



Technology & Connectivity in NYC

Citywide Survey Findings

May 2025

Methodology

- To build on previous research and explore how New Yorkers engage with the city's evolving technology landscape, LinkNYC and Tech:NYC partnered with HarrisX – a leading tech and telecom research firm – to conduct an online survey of 1,528 New Yorkers from February 28 to March 10, 2025.
- This follow-up to the 2023 survey wave examines the role of innovative technology in residents' daily lives, assesses ongoing obstacles to connectivity, and tracks changes in New York's digital divide. Where statistically significant, shifts in survey results since 2023 are noted.
- The survey included oversamples of:
 - 200 Black New Yorkers (410 total responses)
 - 200 Hispanic New Yorkers (499 total responses)
 - 100 AAPI New Yorkers (209 total responses)
- Results were weighted by gender, race, age, income, education, and county to U.S. Census data to align with proportions in the population. The sampling margin of error of this poll is +/- 2.51 percentage points. Margin of error is larger among subgroups.

Key Findings

Key Takeaways

- **The demand for digital connectivity outside the home is rising.** Public Wi-Fi use and awareness of connectivity solutions like Link5G smart poles have increased since 2023, and more residents are relying on cellular networks and free Wi-Fi to stay connected both at home and on-the-go.
- **77% of New Yorkers support having Link5G smart poles in their neighborhood,** with strong backing across boroughs and demographic groups, and support remaining steady or growing since 2023.
- **Technology plays an increasingly vital role in New Yorkers' daily lives and the city's economy.** New Yorkers see tech as a key driver of NYC's future economy, with strong public support for attracting more tech companies to the city and expanding tech-focused workforce development opportunities.
- **New Yorkers see A.I. as a valuable tool for the workforce and skill development,** with strong interest in learning more about modern tech and accessing City-provided A.I. and digital literacy opportunities.

New Yorkers want more reliable and more affordable Wi-Fi and mobile cell service.



Reliable 5G cellular service at home is a priority for the vast majority of New Yorkers, especially for those relying on mobile hotspots for internet access.



Even among those with in-home broadband subscriptions, many depend on their mobile network or hotspots to get online at home.



Public Wi-Fi remains a critical resource – **55%** of New Yorkers use free Wi-Fi at least once a month (**up 6% from 2023**) and the majority of communities and demographics across the city want faster and more reliable free public Wi-Fi in their neighborhood.

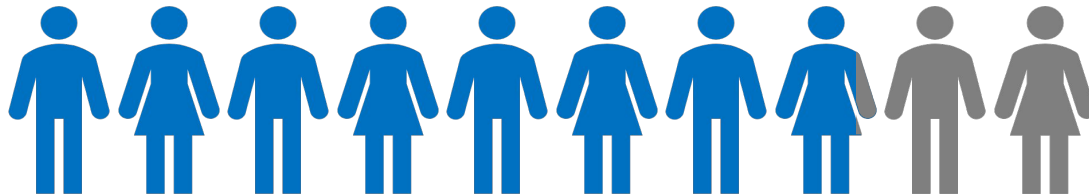


Among the **35%** of city residents without unlimited cellular data plans, **51%** run out of data at least once a month.

More than 3-in-4 New Yorkers support having a Link5G smart pole installed in their neighborhood, and they plan to use them.

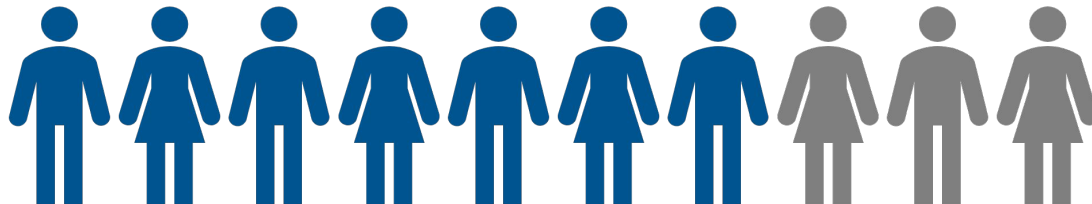
77%

support Link5G smart poles being installed in their neighborhood after seeing a photo of a Link5G, and support strengthens after hearing a brief description of their benefits (**+1% since 2023**).



75%

are likely to use free Wi-Fi via a Link5G smart pole if there was one in their neighborhood (**+1% since 2023**).



New Yorkers see technology as essential to the city's future, with strong support for its role in the economy, public services, and workforce.



Tech is increasingly seen as a key industry for NYC's future. While healthcare, transportation, and finance remain the most important industries today, technology is rising in the ranks as a major driver of the city's future economy.



