HIGH-SPEED INTERNET: VIEWS OF HISPANIC NEW YORK VOTERS AGES 35+

December 2020

Table of Contents

Introduction and Objectives	3
Key Findings	4
Internet Access and Use	5
Support for Expanding High-Speed Internet Access	8
Barriers to Home Internet Use	11
Types of Home Internet Connections	15
Implications	17
Methodology	18
Appendix: Additional Breakdowns and Comparisons by Race/Ethnicity	19
Contact	25

Introduction and Objectives

High-speed internet (often referred to as “broadband”) offers access to an ever-expanding range of online information and resources that can improve quality of life for people of all ages and help older adults live independently. The technology, faster and more reliable than antiquated dial-up service, has the potential to reduce the risk of social isolation by facilitating social connections, provide access to important supportive services (including telehealth) that may not be locally available, promote learning by offering access to unlimited information, and help local businesses grow by serving customers outside their geographical area.

However, access to high-speed internet is not uniform throughout the state of New York.

In order to assess New York voters’ experiences with internet usage and gauge their support for expanded access to high-speed internet, AARP commissioned a survey of New York registered voters ages 35+ in September 2020. This supplement focuses on the findings specific to the sample of 405 Hispanic voters, which were collected from September 22, 2020 through October 12, 2020.*

The objectives of the survey were to:

- Assess experiences and challenges with respect to internet usage.
- Gauge level of support for expanding access to high-speed internet.

*Throughout this report, the term “Hispanic” refers to all respondents who said “yes” when asked “Are you of Hispanic, Spanish, or Latino origin or descent? Although this report focuses only on the survey’s findings among Hispanic registered voters, the survey did collect findings among a general sample of 749 registered voters in the state of New York as well as an oversample of African American/Black registered voters in the state of New York. The appendix includes key findings from the general sample, with comparisons to the Hispanic, Black, and White samples. The findings from the base sample of 749 voters and from the sample of Black registered voters are detailed in separate reports found at www.aarp.org/nyhighspeedinternet.

Key Findings

- Nine in ten (90%) Hispanic registered voters ages 35+ in New York use the internet. Among Hispanic internet users, over nine in ten (94%) **use it at home**.
- Compared to this time last year, over half (57%) of Hispanic voters say that their household's **home internet usage has increased**.
- Nearly nine in ten (88%) Hispanic voters say it is very or somewhat important for the **governor and legislature to bring affordable, high-speed internet to all New Yorkers**.
- More than three in four (78%) Hispanic voters say they would be more likely to **support a candidate who had helped make affordable high-speed internet available to all New Yorkers**.
- Roughly three in ten Hispanic internet users say that **their home internet use over the past 12 months has been limited** a “great deal” or “moderately” by quality (32%), cost (30%), or availability (31%).
- Among Hispanic internet users who use the internet at home, roughly seven in ten (69%) say that they **do not have a fiber optic home internet connection**, which is generally the fastest type of internet service. When asked to indicate their “major” reasons for not having fiber, roughly four in ten (41%) cite **cost** as a “major” reason, while roughly one in four (27%) cite **lack of availability**.

INTERNET ACCESS AND USE

Nine in ten Hispanic registered voters ages 35+ in New York use the internet.

Internet use is especially widespread among Hispanic voters ages 35-49, all of whom indicate that they use the internet, while eight in ten of those ages 50+ use the internet. Internet use also varies by household income, with essentially all of those with household incomes over \$40,000 using the internet compared to just 84 percent of those with incomes under \$40,000. Nearly all Hispanic internet users (94%) use the internet at home, with 5 percent indicating that they don't have access at home.

Internet Usage Among Hispanic Registered Voters Ages 35+
(Base: All Hispanic Respondents)

Bar chart displays calculations from Q2 “How often do you use the internet? This includes using email and accessing the internet through devices such as computers, tablets, or smartphones.” Respondents were classified as “internet users” if they use the internet at all, while those who indicated that they never use the internet or “don’t know” were classified as “non-users.” Base: All Hispanic respondents. Unweighted ns 405 total, 236 ages 35-49, 169 ages 50+, 115 <\$40K, 103 \$40K-\$74K, 157 \$75K+.

Internet Use at Home
(Base: Hispanic Internet Users)

Pie chart displays combined responses from Q3 “...In which of the following places is access to the internet available to you?” (Q3 was asked of all internet users.) and Q4 “Do you currently use the internet when you are at home?” (Q4 was asked of all internet users who indicated that they have internet access at home.) Base for Chart: Internet users. Unweighted n: 382 Hispanics

Compared to this time last year, over half of Hispanic households are using the internet more at home.

