

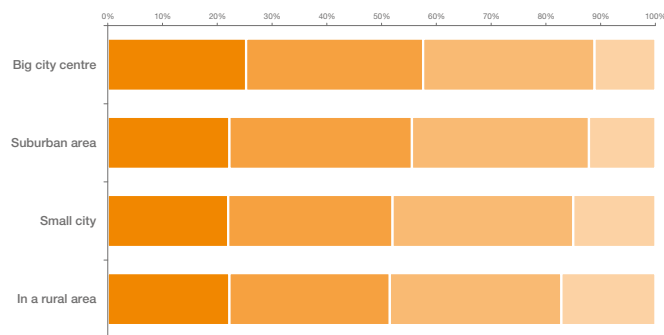
INTERNET – A GREAT STRESS RELIEVER FOR BUSY CITY DWELLERS

Stress is something that almost all of us – particularly those of us who live in big cities – experience from time to time. As a result, there are a number of accepted methods of relieving the symptoms of stress and helping the mind to relax. Taking a nice warm bath and listening to soothing music are two age-old solutions, but now there’s a more modern alternative: spending time on the internet.

Ericsson ConsumerLab studies show that life in the city offers great opportunities. However, sometimes it seems there are too many options to choose from and too many things to squeeze in. Some people find it more difficult than others to manage all the temptations a big city offers and struggle to achieve a balance in their lives. Crowds are part of the problem and stress levels are lower in a relatively small city like Stockholm, and much higher in megacities like Mumbai and Cairo. So, the stereotype that city dwellers are more busy and stressed than those living in the countryside holds true: 57 percent of people living in big city centers feel stress or tension at least fairly often while the corresponding figure for people living in rural areas is 51 percent.

and family lives. Furthermore, white-collar workers tend to be more stressed than people from other walks of life. When comparing age groups, it’s also evident that the 25–34 year olds more frequently experience tension than other age groups – a sign of how challenging life can be when you want to establish yourself in society by starting a career, a home and perhaps also a family. In rural areas, the same three groups stand out as being the most stressed but, as indicated above, are less stressed than their peers who live in cities.

How often do you feel stress or tension?

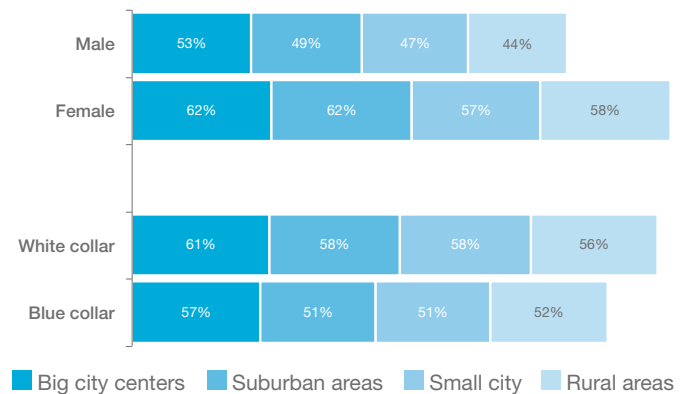


■ Quite often – that is almost every day
■ Fairly often – that is once or twice a week
■ Occasionally – that is a few times a month
■ Almost never – that is only a few days a year

Source: Ericsson Analytical Platform 2011 (online sample).

Women who live in big cities typically feel stressed more often than men – suggesting that women find it more difficult to balance work with the demands of their social

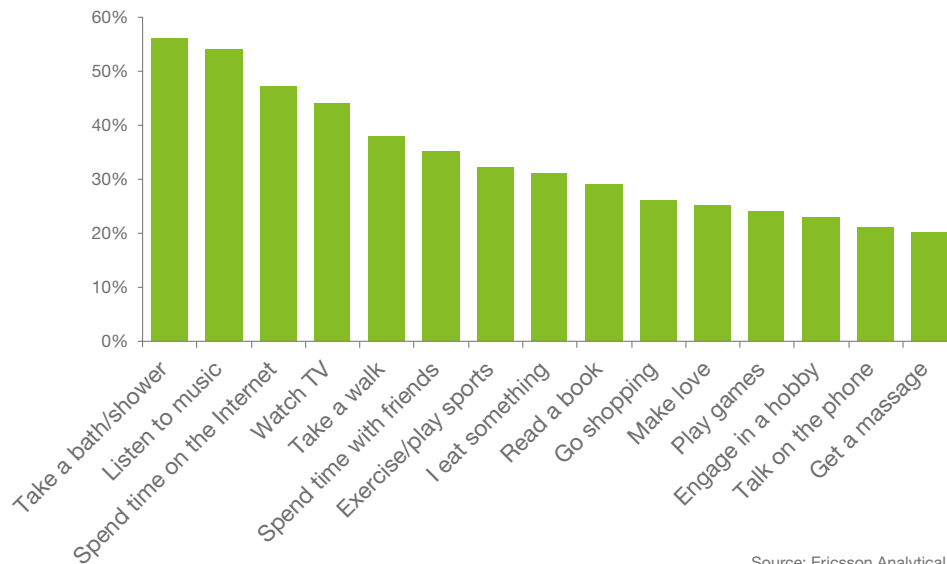
Percentage of people who feel stress or tension at least fairly often.



Source: Ericsson Analytical Platform 2011 (online sample).

The most common stress reliever among busy city dwellers is to take a bath or shower. It is also clear that ICT has a positive impact on quality of life as listening to music, spending time on the internet and watching TV are the next most popular means of relieving stress. Perhaps we will see the rise of waterproof smartphones and tablets as city dwellers take their relaxing media habits into their bathtubs!

What people that live in big city centers do to minimize stress and tension.



Source: Ericsson Analytical Platform 2011 (online sample).

In general, people use the same methods to relax regardless of where they live – but there are some notable differences; listening to music is the top stress reliever among those living outside big cities and these people also use TV to minimize stress as frequently as they turn to the internet for the same purpose. Women who live in cities use the internet to relax more often than women who live elsewhere – the latter more frequently opt to have a snack to unwind. White-collar workers who live in cities turn to the TV before the internet when they need to relax, which might be partly due to the fact that they spend more time on the internet in general.

Stress isn't going away anytime soon, but it's nice to know that technology has provided us with another means of distracting our minds from our day-to-day problems. Simple pleasures such as taking a bath or listening to music remain popular options, but many of us are now turning to the internet as a welcome distraction.

Further reading:

The City life Ericsson ConsumerLab report looks at what makes a city a desirable place to live. www.ericsson.com/news/120514_city_life_244159019_c