New Yorkers overwhelmingly view technology as beneficial – **more than 8-in-10 believe technology helps, rather than hinders, their daily lives.**



Most New Yorkers think NYC's tech-driven services are effective. **76% rate the City's use of technology in delivering services as good or better.**



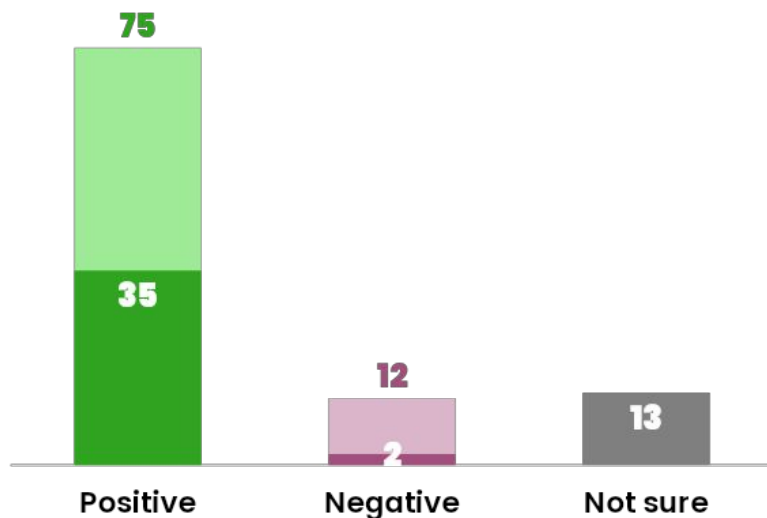
There's strong public support for expanding tech education and industry growth. The majority of New Yorkers agree the City should offer more tech training opportunities (**77%**) and work to attract more tech companies (**76%**).

The Role of Technology in NYC's Programs, Infrastructure, and Economy

A strong majority of New Yorkers feel technology is critical to the city's future. 3-in-4 residents say tech companies have had a positive impact on our lives and the city itself.

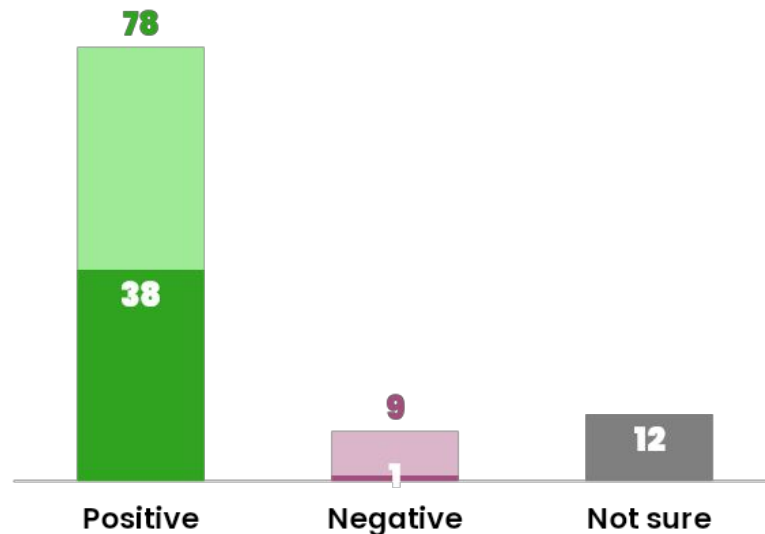
Tech companies' impact on our lives

Darker shade = Stronger intensity



Tech companies' impact on NYC

Darker shade = Stronger intensity



Q. Are technology companies having a net positive or net negative effect on our lives?

Q. Overall, would you say that the presence of tech companies in New York City has a mostly positive or negative impact on the city?

New Yorkers see A.I. as a valuable tool for the workforce and social impact, with strong interest in A.I.-training opportunities.



More than two-thirds of New Yorkers (**68%**) believe A.I. will benefit the workforce and enhance job-related skills. However, workplace A.I. adoption remains low, with most New Yorkers not using A.I. at work and few employers requiring its use.



7-in-10 New Yorkers are interested in learning more about A.I. and would take advantage of City-provided A.I. training programs if available.