Hispanic voters with higher incomes and those ages 35-49 are especially likely to say that they are using the internet more at home. For example, fewer than half (44%) of Hispanic voters with household incomes under \$40,000 are using the internet more at home, compared to three in four (74%) Hispanic voters with incomes of \$75,000 or more. Similarly, seven in ten (71%) of those ages 35-49 are using the internet more at home, compared to roughly four in ten ages 50+.

Current Internet Usage Compared to Last Year
(Base: All Hispanic Respondents)

7. Compared to this time last year, is your household now using the Internet at home [more than last year, less than last year, or about the same amount]?
Base: All respondents. Unweighted ns for Hispanics: 405 total, 236 ages 35-49, 169 ages 50+, 115 <\$40K, 103 \$40-\$74K, 157 \$75K+.

SUPPORT FOR EXPANDING HIGH-SPEED INTERNET ACCESS

Nearly nine in ten (88%) Hispanic voters say it is “very” or “somewhat” important for the governor and state legislature to bring affordable, high-speed internet to all New Yorkers

Regardless of age or income, at least seven in ten Hispanic voters view this as “very important.”

Important for NY Governor and State Legislature to Bring Affordable, High-Speed Internet to All New Yorkers
(Base: All Hispanic Respondents)

8. How important is it for the Governor of New York and the New York State Legislature to take action to bring affordable, high-speed internet to all New Yorkers, regardless of where in the state they live? Unweighted ns for Hispanics, 405 total, 236 ages 35-49, 169 ages 50+, 115 <\$40K, 103 \$40-\$74K, 157 \$75K+.

More than three in four (78%) Hispanic voters would be more likely to support a candidate who had helped make affordable high-speed internet available to all New Yorkers

Regardless of age or income, close to half of Hispanic voters say that they are “much more likely” to support a candidate who had helped make progress on this matter.

Likelihood of Supporting a Candidate Who Helped Make Affordable High-Speed Internet Available to All New Yorkers
(Base: All Hispanic Respondents)

Q9. If a candidate for public office had helped make affordable high-speed internet available to all New Yorkers, regardless of where they live, would you be more or less likely to support that candidate? (Base: All respondents. Unweighted ns for Hispanics, 405 total, 236 ages 35-49, 169 ages 50+, 115 <\$40K, 103 \$40-\$74K, 157 \$75K+.

BARRIERS TO HOME INTERNET USE

Quality, cost, and availability limit home internet use for a significant share of Hispanics

Roughly three in ten Hispanic internet users say that their home internet use over the past 12 months has been limited a “great deal” or “moderately” by quality (32%), cost (30%), or availability (31%). Overall, at least four in ten internet users say that each of these factors has limited their home internet use at least “some.” Internet users ages 35-49 are especially likely to say that their home internet use has been limited by these factors. For example, 42 percent of home internet users ages 35-49 say that quality has limited their home internet use, compared to just 22 percent of home internet users ages 50+.

Degree to Which Quality, Cost, and Availability Limit Home Internet Use

(Base: Hispanic Internet Users)

Total

By Age and Household Income:
% Who Say “A Great Deal” or “Moderately”

Q5C. In the past 12 months, to what extent has each of the following limited your use of the Internet at home? [Quality; Cost, Availability]

Base: Internet users. Unweighted ns for Hispanics: 382 total, 236 ages 35-49, 146 ages 50+, 101 <\$40K, 103 \$40-\$74K, 156 \$75K+

Home internet users are least likely to report problems with fiber*

When Hispanic home internet users were asked to indicate the frequency with which they experience problems with their home connection such as disconnects and slow service, results suggest that the share of users who “always” or “often” experience problems ranges from 12% to 21% depending on the type of home connection. Users report problems least frequently with fiber (12% “always” or “often” have problems).

Q5b_ [IF HOME INTERNET USER] As I read each type of Internet connection that you have at home, I'd like you to think about how often you experience problems with the Internet connection, such as trouble connecting, disconnects, slow service, or other problems. Let's start with [insert connection type]; how often do you experience problems with your [insert connection type] Internet connection?

*Results for respondents with DSL, fixed wireless, satellite connections and dial up connections are not shown due to the small sample sizes (n=49, n=45, n=31, and n=29, respectively).

Cost is the most common reason for not having fiber

Roughly seven in ten (69%) Hispanic home internet users say that they do not have a fiber optic internet connection, which is generally the fastest type of internet service. When asked to indicate their “major” reasons for not having fiber, two in five (41%) cite cost as a “major” reason, while roughly one in four (27%) cite lack of availability as a “major” reason. When forced to name just one “main” reason, respondents most commonly mention cost (35%) followed by lack of availability (17%).

