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| **Regional Preparatory Meeting  for Europe for WTDC-25 (RPM-EUR)**  **Budapest, Hungary, 25-26 February 2025** | A close up of a sign  Description automatically generated |
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| Director, Telecommunication Development Bureau | |
| Regional Initiatives for the 2023-2025 Cycle and Vision for WTDC-25 | |
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| **Agenda item:**  Item 8  **Summary:**  This document outlines the regional initiatives (RIs) adopted during WTDC-22 under the Kigali Action Plan, presenting an overview of key initiatives for each region, with a focus on the Arab States. It also aims to inspire discussions during RPMs to define new regional initiatives for the upcoming WTDC-25 and for the next cycle.  **Action required:**  The RPMs is invited to note this report in its deliberation in identifying new regional initiatives.  **References:**  N/A | |

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# Regional Initiatives for 2023-2025 period

1. **Introduction**

The World Telecommunication Development Conference 2022 (WTDC-22), held in Kigali, Rwanda, marked a significant milestone in advancing the objectives of ITU's Telecommunication Development Sector (ITU-D). Under the Kigali Action Plan, 28 regional initiatives (RIs) were adopted to address region-specific ICT priorities. These initiatives align with the ITU’s strategic goals and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), emphasizing affordability, inclusivity, and digital innovation. Resolution 17 (Rev. Kigali, 2022) underscores the importance of collaboration and resource mobilization to implement these initiatives effectively.

1. **Regional Initiatives Across ITU-D Regions:**

**Africa Region**

* AFR1: Supporting digital transformation to usher in a rapid transition to a digital economy while accelerating innovation in Africa.
* AFR2: Implementation and expansion of broadband infrastructures, connectivity and emerging technologies.
* AFR3: Building trust, safety and security in the use of telecommunications/information and communication technologies and protection of personal data.
* AFR4: Fostering emerging technologies and innovation ecosystems.

**Americas Region**

* AMS1: Deployment of modern, resilient, secure and sustainable telecommunication/information and communication technology infrastructure.
* AMS2: Enhancement and expansion of digital-literacy, digital-skills and digital-inclusion programmes, especially among vulnerable populations.
* AMS3: Effective support for digital transformation and innovation ecosystems through scalable, funded and sustainable connectivity projects.
* AMS4: Development of enabling policy and regulatory environments to connect the unconnected through accessible and affordable telecommunications/information and communication technologies that support achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals and progress towards the digital economy.

**Arab Region**

* ARB1: Sustainable digital economy through digital transformation.
* ARB2: Enhancing confidence, security and privacy in the use of telecommunications/information and communication technologies in the era of new and emerging digital technologies.
* ARB3: Developing digital infrastructure for smart sustainable cities and communities.
* ARB4: Building capacities and encouraging digital innovation, entrepreneurship and future foresight.
* ARB5: Developing means of digital regulation.

**Asia-Pacific Region**

* ASP1: Addressing special needs of least developed countries, small island developing states, including Pacific island countries, and landlocked developing countries.
* ASP2: Harnessing information and communication technologies to support the digital economy and inclusive digital societies.
* ASP3: Fostering development of infrastructure to enhance digital connectivity and connecting the unconnected.
* ASP4: Enabling policy and regulatory environments to accelerate digital transformation
* ASP5: Contributing to a secure and resilient information and communication technology environment.

**CIS Region**

* CIS1: Developing infrastructure to promote innovation and partnerships in the introduction of new technologies – the Internet of Things, including the industrial Internet, smart cities and communities, 5G/IMT-2020 and next-generation NET-2030 communication networks, quantum technologies, artificial intelligence, digital health, digital skills and environmental protection.
* CIS2: Cybersecurity and personal data protection.
* CIS3: Creating an enabling legal and regulatory environment to accelerate digital transformation.
* CIS4: Digital skills and information and communication technology accessibility for the public, in particular for persons with disabilities.
* CIS5: Development of smart cities and communities.

