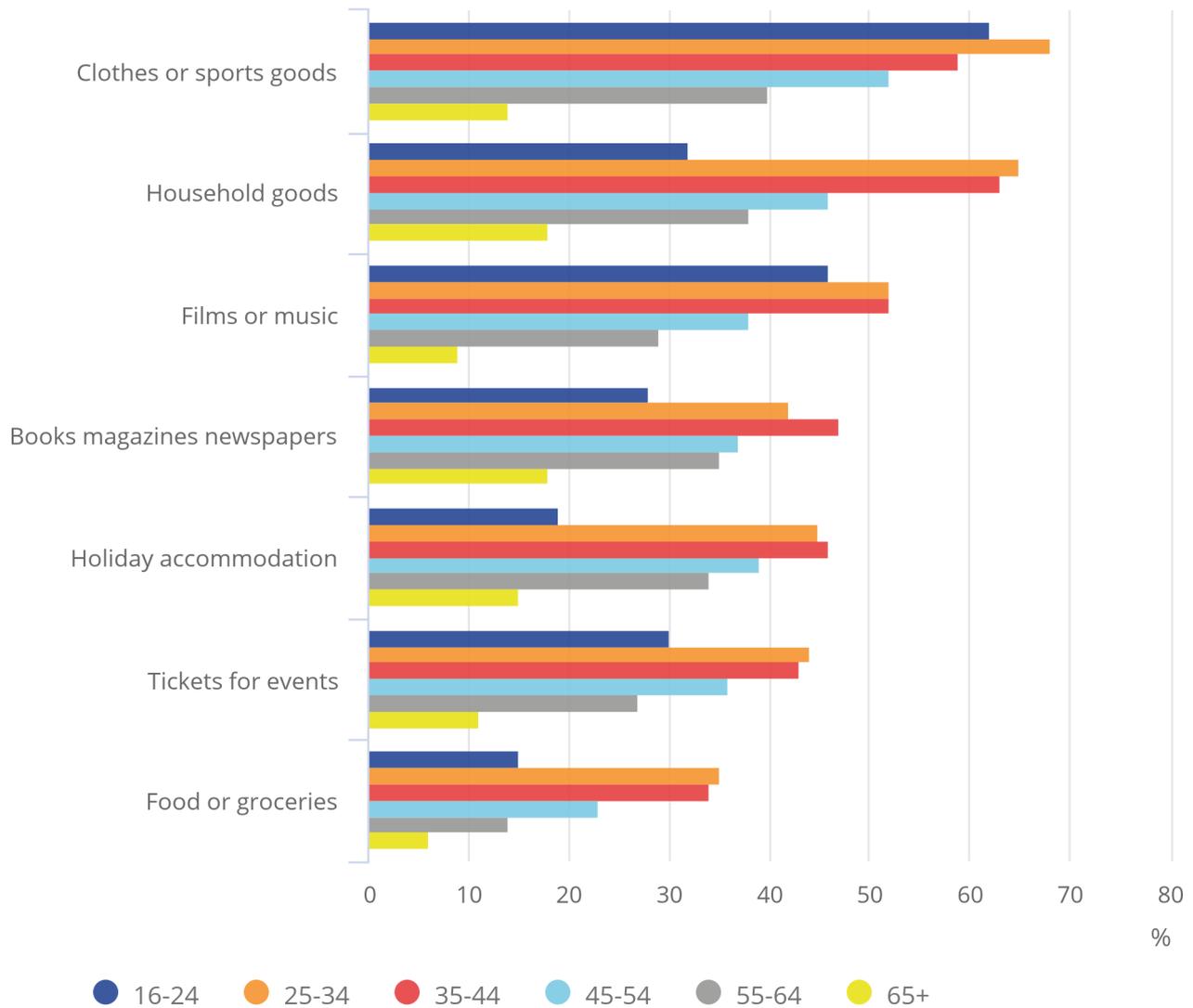
In 2013, as regular stories appear in the media reporting the decline of the high street, it is interesting to note that almost three quarters (72%) of all adults reported buying goods or services online. This has risen from 53% since 2008. While younger age groups have traditionally embraced Internet shopping (92% of 25 to 34 year olds), there has been significant growth in the rate of online purchasing by those aged over 65. Over a third of those aged 65 and over bought online (36%) in 2013, more than double the 2008 estimate of 16%.

Clothes were the most popular online purchase in 2013, bought by 47% of all adults. Those aged 25-34 were most likely to buy these items (68%). In 2013, half of all women (50%) bought clothes online, compared with 45% of men.

There is a noticeable difference in the type of goods bought online, when analysed by age. In 2013, for example, only 15% of those aged 16 to 24 bought food and groceries online, compared with 34% of those aged 35 to 44.

**Figure 6: Purchases made over the Internet by age group, 2013**

Figure 6: Purchases made over the Internet by age group, 2013



Source: Office for National Statistics

## 9 . Downloads

In 2013, one in every two adults (50%) who bought films or music online downloaded the content or accessed it via a streaming website such as Lovefilm or Netflix. Men (53%) were more likely to do this than women (47%).

Over half of all adults (52% of both men and women) who bought reading material online, such as books, magazines, newspapers or e-learning material, did so via download or bought eBooks for readers such as Kindle or Nook.