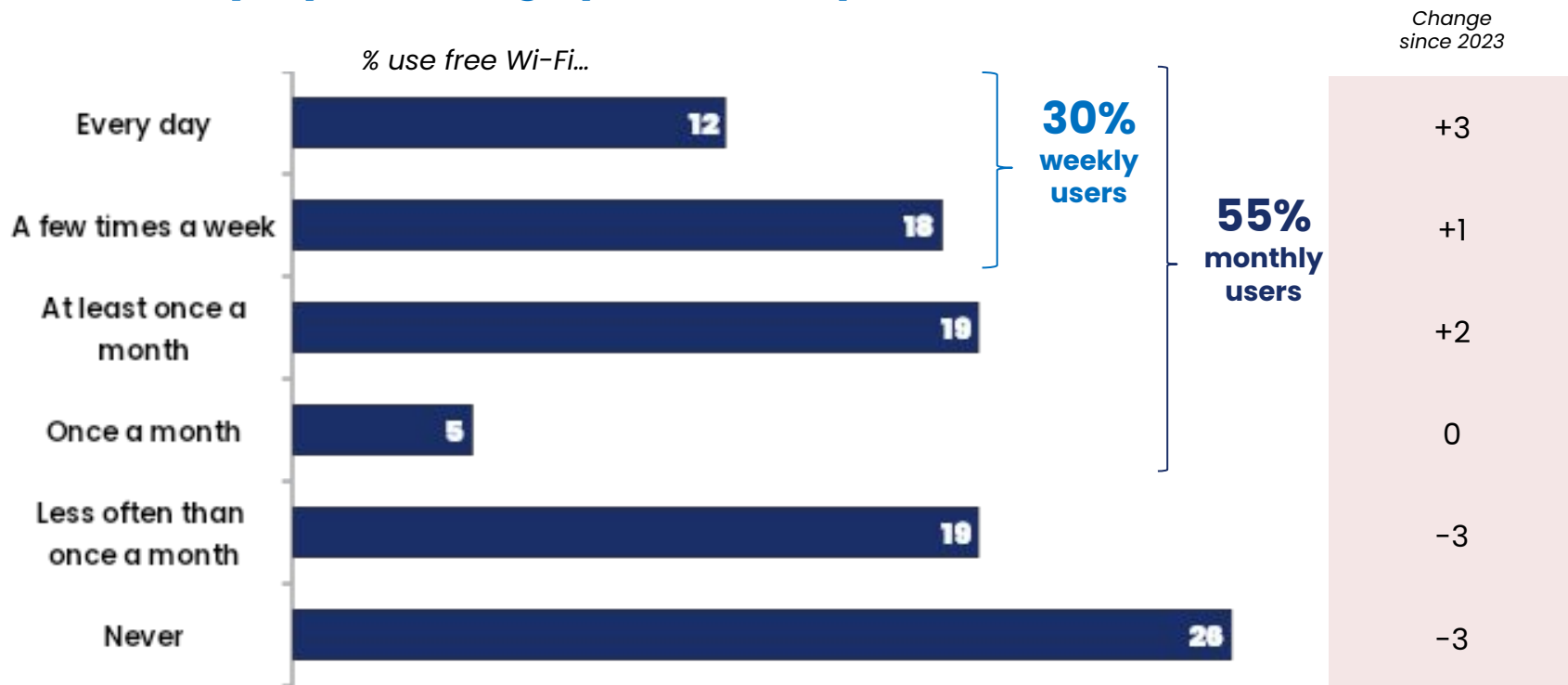
64% of New Yorkers believe A.I. will have a positive impact on the city. A majority of New Yorkers (**60%**) recognize A.I.'s potential as a tool for social impact, with strong agreement (**66%**) that it can help nonprofits scale their services and better serve New Yorkers.



New Yorkers rank Tech as the second most important industry for NYC's future economy, with **30%** of respondents including it in their top three selections (along with Tourism and Finance), trailing only Healthcare (35%).

Internet & Cell Usage

More New Yorkers now use free public Wi-Fi every day compared to 2023 – and the number of New Yorkers who use free Wi-Fi at least once per month increased by 6 percentage points compared to 2023.



Q. How often do you use free public Wi-Fi (for example, at a library, coffee shop, or from a LinkNYC kiosk)?

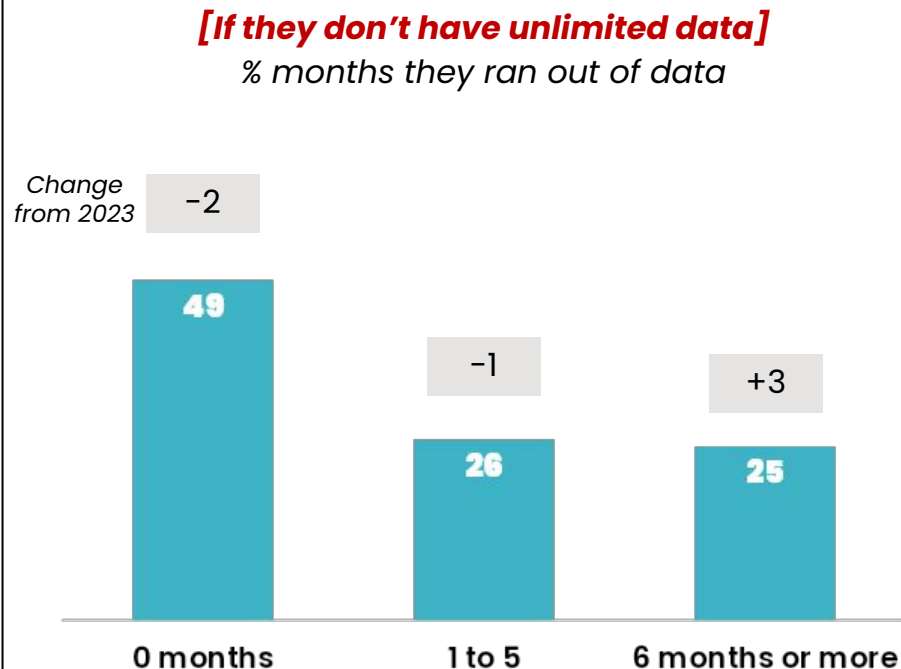
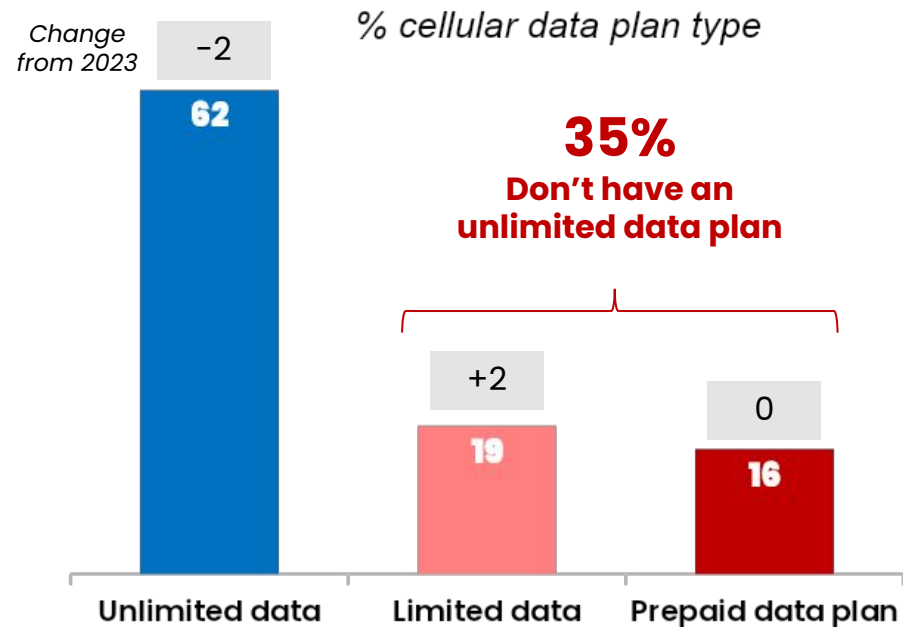
Interest in fast, free Wi-Fi being offered near home is sky high.

