

Report of the CWG-SFP Informal Consultation on the ITU Strategy

CHAIR OF COUNCIL WORKING GROUP ON STRATEGIC AND FINANCIAL PLANS 2024-27

1st meeting of CWG-SFP – September 2021

CWG-SFP Informal Consultation on the ITU Strategy

Online consultation
of ITU membership
4 Aug / 3 Sep 2021

49
responses

31
Member States

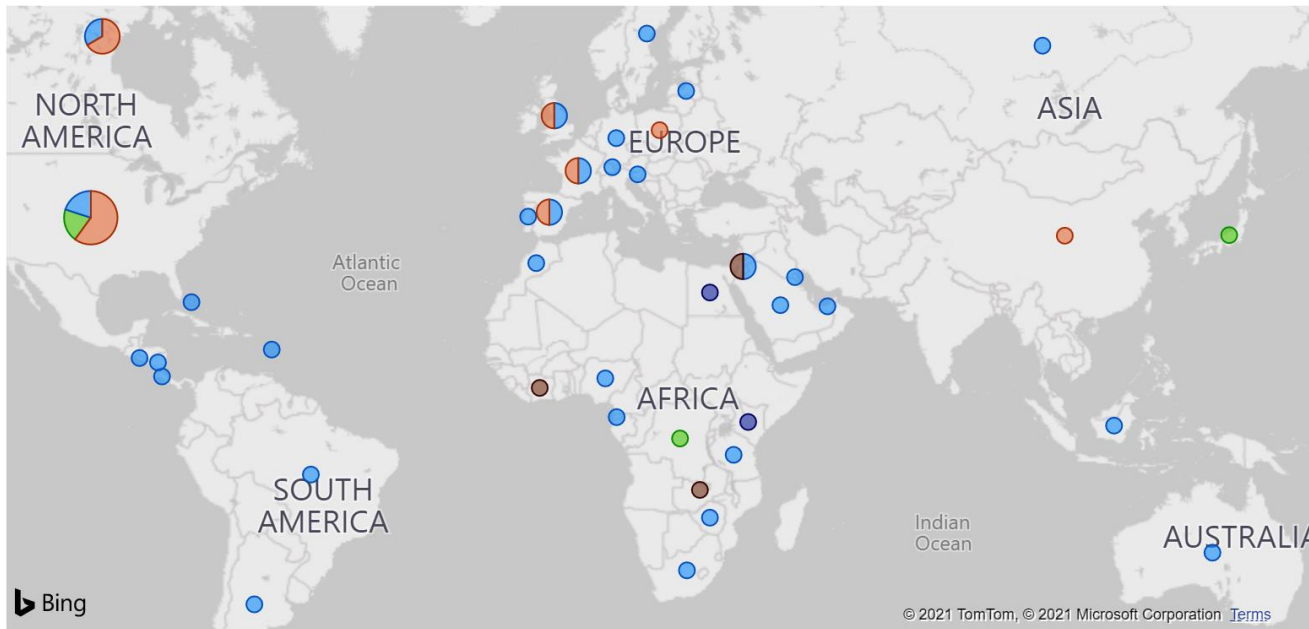
18
Sector Members
Associates Academia

12
ITU-R members
9
ITU-D members

15
ITU-T members

Responses by Country and Type of Organization

Type of org. ● Academia and foundations ● Member States ● Private sector / industry ● Reg. / private sector Associations ● Regional Organizations



31
Governmental Org. (Ministry,
Regulator, Agency)

10
Private Sector /
Industry

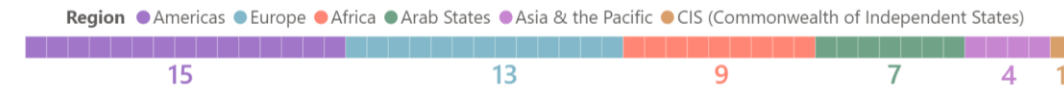
3
Reg. / private sector
Associations

3
Academia and
Foundations

2
Regional
Organizations

- **Participation more than doubled** in comparison to the first consultation on the Strategic Plan for the 2020-2023 cycle (49 responses vs. 23 responses in 2017)
- Representation from **all Regions and categories/types of membership**, from members of all ITU Sectors
- Responses **by gender** also aggregated (33% of those TIES users responded are female)