**Europe Region**

* EUR1: Digital infrastructure development.
* EUR2: Digital transformation for resilience.
* EUR3: Digital inclusion and skills development.
* EUR4: Trust and confidence in the use of telecommunications/ information and communication technologies.
* EUR5: Digital innovation ecosystems.

1. **Focusing on Regional Initiatives for the Europe Region**

The Europe Region's initiatives highlight its dedication to harnessing ICTs for sustainable development, addressing critical challenges, and fostering growth and innovation. Resolution 17 underscores the need for coordinated efforts and partnerships to implement these initiatives effectively. The following presents the objectives and expected results of each Regional Initiative as agreed by WTDC-22[[1]](#footnote-2).

* **EUR1: Digital infrastructure development**: Objective of this initiative is to facilitate the attainment of Gigabit connectivity through resilient and synergistic infrastructure development and an enabling environment, ensuring ubiquitous coverage.

**Expected Results**

Assistance to the countries in need in the following areas:

* 1. Development and updating of plans and feasibility studies for the deployment of ubiquitous resilient high-speed connectivity with all relevant components including legislation, standards, organizational set-up, capacity building and cooperation mechanisms, as needed.
  2. Assessment of dynamics, challenges and opportunities in respect of the rollout of such connectivity, and sharing of best practices and case studies on the various above-mentioned aspects through the organization of regional workshops, conferences or webinars.
  3. Sharing of guidelines on collaborative regulation between the telecommunication sector and other synergistic sectors such as energy, railway and transportation.
  4. Mapping of ubiquitous infrastructure and services, fostering harmonization of approaches across the region and taking into account infrastructure-sharing approaches applied by countries, including the development of broadband mapping systems for broadband networks and related facilities and promoting innovative solutions for meaningful connectivity.
  5. Initiatives on the wider deployment of broadband information and communication technology (ICT) services and contributing to environmental sustainability.
  6. Initiatives to raise the level of awareness and education of citizens on new and emerging telecommunications/ICTs and topics such as human exposure to electromagnetic fields originating from wireless radio systems.
* **EUR2: Digital transformation for resilience:** Objective of this initiative is facilitate the digitalization processes of services in different sectors (agriculture, health, government, education), including those of public administrations, in order to ensure greater resilience in responding to critical situations, including the challenges of pandemics.

**Expected Results**

Assistance to the countries in need in the following areas:

* 1. Creating an experience- and knowledge-exchange platform between countries.
  2. Developing technical and service infrastructure (data centres, networks, secure gateways, authentication, interoperability, standards and metadata) as well as capacity building within the national administrations and institutions.
  3. Fostering the development of and increase in types of online transactional services, including applications for administration-to-administration and administration-to-customer services.
  4. Building the capacities necessary for accelerating the process of national and regional digitalization, through the development of national strategies and dedicated programmes.
  5. Raising public trust through security enhancements in e-government services, digitization processes and awareness-raising campaigns, including promotion of application-based solutions for e-government by national administrations and other institutions.
  6. Identifying areas for improvement and key horizontal factors for the successful implementation of e-government services and digitalization, such as secure and accessible digital identification, tools for data analysis, integrating workflow solutions, approach to re-use of data, and fostering their development.
* **EUR3: Digital inclusion and skills development:** Objective of this initiative is to facilitate equitable access to information and communication technologies (ICTs) and necessary digital skills for all groups of society, including persons with disabilities and persons with specific needs, as well as women and youth, in order to take advantage of telecommunications/ICTs.

