



NOVEMBER 2016

NETWORK TRANSFORMATION: Are Governments On the Right Path?

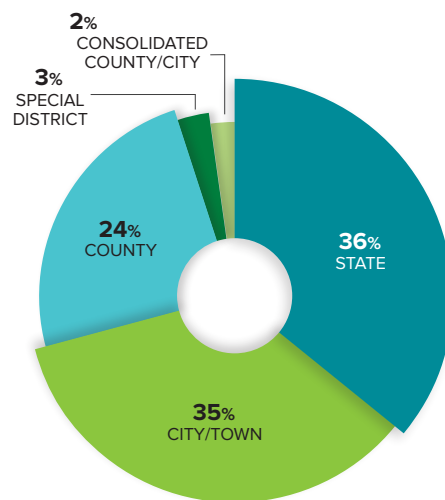
Network convergence — the co-existence of telephone, video and data communication in one IP network — can transform government operations and efficiency. Converged networks simplify network management, increase employee productivity, improve citizen service delivery and enhance continuity of operations. Despite these benefits, some government agencies still operate outdated network architectures composed of siloed technologies and systems. Network transformation is a priority, but it can be difficult to make a reality.

In July 2016, the Center for Digital Government surveyed 386 state and local government, public safety and education decision-makers to gauge the status of network convergence and transformation. This report highlights the perceived benefits and challenges of network convergence.

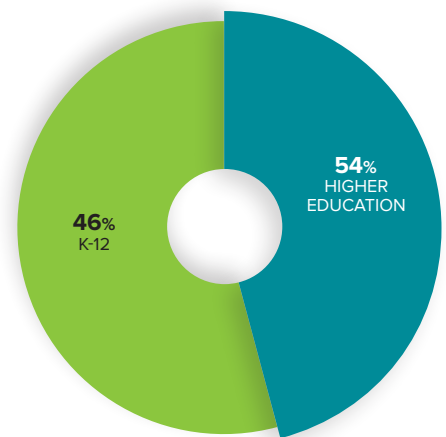
Respondent Demographics

While the results of this survey cannot be projected to the entire population, they are reflective of those who subscribe to the GovTech Exchange communities.

What level of government do you work for?