Responses by Region

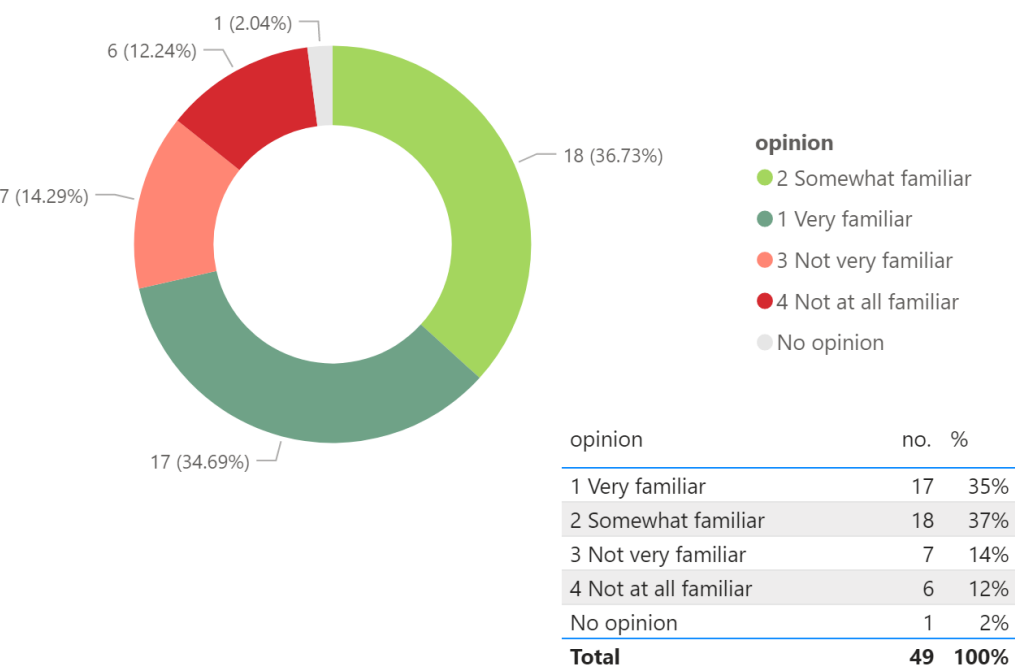


Users responded (by Gender)



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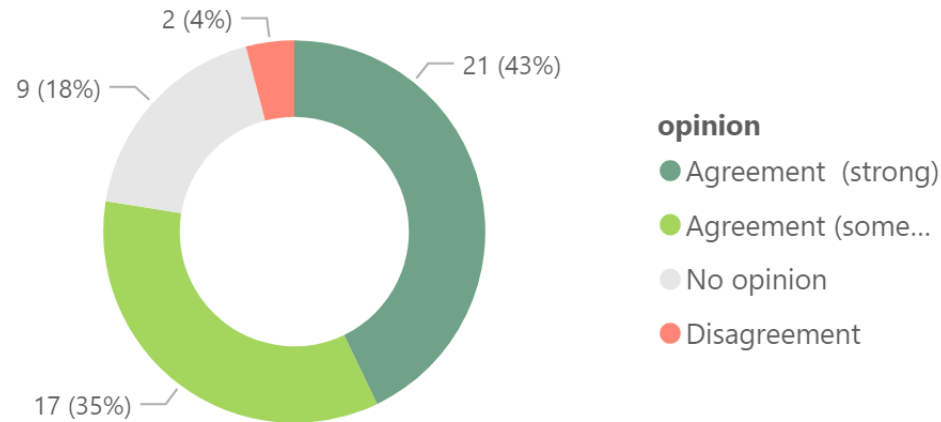
Q1 Familiarity with the current 2020-23 Strategic Plan



- Majority of those responded are **familiar** with the current strategic plan (73% very or somewhat familiar)
- Member States** representatives (81% very or somewhat familiar) more familiar than **Sector Members** (60%) or **Associates/Academia**

ITU Status (groups)	1 Very familiar	2 Somewhat familiar	3 Not very familiar	4 Not at all familiar	No opinion	Total
1 Member State	39%	42%	13%	6%		100%
2 Sector Member	33%	27%	20%	13%	7%	100%
3 Associate		50%		50%		100%
4 Academia				100%		100%
Total	35%	37%	14%	12%	2%	100%

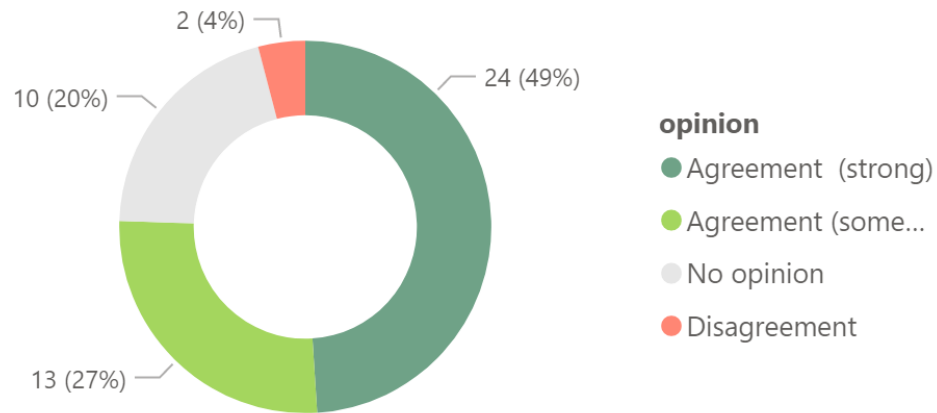
Q2a The ITU strategic plan can benefit from further simplification and clarity