● Interested ● Not interested % Interest in fast, free Wi-Fi being offered near home



Q. How interested would you be in fast, free Wi-Fi being offered near your home?

More than a third of New Yorkers do not have unlimited cellular data, and half of those residents run out of data during at least one month per year.

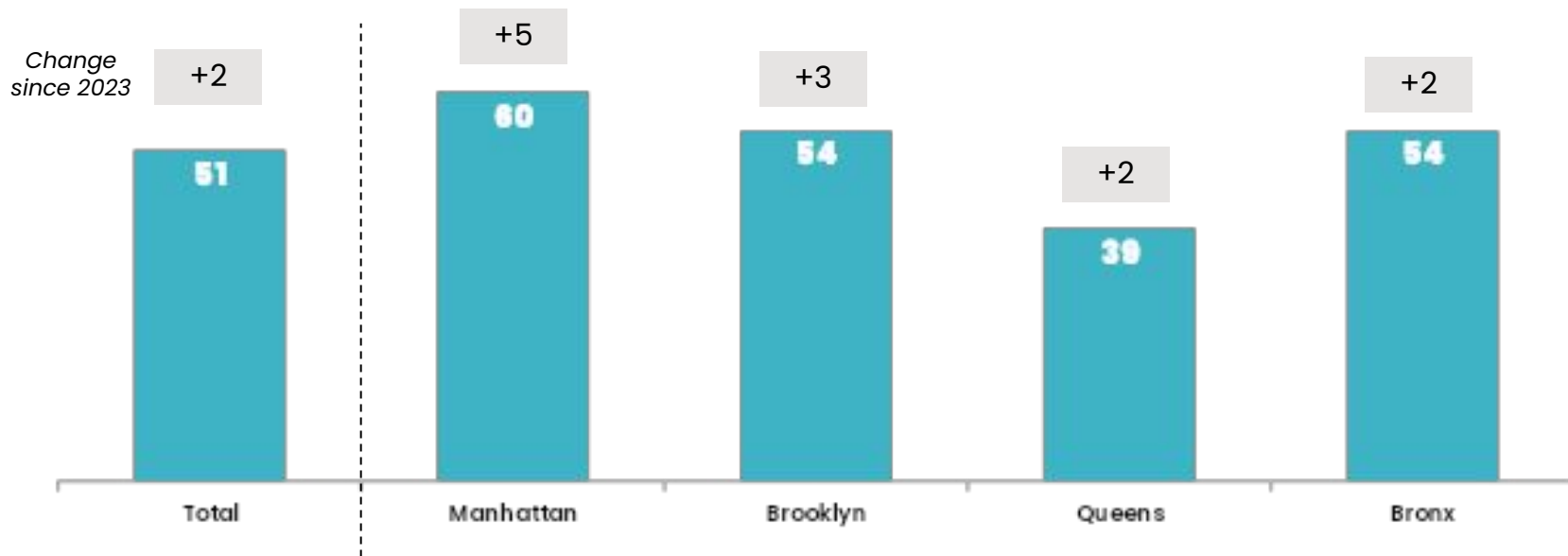


Q. (IF NOT UNLIMITED DATA PLAN) How many months out of the year do you run out of data? For example, if you never run out of data, please enter "0". Your best estimate is fine.

Q. What type of data plan do you have?

Running out of data affects half of New Yorkers on limited data plans.