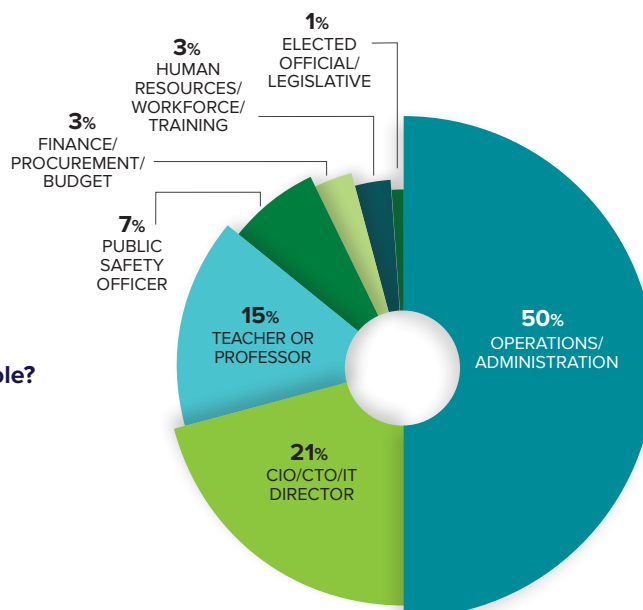


Government and Public Safety



Education

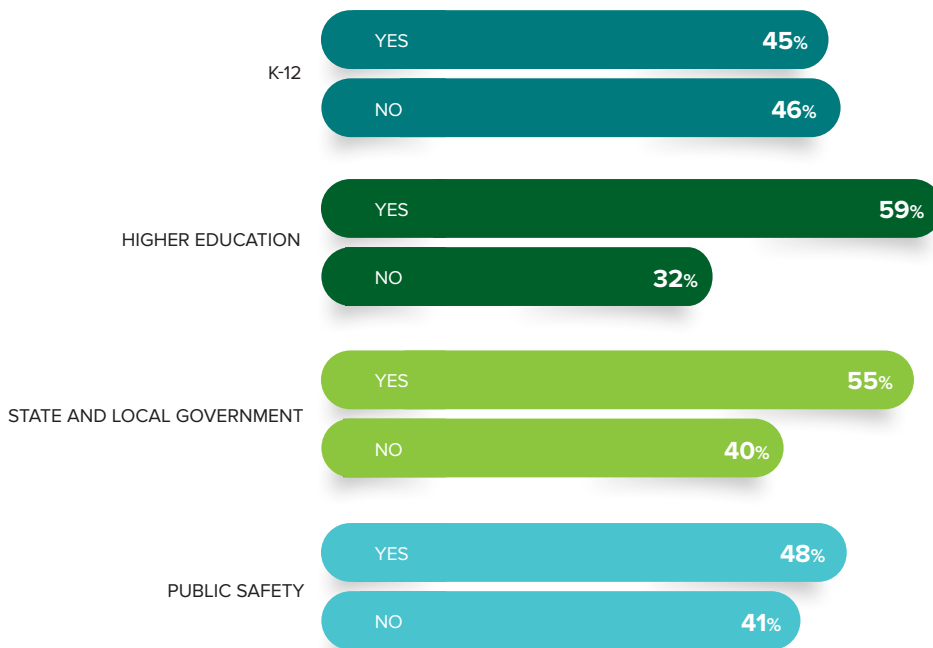
What is your job role?



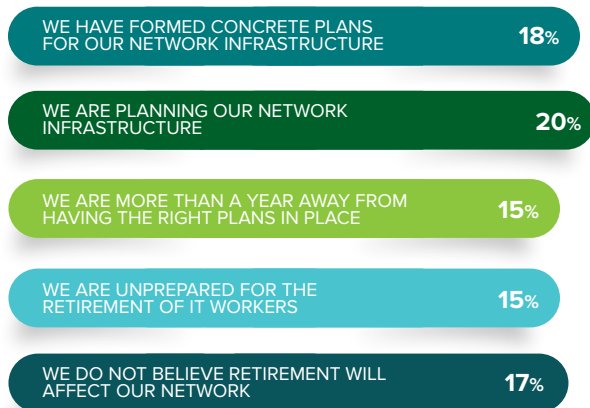
Network Shortfalls

Forty percent of all respondents say their current network is not meeting their needs. Reasons for this include lack of funding to modernize — 53 percent of IT respondents say their network receives 20 percent or less of the total IT budget. Additionally, experienced staff may be retiring faster than new employees can be trained on legacy systems, leaving a gap in skills to maintain the network — only 18 percent of IT respondents have formed a concrete plan for network infrastructure in the wake of mass retirements. Security continues to be a concern as well, with more than half of all respondents identifying data and system security as a key motivator for improving their existing networks.

Is your current network fully meeting your needs?



