BRIDGING THE DIGITAL DIVIDE IN RURAL CANADA

CONNECTIVITY

Unity Through Connectivity

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The Need for Connectivity

Over 90% of Canadian households now have high-speed internet access at 50/10 Mbps standard. However, achieving 100% access by 2030 remains imperative. Visualizing current trends and future targets highlights the urgency for continued investment in connectivity infrastructure.
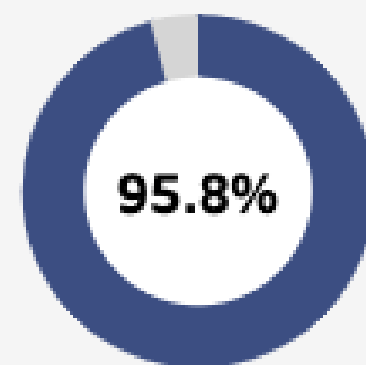
Internet Coverage Across Canada

Source: CRTC Facilities Survey and Statistics Canada, 2021 Census
Note: Starting year-end 2022, the 2021 Statistics Canada Census was used. Prior to this date, the 2016 census was used.
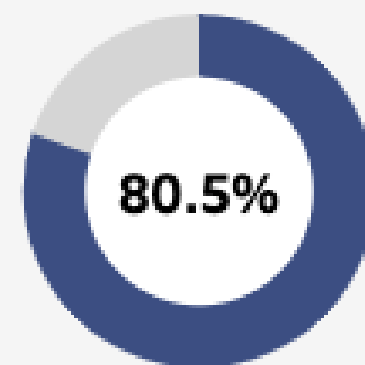
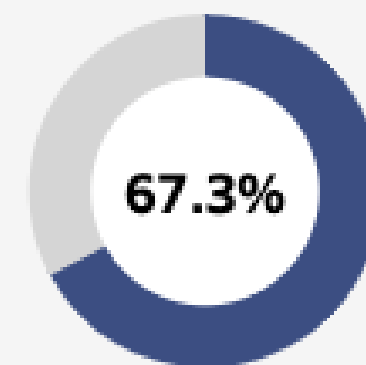### Summary of Year-End 2023 50/10 Mbps Unlimited Internet Coverage

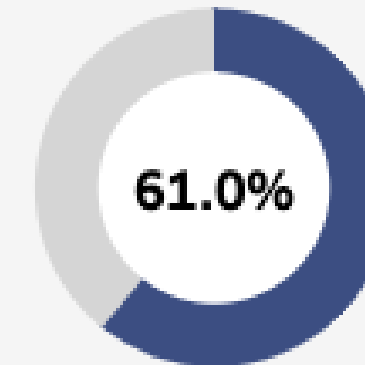| Canada	Rural Areas	Territories	First Nations Reserves
95.8%	80.5%	67.3%	61.0%
677.5K households without coverage	628.6K households without coverage	16.0K households without coverage	53.0K households without coverage

Collaboration for Economic Growth

Policy Challenges
Addressing Key Barriers to Connectivity

Design Complexity

The unique design challenges of rural connectivity projects require tailored solutions that account for diverse environments, ensuring effective implementation and long-term sustainability for all regions involved.

Workforce Needs

In addition to mobilizing, accommodating, and providing education for crews from significant distances, addressing workforce needs means investing in training and developing a skilled local workforce — with a strong focus on building capacity and creating meaningful employment opportunities for Indigenous peoples through training, mentorship, and on-the-job learning.

Funding Barriers

Additional funding should be allocated to support cultural competency training, community capacity-building, and workforce development. Recognizing the unique geographic and logistical realities of the North, project execution requires a funding multiplier to ensure equitable, timely, and effective implementation.

Rural Growth

Rural, remote, and Indigenous communities are pivotal in Canada's economic landscape, driving innovation and development. Our contributions fuel national growth, fostering vibrant ecosystems that attract investment and collaboration, ultimately enhancing connectivity and prosperity for all Canadians.

The Path Forward

Strategies for Equitable Connectivity

Accurate Data

Implementing red-flag mechanisms is crucial for identifying and correcting broadband map errors, which can significantly impact planning and ensure efficient resource allocation for underserved areas.

Community Relief

Providing relief for communities is essential to prevent overburdening local & Indigenous governments, ensuring that they can focus on essential services and infrastructure while supporting connectivity initiatives effectively.

Accountability

Establishing measurable goals and transparent funding mechanisms is vital for maintaining accountability in connectivity projects, especially as deadlines approach for achieving equitable access across rural areas.

The Future is Bright

Engaged community leaders are igniting change and fostering unity through connectivity. These passionate individuals are committed to driving progress, ensuring that rural and Indigenous communities thrive in the digital age, actively participating in their shared future and contributing to national growth.

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