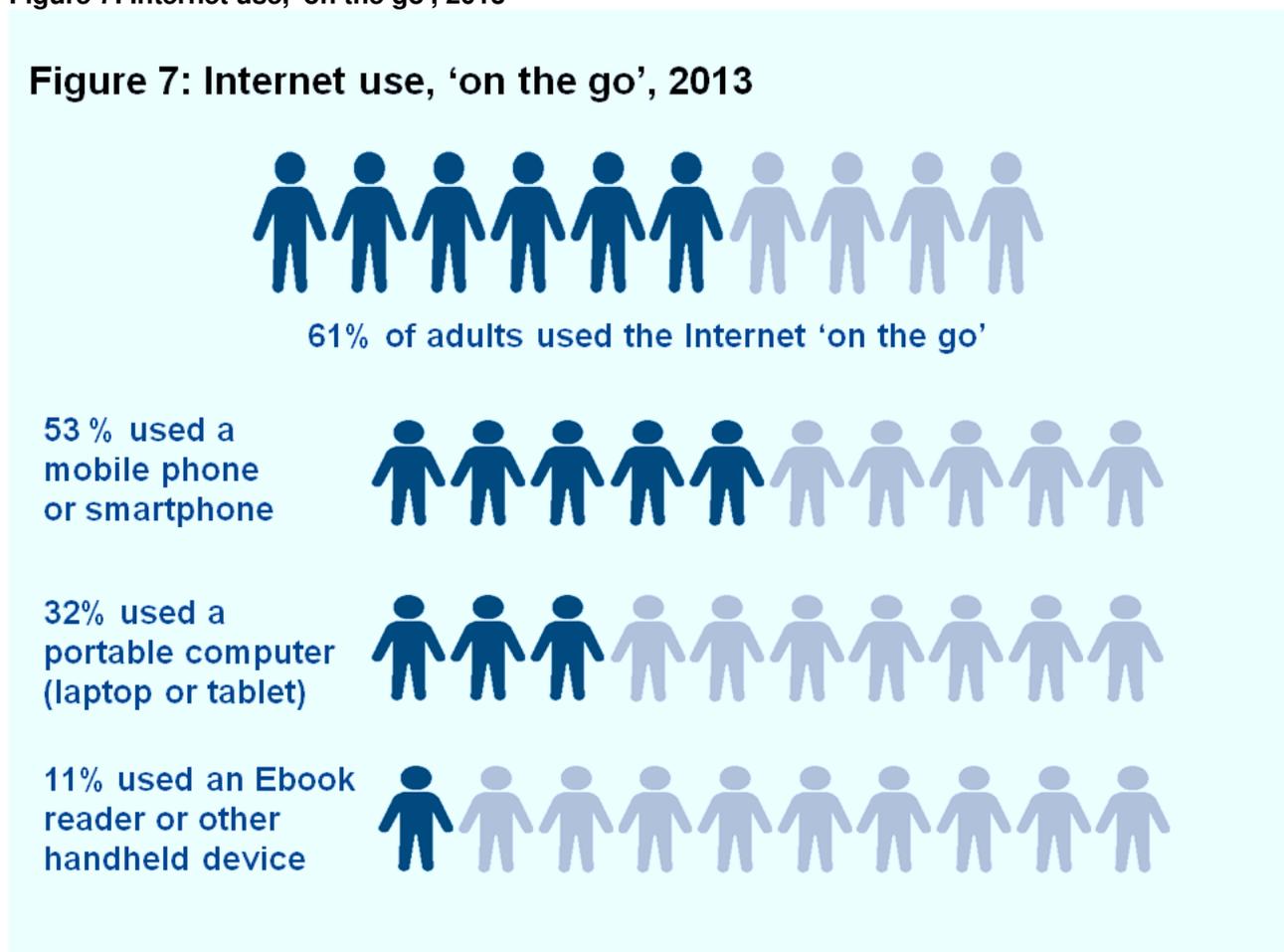
## 10 . Mobile internet

In October 2012, the UK's first 4G network was launched, offering faster mobile broadband than the existing 2G and 3G networks previously provided. In 2013, the 4G network is set to expand, with more providers due to launch 4G services. Recent developments have not only been limited to mobile broadband, with the availability of wireless (wifi) hotspots increasing at a rapid rate. Leading companies provide thousands of hotspots across the country. These are now regularly seen at locations such as pubs, cafes and hotels. The availability of both mobile broadband and wifi networks means the mobile Internet is now used by more people than ever before.

In 2013, 6 in 10 adults (61%) had used a device such as mobile phone or portable computer (a tablet or laptop) to access the mobile Internet, away from home or work. Almost all those aged 16 to 24 (94%) had used a mobile phone or portable device to access the Internet "on the go", compared with only 17% of those aged 65 or above.

The most popular device used to access the Internet 'on the go' was a mobile phone, with over half of all adults (53%) accessing the Internet this way. This has more than doubled since the 2010 estimate of 24%.

