

Two out of three families have an Internet access at home in France

This document is a summary of an article published by INSEE (the French Institute for Statistics and economic studies) at this address: http://www.insee.fr/fr/themes/document.asp?ref_id=ip1340. It was released by InterInnov on 4 March 2011.

Over the past ten years, the families with an Internet connection at home in France rose from 12% to 64%. Therefore, the digital divide seems to be eroding.

The continuous growth of the Internet

Even though 64% of families in France have an Internet access at home, the young couples seem to be the best equipped: 75% of the people under age 60 have a connection, whereas this figure is decreasing rapidly over 60. The equipment in Internet access changes also according to the level of education: indeed, the more the diploma is high the more chances are that a person has an Internet access. Nonetheless, the gap between the less educated and the most educated is decreasing.

Another difference can be noticed: unemployed people are usually less equipped (73.9%) than the others (83.4%). However, here again, the digital divide is wearing off.

Mobile Internet has on the other hand experienced a huge growth over the past two years: 38% of the Internet users use mobile internet. The wifi technologies and mobile phones are carrying this growth. In 2010, 24% of Internet users have declared using their mobile phone to go on the web.

Finally, the importance of Internet can be measured by the fact that 71% of people claim having used the Internet during the past three months. Among them, 80% are using it every day and 17% use it at least once a week.

The role of the Internet becomes more diverse

97% of the Internet users know how to use a search engine, 90% are able to send emails with files attached.

The use of Internet became more diverse:

- 91% of Internet users are using it as a communication medium (to send and receive emails);
- 83% of them use the Internet to search for information on goods and services;
- 66% of them to check their bank account;
- 61% of the Internet use it to get administrative information;
- 53% of them have bought an item on the Internet at least once in 2010;
- 52% of them use it in order to organize their holidays.

The use of the Internet is different according to sex: men download more than women, whereas women are searching more often information on health.



A tool still perfectible

Despite the many advantages of the web, three out of four Internet users have already experienced problems on the Internet over the past 12 months: from spams to viruses, and abuse of personal information.

Moreover, another important problem related to the Internet lies on the fact that there are great disparities between European countries. Indeed, the rate of Internet access at home can vary by a factor of three. For instance, if the Netherlands, 91% of families have an Internet connection at home, while in Bulgaria, only 33% do.