Overall findings:

- More **clarity** (in terms of linkages between the elements of the framework and linkage with the financial plan) and a **simplification of the different elements** is proposed by several contributions
- **Moving away** from focusing **on the numerous activities** is also proposed
- **Consolidating priorities** is another proposal

Q2b The ITU strategic plan can benefit from more focus of the activities of the organization

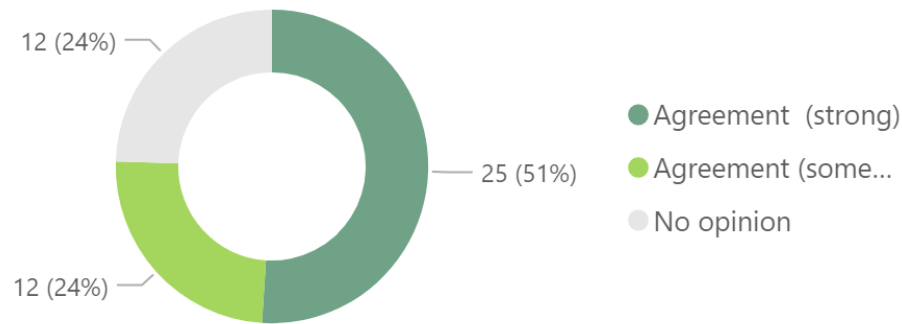


opinion	no.	%
Agreement (strong)	24	49%
Agreement (somewhat)	13	27%
Disagreement	2	4%
No opinion	10	20%
Total	49	100%

Overall findings:

- Strategic plan **not entirely focused** on the main goals, **excessive in volume** and **overloaded with details**
- Need to **focus on core mission and scope**
- Strategic plan **to remain high-level**

Q2c The ITU strategic plan can benefit from better reflecting the needs of the ITU membership

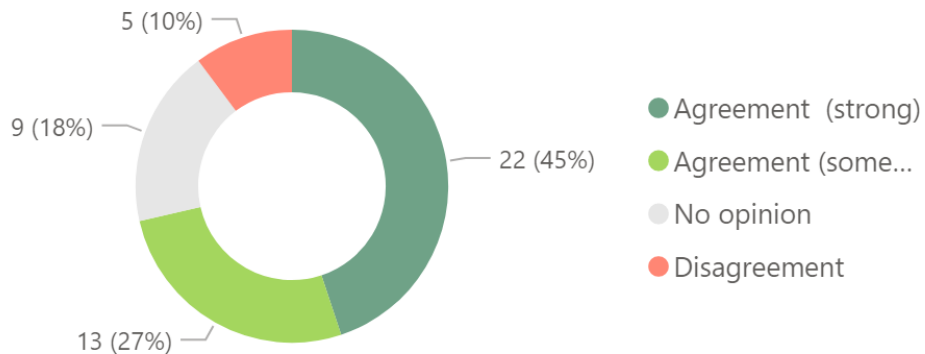


opinion	no.	%
Agreement (strong)	25	51%
Agreement (somewhat)	12	24%
No opinion	12	24%
Total	49	100%

Overall findings:

- Importance for ITU to **reflect the needs of its diverse membership**; need to continue as a **membership driven organization**
- Importance of **countries' diversities** and **different needs** (focusing on specific groups such as the LDCs, LLDCs, SIDSs, economies in transition)
- Importance of **regional presence** and **regional initiatives** in the context of addressing the membership needs
- Need to **understand the needs of new Sector members** and **provide a clear value proposition**

Q2d The ITU strategic plan can benefit from adapting the vision and mission of the ITU in the evolving environment

