

**UNDER EMBARGO UNTIL 00.01AM BST ON TUESDAY 20<sup>TH</sup> JUNE 2017**

## **1.75bn citizens in the world's eight richest countries remain unconnected**

- *New WBA report reveals a third (34%) of those without internet connectivity reside in major urban centers*
  - *London is the most connected city, with only 7% unconnected*
  - *Gap between urban and rural unconnected fading in mature markets*

**London, 20 June 2017** -A new study by the Wireless Broadband Alliance (WBA) reveals a staggering 1.75bn citizens in the world's eight richest countries (by GDP) remain unconnected - with 34% residing in major urban centers. The report, launched today, highlights that the digital divide remains a global problem, despite the fact, that driving universal connectivity is a common priority for all countries.

The new study, undertaken by IHS Markit to mark [World Wi-Fi Day](#), explores the levels of urban and rural connectivity across eight major countries: Brazil, China, Germany, India, Japan, Russia, the UK and the USA. It also uncovers the challenges faced and the initiatives being implemented by five of the world's major cities: Delhi, London, Moscow, New York and Sao Paulo.

Key findings from the report reveal:

- Delhi and Sao Paulo have the largest number of unconnected citizens. 29% (5.331 million) of the population of Delhi are unconnected, 36% in Sao Paolo, (4.349 million) are unconnected
- London is the most connected city, with just 7% of citizens unconnected (625,336)
- 19% of people in New York City are unconnected (1.600 million), while 10% of people in Moscow are unconnected (1.231 million)

<b>Country</b>	<b>Region</b>	<b>Total unconnected individuals (Million)</b>	<b>Total unconnected individuals as % of total population</b>
Brazil	Latin America	90.638	43.25
China	Asia Pacific	649.388	47.01
Germany	Europe	10.683	13.00
India	Asia Pacific	853.386	68.55
Japan	Asia Pacific	20.241	16.04
Russia	Europe	39.335	26.85
United Kingdom	Europe	8.384	12.83
United States	North America	78.401	24.18

Internet adoption has been faster in cities than in rural areas, however urban areas still face significant challenges to expanding internet users. These challenges include limited spending power, lack of availability of technology, lack of awareness of benefits gained from using the internet, and also, IT literacy levels.

In both developing and mature markets, availability of affordable internet services is still an obstacle to connectivity. Even among those countries with higher average salaries, the existence of economic and social divides significantly shapes the issue of the digital divide.

- In New York, one of the greatest barriers to connectivity is the quality and affordability of internet connections
- For Londoners, IT skills and an understanding of the benefits provided by being connected are, along with spending power, key challenges to internet adoption
- Moscow has faced specific challenges related to infrastructure, developing an integrated approach to promoting internet adoption, and ensuring a high standard and quality of internet services.

The report also highlights the many benefits and opportunities unconnected individuals miss out, from generating savings to personal development as a result of not having access to information and education services. What's more, digital inclusion is an engine for economic growth for cities, nations, and businesses of all sizes as it helps to attract investment, start new companies and stimulate innovation.

“Connectivity is now an essential commodity, much in the same category as power and water. Yet many people in some of the world's major cities are still without an internet connection,” said Shrikant Shenwai, CEO of the WBA. “Wi-Fi is playing an instrumental role in helping cities bring wider and more affordable connectivity to its citizens. The WBA is committed to helping cities bridge the digital divide through initiatives like World Wi-Fi Day and our Connected City Advisory Board, and see Wi-Fi as key to bringing connectivity to everyone, everywhere.”

“The issue of the urban unconnected is of critical importance the economies and societies around the world. We call on Governments around the world to re-double their focus on connecting the urban unconnected. It's vital that internet access becomes recognized as a human right, and that all stakeholders involved in the provision of broadband work together to make this happen,” added Shenwai.

World Wi-Fi Day was launched by the WBA in 2016 to help accelerate the deployment of affordable connectivity globally. The initiative encourages cities and government bodies, as well as operators, service providers, technology vendors and internet giants, to come together to deliver connectivity to everyone, everywhere.

For more information on World Wi-Fi Day, please visit <http://worldwifiday.com/>. The full white paper, entitled 'The Urban Unconnected', is available to download [here](#).

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### **About the Wireless Broadband Alliance**

Founded in 2003, the mission of the Wireless Broadband Alliance (WBA) is to accelerate global leadership for enabling of wireless services that are seamless, secure and interoperable. Building on our heritage of Next Generation Hotspot (NGH) and carrier Wi-Fi, WBA will continue to drive and support the adoption of Next Generation Wireless services across the entire public Wi-Fi ecosystem, including IoT, Converged Services, Smart Cities, 5G, etc. Today, membership includes major fixed operators such as BT, Comcast and Charter Communications; seven of the top 10 mobile operator groups (by revenue) and leading technology companies such as Cisco, Microsoft, Huawei Technologies, Google and Intel.

The WBA Board includes AT&T, Boingo Wireless, BT, China Telecom, Cisco Systems, Comcast, Intel, KT Corporation, Liberty Global, NTT DOCOMO, Orange and Ruckus Wireless. For a complete list of current WBA members, please [click here](#).

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## **Research Methodology**

The white paper is the result of the research conducted on the topic of the digital divide and urban unconnected across eight leading countries (Brazil, China, Germany, India, Japan, Russia, the United Kingdom, and the United States of America) with deep dive studies provided for five global cities.

The research was carried out through primary and secondary research and was complemented by interviews with city authorities and experts on the issue of digital divide and connectivity.

For the purpose of this report an unconnected individual is defined as an individual who does not have access to or cannot afford broadband connectivity. Sources used for this white paper include, among others, national statistical offices, city statistical offices, national telecoms regulators, city departments websites, internet usage or adoption surveys, IHS Markit proprietary data, and other sources such as the International Telecoms Union (ITU), the United Nation, and the World Bank.