

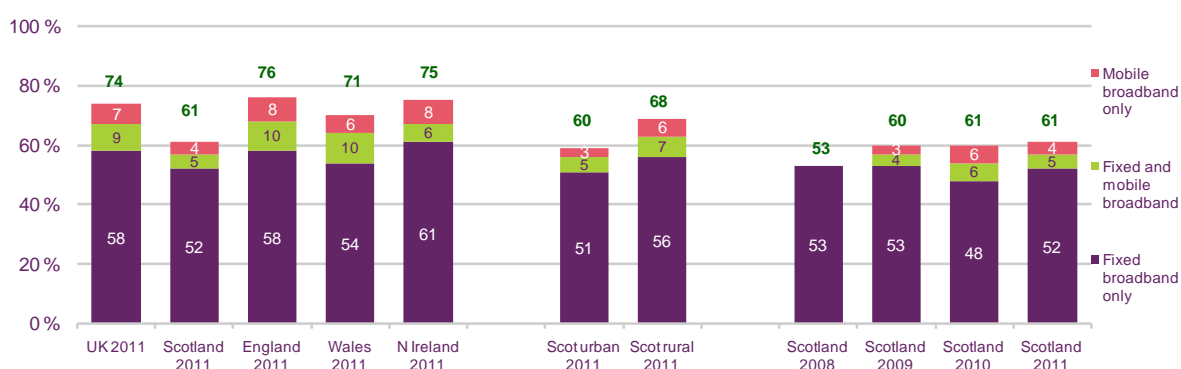
## 4 Internet and web-based content

### 4.1 Broadband take-up

#### Broadband take-up in Scotland is below the UK average

Since Quarter 1 2009, broadband take-up in Scotland has remained unchanged, standing now at 61%. At the same time, take-up in the other UK nations has been increasing; meaning that broadband take-up in Scotland is now at least ten percentage points behind all the other nations and lags behind the UK average by 13 percentage points. For more information on broadband take-up by area, see Ofcom's fixed broadband map: <http://maps.ofcom.org.uk/broadband/>

**Figure 4.1 Broadband take-up at home**



Source: Ofcom research, Q1 2011

Base: All adults aged 16+ (n = 3474 UK, 487 Scotland, 1983 England, 493 Wales, 511 Northern Ireland, 239 Scotland urban, 248 Scotland rural, 925 Scotland 2008, 1014 Scotland 2009, 1468 Scotland 2010, 487 Scotland 2011)

QE9. Which of these methods does your household use to connect to the internet at home? (NB 2008 survey did not cover mobile broadband. 2008 measure shows any broadband)

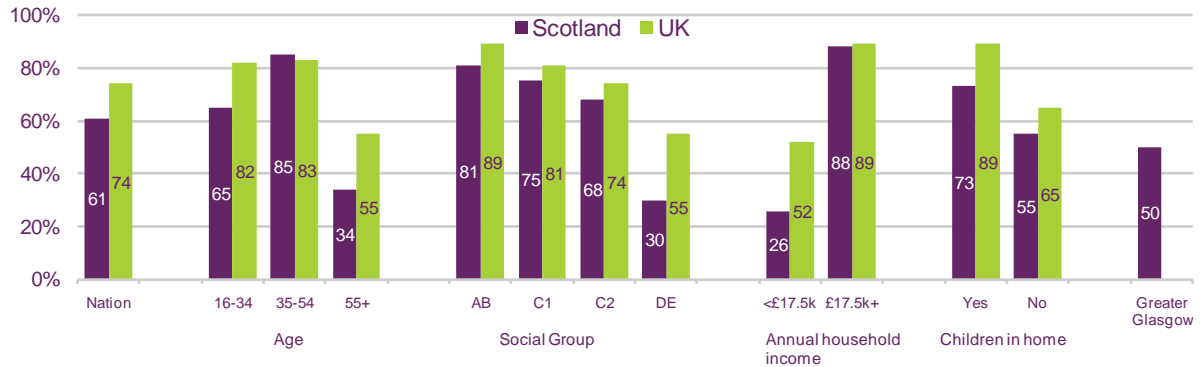
#### Broadband take-up is particularly low among over-55s and DE households

