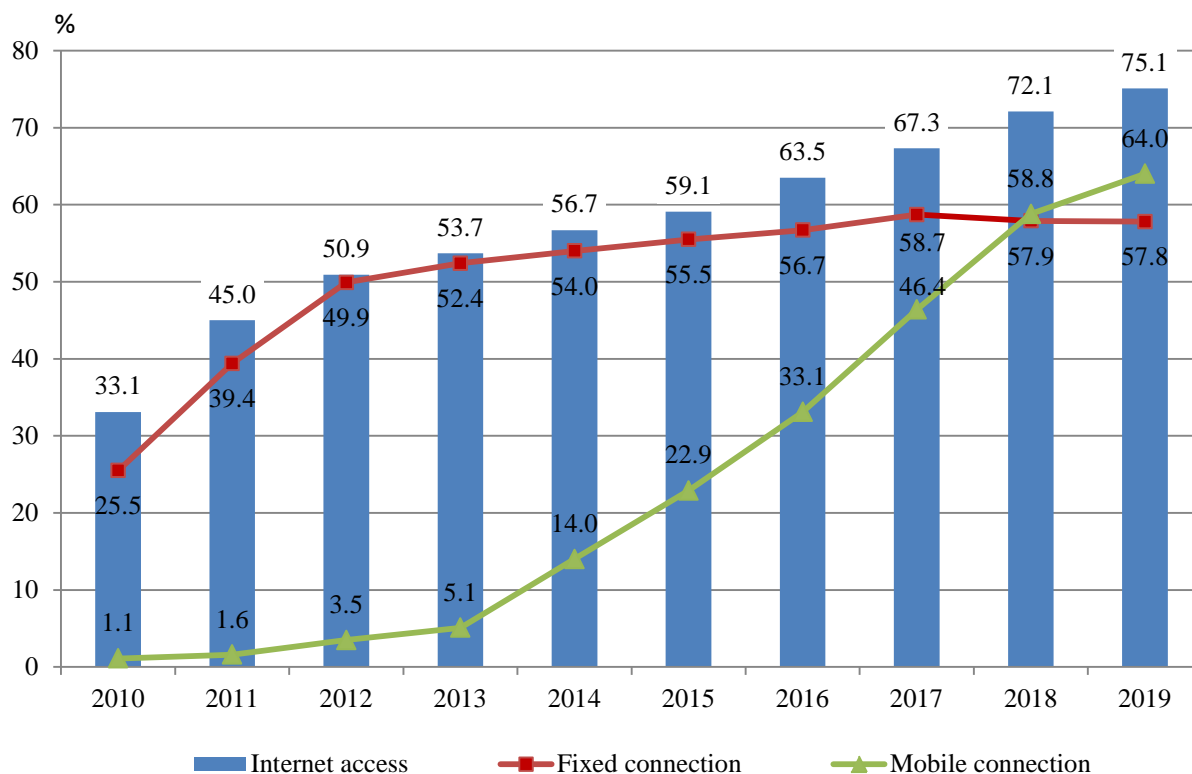




INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGIES USAGE IN HOUSEHOLDS AND BY INDIVIDUALS IN 2019

The results of the 2019 survey on the usage of information and communication technologies (ICT) in households and by individuals showed that 75.1% of the households in Bulgaria had internet access at home with an increase of 42.0 percentage points over a ten-year period. The internet connection used by the households was mobile connection through a mobile phone network (64.0%) and fixed wired connection - 57.8%.

Figure 1. Share of households with internet access by type of connection



In 2019, the highest relative share of households with internet access was found in Yugozapaden region (77.8%), while the lowest relative share was observed in Severozapaden region - 70.8%.

Households with children used the global network more actively as 90.5% of them had internet access, compared to 70.0% of the households without children (Table 1).

In 2019, 24.8% of the households did not have internet access at home. Half of them (50.3%) considered that they did not need it (not useful, not interesting, etc.), 41.9% stated that the main reason was the lack of skills for working with internet, and according to 24.3% the equipment was expensive.



