Bridging the digital divide

Facts and stats on how COVID-19 is changing the landscape of digital inclusion

ageing-better.org.uk
More older people than ever are using the internet.
Recent internet use in those aged 65 to 74 increased from 52% in 2011 to 83% in 2019.
But many people are still not online...
In 2019, over 3.7 million people aged 55 and over had never used the internet.

3.7m+
...and it’s not just older people who are offline.
A fifth of those who have not used the internet within the past three months are under the age of 50.

Centre for Ageing Better
Source: Lloyds Bank UK Consumer Digital Index 2019
While age does play a part, it’s not the only indicator of who’s online.
71% of those offline have no more than a secondary education.
Nearly half of those offline are from low-income households.

47%

Centre for Ageing Better
Source: Lloyds Bank UK Consumer Digital Index 2019
Being online has been especially important during the COVID-19 pandemic.
78% of people agree that COVID-19 has escalated the need for digital skills.

Centre for Ageing Better
Source: Lloyds Bank UK Consumer Digital Index 2020
Four out of five people agree that using technology has been a vital support during the coronavirus outbreak.

Centre for Ageing Better
Source: Lloyds Bank UK Consumer Digital Index 2020
In a pandemic or not, our reliance on the internet cannot be overstated.
Across all age groups, people use the internet regularly for online shopping, learning, and managing their health.

Source: Lloyds Bank UK Consumer Digital Index 2020
Just under half of those aged 50-79 use the internet to access local council information.
Being online is also important for job opportunities.
More than half of people in the workforce lack digital skills in the workplace.

17m

Centre for Ageing Better
Source: Lloyds Bank UK Consumer Digital Index 2020
Only 23% of the UK workforce have received digital skills training and support from their employer.

23%

Centre for Ageing Better
Source: Lloyds Bank UK Consumer Digital Index 2020
Semi or unskilled manual workers are the most likely to think their digital skills are not good enough.

Centre for Ageing Better
Source: Lloyds Bank UK Consumer Digital Index 2020
Manual workers who are digitally enabled earn an average of £2,160 extra per annum.

Centre for Ageing Better
Source: Lloyds Bank UK Consumer Digital Index 2020
But many barriers can stop people from getting or staying online.
Self-efficacy: Many describe a real fear of ‘the internet’ and a lack of confidence in being able to navigate it.

Centre for Ageing Better
Source: ‘The digital age’ (2018), Ageing Better
Perceived value and relevance:

Many prefer offline alternatives or view themselves as fundamentally different from ‘an internet user’.

Centre for Ageing Better
Source: ‘The digital age’ (2018), Ageing Better
Cost:

More than half of those offline may struggle to afford broadband.

53%

Centre for Ageing Better
Source: Lloyds Bank UK Consumer Digital Index 2020
2.2 million people say to go online they need:

1. Simpler online services
2. Increased security awareness
3. Cheaper connectivity and devices.

Centre for Ageing Better
Source: Lloyds Bank UK Consumer Digital Index 2019
If we’re to avoid leaving people behind, services like GP clinics and supermarket home deliveries must have other non-digital channels to access services.
Government and service providers should invest in schemes to support those who are digitally excluded to get online using good practice.
This must include universal access to the internet, availability of equipment, and personalised support to give confidence to people in developing digital skills.