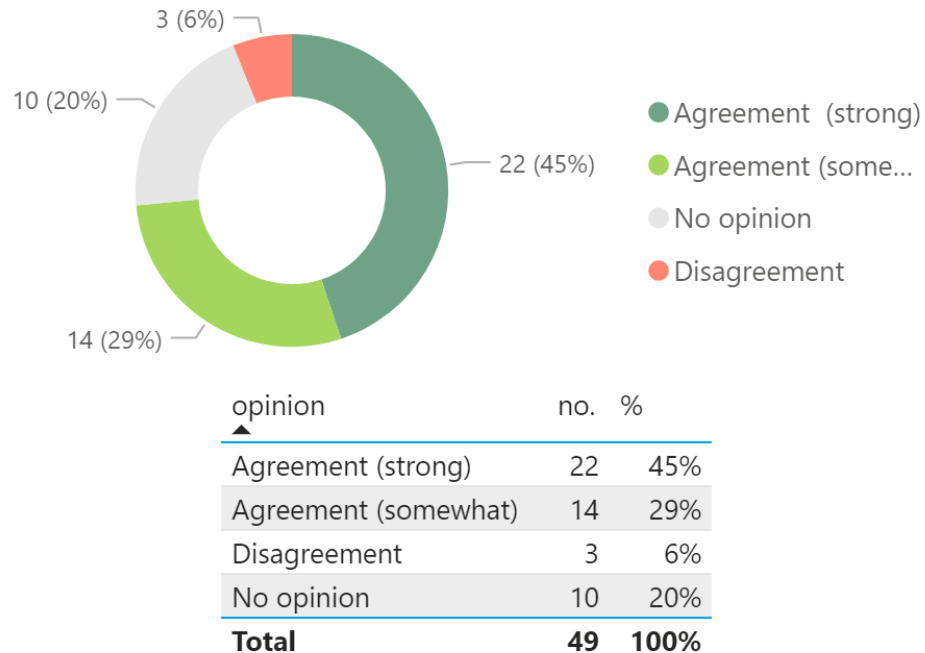


opinion	no.	%
Agreement (strong)	22	45%
Agreement (somewhat)	13	27%
Disagreement	5	10%
No opinion	9	18%
Total	49	100%

Overall findings:

- Views expressed that **the changing international/digital landscape** and the **impact of COVID-19** require revisiting the **Vision/Mission**
- Views that the Vision and Mission **should remain high-level** and that it is already **formulated in a way to adapt to an evolving environment**

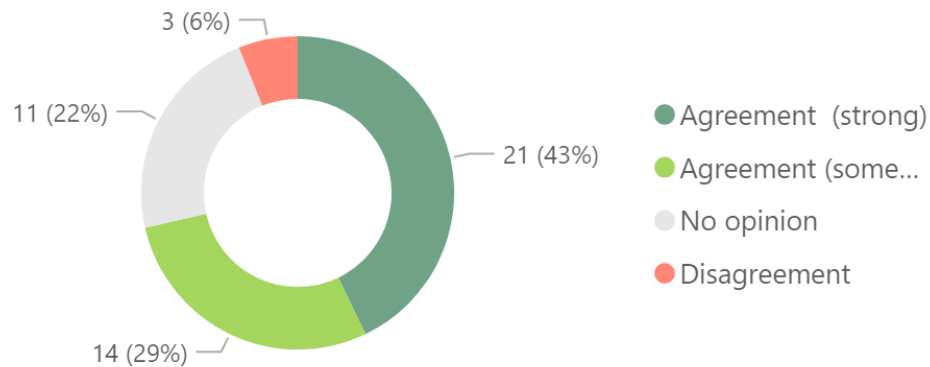
Q2e The ITU strategic plan can benefit from revisiting the strategic goals



Overall findings:

- Views supporting that current goals **remain relevant**, and are a good foundation/basis, therefore **no need for change**
- Views proposing need to **assess the current goals and align** in the fast-changing environment
- Views proposing **goals to be revisited and possibly some merged**

Q3 Would the ITU strategic plan benefit from better reflecting the role of the ITU regional presence?

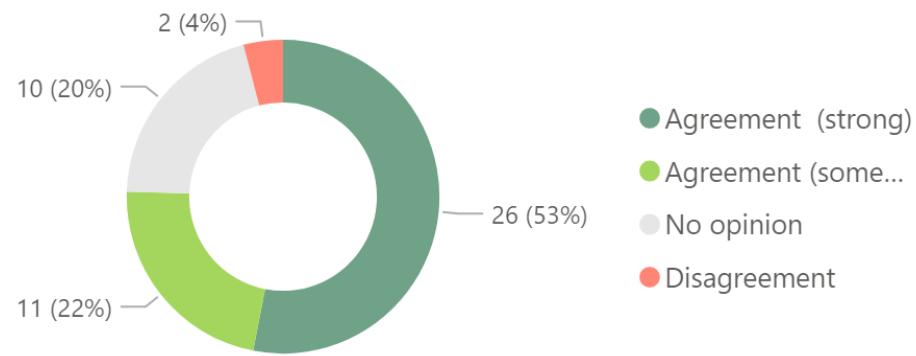


opinion	no.	%
Agreement (strong)	21	43%
Agreement (somewhat)	14	29%
Disagreement	3	6%
No opinion	11	22%
Total	49	100%

Overall findings:

- Ongoing Review following the PwC Report **is still under discussion**
- Need to **clarify role** and **mandate** for the regional offices
- Need for regional presence to **reflect the overall Strategic Goals**
- Importance of **collaboration with the UN at regional level**
- Some proposals suggest the need to **further strengthen with financial resources**
- Other proposals suggest **more authority to be given to the General Secretariat, not only the Development Sector / or envisage transferring regional/area offices under the auspices of the General Secretariat** (in line with the One ITU concept)

Q4 Would the strategic plan benefit from an improved linkage and alignment with the financial plan, in terms of strategic priorities and allocation of financial resources?