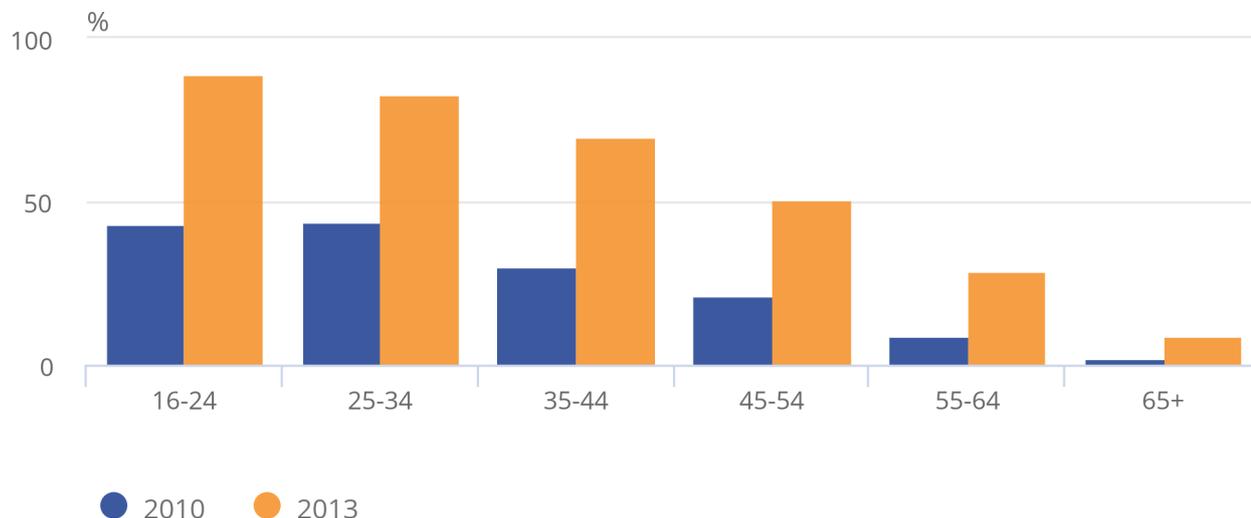
Figure 7: Internet use, 'on the go', 2013



Almost 9 in 10 (89%) adults aged 16 to 24 used their mobile phone to access the Internet. However, this type of access is not solely limited to the early-adopting, younger age groups with just over half (51%) of those aged 45 to 54 accessing the mobile Internet on their mobile phone.

**Figure 8: Internet use on a mobile phone by age group, 2010 and 2013**

Figure 8: Internet use on a mobile phone by age group, 2010 and 2013



Source: Office for National Statistics

Accessing the Internet using portable computers such as tablets or laptops was popular with almost one third of all adults (32%). The three youngest age groups (16 to 24; 25 to 34 and 35 to 44) all reported similar rates of use, with those aged 25 to 34 leading the way at 43%. Of those aged 65 and over, 1 in 10 adults (11%) used a tablet or portable computer to access the Internet “on the go” in 2013.

One fifth (21%) of 16 to 24 year olds reported using a device such as a games console or eBook reader to access the Internet away from home or work. This type of access was heavily favoured by the younger age groups, with just 10% of 45 to 54 year olds accessing the Internet over these devices and only 11% of all adults.

## 11 . Public authorities and services

In April 2013, the UK Government published details of a system of “[Universal Credit](#)”; a change to the benefits system in which “most people will apply online and manage their claim through an online account”. This is likely to have a significant impact on the numbers of adults who use the Internet to interact with public authorities and services online.

In 2013, the most popular reason for accessing a public authority or service website was to obtain information. Approximately, 31% of adults obtained information from public authorities or services such as local authorities, schools and universities, or government departments. For example, as reported earlier, it is likely that a proportion of those adults (43%) that used the Internet to seek health related information used public health websites such as NHS direct.

## 12 . Household internet access

In 2013, 21 million households in Great Britain had an Internet connection. This represented 83% of households, up from 80% in 2012 and 57% in 2006.

There were 4 million households in Great Britain without Internet access in 2013, compared with 10 million in 2006. Figure 9 clearly shows that Internet access by households has increased dramatically since ONS first began collecting these statistics in 1998.

There were changes in the survey source, periodicity and coverage over the period 1998 to 2005; consequently these estimates (from 1998 to 2005) are not directly comparable with the annual estimates from 2006 onwards, but have been provided as our best indication of growth over this period.

**Figure 9: Households with Internet access, 1998 to 2013**



Source: Office for National Statistics

### Notes:

1. UK estimates from 1998 to 2004, Great Britain estimates from 2005 to 2013.

Internet access varies depending on household composition. The majority of households with children have an Internet connection (97%). This is the same figure as households made up of three or more adults (including homes of multiple occupancies such as student accommodation).

