

#TECH: Malaysia ranks 37th in digital quality of life

By [Izwan Ismail](#) - September 20, 2023 @ 11:47am



Gabriele Racaityte-Krasauske

MALAYSIA is ranked 37th in the world in Digital Quality of Life Index (DQL) based on Surfshark's study; showing a drop from 26th last year.

The DQL Index assesses the digital quality of life in 121 nations worldwide, focusing on five key pillars and 14 indicators.

MALAYSIA'S PERFORMANCE

Out of the five pillars assessed in the DQL Index, Malaysia excelled in Internet quality, securing the 13th position globally.

However, according to Surfshark, a Netherland-based cybersecurity company, the country faced challenges in the e-security category, where it ranked 48th. In other areas, Malaysia ranked 26th in Internet affordability, 32nd in e-government and 33rd in e-infrastructure.

"In many nations, 'digital quality of life' has merged into the broader concept of overall 'quality of life'. There's no other way to look at it now that so many daily activities, including work, education and leisure, are done online. That's why it's crucial to pinpoint the areas in which a nation's digital quality of life thrives and where attention is needed, which is the precise purpose of the DQL Index", said Surfshark spokesman, Gabriele Racaiyte-Krasauske.

QUALITY

Malaysia's strong point in the DQL Index is its Internet quality. With fixed Internet speed averaging at 133 Mbps, Malaysia boasts a level 38 per cent higher than the global average. To put this in perspective, Singapore is the world's fastest at 300 Mbps, and Yemen, the slowest, is struggling at just 11 Mbps.

In the mobile Internet category, Malaysia averages at 83 Mbps, with the United Arab Emirates leading globally at 310 Mbps and Venezuela being far behind at just 10 Mbps.

Racaiyte-Krasauske said Malaysia has also made significant strides in improving its Internet speeds over the past year, with mobile Internet speed increasing by 142 per cent and fixed broadband speed growing by 19 per cent.

However, compared with Singapore, Malaysia's mobile Internet is 44 per cent slower, and its fixed broadband is 56 per cent slower.

AFFORDABILITY

When it comes to Internet affordability, Racaiyte-Krasauske said Malaysia was relatively competitive compared with other countries.

"Malaysians need to work approximately 4 hours and 48 minutes each month to afford fixed broadband, which is less than the global average.

"However, it is worth noting that this is 16 times more effort than in Romania, which boasts the world's most affordable fixed Internet, requiring just 18 minutes of work per month," she said.

For mobile Internet, Malaysians need to work about 33 minutes and 17 seconds each month, which is double the time needed in Luxembourg, the country with the world's most affordable mobile Internet, where it takes just 16 minutes of work per month to afford it.

DIGITAL SERVICES

According to Surfshark, Malaysia is ranked 48th in the world in e-security, a drop of nine places compared with the previous year. The e-security pillar evaluates a country's readiness to counter cybercrime and the strength of its data protection laws. While

Malaysia outperforms both Singapore (56th) and Thailand (60th) in this pillar, there is room for improvement.

In the e-infrastructure pillar, which measures a country's Internet penetration and network readiness, Malaysia is ranked 33rd. The nation has a high Internet penetration rate of 94 per cent, placing it 24th in the world, and ranks 34th in network readiness.

In terms of e-government, Malaysia is ranked 32nd globally, indicating a relatively advanced level of digital government services. The country is also above the global average in terms of artificial intelligence (AI) readiness.

AFFORDABILITY TRENDS

The DQL Index for 2023 reveals a positive global trend in Internet affordability. Fixed Internet is now 11 per cent more affordable than the previous year, with people needing to work an average of 42 minutes less each month to afford it. Mobile Internet is also 26 per cent more affordable, requiring 41 minutes less work to afford it.

The Digital Quality of Life Index 2023 assessed 121 nations, representing 92 per cent of the global population, using data from the United Nations, World Bank, and other open-source information.