

### Access to services

*Lower income countries often have larger regional disparities in broadband access.*

Access to services is an important dimension of well-being which can change remarkably between different places within a country. Having easy access to services, such as public transport or efficient telecommunication networks, can improve access to markets, increase the connectivity of regions and therefore foster their economic development.

The provision of a high-speed Information Communication and Technology (ICT) network can be a key factor to provide services to remote areas and to facilitate the adoption of new technologies. Regional differences in the percentage of households with broadband access are strongly pronounced both in countries with a high ICT penetration, such as France, Israel, the United States and New Zealand, and countries with low average ICT access such as Mexico or Turkey (Figure 2.3). In these last two countries, broadband access in the region with the highest proportion of households with broadband connection is more than three times higher than in the region with the lowest access.

Part of regional differences in broadband access can be explained by the urban-rural divide. Regions that are mostly agglomerated, where more than half of the population live in a functional urban area, show, on average, a higher share of broadband connection than other less densely populated regions (80% and 76%, respectively). However, this gap has been halved since 2007. Korea and the Netherlands are the two countries with the highest average proportion of households with broadband connection; at the same time, they show very low regional disparity in this indicator.

The rise of information technologies and information infrastructures has enabled an increase in the availability of services delivered through the Internet. Online access can facilitate the provision and delivery of public services and increase transparency. In this respect, the proportion of the population interacting with public authorities through the Internet provides a measure of both the availability of online public services and how people in regions are receptive to new ways to contact public authorities. In the subset of 19 OECD countries observed, 60.5% of individuals used the Internet in 2017 to interact with public authorities. Regional variation is most pronounced in the United Kingdom, Hungary, Portugal, France and Spain, where the share of people using Internet to deal with public services can differ by more than 20 percentage points. Copenhagen (Denmark), Upper Norrland (Sweden), Helsinki-Uusimaa (Finland) and Oslo and Akershus (Norway) are the leading regions in this

usage of the web, whereas the region of Apulia has the lowest rate with only 16% of the individuals connecting with public services online (Figure 2.4).

#### Definition

The broad dimension of “access to services” can be broken down into several domains, such as the ease of access to the place where a specific service is provided (physical accessibility), its affordability (economic accessibility) and the extent to which the access is favoured or constrained by norms, values and laws (institutional accessibility).

The share of individuals using the Internet to interact with public authorities, includes the use of ICT by individuals to exchange information and services with governments and public administrations (e-government).

#### Source

OECD (2018), OECD Regional Statistics (database), <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/region-data-en>.

Eurostat, Survey on ICT (information and communication technology) usage in households and by individuals using the Internet for public services.

#### Reference years and territorial level

Share of households with broadband access to the Internet and individuals who used such means to interact with public authorities: 2017; TL2.

#### Further information

OECD (2014), How's Life in Your Region?: Measuring Regional and Local Well-being for Policy Making, OECD Publishing, Paris, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/9789264217416-en>.

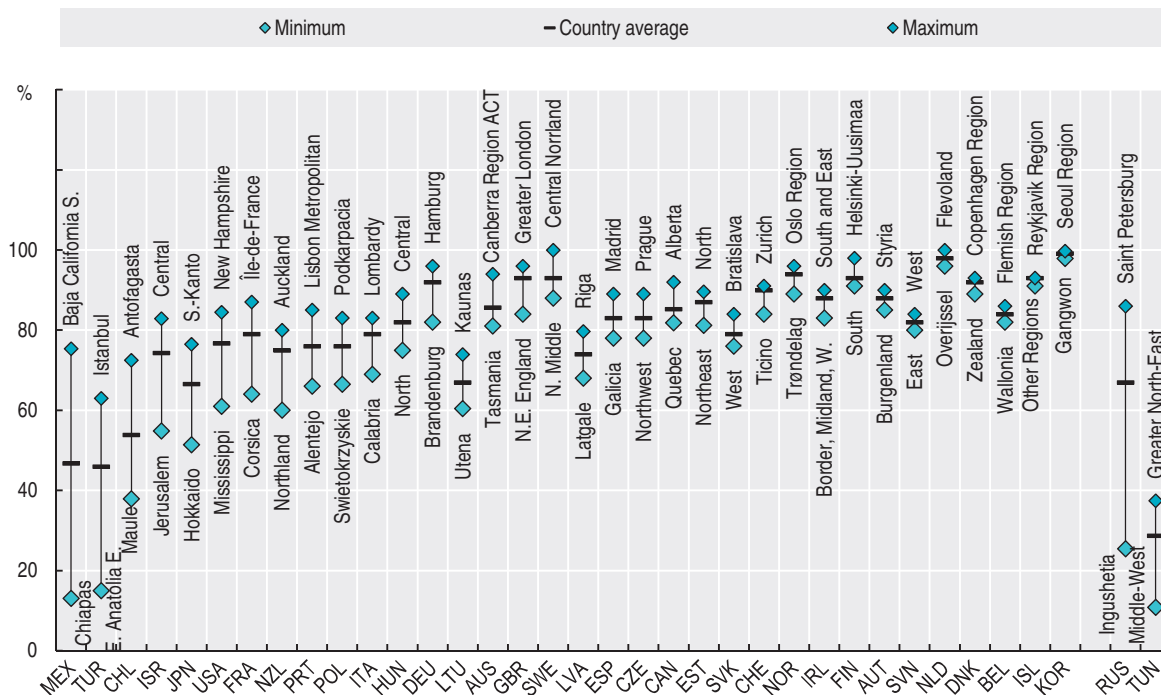
OECD Regional Well-Being: [www.oecdregionalwellbeing.org](http://www.oecdregionalwellbeing.org).