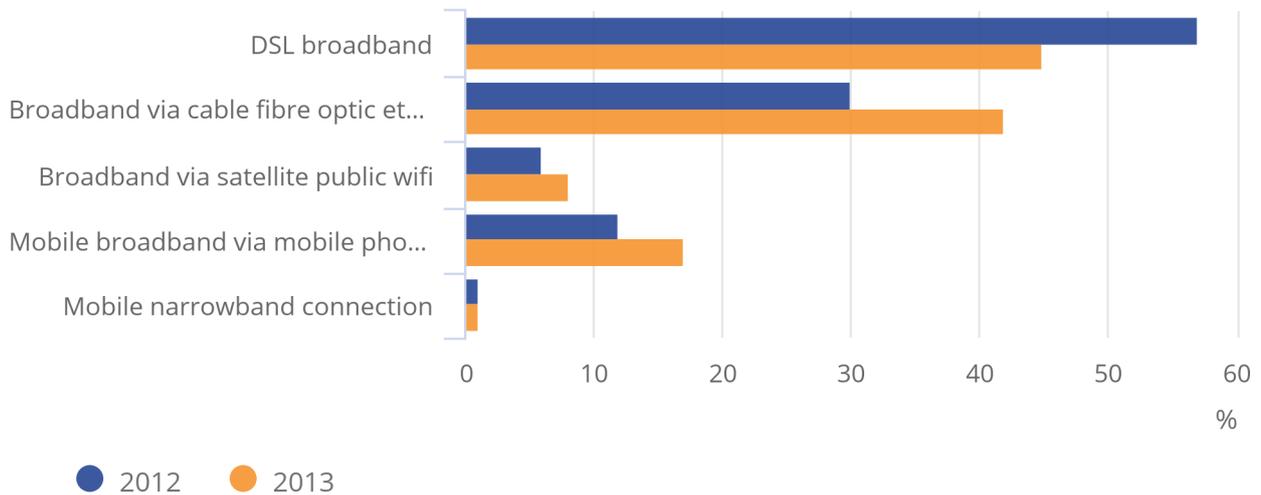
Access to the Internet by single adult households varies considerably depending on age. Where the adult is aged 65 or over, only 40% of households had an Internet connection. In contrast, 74% of households had an Internet connection where the adult was aged 16 to 64 years.

The way households connect to the Internet has changed considerably in recent years. In 2006, 31% of households made use of a dial-up connection over a standard telephone line. Seven years on and dial-up Internet has almost entirely disappeared from the Great Britain Internet map, with less than 1% of households still connecting this way. Therefore, for the vast majority of households an Internet connection now means a broadband connection over a Digital Subscriber Line (DSL), fibre optic or cable line.

Households accessing broadband, via fibre optic or cable connections, increased by 12 percentage points since 2012 (30%), to 42% in 2013. This is likely, as mentioned earlier, to be a result of increased investment into the availability of fibre optic connections. In comparison, DSL broadband is beginning to lose its dominance. In 2013, only 45% of households reported using a DSL connection, down from 57% in 2012.

**Figure 10: Household Internet connection by type, 2012 and 2013**

Figure 10: Household Internet connection by type, 2012 and 2013



Source: Office for National Statistics

### Reasons for no household Internet access

Of the 4 million households without Internet access, the majority (59%) said that they didn't have a connection because they 'did not need it'. This is compared with 34% in 2006. While this may suggest that many households without the Internet are actively choosing not to subscribe, there is still a large and important minority who state that barriers prevent them from connecting to the Internet. Approximately, one in five households (20%) indicated that they did not have the Internet in their household due to a lack of computer skills. Further barriers included equipment costs and access costs being high at 13% and 12% of households without Internet access respectively.

# 13. Background notes

## 1. Key issues specific to this bulletin

This statistical bulletin provides information about individuals' use of the Internet and how households access the Internet. The source of this information is the Opinions and Lifestyle Survey. The Opinions and Lifestyle Survey is a multi-purpose survey developed by ONS for use by government departments, other public bodies, charities, academics and the media. It provides a fast, cost effective and reliable way of obtaining information on topics too brief to warrant their own survey.

Responses for the Internet Access Survey are normally collected in January, February and March each year. However, due to a data collection problem that affected some of the 2012 estimates, the 2012 survey was re-run over August, September and October 2012. The effect of this is that year on year comparisons of 2012 and 2013 estimates of Internet use (Tables 1 to 12) relate to a comparison period of five months rather than the usual 12 months.

A random sample of about 1,800 adults aged 16 and over, living in private households throughout Great Britain are selected each month. After accounting for refusals and where no contact can be made, approximately 1,000 interviews are conducted each month. Further information about the Opinions and Lifestyle Survey is available on the ONS website. For general information on the survey, contact telephone +44 (0)1633 455810, email: [opinions@ons.gov.uk](mailto:opinions@ons.gov.uk).

The annual release of estimates of Internet Access commenced in 2006. Internet Access results were originally published from 1998 onwards. Between 1998 and 2006, the results were published more frequently, but were based on smaller sample sizes. There were also various changes made to the survey in this earlier period of collecting Internet Access data, such as the survey vehicle used to collect the data. Some historical Internet Access estimates published before 2006 are available on the ONS website. However, comparing estimates in this release with those from prior to 2006 should be made with caution.

The estimates in the 2013 survey relate to Great Britain. For the period 2006 to 2010, this bulletin was published on a UK basis. Northern Ireland has not been sampled since the 2008 survey, but was included in the survey estimation process for the 2009 and 2010 results, which meant UK estimates were also produced for 2009 and 2010. Northern Ireland was not included in the estimation process for 2011; therefore the coverage of the survey was changed in 2011 from UK to Great Britain. All estimates in this bulletin have been reworked to be on a Great Britain basis. As in previous years, the Isles of Scilly and the Scottish Highlands (North of the Caledonian Canal) and Islands were not sampled but are included in the estimation.

## 2. Common pitfalls in interpreting series

The statistics presented in this release should not be confused with the quarterly estimates of adults who have ever or never used the Internet. These are published in the Internet Access Quarterly Update statistical bulletin. These estimates are derived from the Labour Force Survey which has a much larger sample than the Opinions and Lifestyle Survey.

References to 2013 in this release refer to data collected in interviews between January and March 2013.

## 3. Revisions

There are no revisions to estimates previously published.

#### 4. Users and uses of the data

[Eurostat](#) is the principal user of these statistics. The UK provides statistics to Eurostat measuring households' and individuals' use of the Internet and other forms of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) in accordance with the ICT [Regulation \(EC\) No 808/2004 of the European Parliament and of the Council](#).