[If they don't have unlimited data]: % run out of data at least one month a year



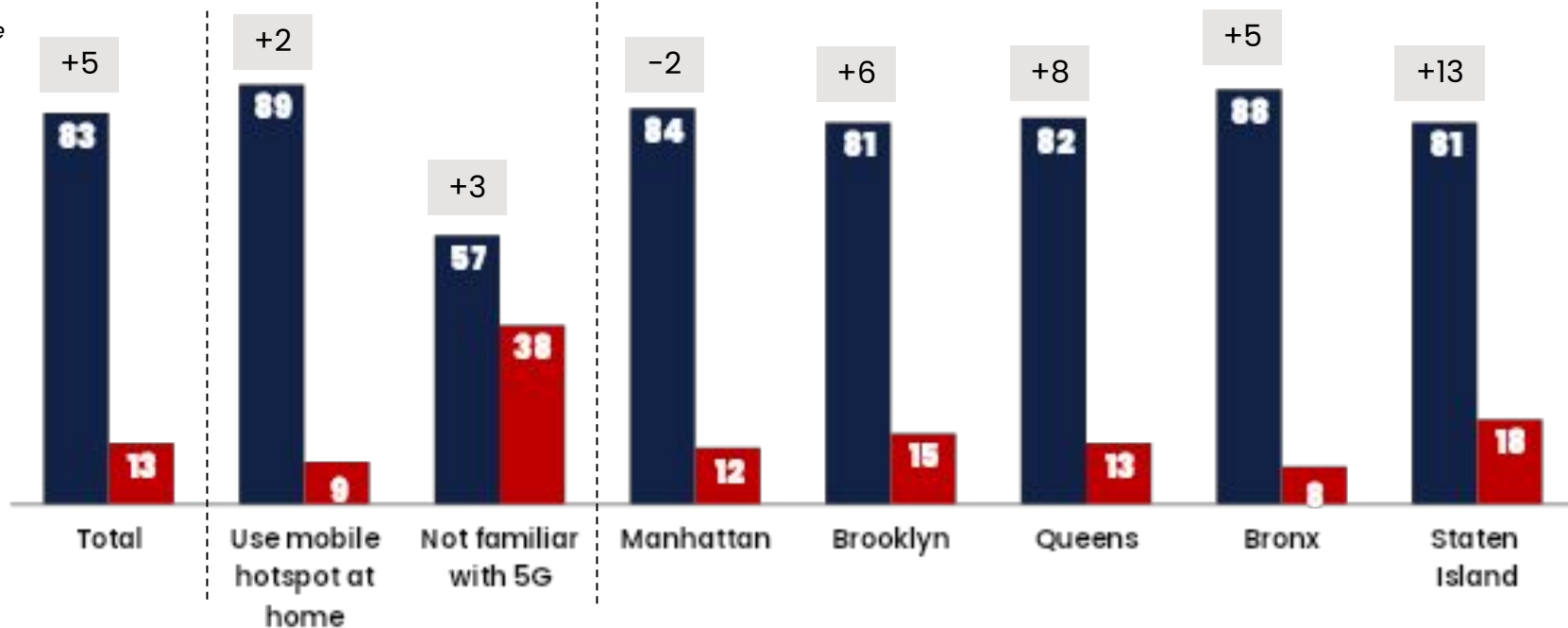
Q. (IF NOT UNLIMITED DATA PLAN) How many months out of the year do you run out of data? For example, if you never run out of data, please enter "0". If you always run out of data, please enter "12". If you run out of data some months but not others, please enter your best guess for how many months out of the year this occurs. Your best estimate is fine. NOTE: Staten Island sample size too small to report.

Link5G Smart Poles

Reliable 5G cellular service at home is a priority for the vast majority of New Yorkers, especially for those relying on mobile hotspots for internet access. Interest in 5G service at home is lower among those unfamiliar with the technology.

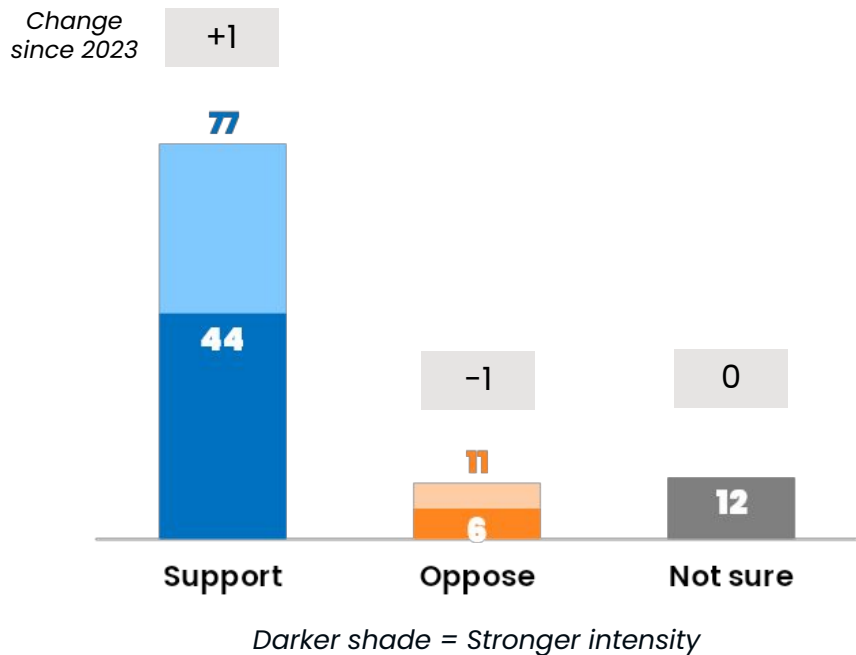
● Important to have 5G cellular service at home ● Not important

