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## Digital Quality of Life Index 2020: SurfShark

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### Why in News

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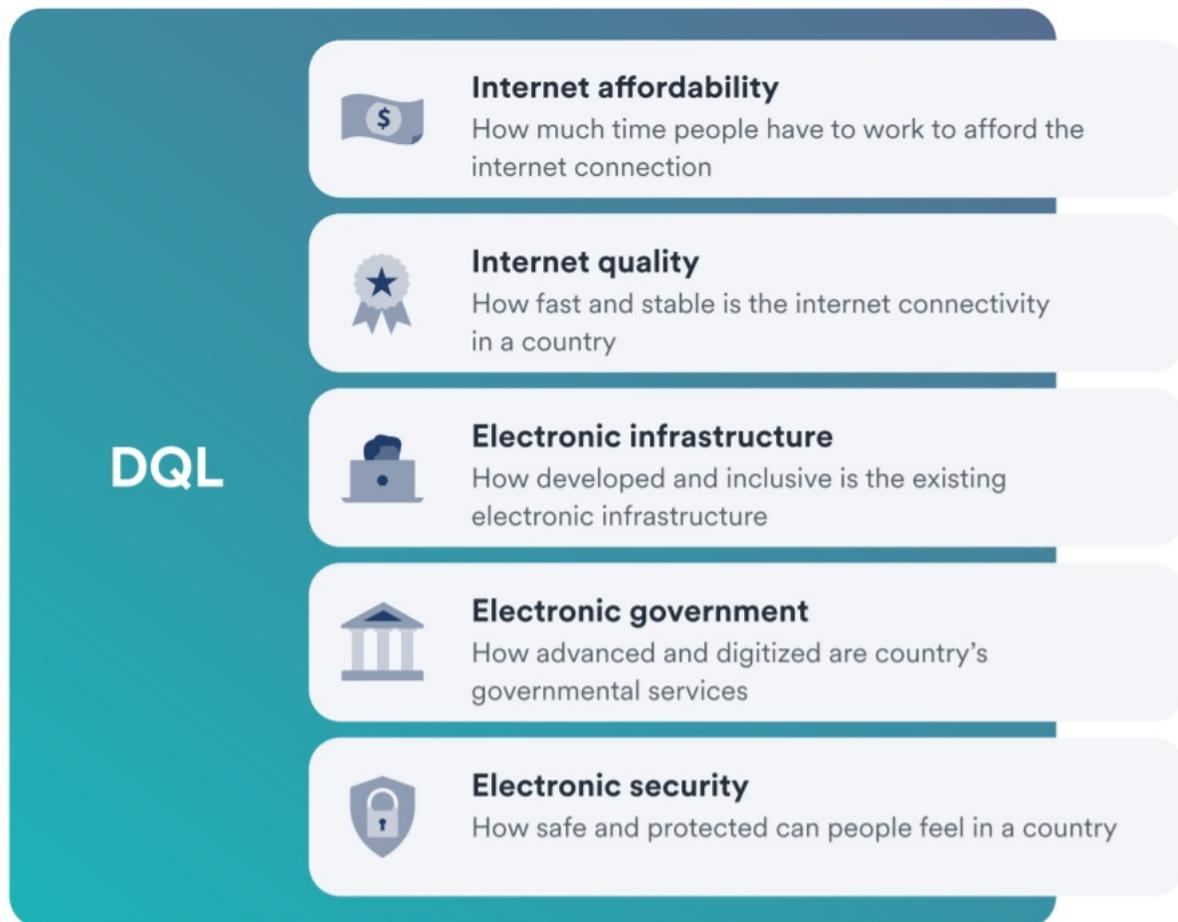
Recently, the **Digital Quality of Life (DQL) Index 2020** has been released by **SurfShark**, an online privacy solutions provider.

According to it, **India ranks among the lowest** in the world in terms of Internet quality.

### Key Points

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- **Coverage:** It is **global research on the quality of digital wellbeing in 85 countries** (81% of the global population).



- **Parameters:** The study indexes the countries by looking at **five fundamental pillars** that define the digital quality of life namely, **internet affordability, internet quality, electronic infrastructure, electronic security and electronic government.**
  - Underpinning these pillars are 12 indicators that are interrelated and work together to provide a measure of the overall digital quality of life.
- **GDP and DQL:** Although **GDP per capita has a strong correlation with the DQL**, there are countries that have a better digital quality of life with a lower GDP per capita than expected.
  - **13 countries** (Azerbaijan, Bulgaria, China, Croatia, Greece, etc.) **exceed the expected digital quality of life by outperforming others** in providing higher levels of e-security and more affordable internet connectivity.
  - **Bahrain, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia** with relatively high GDP per capita are **underperforming** in providing better digital wellbeing for their citizens due to low levels of internet quality and e-security.

- **Affordability:** The **affordability of the internet plays a major role in ensuring accessibility** but has a notably **lower correlation with the DQL** than the other pillars.  
For instance, the internet is less affordable in some Southern or Eastern European countries but people there still enjoy higher than the average digital quality of life.
- **Internet Infrastructure:** The **stability of the internet infrastructure** has become of crucial importance during the **Covid-19 pandemic** when video conferences replaced live meetings. Consequently, it impacted the quality of people's digital lives.  
During the first month of the lockdowns, 49 of 85 countries experienced deteriorated speeds of mobile internet and 44 countries experienced deteriorated speeds of broadband connection.
- **Global Rankings:**
  - **7 out of 10 countries with the highest DQL are in Europe**, with **Denmark leading** among 85 countries.  
**Scandinavian countries excel** in offering high-quality digital wellbeing to their citizens.
  - **Canada leads in American continents, Japan in Asia, South Africa in Africa and New Zealand in Oceania.**
- **Indian Rankings:** India stands at the **overall rank of 57** out of the 85 countries.
  - **Internet Affordability: 9<sup>th</sup> place** and outperforms countries like the UK, the USA and China.
  - **Internet Quality: 78<sup>th</sup> place** and is almost at the bottom of the pillar.
  - **E-infrastructure: 79<sup>th</sup> place** and below countries like Guatemala and Sri Lanka.
  - **Electronic Security: 57<sup>th</sup> position.**
  - **E-government: 15<sup>th</sup> place** and just below countries like New Zealand and Italy.

## Government Initiatives Related to Internet

- **Digital India Programme:** It is an umbrella program to prepare India for a knowledge-based transformation.  
**e-Kranti: National e-Governance Plan 2.0** which is an essential pillar of the Digital India initiative.
- **Digilockers:** It enables Indian citizens to store certain official documents on the cloud.
- **BHIM App:** To enable digital payments.
- **Pradhan Mantri Gramin Digital Saksharta Abhiyan:** To make citizens digitally literate.

- **Bharat Net programme:** To provide an optical fibre network in all gram panchayats.

**Source: TH**