1. Share of households with internet access by statistical region and household type in 2019

(Per cent)

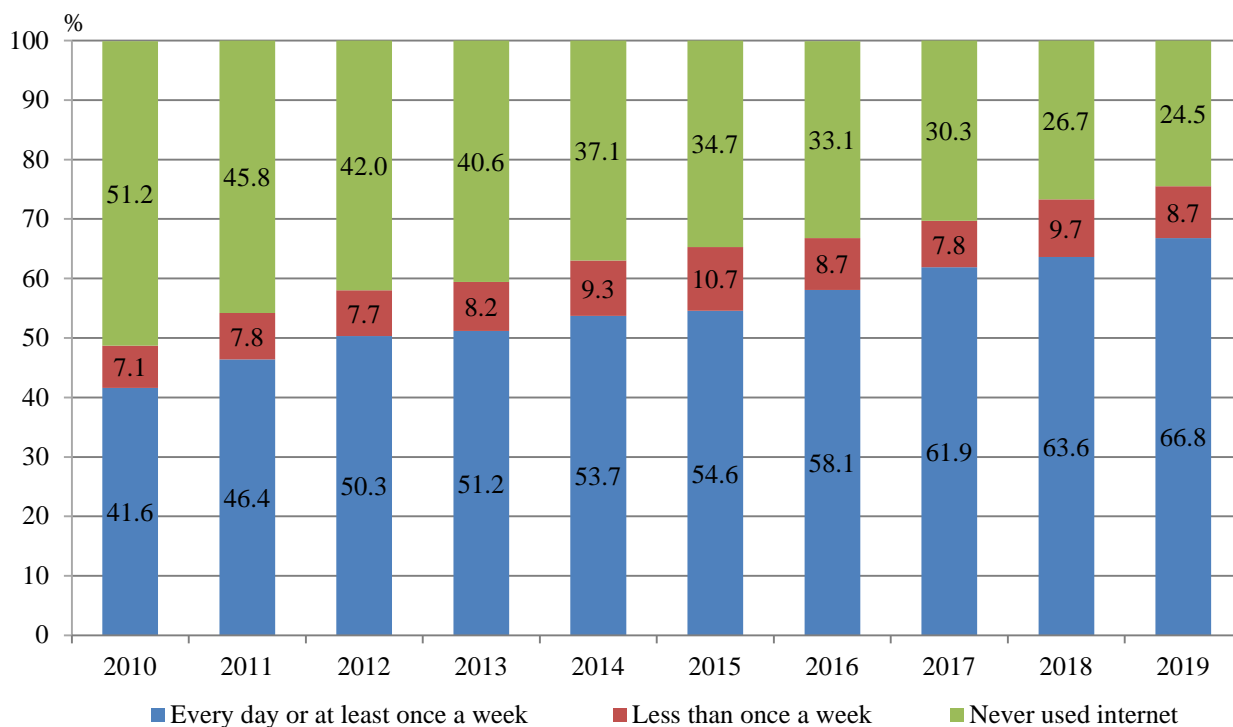
Statistical region	Total	Households with children	Households without children
Total	75.1	90.5	70.0
Severozapaden	70.8	89.2	65.9
Severen tsentralen	73.2	95.2	66.4
Severoiztochen	74.0	87.8	69.2
Yugoiztochen	74.7	89.8	69.8
Yugozapaden	77.8	93.6	72.8
Yuzhen tsentralen	75.3	86.3	71.2

Use of the internet

In 2019, 66.8% of the **individuals aged between 16 and 74 years** used the internet every day or at least once a week at home, at work or any other place and 53.9% took advantage of the resources of the global network several times during the day. The most active users of the internet were those with tertiary education (91.7%), as well as the young people aged between 16 and 24 years - 90.3%.

In 2019, one quarter (24.5%) of the people have never used the internet. Over a ten-year period, their relative share decreased more than twice.