**Expected Results**

Assistance to the countries in need in the following areas:

* 1. Leveraging digital accessibility for persons with disabilities and persons with specific needs as a priority for the countries, and supporting them through the creation and updating of strategies and policies, taking into account regional or global standards, capacity building, fostering innovation, monitoring the implementation of digital accessibility, and creating new partnerships or strengthening existing ones such as “Accessible Europe – ICT for All”.
  2. Improving gender equality in all groups in the telecommunication/ICT sector and beyond by providing opportunities for collaboration, maximizing impact and supporting the setting up of new projects and the scaling up of successful ongoing projects.
  3. Meaningful empowerment, engagement and participation of youth in the telecommunication/ICT sector and beyond, and creating new career schemes and opportunities.
  4. Assessment of national and regional approaches for digital-skills development, elaboration of national and regional strategies or action plans, development of necessary digital skills, knowledge and literacy programmes, and providing support for educators
  5. Building and/or strengthening partnerships with the private sector, regional and subregional organizations, United Nations system organizations, academia and other possible stakeholders for the benefit of digital inclusion in the European region and globally.
* **EUR4: Trust and confidence in the use of telecommunications/ information and communication technologies**: Objective of this initiative is to support the deployment of resilient infrastructure and secure services allowing all citizens, especially children, to use telecommunications/information and communication technologies (ICTs) in their daily lives with confidence.

**Expected Results**

Assistance to the countries in need in the following areas:

* 1. Providing regional platforms and tools for building human capacities to enhance trust and confidence in the use of telecommunications/ICTs, including establishing common approaches to cybersecurity capacity building for European countries with a cross-sectoral cybersecurity-skills curriculum and guidelines promoting skills related to multiple sectors, such as law, psychology, social sciences, economics, security and risk management, diplomacy and interdisciplinary skills.
  2. Sharing national and regional best practices and case studies, conducting surveys on enhancing confidence and trust in the use of ICTs, including training, and creating other opportunities for sharing knowledge and experience.
  3. Elaborating or reviewing national cybersecurity strategies, including the promotion of online safety, ensuring multistakeholder engagement (government, children and young people, parents, guardians and educators, industry and connectivity providers, research and academia, non-governmental organizations, law enforcement, health, and social services).
  4. Setting up or improving the capabilities of national computer security incident response teams (CSIRTs) and the corresponding networks to support these CSIRTs in cooperating with each other.
  5. Conducting simulation or educational exercises such as cyberdrills or other events at the national and regional levels in cooperation with international and regional organizations, and assisting countries in developing tools through synergies and resource optimization.
  6. Creating a safer online environment for children and young people through raising awareness and education about cybersecurity, implementation and promotion of the Guidelines on Child Online Protection and other educational resources, encouraging governments to identify risks and vulnerabilities for children in cyberspace, and promoting media literacy in respect of cybersecurity.
* **EUR5: Digital innovation ecosystems:** Objective of this initiative is to foster environments that are conducive to innovation and entrepreneurship through systemic approaches based on digital telecommunications/information and communication technologies (ICTs), aimed at closing the growing digital innovation divide in the region.

**Expected Results**

Assistance to the countries in need in the following areas:

* 1. National digital innovation strategies and policies, country profiles and reviews, and sectoral innovation assessments to provide an accurate assessment of digital innovation gaps.
  2. Capacity-building and knowledge-sharing platforms such as regional innovation forums, open innovation competitions and ecosystem development training to empower stakeholders.
  3. Ecosystem-building initiatives and projects such as technology sandboxes and programmes supporting tech start-ups and entrepreneurship to create concrete impact.
  4. Promoting multistakeholder and multisectoral partnerships between and within different ecosystems, for sustainability and scale-up.
  5. Fostering inclusion by sharing, twinning best practices and connecting different ecosystems, with special attention to gender and youth.

These initiatives were designed and implemented to address the specific needs of the European region while contributing to global efforts to bridge the digital divide. By prioritizing partnerships, resource mobilization, and knowledge sharing, Europe aims to achieve sustainable development through ICTs and ensure that no one is left behind in the digital era.

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1. Extract from WTDC-22 Outcome Document may be consulted [here](https://www.itu.int/en/ITU-D/Regional-Presence/Europe/Documents/Events/2023/0522-23%20-%20RDF/WTDC-Regional_Initiatives_for_Europe.pdf). [↑](#footnote-ref-2)