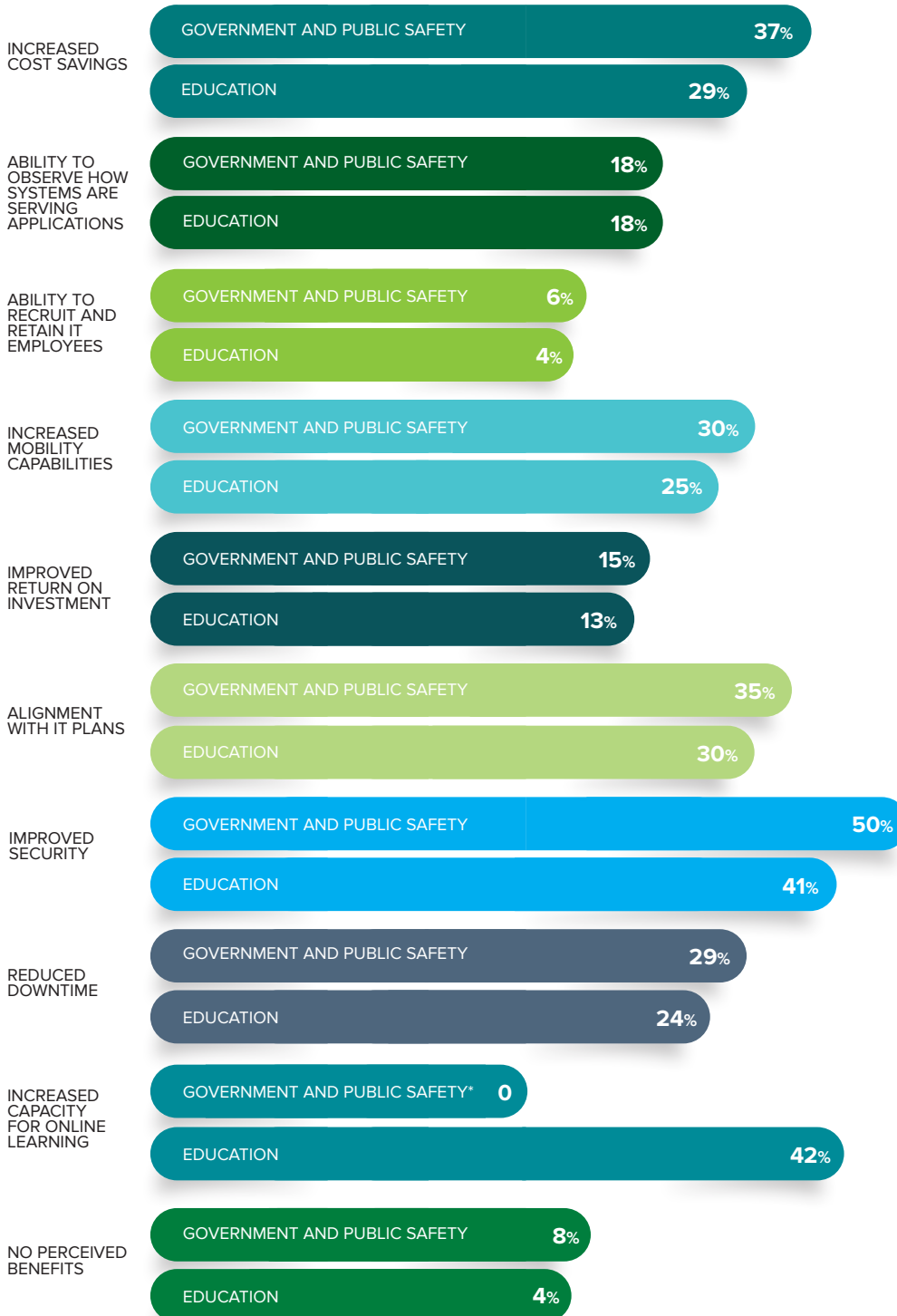
What is your agency’s level of readiness for addressing the retirement of older and experienced IT workers in relation to your network? *(Graph is indicative of IT respondents only.)*



Drivers and Challenges

Thirty-seven percent of government and public safety respondents say increased cost savings is the primary benefit of a converged network, while 42 percent of education respondents note improved capacity and reliability to support online or remote learning as the primary benefit. Improved security is a top-three benefit for all respondents. However, there are a number of challenges that stand in the way of a converged network. Insufficient funding (60%), organizational resistance to change (38%) and other competing priorities (32%) are common barriers.

What are the benefits of a converged network?



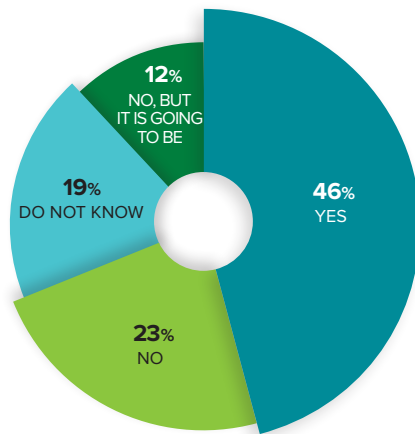
*This response was not available to government/public safety participants.