Figure 4.2, below shows that broadband take-up in Scotland varies dramatically by demographic factors. Take-up is particularly low in Greater Glasgow (50%), as we have reported in previous years, and among those aged 55+ (34%), DE socio-economic groups (30%), and in households with incomes less than £17.5k per annum (26%). The Greater Glasgow area has a relatively high proportion of low-income homes, which goes some way to explaining why take-up is particularly low in this area.

Lower broadband take-up among lower-income homes, DE socio-economic groups and older consumers is seen across the UK; however, in Scotland take-up is *particularly low* within these groups. Of the over-55s, 55% have broadband at home in the UK – in Scotland this figure is 21 percentage points lower, at 34%. Among DE socio-economic groups across the UK 55% have broadband at home; in Scotland this figure stands 25 percentage points lower, at 30%. So, the low broadband take-up in Scotland is almost entirely explained by particularly low take-up by these groups of consumers. Among those aged 35-54, broadband ownership in Scotland is virtually identical to the UK figure (85% in Scotland vs. 83% across the UK).

These demographic differences in broadband ownership and use were also found by the Scottish government in the 2009 *Scottish Household Survey*<sup>6</sup>, with age and income being particularly strong determinants of likelihood to have an internet connection. The survey also found, as did Ofcom's survey, that take-up and use of the internet was particularly low in the Glasgow area.

**Figure 4.2 Broadband take-up in Scotland compared to UK (by demographic)**



Source: Ofcom research, Q1 2011

Base: All adults aged 16+ in Scotland (n = 487 Scotland, 145 16-34s, 178 35-54s, 164 55+, 109 AB, 141 C1, 95 C2, 142 DE, 127 <£17.5k income, 90 £17.5k+, 159 children in home, 328 no children in home, 120 Greater Glasgow)

QE9. Which of these methods does your household use to connect to the Internet at home?

Note: "Greater Glasgow" includes Greater Glasgow and Clyde Health Board area + other parts of Lanarkshire.

<sup>6</sup> <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Statistics/16002/Tables09Internet>

### **Why is broadband take-up low in Scotland?**

As the demographic analysis above has shown, the overall broadband ownership figure in Scotland is explained by particularly low take-up among those aged 16-34, those aged 55+ and DE/ low income groups.

#### Computer ownership is low

Across the UK, the vast majority of home computers are now connected to a broadband service. This is also true in Scotland, although ownership of computers at home is lower there than the UK average (65% in Scotland vs. 77% in the UK). In Scotland, among those aged 55+, just 38% have a computer at home (which goes some way to explain why broadband take-up is 34%). Historically, increases in internet take-up across the UK have been partially driven by homes that already had a computer connected to the internet.

#### A high proportion of people do not use the internet at all (in any location)

30% of adults in Scotland say that they do not use the internet in any location, compared to 20% in the UK as a whole. Among internet users, take-up at home (87%) is not very different to the UK (93%).

#### Perceived lack of need or knowledge

Of those in Scotland who do not have internet access at home, the majority (76%) say that they are unlikely to get internet access at home within the next 12 months. When asked the main reason for this, the top reasons given were:

Don't know how to use computers/ the internet (30%),  
No need (22%),  
Too old to use the internet (16%),  
Don't want a computer (8%),  
Computer is too expensive to buy (8%),  
Friends/ family member checks internet for me (5%),  
Too expensive to set up (4%),  
Satisfied using the internet elsewhere (3%),  
Charges are too expensive (2%).

The most frequently cited reasons relate to lack of knowledge or need. Costs are also a barrier to take-up for a significant minority. Three in ten said that they "Don't know how to use a computer", which was a response given much less frequently in the UK as a whole (14%).