11. Please indicate whether each of the following is a major reason, a minor reason, or not a reason at all why you don't have a Fiber Optic internet connection at home.
Base: Hispanic home internet users who don't have fiber at home. n=247

11b. What is the main reason that you don't have a Fiber Optic internet connection at home? (Select one.) Base: Hispanic home internet users who don't have fiber at home. n=247

TYPES OF HOME INTERNET CONNECTIONS

Cable is the most common type of home internet connection

Nearly two in three (64%) Hispanic home internet users have a cable internet connection at home. The next most common types of home internet connections include mobile data plans (used by 35% of home internet users) and fiber (31%). Approximately one in ten have each of the following types: DSL, fixed wireless, satellite, and dial up. Those ages 50+ (43%) are more likely than those ages 35-49 (29%) to say that they have a mobile data plan.

**Type of Home Internet Connection
(Base: Hispanic Home Internet Users)**

Chart combines responses to Q5 and Q5a. Q5. What type of internet connection do you have at home? (multiple responses accepted). Q5a.(for those who replied "don't know" to Q5): As far as you know, do you have dial-up internet service or do you have high-speed internet service? Base: Hispanic home internet users. Unweighted n=362

Implications

Internet usage is widespread among Hispanic voters ages 35+ in the state of New York, with many using the internet on a daily basis. It is a critical resource in their daily lives.

However, some Hispanic voters face clear challenges related to quality, cost, and/or availability that have limited their use of the internet. In fact, cost is the most commonly cited barrier to fiber optic internet service—generally considered to be the fastest type of home internet connection.

The fact that large majorities of Hispanic voters ages 35+ in New York say that it is important for the governor and legislature to bring affordable, high-speed internet to all New Yorkers and that they would be more likely to support a candidate who had helped make affordable high-speed internet available to all New Yorkers suggests that the expansion of affordable, high-speed internet is an important issue to many Hispanics in the state of New York.

Methodology

The data presented in this report were collected in a telephone survey of New York registered voters ages 35+ that began on September 22, 2020. After 749 interviews were completed for the base sample, an oversample was completed with Hispanics in order to achieve a total sample of 405 Hispanics. (92% of Hispanic interviews were completed on a mobile phone.) Interviewing was conducted by Alan Newman Research on behalf of AARP.

Bilingual interviewers were utilized to offer the survey in English or Spanish for calls to New York City as well as for calls to respondents comprising the Hispanic oversample. For any other respondents where there appeared to be a language barrier, the survey was also offered in English or Spanish.

Fielding Dates: September 22, 2020 through October 12, 2020

Weighting: The Hispanic sample was weighted by age, gender, and education based on 2018 Current Population Survey data specific to Hispanics/Latinos in the state of New York.

Margin of Error: $\pm 4.9\%$ at the 95% level of confidence for the total sample of 405 Hispanic respondents.

**APPENDIX:
ADDITIONAL BREAKDOWNS AND
COMPARISONS BY RACE/ETHNICITY**

The vast majority of Hispanic voters ages 35+ in New York use the internet at least once a day, with differences by income and age

Eight in ten (80%) Hispanic voters use the internet at least once a day. Usage varies considerably by age and by income. Daily use is nearly universal among voters ages 35-49 (94%) and among those with household incomes of \$75,000 or more (93%). One in ten (10%) Hispanic voters ages 35+ never use the internet, including nearly one in five (18%) of those ages 50+ and 17 percent of those with household incomes under \$40,000.

Frequency of Internet Use

(Base: All Hispanic Respondents)

Q2. How often do you use the internet? This includes using email and accessing the internet through devices such as computers, tablets, or smartphones.

Base: All respondents. Unweighted ns for Hispanics: 405 total, 236 ages 35-49, 169 ages 50+, 115 <\$40K, 103 \$40-\$74K, 157 \$75K+.

Mobile phone is the most popular device for accessing the internet

Nearly nine in ten (89%) Hispanic internet users access the internet from mobile phones, with those ages 35-49 (92%) especially likely to do so. Laptops are the next most common device used to access the internet, followed by TVs and tablets. Hispanic internet users ages 35-49 are more likely than those ages 50+ to say that they access the internet through mobile phones and laptops.

Device usage also varies considerably by household income. For example, just over half (53%) of Hispanic internet users with household incomes less than \$40,000 use a laptop to access the internet, compared to over seven in ten (72%) Hispanic internet users with household incomes of \$75,000 or more. Similarly, just 37 percent of those with incomes less than \$40,000 use a tablet to access the internet, compared to 62 percent of those with incomes of \$75,000 or more.

Q2b. Which of the following devices do you currently use to connect to the internet (such as surfing the internet, using email, using apps, etc.)?