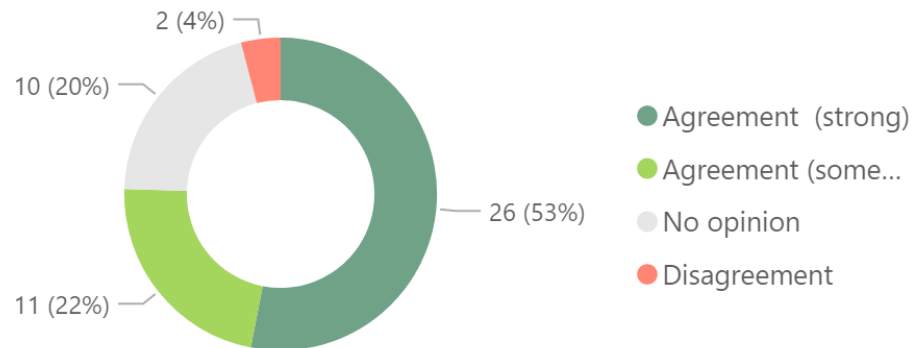


opinion	no.	%
Agreement (strong)	26	53%
Agreement (somewhat)	11	22%
Disagreement	2	4%
No opinion	10	20%
Total	49	100%

Overall findings:

- Agreement on the need to further improve methodologies for full **implementation of RBM/RBB**:
 - There should be a direct linkage of the **strategic priorities identified** and the **allocation of financial and human resources**
 - **No elements** should remain **unfunded or without being measured**
- Importance of **implementation of all Recs.** of internal and external oversight bodies
- Challenge of different cycles of Sectors **preventing synchronization**

Q5 Could the concept of One ITU be further strengthened in the new ITU strategic plan?



opinion	no.	%
Agreement (strong)	26	53%
Agreement (somewhat)	11	22%
Disagreement	2	4%
No opinion	10	20%
Total	49	100%

Overall findings:

- Agreement on the **significant importance for the One ITU concept to keep guiding ongoing work** (perhaps with further clarification on the concept)
- New strategic plan needs to **enhance cooperation between the 3 Sectors**, considering **efficiencies** and **synergies**
- A proposal to **allocate resources flexibly rather than running the Sectors separately**

Q6 Key suggestions to improve the Strategic Plan

key suggestions to improve the current plan	%
Simplified and streamlined Strategic Plan, with focus and clarity	16%
Attention to Regional presence and specific needs	16%
Provide support and assistance to Member States to overlap gaps	10%
Execution, Monitoring and Evaluation -for value-add results and outcomes	10%
Deliver the concept of One ITU and avoid duplication of work	6%
Improved linkage between strategic and financial planning	6%
Better prioritization of resources	6%

Q7a Main strengths of ITU

main strengths	%
Diverse membership structure and large network of ICT experts	44%
ITU's expertise and commitment to ensuring the benefits of ICTs for all	31%
Unique status as International Org. - UN agency specialized for telecom/ICTs, with technical credibility and internationally accorded mandate	31%
ITU's decision making bodies (e.g., WRC, Study Group, etc.) for global consensus on telecom/ICTs	11%
ITU as a neutral, unbiased , and non-political platform for all its members	9%
Rich history (150+ yrs) of the Union, contributing to the growth of telecom/ICTs	4%
Ability to support or strengthen its members to achieve sustainable development through telecom/ICTs	4%
Elected officials, Staff and close cooperation of the three bureaux	4%
Bring value by developing, promoting and sharing good practices or guidelines (e.g., GSR, etc)	2%
Different visions and perspectives building a future agenda for all	2%
Trust among membership	2%

Q7b Main contribution/service/outcome that the ITU provides

main contribution/service/outcome	%
Spectrum and orbital resources management	41%
Developing interoperable global telecom. standards	39%
International agreements / regulations / Radio Regulations	36%
Promote affordable, universal access / connecting to ICT infrastructure	25%
Capacity building	23%
Venue for discussions / platform for collaboration / sharing good practices	20%
Supporting bridging the digital divide , via digital technologies and ICT development	16%
ICT statistics	9%
Support its Members via programmes / initiatives	7%
Achieving the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs / WSIS process	7%
Promoting enabling environments and ICT investment	5%
Publications and Reports	5%
Global coordination at technical levels	2%
Integrating local ecosystems	2%
Tackling environmental and climate issues	2%
ICT policies	2%
Allow secure communications	2%