Figure 2. Structure of individuals by frequency of internet usage

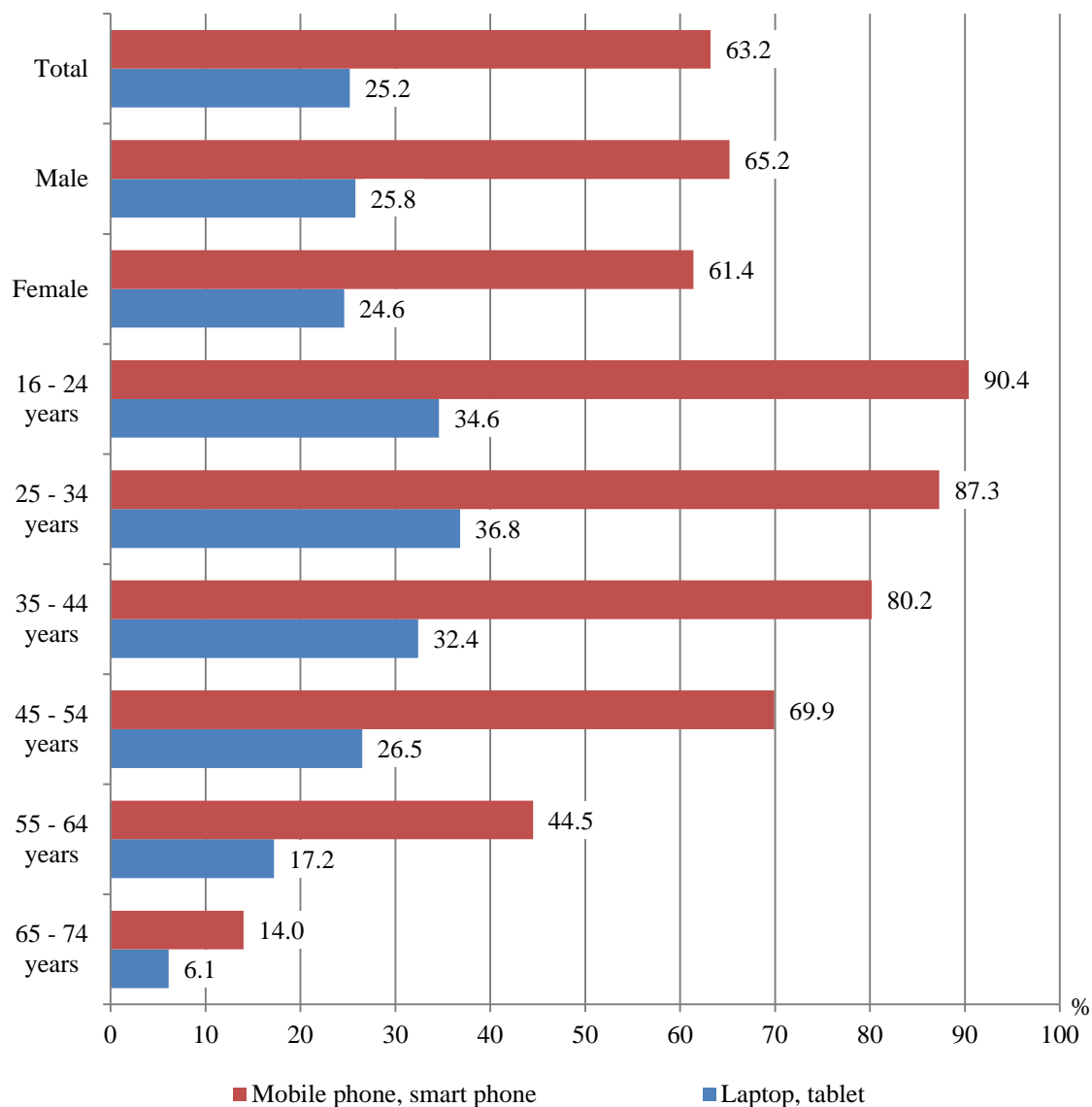




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The most preferred device to access the internet **away from home or work** was the mobile phone (incl. smartphone) which was used by 63.2% of the people.