Key Steps to Convergence

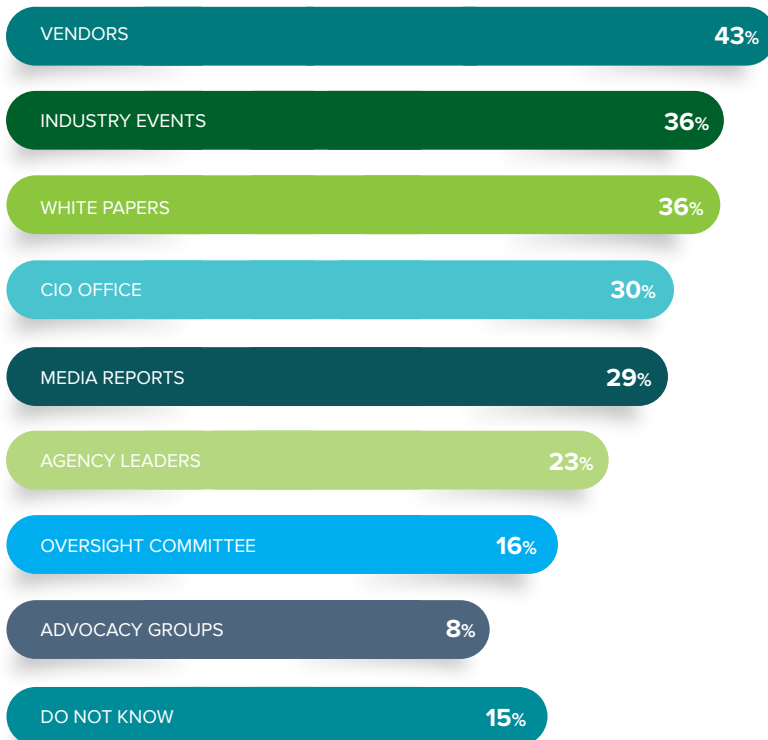
Government organizations are working to overcome many of these challenges by:

- **Incorporating network transformation into strategic planning activities.** Fifty-eight percent of all respondents currently include or plan to include network transformation in their agency's IT planning.
- **Pursuing service-based models.** The majority of IT decision-makers expressed moderate to high levels of interest in service-based models.
- **Seeking opportunities to partner with vendors.** Respondents see vendors as experts in convergence — 43 percent rely on vendors for networking information while 54 percent say they'd like to see more communication and consultation with providers.

Is network transformation part of your strategic IT planning?



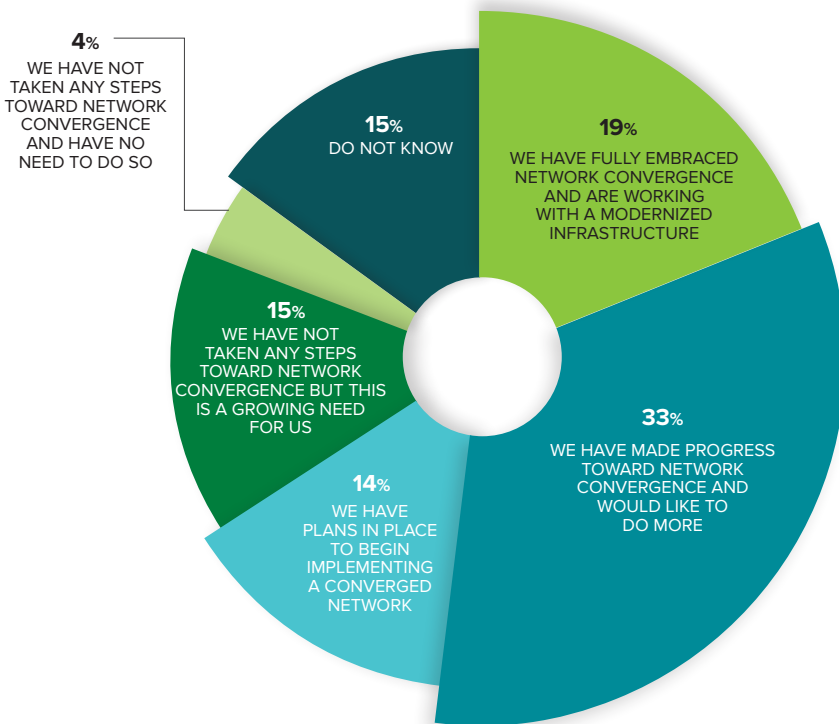
Where do you get information about IT networking and telecommunications?



Now and in the Future

Government, public safety and education institutions can benefit from a converged network. As the survey indicates, these agencies are aware of the efficiencies that an improved, reliable network can bring. However, 62 percent of all respondents say there is room for growth around network convergence. While many organizations are making efforts to plan for or implement a converged network, there is still uncertainty or a lack of understanding around the technological benefits of convergence. With the right vendor in place, agencies can glean additional information about the benefits and technical requirements of converged networks.

What is the status of network convergence in your agency?



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