

Research on Internet Access and Network Quality in Azerbaijan

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The [news](#) that “Aztelekom” Limited Liability Company announced sweeping changes to its broadband service offerings, revising tariffs and promising faster speeds in Azerbaijan as of 15 August 2024, opened the door for intense discussions around Internet quality throughout the country. The company enhanced the speed delivered by its Gigabit Passive Optical Network (GPON) to 100 Mbit/s, 2,5 times faster than before. This upgrade led to an increase in tariffs for low-speed Internet users. However, during discussions in the [periodical press](#) and social networks, Azerbaijanis stated that their Internet speed had not increased despite the price adjustments.

Taking into account discussions in the general public, we at Baku Research Institute (BRI) have conducted a study to assess the quality of the Internet for personal or family use in the country and customer satisfaction level with Internet services.

In preparing this study, the authors have also analyzed the legislative framework regulating Internet services in the country. According to the [2022-2026 Social and Economic Development Strategy of the Republic of Azerbaijan](#), a legal framework will be developed to facilitate digital technologies with government regulatory oversight. Schemes will be deployed to incentivize digital technologies; in this context, internet, high-speed mobile internet (including 5G), and, in particular, broadband internet coverage will be increased to 95%. As part of the strategy, the government has made commitments, such as Information and Communications Technology (ICT) access and use by the end of 2026, online government

services and information sharing, the export in ICT services, and annual improvement in the country's position in international rankings of fixed speed internet users per 100 people.

The second section of the study analyzes Internet-market statistics. Analysis of statistical data indicates, on the one hand, a year-on-year growth in Azerbaijan's number of Internet users, on the other hand, an increase in Internet tariffs.

While preparing the study, a population survey of 500 respondents was also conducted via the platform www.freeonlinesurveys.com. The purpose of the survey was to assess the quality of the Internet in the country for personal and family use. Most regions across the country were covered by the survey. The majority of respondents (68%) were from Baku. The respondents were asked to rate issues such as uninterrupted Internet access, problems faced by the population, affordable prices, to name a few.

Our literature review on the quality of Internet services around the world shows that at present many countries have legally established guarantees of citizens' Internet access. In 2009, France and in 2010, Finland, for example, declared that Internet access and affordability would be enshrined in their constitutions as a basic human right for all their citizens. According to OECD experts, there are 3 additional important measures that governments can take to make the Internet as accessible and affordable as possible: increasing the population's income, making the Internet cheaper, and maximizing the benefits of the Internet. In addition, different mechanisms can be used to ensure Internet access for vulnerable and low-income populations (elderly people, rural settlers, the poor, among others). For example, Colombia has developed a program called *Vive Digital* to provide appropriate support to people from the poorest quintiles.

The study compares the average monthly cost of broadband

access in Azerbaijan with developed countries. It turns out that although the average monthly cost of broadband Internet access in Azerbaijan is relatively inexpensive compared to developed countries, it is not cheap compared to most regions and developing countries. In addition, if we calculate the ratio of monthly fees to national income per capita, prices in Azerbaijan are almost 2-2,5 times higher than, for example, in Türkiye and Poland. The literature review highlights the following important points.

You can read the [report](#) in full by clicking on the pdf file.