Figure 3. Share of individuals, who used mobile devices to access the internet away from home or work by type of device in 2019



Individuals used the network mostly for communication as 57.5% of them carried out phone or video calls (using applications, e.g. Viber, WhatsApp, Skype, Facetime, Messenger), and 52.9% participated in social networks (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Snapchat, etc.). The smallest share of individuals used the internet to take part in online consultations or voting to define civic or political issues - 3.5%.

Males listened to music online more than females, respectively 31.9% and 27.6%, while females were more active in seeking of health related information - 37.8% compared to 22.7% for males.

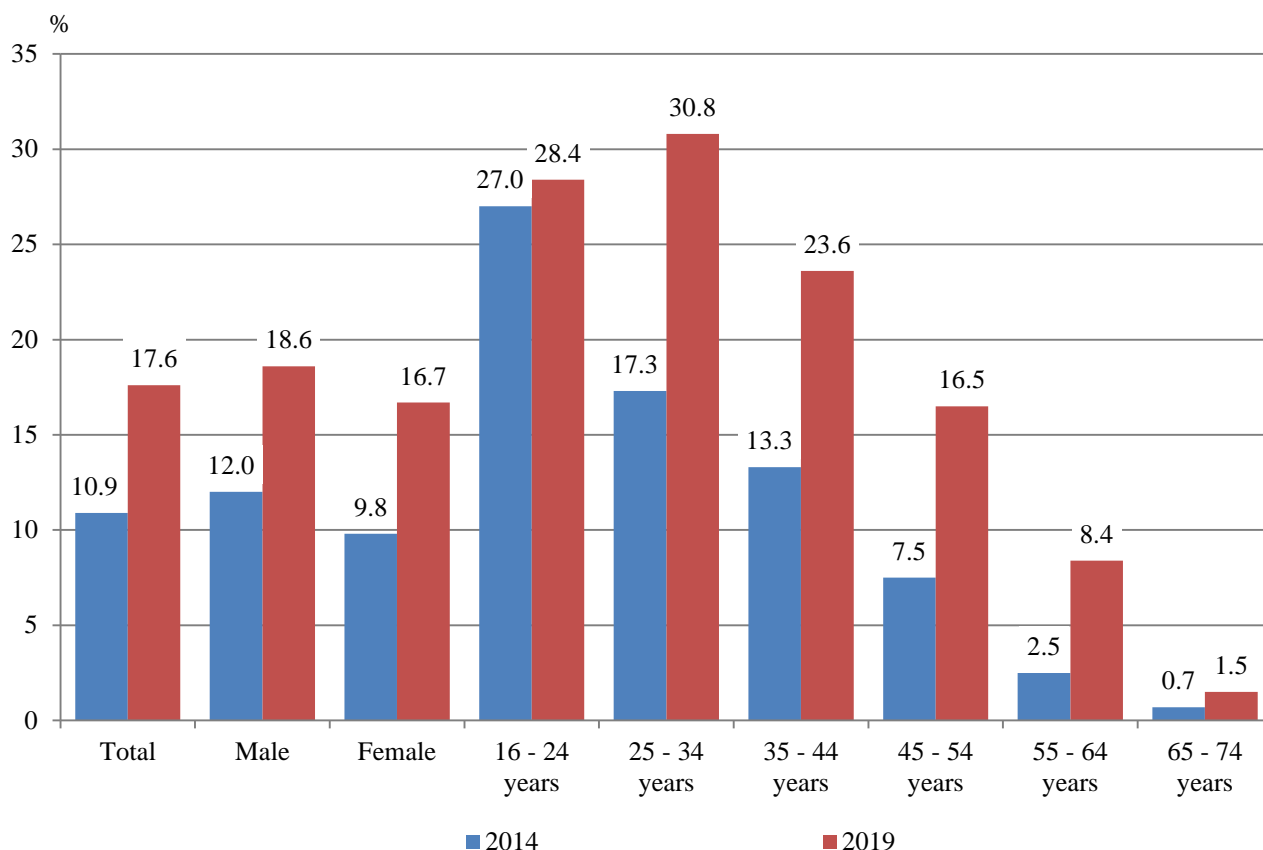
The relative share of the individuals who used storage space on the internet to store documents, photos, music, videos or other files was 17.6%, as users of cloud services were 18.6% of males and