The Internet Access estimates are used to provide information that is consistent with other European Union (EU) member states, as part of progress towards measuring EU benchmarking indicators. These EU indicators compare the development and use of ICT across EU member states, and help to provide a better understanding of the adoption of ICT and the Internet by households and individuals at an EU level.

ICT is considered as critical for improving the competitiveness of European industry and, more generally, to meet the demands of society and the economy. Broadband is considered to be important when measuring access to, and use of, the Internet, as it offers users the possibility to rapidly transfer large volumes of data and keep access lines open. The take-up of broadband is a key ICT policy-making indicator. Widespread access to the Internet via broadband is regarded as essential for the development of advanced services on the Internet, such as e-business, e-government or e-learning. Until 2010 the EU policy framework for ICT was the i2010 initiative called '[A European information society for growth and employment](#)' which sought to boost efficiency throughout the EU economy by means of the wider use of ICT.

In May 2010 the European Commission adopted [A digital agenda for Europe](#), a strategy for a digital economy by 2020. The Digital Agenda for Europe is one of the seven flagship initiatives under the [Europe 2020 strategy](#) for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth. It outlines policies and actions aimed at maximising the benefits of the digital era to all sections of society and economy.

Within the UK there is wide interest in these statistics from researchers, public bodies, charities, academics and the media.

Do you make use of our estimates of annual Internet access and use of computers estimates? If yes, we would like to hear from you ([esociety@ons.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:esociety@ons.gsi.gov.uk)) and understand how you make use of these statistics. This may enable us, in the future, to better meet your needs as a user.

#### 5. Coherence

The results published in this bulletin focus on adults' use of the Internet. These estimates complement the estimates contained in the Internet Access Quarterly Update, which was last published on 15th May 2013. The Internet Access Quarterly Update focuses on adults who have ever or never used the Internet and includes detailed socio-demographic breakdowns. This release was compiled from approximately 3,000 interviews conducted for the Opinions and Lifestyle Survey, whereas approximately 41,000 households respond each quarter to the LFS. Therefore the LFS estimates of Internet users are considered to be more reliable.

ONS's annual survey of [ICT and e-commerce activity of business](#) provides information on business e-commerce and ICT activity of UK businesses. The 2011 survey results were published on 30 November 2012.

#### 6. Sampling variability

The Opinions and Lifestyle Survey is carried out by interviewing a nationally representative sample of households in Great Britain. About 1,800 households are sampled each month and estimates are subject to sampling variability, as are those from all sample surveys.

The confidence interval tables below show estimated 95% confidence intervals for selected estimates relating to Internet Access. The estimates come from survey data and so have a degree of statistical error associated with them. Confidence intervals are an indication of the reliability of an estimate; the smaller the interval, the more reliable the estimate is likely to be. With regards to '95% confidence intervals', we mean that if we repeated our survey 100 times, 95% of the time (95 times out of 100), the true population value would fall within the range of these confidence intervals.

**Table A: Frequency of Internet use, 95% Confidence Intervals, 2013**

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	Lower Survey estimate limit	Upper limit
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Used within the last three months: (millions)			
Every day or almost every day	34.9	35.7	36.5
At least weekly	4.1	4.2	4.2
Less than weekly	1.6	1.6	1.7
Did not use in the last 3 months	7.3	7.4	7.5

Used within the last three months: (%)			
Every day or almost every day	71	73	75
At least weekly	7	9	10
Less than weekly	3	3	4
Did not use in the last 3 months	13	15	17

Source: Office for National Statistics

Notes:

1. Base: Adults (aged 16+) in Great Britain.

**Table B: Doing an online course or looking for a job online, by unemployed adults, 95% Confidence Intervals, 2013**

	Lower limit	Survey estimate	Upper limit
Used within the last three months: (millions)			
Every day or almost every day	34.9	35.7	36.5
At least weekly	4.1	4.2	4.2
Less than weekly	1.6	1.6	1.7
Did not use in the last 3 months	7.3	7.4	7.5

Used within the last three months: (%)			
Every day or almost every day	71	73	75
At least weekly	7	9	10
Less than weekly	3	3	4
Did not use in the last 3 months	13	15	17

Source: Office for National Statistics

Notes:

1. Base: Adults (aged 16+) in Great Britain.

**Table C: Internet use on a mobile phone, 95% Confidence Intervals, 2013**

	Lower limit	Survey estimate	Upper limit
Used within the last three months: (millions)			
Every day or almost every day	34.9	35.7	36.5
At least weekly	4.1	4.2	4.2
Less than weekly	1.6	1.6	1.7
Did not use in the last 3 months	7.3	7.4	7.5

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Used within the last three months: (%)			
Every day or almost every day	71	73	75
At least weekly	7	9	10
Less than weekly	3	3	4
Did not use in the last 3 months	13	15	17

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Source: Office for National Statistics

Notes:

1. Base: Adults (aged 16+) in Great Britain.

The larger the sample that is used for a particular estimate, the narrower the confidence interval. Estimates at Great Britain level (for example adults in Great Britain using the Internet) will have a larger sample than estimates of sub-groups of the population (for example adults using the Internet broken down by age group). Therefore the quality of estimates of the whole population will be higher than that for sub-groups.