#### Figure notes

2.3: Available years: Korea, Mexico and Poland 2016; Australia, Canada, Israel, Japan, Russian Federation and United States 2015; Tunisia 2014; Chile, South Africa and Turkey, 2013; Iceland and New Zealand 2012.

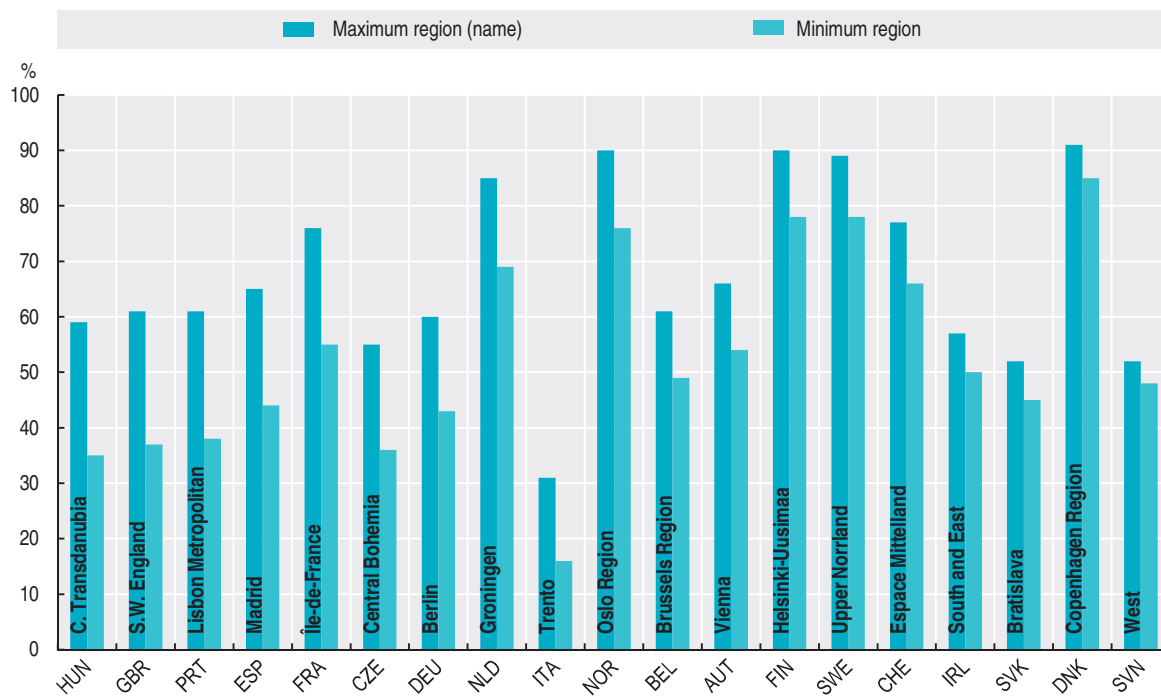
## 2.3. Regional variation in the % of households with a broadband connection, 2017

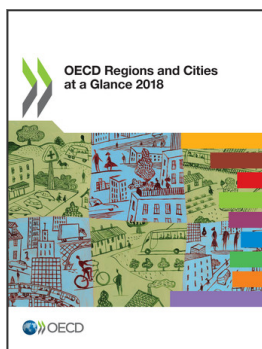
Large regions (TL2)

StatLink <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/888933817029>

## 2.4. Regional variation in the % of population using Internet for public services, 2017

Large regions (TL2)

StatLink <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/888933817048>



**From:**  
**OECD Regions and Cities at a Glance 2018**

**Access the complete publication at:**  
[https://doi.org/10.1787/reg\\_cit\\_glance-2018-en](https://doi.org/10.1787/reg_cit_glance-2018-en)

**Please cite this chapter as:**

OECD (2018), "Access to services", in *OECD Regions and Cities at a Glance 2018*, OECD Publishing, Paris.

DOI: [https://doi.org/10.1787/reg\\_cit\\_glance-2018-16-en](https://doi.org/10.1787/reg_cit_glance-2018-16-en)

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