

home?, the report says.

A digital divide persists in the UK, with some six million citizens never having used the internet and 9.5 million lacking adequate digital skills, partly because they have been "poorly served at school", the report warns. In particular, it says, a shortage of medium and high-level digital skills "needs immediate attention" if the UK is to remain globally competitive. It urges action at all levels of the "talent pipeline - primary, secondary, further and higher education". "The combination of poor connectivity and limited ICT skills can lead to digital exclusion for many people. It can also (?) reduce access to public services and inhibit business growth", the report says. In turn, rural areas may "lose their competitive advantage and be seen as less attractive places to do business", it adds. The recent **"Speak Up for Rural Scotland"** consultation, after all, already highlighted broadband as the key issue, recognising broadband as a vital measure to support economic growth in rural areas.

Download the "Make or Break: The UK's Digital Future" report [here](#).