Base: Internet users. Unweighted ns for Hispanics: 368 total, 154 ages 35-49, 214 ages 50+

Comparison by Race/Ethnicity*

This table compares selected findings among Hispanic voters to findings among Black voters, White voters, and the total base sample. For the complete findings from the base sample of 749 voters and the sample of Black voters, please see the separate reports found at www.aarp.org/nyhighspeedinternet.

	Hispanic*	Black*	White*	Total Base Sample
Use of the Internet (Q2)	N=405	N=403	N=482	N=749
Internet User	90%	89%	90%	87%
Non-User	10%	11%	10%	13%
Internet Use Compared to Last Year (Q7)				
More	57%	54%	45%	47%
Less	5%	6%	6%	5%
About the Same	35%	39%	46%	44%
How Important for the Governor and Legislature to Act (Q8)				
Very/Somewhat Important	88%	93%	85%	86%
Very Important	71%	76%	62%	67%
More Likely to Support a Candidate (Q9)				
Much more/Somewhat More	78%	79%	71%	72%
Much more Likely	44%	38%	30%	33%

Comparison by Race/Ethnicity* (continued)

	Hispanic*	Black*	White*	Total Base Sample
Quality, Cost, Availability Limit Home Internet Use “A Great Deal” or “Moderately” (Q5c) (Base: Internet Users)	N=382	N=368	N=446	N=671
Cost	30%	25%	24%	25%
Quality	32%	27%	29%	28%
Availability	31%	27%	26%	26%
“Major” Reasons for Not Having Fiber at Home (Q11) (Base: Home Internet Users without fiber)	N=247	N=258	N=297	N=445
Fiber is too expensive	41%	29%	21%	25%
Fiber is not available in your area	27%	31%	38%	35%
You are not interested in fiber	19%	13%	20%	19%
You have concerns about fiber	17%	6%	11%	12%
Can use fiber somewhere else besides at home	18%	11%	11%	12%
You are not sure how to get fiber installed in your home	22%	15%	16%	17%

* “Hispanic” refers to all respondents who said “yes” when asked “Are you of Hispanic, Spanish, or Latino origin or descent?” “Black” refers to all respondents who identified their race as “African American or Black” and did not say “yes” when asked “Are you of Hispanic, Spanish, or Latino origin or descent?” “White” refers to all respondents who identified their race as only “White or Caucasian” and who said “no” when asked “Are you of Hispanic, Spanish, or Latino origin or descent?”

Bold percentages are statistically significantly greater than the corresponding % for at least one other group.

Comparison by Race/Ethnicity* (continued)

	Hispanic*	Black*	White*	Total Base Sample
Internet Use at Home (Q3/4) (Base: Internet Users)	N=382	N=368	N=446	N=671
Use internet at home	94%	94%	96%	96%
No access to internet at home	5%	5%	3%	3%
Do not use internet at home (despite having access)	1%	1%	1%	1%
Home Internet Connection Type (Q5/5a) (Base: Internet Users)	N=382	N=368	N=446	N=671
Dial Up	8%	5%	5%	6%
High Speed**	84%	87%	90%	88%
No internet access at home or do not use internet at home	6%	6%	4%	4%
Home Internet Connection Type (Q5/5a) (Base: <i>Home</i> Internet Users)	N=362	N=349	N=430	N=644
Dial Up	9%	6%	5%	7%
High Speed**	90%	93%	94%	92%

**According to the Federal Communications Commission’s consumer guide, “high speed” internet (also known as “broadband”) includes fiber optic, cable, DSL, satellite, fixed wireless, and mobile data plans even though the speed at which each of these types of broadband technology transmits data varies considerably, with fiber optic typically being the fastest. For this reason, all survey respondents who indicated that they have at least one of these types of internet connections have been included in this “high speed” category. <https://www.fcc.gov/consumers/guides/getting-broadband-qa> While our survey found that the share of registered voters ages 35+ who have high-speed internet varies little by race/ethnicity, other sources such as the Census Bureau’s 2019 American Community Survey show that the share of New York residents who have broadband varies more by race/ethnicity. The smaller differences in our survey may be attributable in part to the fact that our survey focused on registered voters as well as to sampling error. As noted in the methodology section, the margin of error for our survey is roughly +/-5%.

For the complete findings from the base sample of 749 voters and the sample of Black voters, please see the separate reports found at www.aarp.org/nyhighspeedinternet.

S. Kathi Brown, AARP Research
skbrown@aarp.org

Media inquiries should be directed to Erik Kriss in the AARP New York State Office at ekriss@aarp.org.

This research was designed by AARP Research.