The voluntary nature of the survey means that people who do not wish to take part in the survey can refuse to do so. The sample is designed to ensure that the results of the survey represent the population. The risk of the survey not being representative is likely to increase with every refusal or non-contact with a sampled household (survey non-response). One measure of the quality of survey results is therefore the response rate.

The response rate for 2013 was 54%, the rate of refusals was 33% and 13% of the sample could not be contacted. The response rate for the 2012 survey was 55%, the rate of refusals was 32% and 12% of the sample could not be contacted.

## 7. Calibration

Weights are used in the analysis of the Opinions and Lifestyle Survey data, for both households and for individuals. Each respondent to the survey is assigned a weight which is the number of adults or households that this person represents. These weights are derived by calibration, using population estimates for age group by sex and region. The weights are used to improve the accuracy of results by compensating for different response rates for different groups and by reducing the random variation in estimates.

As the responses are weighted to population estimates, weighted totals of individuals by age group, sex and region from the survey are guaranteed to match the fixed population totals.

## 8. Rounding

Percentages in the data tables may not sum to 100 or agree with related totals, due to independently rounded components.

## 9. International comparison

A comparable survey is run in all countries of the European Union (EU) and also in some non-EU countries. The measurement of household Internet access and adults' use of the Internet is under continuing review and development. The Statistical Office of the European Commission (Eurostat) plays a leading role in this, and each year Eurostat leads a process whereby the data requirements for the Internet Access survey in all EU countries are reviewed and updated. Comparative data for EU countries can be found on [Eurostats website](#)

## 10. Social media

Follow ONS on [Twitter](#) and receive up to date information about our statistics.

Like ONS on [Facebook](#) to receive our updates in your newsfeed and to post comments on our page.

## 11. Special events

ONS has published commentary, analysis and policy on 'Special Events' which may affect statistical outputs. For full details visit the [Special Events](#) page on the ONS website.

12. Details of the policy governing the release of new data are available by visiting [www.statisticsauthority.gov.uk/assessment/code-of-practice/index.html](http://www.statisticsauthority.gov.uk/assessment/code-of-practice/index.html) or from the Media Relations Office email: [media.relations@ons.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:media.relations@ons.gsi.gov.uk)

These National Statistics are produced to high professional standards and released according to the arrangements approved by the UK Statistics Authority.



## Internet Access - Households and Individuals, 2013

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**Table 1: Frequency of Internet use, 2006 to 2013**

Year	Used within the last three months						Did not use the Internet in the last three months	
	Daily		At least weekly		Less than weekly		Adults	
	Adults (Millions)	%	Adults (Millions)	%	Adults (Millions)	%	(Millions)	%
2006	16.2	35	7.4	16	3.7	8	18.5	40
2007	20.7	45	7.3	16	3.0	6	15.3	33
2008	23.0	49	7.2	15	2.8	6	13.5	29
2009	26.6	55	7.3	15	2.5	5	11.6	24
2010	29.2	60	6.3	13	1.7	3	11.1	23
2011	31.4	64	5.2	11	2.2	5	9.8	20
2012	33.2	68	5.3	11	1.5	3	8.8	18
2013	35.7	73	4.2	9	1.6	3	7.4	15

Base: Adults (aged 16+) in Great Britain

Source: Office for National Statistics

Percentages may not sum to 100 due to independently rounded components

**Table 2 : Internet activities by age group and sex, 2013**

	Age group						Sex		
	16-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65+	Men	Women	All
Sending/receiving emails	87	89	86	81	72	44	78	72	<b>75</b>
Finding information about goods and services	65	77	77	74	69	41	69	64	<b>66</b>
Reading or downloading online news, newspapers or magazines	69	72	66	57	49	23	60	49	<b>55</b>
Social networking, eg Facebook or Twitter	93	84	66	50	29	11	52	55	<b>53</b>
Using services related to travel or travel related accommodation	46	65	58	56	51	29	50	50	<b>50</b>
Internet banking	55	76	62	50	43	23	54	47	<b>50</b>
Seeking health related information	46	59	56	41	41	21	39	46	<b>43</b>
Consulting wikis	60	55	52	44	40	18	48	39	<b>43</b>
Looking for information about education, training or course offers	62	40	38	31	17	8	30	32	<b>31</b>
Downloading software (other than games software)	55	47	35	27	18	10	40	22	<b>31</b>
Selling goods or services over the Internet	33	45	34	31	19	10	32	24	<b>28</b>
Telephoning or making video calls over the Internet via a webcam	40	39	28	22	18	9	26	24	<b>25</b>
Looking for a job or sending a job application	45	39	30	23	12	1	25	22	<b>24</b>
Participating in professional networks	16	23	23	17	13	3	19	12	<b>15</b>
Posting opinions on civic or political issues	13	15	12	8	8	5	12	8	<b>10</b>
Doing an online course	18	9	14	8	6	1	11	7	<b>9</b>
Taking part in online consultations or voting on civic or political issues	6	8	10	7	8	6	8	7	<b>7</b>