Change
since
2023

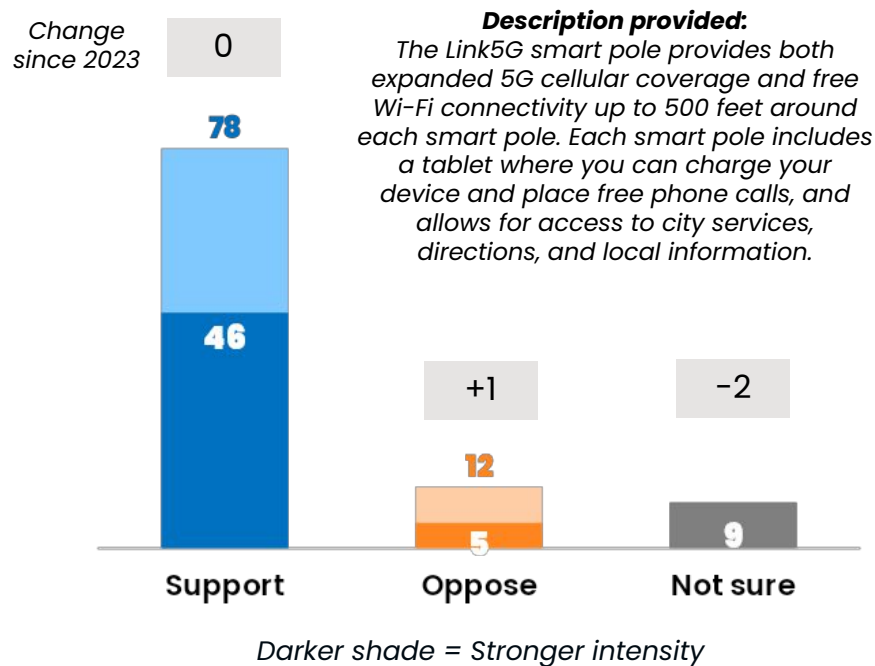


Q. How important is it to you personally that you have 5G cellular service at home?

A strong majority of New Yorkers support having Link5G smart poles in their neighborhood – and their support slightly increases when they learn more about Link5G's services.



Q. Below is a picture of the new Link5G smart pole that will enable better 5G cellular coverage and free Wi-Fi connectivity around the smart poles' locations. Would you support having one of these smart poles in your neighborhood?

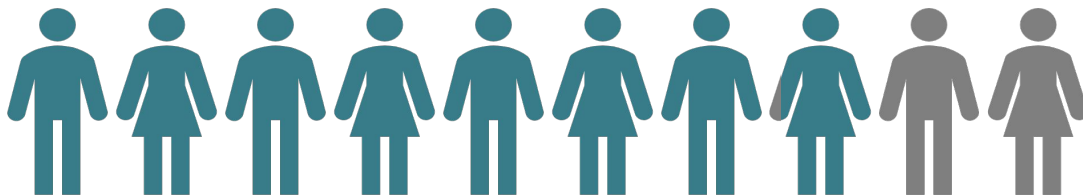


Q. [DESCRIPTION] Would you support having one of these smart poles in your neighborhood?

Even those unfamiliar with Link5G support having a Link5G smart pole installed in their neighborhood and say it will provide needed benefits.

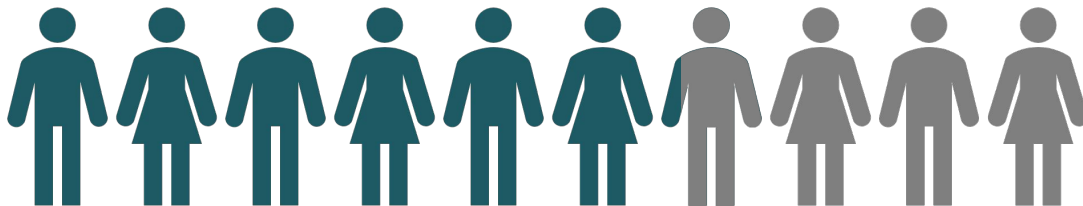
71%

of those who have not seen smart poles around the city would support having one in their neighborhood (no change from 2023).



62%

of New Yorkers say Link5G smart poles will provide needed benefits for their neighborhood and community (+1% from 2023).