Q7c Key success factor of the ITU today



key success factor	%
Bringing multiple parties together	24%
Adopted standards and agreements	10%
Reaching the whole world	7%
Strong partnerships	7%
Collaboration	7%
ICT development	7%
Representativeness	7%
Virtual meetings	5%
Achieving the objectives	5%
Growth in ICT access	5%
Decision making by consensus	5%

Q7d What the organization is doing well and should continue doing



doing well	%
Developing standards / fostering interoperability	14%
Facilitating ICT development	14%
Spectrum harmonization and management	12%
Bringing all stakeholders together	10%
Selected ITU-R / ITU-T / ITU-D activities	10%
Efforts to close the digital gap	7%
Expanding connectivity	7%
Promoting consensus	7%
Capacity building	5%
Focus on Study Groups	5%
Information exchange	5%
Role in digital transformation	5%
Coordination of satellite resources	5%

Q8 Main weakness of the ITU

main weaknesses	%
Cumbersome decision-making (based on consensus) - political interests influencing ITU work	26%
Difficulty to identify role and mandate in contentious global issues (expanding mandate/ambiguous role)	23%
Not working as One ITU (silo-based approach by Sectors), not a unified brand, internal duplication of activities and events	21%
Lack of financial stability and predictability for the Union - dependence of ITU on stakeholder funding	10%
External duplication of activities (with other UN agencies or international org's) / lack of collaboration	10%
Failure to respond quickly to emerging needs, lack of relevance of work topics	10%
Unagile management - too bureaucratic, low compliance to oversight bodies recs., lack of staff adequacy, lack of follow-up/monitoring	10%
Technical assistance/programs do not meet Members' needs	8%
Lack of communication to members, lack of recognition as connectivity leader	8%
Lack of transparency	5%
Low value for developed countries	5%
Not leveraging external resources	3%

Q9 Main internal opportunities for improvement

main internal opportunities for improvement	%
OneITU / coordinate between Sectors and avoid duplication	31%
Results-based mgmt., transparency and accountability by publishing data/performance results	20%
Strengthening the capacity of all Member States to actively participate	14%
Reform the ITU organization structure to meet the changing digital ecosystem challenges	11%
Aligning strategic and financial plans , implementing the Goals within existing budget resources	9%
Modernize working methods for staff/delegates (hybrid/utilize big data as new data source)	9%
Focus on core scope and competence	6%
Strengthen institutional capacity and Staff and avoid external experts	6%
Re-enforce regional presence	6%

Q10 What are the main external opportunities?