Base: Adults (aged 16+) in Great Britain

Source: Office for National Statistics

**Table 3: Internet activities by year, 2007 to 2013**

	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
Sending/receiving emails	57	62	68	69	-	73	75
Finding information about goods and services	58	59	59	58	62	67	66
Reading or downloading online news, newspapers or magazines	20	34	39	39	42	47	55
Social networking, eg Facebook or Twitter	-	-	-	-	45	48	53
Using services related to travel or travel related accommodation	42	45	52	49	46	44	50
Internet banking	30	35	41	42	44	47	50
Seeking health related information	18	24	32	30	34	-	43
Consulting wikis	-	-	-	-	38	-	43
Looking for information about education, training or course offers	25	22	28	24	29	-	31
Downloading software (other than games software)	16	27	27	23	24	-	31
Selling goods or services over the Internet	12	13	14	16	25	22	28
Telephoning or making video calls over the Internet via a webcam	8	-	16	18	17	32	25
Looking for a job or sending a job application	14	18	23	20	24	-	24
Participating in professional networks	-	-	-	-	10	-	15
Posting opinions on civic or political issues	-	-	-	-	11	-	10
Doing an online course	4	-	6	6	6	-	9
Taking part in online consultations or voting on civic or political issues	-	-	-	-	6	-	7

Base: Adults (aged 16+) in Great Britain

Source: Office for National Statistics

'-' Data not available

**Table 4: Doing an online course or looking for a job online, by employment status, 2013**

	<b>In Employment</b>	<b>Unemployed</b>	<b>Economically inactive</b>
Doing an online course (in any subject)	11	13	4
Looking for information (education/training/course offers)	35	54	21
Looking for a job or sending a job application online	28	67	9

%

Base: Adults (aged 16+) in Great Britain

Source: Office for National Statistics

**Table 5: Internet purchasing, by age group and sex, 2008 to 2013**

	%					
	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
<b>All</b>	<b>53</b>	<b>61</b>	<b>62</b>	<b>66</b>	<b>67</b>	<b>72</b>
Men	57	66	64	68	68	74
Women	49	57	60	63	67	70
<b>Age group</b>						
16-24	65	78	74	77	79	86
25-34	72	82	79	88	87	92
35-44	68	75	78	79	84	83
45-54	59	65	70	73	72	77
55-64	45	52	58	59	61	67
65+	16	20	22	27	32	36

Adults (aged 16+) in Great Britain

Source: Office for National Statistics

**Table 6: Purchases made over the Internet, by age group and sex, 2013**

%

	Age group						Sex		All
	16-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65+	Men	Women	
Clothes, sports goods	62	68	59	52	40	14	45	50	<b>47</b>
Household goods	32	65	63	46	38	18	44	43	<b>43</b>
Films and music	46	52	52	38	29	9	40	33	<b>36</b>
Books, magazines, newspapers	28	42	47	37	35	18	33	35	<b>34</b>
Holiday accommodation	19	45	46	39	34	15	35	31	<b>33</b>
Other travel arrangements	24	41	41	38	34	15	33	31	<b>32</b>
Tickets for events	30	44	43	36	27	11	31	31	<b>31</b>
Food or groceries	15	35	34	23	14	6	20	22	<b>21</b>
Electronic equipment	20	31	28	22	16	7	26	14	<b>20</b>
Video games software and upgrades	30	33	29	18	8	2	26	13	<b>19</b>
Share purchases, insurance policies etc	8	26	26	22	18	7	22	13	<b>18</b>
Other computer software and upgrades	19	22	23	22	14	8	25	11	<b>18</b>
Telecommunication services	10	21	21	19	13	6	19	10	<b>15</b>
Computer hardware	10	12	17	12	9	4	16	5	<b>10</b>
Medicine	5	10	9	11	8	4	8	7	<b>8</b>
E-learning material	10	7	9	4	2	1	6	5	<b>5</b>

Adults (aged 16+) in Great Britain

Source: Office for National Statistics

**Table 7: Internet purchases downloaded or accessed via websites, by sex, 2013**

			%
	<b>Men</b>	<b>Women</b>	<b>All</b>
Films or music	53	47	<b>50</b>
Electronic books, magazines, newspapers or e-learning material	52	52	<b>52</b>
Computer software, computer and video games or software upgrades	69	62	<b>66</b>

Adults (aged 16+) in Great Britain who bought such products over the Internet

Source: Office for National Statistics

**Table 8: Internet use on a mobile phone, 2010 to 2013**

	2010	2011	2012	2013
				%
<b>All</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>53</b>
Men	29	42	56	57
Women	19	30	46	49
<b>Age group</b>				
16-24	43	70	87	89
25-34	44	62	81	83
35-44	30	46	69	70
45-54	21	29	46	51
55-64	9	16	29	29
65+	2	3	8	9

Base: Adults (aged 16+) in Great Britain

Source: Office for National Statistics

**Table 9: Accessing the Internet 'on the go' using mobile phones and/or portable computers, by age group and sex, 2013**

*Within the last 3 months*

	Age group						Sex		%	
	16-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65+	Men	Women		All
	Have accessed the Internet 'on the go'	94	88	77	61	41	17	64		57
Have not accessed the Internet 'on the go' in the last three months	6	12	22	39	59	83	36	42	<b>39</b>	

Base: Adults (aged 16+) in Great Britain

Source: Office for National Statistics

**Table 10: Accessing the Internet 'on the go' by portable device type, by age group and sex, 2013**

*Within the last 3 months*

	Age group						Sex		All	%
	16-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65+	Men	Women		
Mobile phone or smartphone	89	83	70	51	29	9	57	49	<b>53</b>	
Portable computer (laptop, tablet)	42	43	41	34	26	11	35	29	<b>32</b>	
Other handheld device (eg PDA, MP3, e-book reader, games console)	21	15	14	10	7	2	12	10	<b>11</b>	