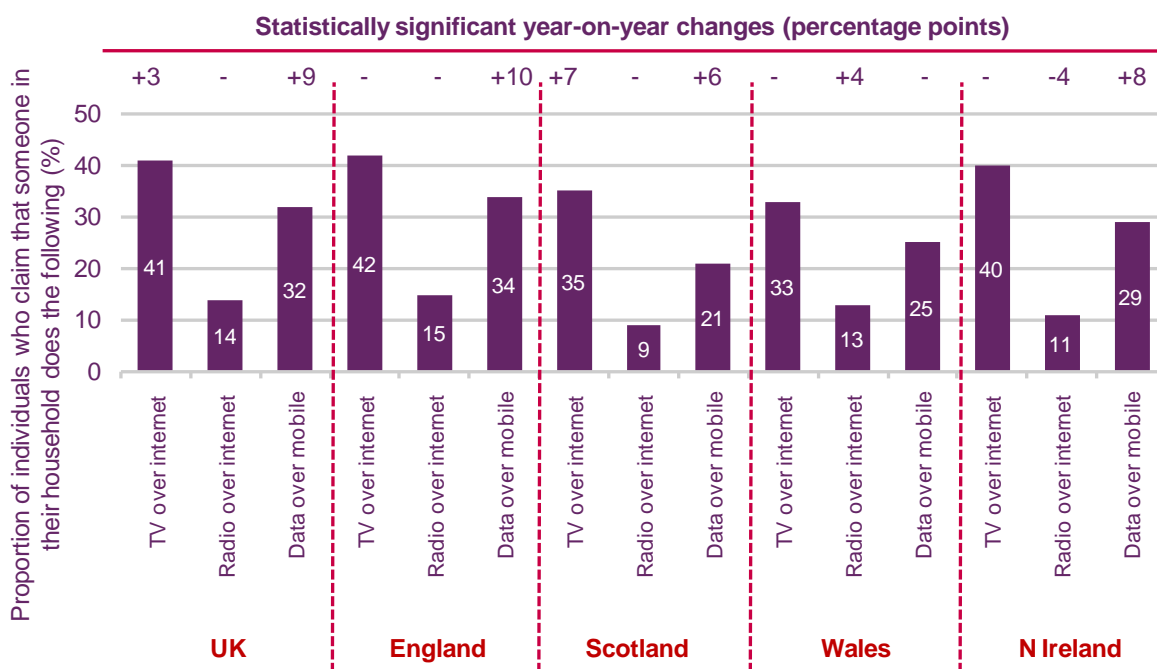
Among those in Scotland who do not have internet access at home, about one in five (21%) say that they use the internet in other locations, with the most common location being someone else's home (18%).

### **Consumers' use of data on mobile handsets in Scotland has increased by 40% in the past year**

A fifth (21%) of Scotland's consumers now say that somebody in their home uses their mobile phone to access data services (internet, emails, web-enabled apps etc). This is an increase of 6% points since last year. This rapid growth has been driven by the fast-increasing popularity of smartphones. Consumers' use of smartphones is discussed in more detail in Figure 1.4, in section 1.

Watching audio-visual content over the internet continues to be a popular pastime, with over a third (35%) of homes watching services such as BBC iPlayer, 4oD and ITV Player, an increase of seven percentage points on the previous year.