Geographic Distribution of Support for Link5G

Strongest regions of support (80–90%)

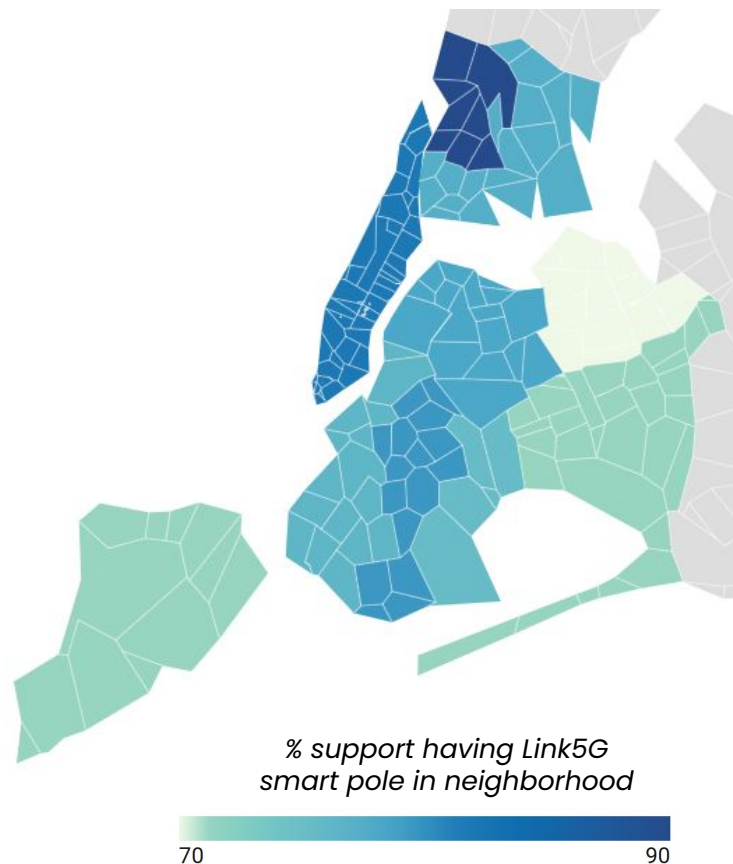
- North Bronx
- Upper Manhattan
- Downtown/Midtown
- Central Brooklyn

Middle-tier support (75–80%)

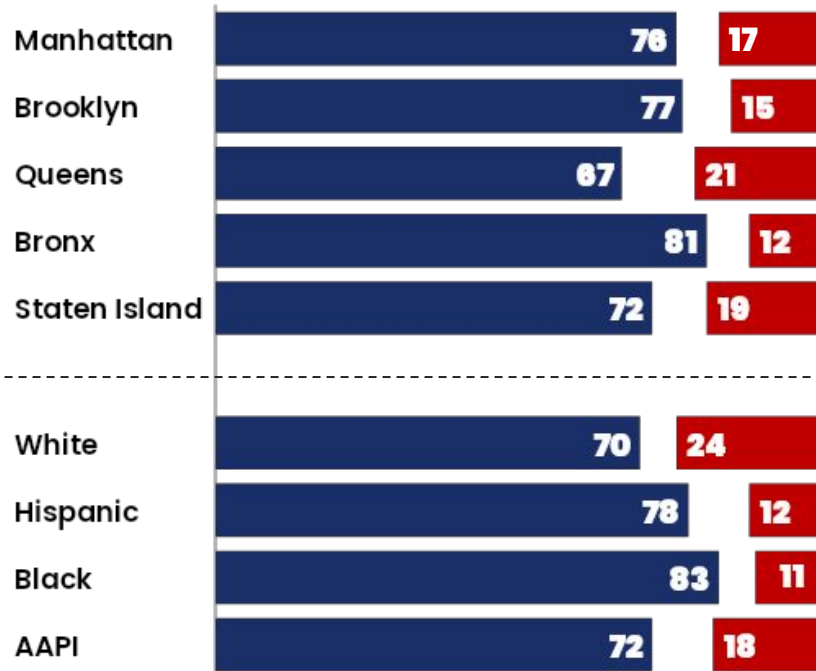
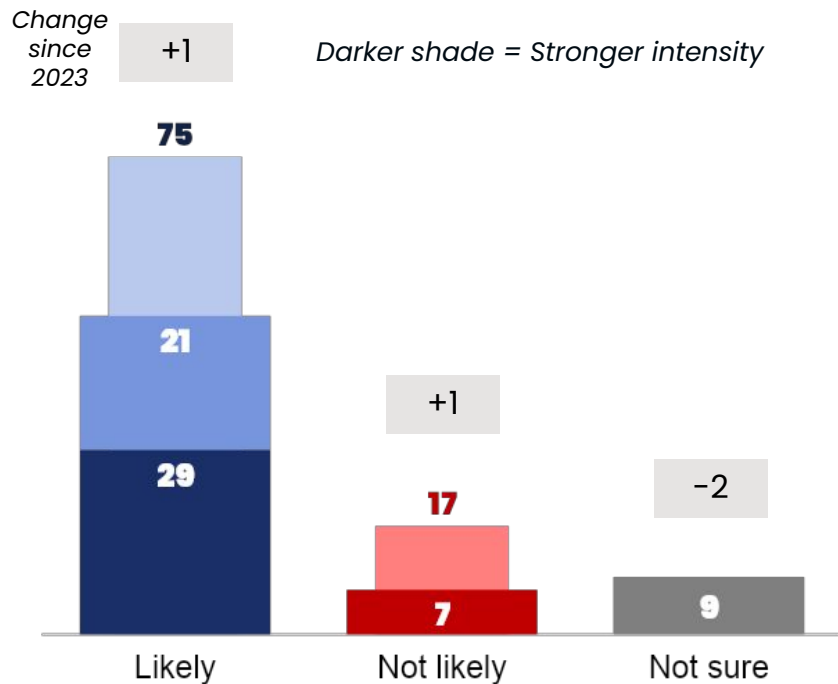
- Northeast Queens
- South Bronx
- West Brooklyn
- East Brooklyn