Base: Adults (aged 16+) in Great Britain  
 Individuals may have more than one type of device

Source: Office for National Statistics

**Table 11: Reasons for using the Internet to interact with public authorities or services, by age group and sex, 2013**

*Within the last 12 months* %

	Age group						Sex		All
	16-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65+	Men	Women	
Obtaining information from websites	22	35	42	38	35	18	34	28	<b>31</b>
Downloading official forms	13	26	25	24	27	13	24	18	<b>21</b>
Submitting completed forms	12	23	28	22	24	12	23	17	<b>20</b>
None of these	72	57	50	53	57	77	58	64	<b>61</b>

Base: Adults (aged 16+) in Great Britain  
 Respondents may select more than one option

Source: Office for National Statistics

**Table 12: Use of public authorities or services' websites, by age group and sex, 2013**

*Within the last 12 months*

%

	Age group						Sex		All
	16-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65+	Men	Women	
Requesting personal documents/certificates	7	16	14	13	9	8	14	9	<b>11</b>
Income tax declaration	1	6	11	10	9	4	9	5	<b>7</b>
Using public library services	4	7	7	7	7	3	5	6	<b>6</b>
Claiming social security benefits	4	5	7	2	3	1	4	4	<b>4</b>
Change of address	4	7	6	4	2	1	5	3	<b>4</b>
Enrolment in higher education / university	9	3	2	2	-	1	2	3	<b>3</b>

Base: Adults (aged 16+) in Great Britain

Source: Office for National Statistics

'-' Data not available

**Table 13: Frequency of computer use by age group, 2006 and 2013**

	%									
	Used within the last three months						Used over 3 months ago		Never used	
	Daily		Weekly		Less than once a week		2006	2013	2006	2013
	2006	2013	2006	2013	2006	2013				
16-24	63	88	15	8	10	1	10	2	2	1
25-34	61	84	17	11	8	2	10	2	5	-
35-44	63	80	16	12	5	4	7	2	9	2
45-54	56	76	13	11	8	4	8	3	15	6
55-64	36	67	17	12	8	6	11	4	28	11
65 +	9	37	8	11	6	4	12	11	65	36
<b>All</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>11</b>

Base: Adults (aged 16+) in Great Britain

Source: Office for National Statistics

'-' Data not available

Percentages may not sum to 100 due to independently rounded components

**Table 14: Households with Internet Access, 1998 to 2013**

Year	%
1998	9
1999	13
2000	25
2001	36
2002	42
2003	46
UK 2004	49
GB 2005	55
2006	57
2007	61
2008	65
2009	70
2010	73
2011	77
2012	80
2013	83

Source: Office for National Statistics

#### Notes

UK estimates from 1998 to 2004. GB estimates from 2005 to 2013

Source: Family Expenditure Survey 1998 to 2001;

Expenditure and Food Survey 2002 to 2004;

Opinions and Lifestyle survey, formerly known as the Opinions/Omnibus Survey from 2005

Estimates were published on a quarterly basis from 1998 to 2004. See

<http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/publications/re-reference-tables.html?edition=tcm%3A77-48688>

All estimates relate to January to March for each year, except 1998 which relates to April to June and 2005 which relates to May.

During 2005, estimates were published at irregular intervals as Topic Based Summaries. These are no longer available on the ONS website.

**Table 15: Internet connection by household composition, 2012 to 2013**

	<b>Have Internet access</b>		<b>No Internet Access</b>	
	2012	2013	2012	2013
1 adult Aged 16 to 64	76	74	24	26
1 adult Aged 65+	36	40	64	59
2 adults Aged 16 to 64	93	96	7	4
2 adults, 1 at least 65+	69	74	31	26
3+ adults all Ages	95	97	5	3
Households with children	95	97	5	3
<b>All households</b>	<b>80</b>	<b>83</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>17</b>

%

Base: Households in Great Britain with Internet access

Source: Office for National Statistics

**Table 16: Type of household Internet connection, 2012 to 2013**

	%	
	2012	2013
DSL broadband	57	45
Broadband via cable, optical fibre, ethernet, PLC etc	30	42
Broadband via satellite, public wifi	6	8
Mobile broadband via mobile phone network (handset or dongle/card)	12	17
Dial up access over a normal telephone line or ISDN	1	-
Mobile narrowband connection (less than 3G)	1	1

Source: Office for National Statistics

Base: Households in Great Britain with Internet access

Percentages sum to more than 100 because respondents can give more than one answer

'-' Data not available/too small to be displayed.

**Table 17: Reasons for households not having Internet access, 2006 to 2013**

						%
	2006	2008	2010	2011	2012	2013
Don't need Internet (not useful, not interesting, etc)	34	33	39	50	54	59
Lack of skills	-	14	21	21	22	20
Equipment costs too high	21	15	18	19	15	13
Access costs too high (telephone, broadband subscription)	16	11	15	13	14	12
Have access to the Internet elsewhere	10	9	8	8	8	7
Privacy or security concerns	8	3	4	5	4	2
Physical or sensorial disability	3	1	2	3	3	2
Other reason	13	18	13	18	15	13

Base: GB households without Internet access

Source: Office for National Statistics

These questions were not asked in 2007 or 2009

'-' Data not available

Percentages sum to more than 100 because respondents can give more than one answer