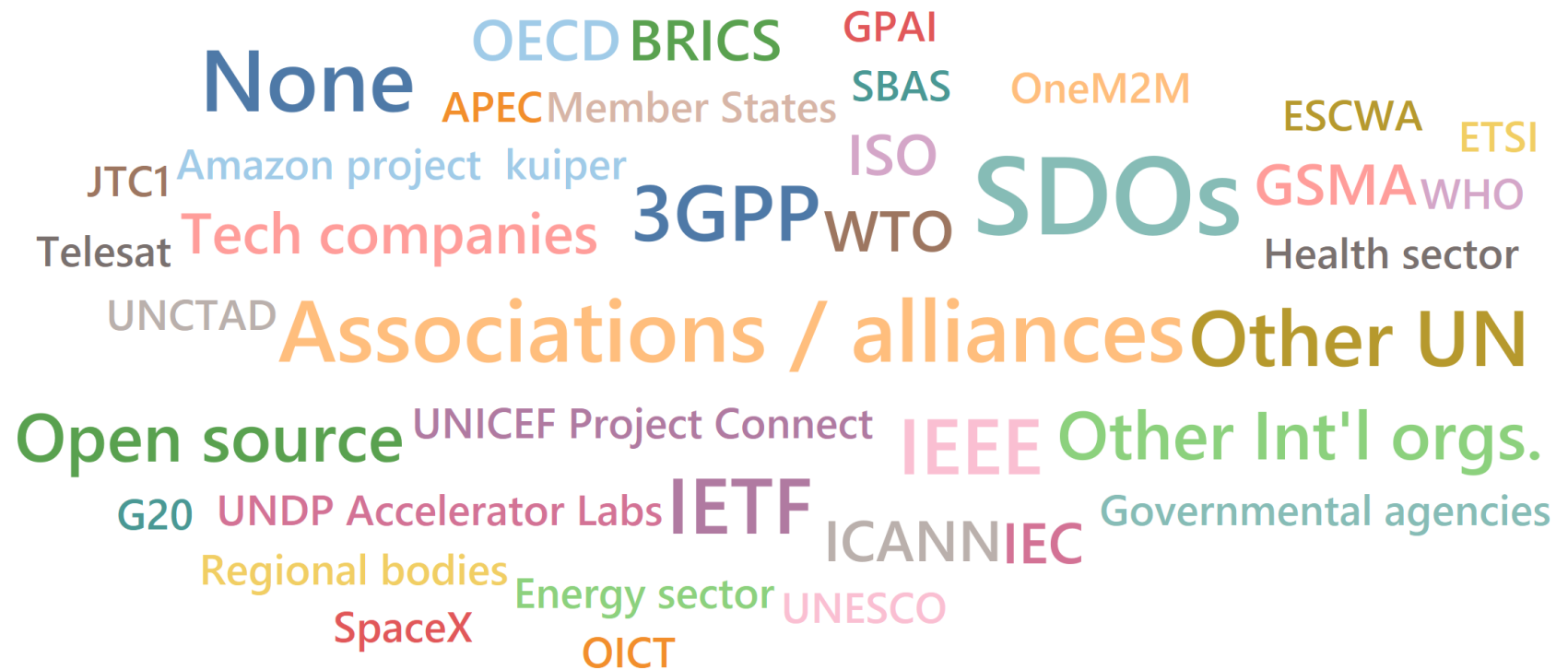
main external opportunities	%
Becoming a partner of choice by positioning ITU in supporting the delivery of SDGs/digital transformation, building trust and using expertize, collaborate/partner with relevant	36%
Build trust with other SDOs, improve/strengthen cooperation	18%
Get the lessons of the Pandemic to encourage the governments to have emergency plans	8%
Develop collaboration with different stakeholders while maintaining ITU leadership	8%
Expand the alliance with OTTs	5%
Collaboration with funding sources / Availability of PPPs for project implementation	5%
Joint SDG fund the recognition that ICT is a critical enablers for meeting SDGs	3%
The adoption of the Roadmap for Digital Cooperation/Our common agenda at UN level	3%
ICT as an important option to leapfrog development and innovation	3%
Use in more efficient way the scarce resources like spectrum	3%
Explosive growth in cross border e-commerce traffic	3%
The boundless feature of the ICT market/the fast growth of ICT market	3%
All new technologies / ITU must have role in new standards and regulatory aspects	3%
Customer orientation	3%
Global coverage in skills and manpower recruitment and outsourcing	3%
Develop new generation telecommunication standards	3%
Achieve universal connectivity in line with SDG 9	3%
The trust in ITU	3%
The history and experience facilitating to become a role model	3%
Bridging the standardization Gap	3%

Q11 Main external threats ITU faces today

main external threats	%
Be left behind and ill-adapted to the new technologies and trends in ICTs market (e.g. AI, OTT, Industry 4.0)	20%
Highly formal and structured, long discussion cycles, bureaucracy	17%
Loss of relevance resulting from a lack of focus on delivering ITU's core mandate	17%
Growing number of other organizations (e.g., UN, standardization) competing with ITU on mandate or digital agenda	17%
Constantly changing telecom/ICT ecosystem and market	6%
Digital divide among its Member States	6%
COVID-19 pandemic and its conspiracy theory linking to ICTs	6%
Underestimate/restrict ITU's role	3%
Unauthorized disclosure of information	3%
Dominance and power play between the developed economies	3%
Global trends in standardization being taken hostage by interested parties	3%
Being made irrelevant by major private ICT players	3%
Largely useless for developed countries	3%
Insufficient funding from financial contribution	3%

Q12 Main "competitors" for the Union

entity	%
SDOs	22%
Associations / alliances	14%
None	14%
IETF	11%
IEEE	11%
3GPP	11%
Other UN	11%
Open source	8%
Other Int'l orgs.	8%
ISO	5%
IEC	5%
GSMA	5%
WTO	5%
OECD	5%
ICANN	5%
BRICS	5%
Tech companies	5%



Q13 What should the organization stop doing?