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16.7% of females. Compared to 2014, the largest increase of the use of this type of service was observed in the age group 25 to 34 years - 13.5 percentage points.

Figure 4. Share of individuals who used cloud services by sex and age



Use of e-Government

In the last 12 months, 25.4% of the individuals used the global network for interaction with the public and local authorities, as follows:

- 19.8% obtained information from public administration's websites or apps;
- 12.5% downloaded official forms;
- 10.2% submitted completed forms online.

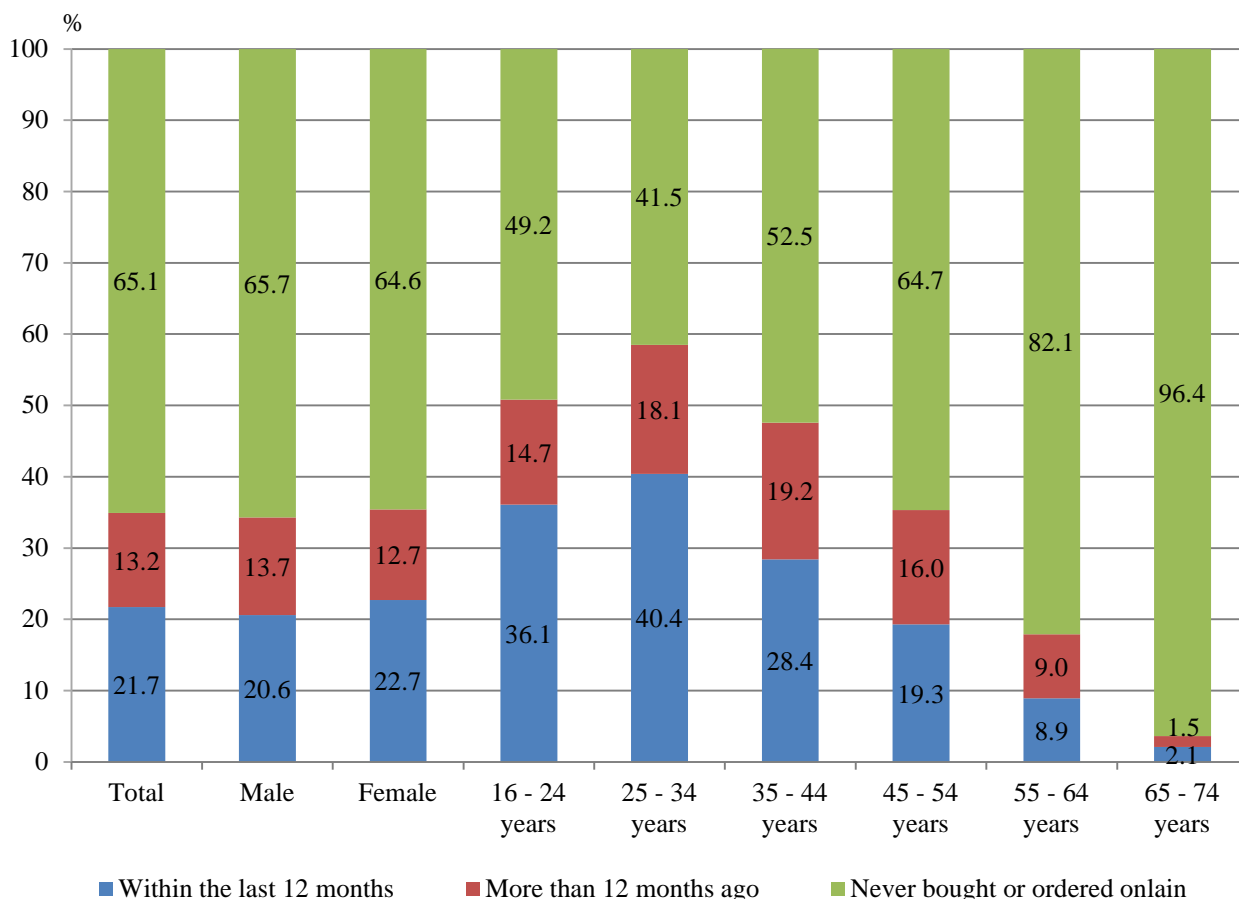
Females were more active than males in the use of online services offered by the public authorities - respectively 26.4% and 24.5%.