Relatively weaker regions of support (still 71–75%)

- Staten Island
- South Queens
- Northwest Queens

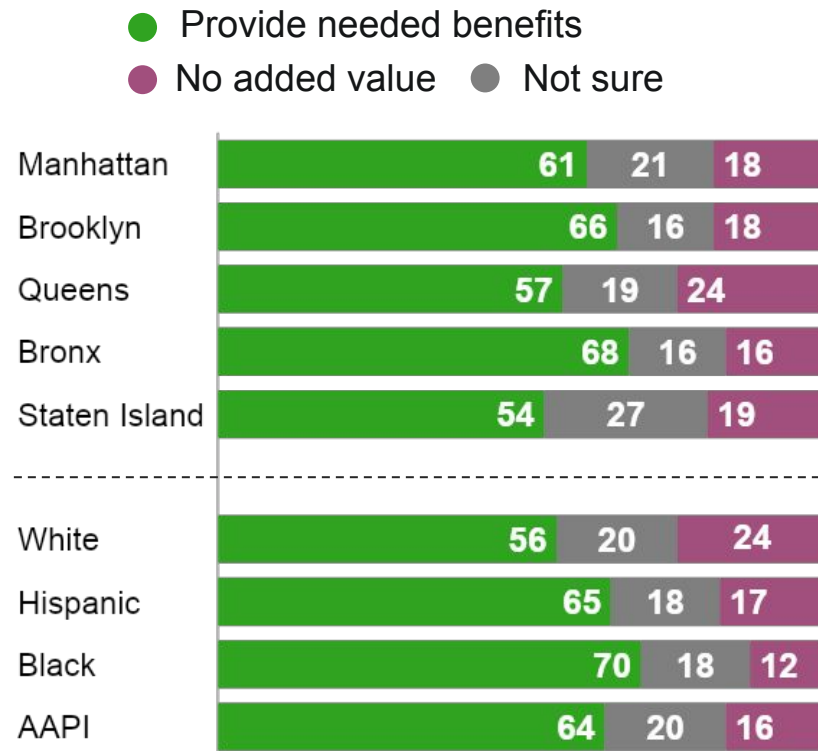
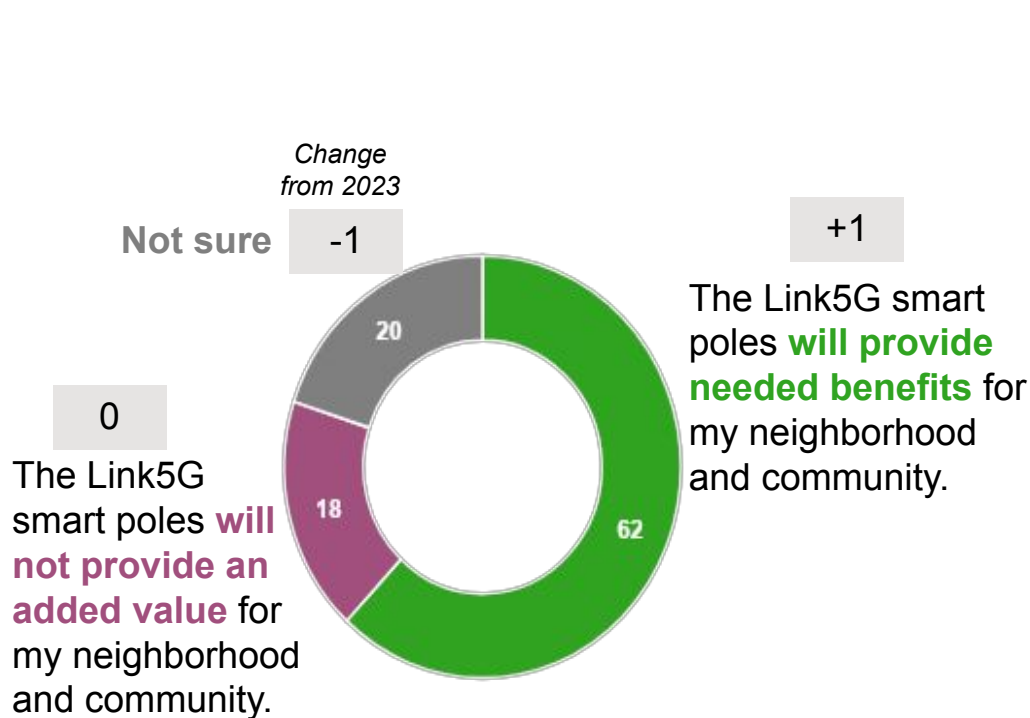


3-in-4 New Yorkers would use free Wi-Fi via Link5G smart poles if available in their neighborhood.



Q. How likely are you to use the free Wi-Fi, assuming there is a new Link5G smart pole in your neighborhood?

The benefits of Link5G smart poles are widely acknowledged by New Yorkers — especially those living in Brooklyn and the Bronx.



Q. Which of the following statements better describes your view?

LinkNYC



tech:nyc

harrisx
A STAGWELL COMPANY