**Figure 4.3 Consumers' use of converging platforms**



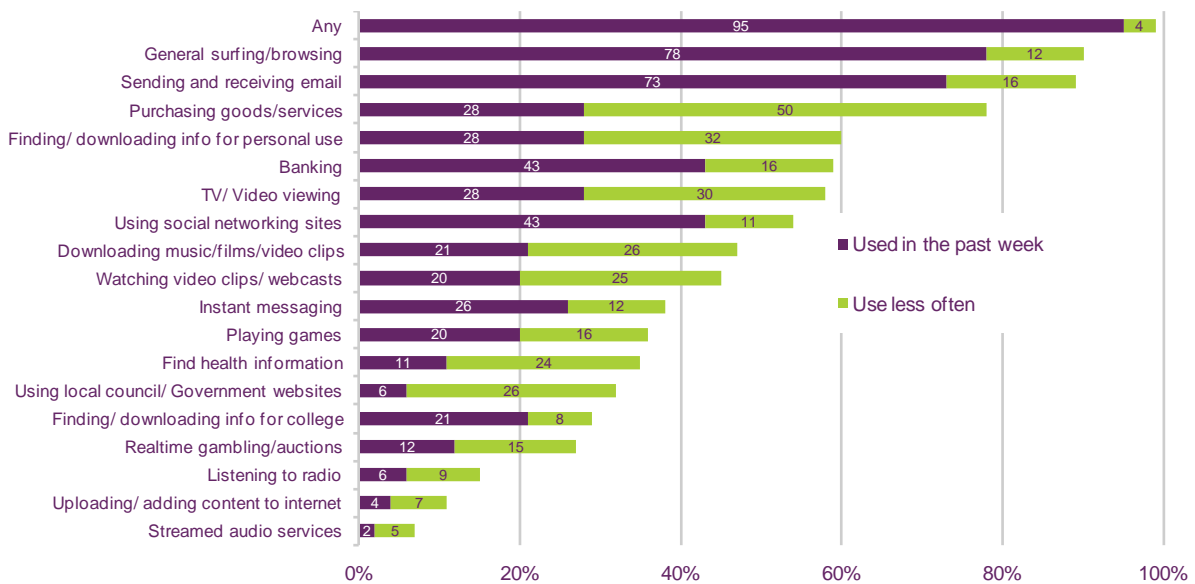
Source: Ofcom research, Q1 2011

Base: All adults aged 16+ (n = 3474 UK, 1983 England, 487 Scotland, 493 Wales, 511 Northern Ireland)

Questions. Which, if any, of these do you or members of your household use the internet for whilst at home?/ Which, if any, of the following activities, other than making and receiving calls, do you use your mobile for?/ Includes download free applications, download paid for applications, send/ receive emails, accessing the internet, connecting to the internet using Wi-Fi, using VoIP service, download a new video clip, video streaming, TV streaming, accessing/ receiving, sports/ team news/ scores, accessing/ receiving news, use IM/ Instant messaging

Those in Scotland who do have a broadband connection at home use their connection for a range of purposes, as shown in Figure 4.4. The applications they use are similar to those used across the rest of the UK. A slightly lower proportion of consumers in Scotland use social networking sites, which is probably related to the fact that Scotland's 16-34 year olds – the age group most likely to use these sites – are less likely to have broadband connections.

**Figure 4.4 Use of online applications among broadband users**



Source: Ofcom research, Q1 2011

Base: Adults aged 16+ with a broadband connection at home (n= 317 Scotland)

QE5. Which, if any, of these do you or members of your household use the internet for while at home?

## 4.2 Recent developments in Scotland

A strategy to get more people using the internet, with greater access to high-speed broadband, was published by the Scottish Government in March 2011. Their aim is to have next-generation broadband available throughout Scotland by 2020 with significant progress by 2015. Funding of £1.5m was announced for 2011/12 to improve the uptake and use of broadband.

The Scottish government views next-generation broadband as an enabler of much of the ambitions and actions contained within its strategy. It has pledged to work with Business Gateway, Scottish Enterprise and Highlands and Islands Enterprise to explore how best to encourage the 25% of Scottish businesses currently not online, to get online, and to support the 75% already online to make better use of the broadband that is available to them. The Scottish government conducted research on the use of broadband by Scottish businesses, including a survey of 1,000 small to medium-sized enterprises and micro-businesses (with 0-9 employees). Around 25% of those businesses surveyed did not use the internet at all, with most of this 25% showing no intention of doing so in the next three years, believing the internet to have little relevance to their business. One reason given by survey respondents for non-use relates to lack of adequate IT skills. Cost was not cited as the main barrier.