Electronic commerce (E-commerce)

The share of individuals who bought goods or services for private use over the internet in the last 12 months was 21.7%. Most active in online shopping were those in age group 25 - 34 years with relative share 40.4%, while only 2.1% of individuals aged 65 - 74 years purchased online. Females were more active in online shopping than males - respectively 22.7% and 20.6%.



Figure 5. Structure of individuals who bought goods or services over the internet by sex and age in 2019



The internet buyers bought mainly:

- clothes and sport goods - 76.4%;
- household goods - 35.3%;
- holiday accommodation - 20.7%;
- food or groceries - 16.9%.

The most of online consumers bought from sellers from Bulgaria (88.1%), but many people purchased from other EU countries (41.8%) or from other countries - 19.1% in the last 12 months.

The main reasons for not buying online were: preference to shop in person, loyalty to shops or force of habit (31.4%); lack of skills or knowledge (5.4%); concerns about returning goods, complaint and redress - 4.3%.



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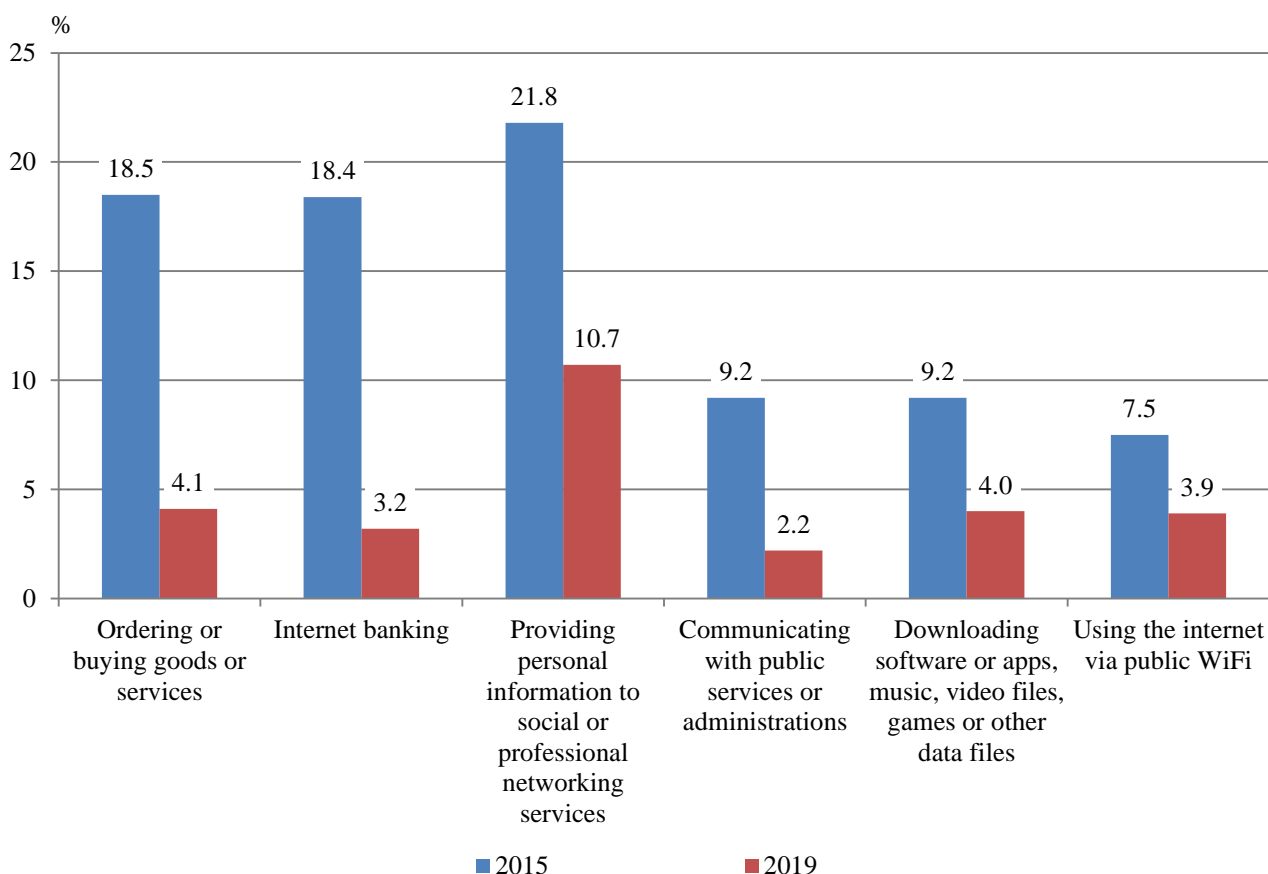
Internet security

The increasing deployment of digital technologies in our daily life and the ubiquitous internet connectivity raised certain security-related challenges. The results of the survey showed that, out of the individuals who used internet in the last 12 months:

- 11.3% received fraudulent messages ('phishing');
- 5.6% experienced loss of documents, pictures or other data due to a virus or other infection (e.g. worm or Trojan horse);
- 3.1% were redirected to fake websites asking for personal information ('pharming');
- 2.0% had problems with children accessing inappropriate websites.

Mainly, security-related concerns limited or prevented individuals from providing personal information to social or professional networking services (10.7%), but this relative share decreased twice compared to 2015.

Figure 6. Share of individuals who were limited or prevented from doing activities via the internet due to security-related concerns by type of activity



Every fourth person (26.2%) made back-up copies of the files (documents, pictures, etc.) on an external storage device or to internet storage space in order to prevent possible loss of information.



Methodological notes

The survey on Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) usage in households and by individuals is a part of the European statistical programme and has been carried out in Bulgaria since 2004 according to the Regulation (EU) No. 808/2004. The main purpose of the survey was to obtain reliable and comparable data, which reflect the dissemination and usage of ICT at national and European level.

The statistical units are households and individuals. The population of households consists of **all private households and their members in the age group of from 16 to 74 years**. In 2019, 4 220 randomly selected households and 9 164 individuals were surveyed. The survey was conducted by face-to-face interview, carried out by NSI staff. The questionnaire for 2019 comprised several modules, which collect information about availability and use of internet in households and by individuals, e-government, e-commerce, internet security, digital skills, as well as questions related to the socio-demographic characteristics of households and individuals.

Fixed wired connection includes DSL, ADSL, VDSL, LAN, cable modem CATV, optical fibre, satellite, public Wi-Fi connection, etc.

A **mobile connection** means internet connection via mobile phone network (3G/ 4G), using SIM card or USB key, mobile phone or smart phone as modem.

Smartphone is a mobile phone that has an operating system and allows access to the internet.

More information and data from surveys on Information and Communications Technologies usage in households and by individuals can be found at the NSI's web site (<http://www.nsi.bg/en/content/6096/ict-usage-households>) and in Information System 'Infostat' (https://infostat.nsi.bg/infostat/pages/module.jsf?x_2=240).