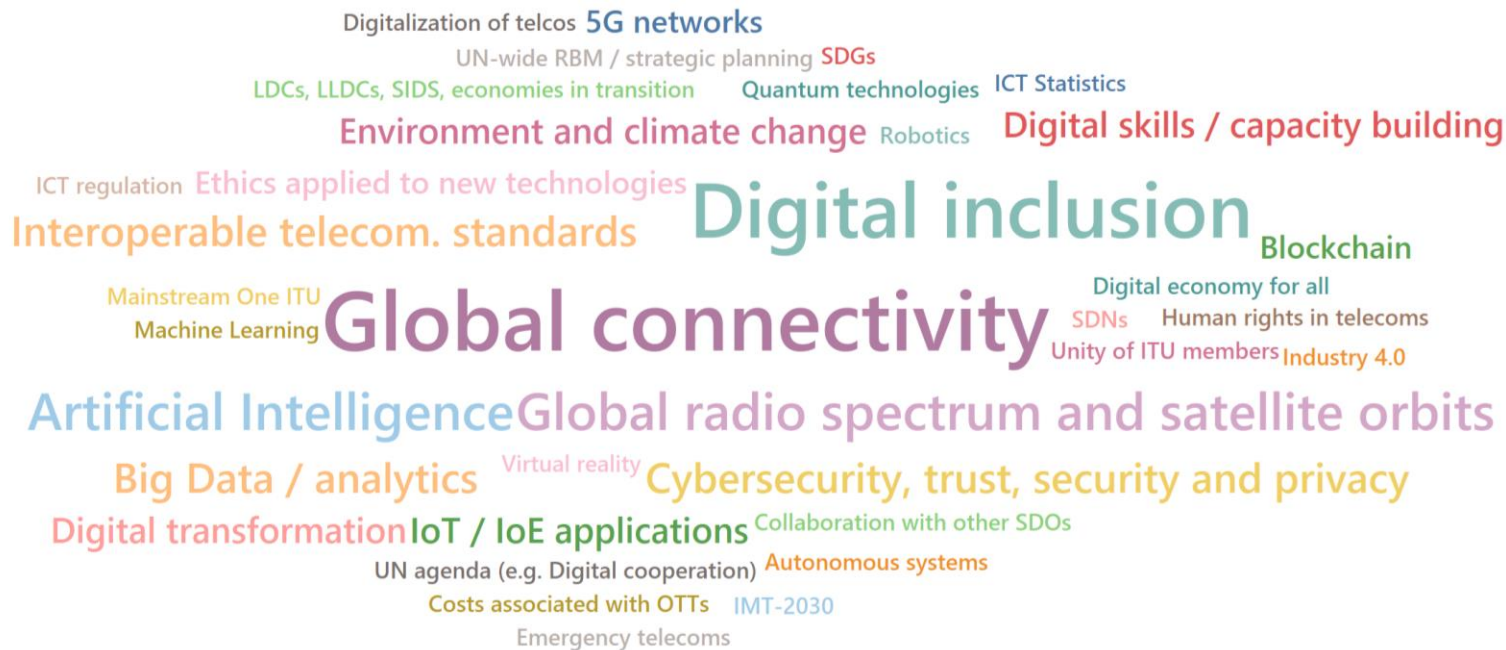
stop doing	%
Over extend into issues outside of ITU's mandate or issues related to ambiguous/controversial topics	18%
Not becoming an event agency for panel discussion/endless talking	15%
Avoid internal inefficiencies/being focus and excelent	12%
None	9%
Reducing the wrapping work from other SDOs	9%
Restructure of the processes for discussing Standards and recommendation /more agile	9%
Stop facilitatiting the more economically stronger members views at the expense of smaller members	3%
Focus less on developed contries / facilitating progress of LDCs by sharing information and building capacity	3%
Stop discussing another WCIT and revision of ITRs	3%
Stop ignoring poor behaviour on the part of delegates	3%
Stop collecting data without any assesment of previous obsolete indicators	3%
Stop politics in recruitment	3%
Non technical activities	3%
Stop allowing geopolitics to influence the outcomes of the meetings	3%
Printing documents at PP	3%

Q14 Key strategic priorities 2024-27

- Promoting **digital inclusion, digital transformation** and the **digital economy** identified as key strategic priorities
- Connecting the unconnected** also identified as another key strategic priority
- Enhanced partnerships and collaboration** identified as key means to achieve the key priorities
- Achievement of **2030 Agenda** and the **SDGs** identified as the envisioned long-term impact
- Managing **post-COVID-19 challenges** another priority
- Management reform** identified as the key organizational priority

strategic priorities	%
Promote digital inclusion / ICTs for social, economic and environmental development / digital transformation and the digital economy	45%
Connect the unconnected ensuring universal and affordable connectivity	35%
Enhance strategic partnerships to leverage expertise across organizations (avoid duplication, enhance collaboration with UN and other industry sectors)	25%
Achieve the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs - commit to the WSIS review process	18%
Managing post-COVID-19 challenges and harnessing lessons learned	15%
Management reform (UN agenda, organizational reform, RBM, accountability)	13%
Promote cybersecurity / confidence and security / secure networks	10%
Focus on cutting edge topics, new and emerging technologies (AI, IoTs, data analytics)	10%
Focus on policies and standards	10%
Enabling environment for Innovation	10%
Focus on regional presence and implementation of regional priorities	8%
Effective management and harmonization of spectrum and frequency bands	8%
Enhance cooperation and collaboration of ITU Sectors	5%
Strengthen multi-stakeholder participation	5%
Social economic growth of LDCs, LLDCs, SIDs , countries with economies in transition	5%
5G - sharing best practices and solutions / 6G standardization	5%
Contribute to climate change	5%
Digital skills and capacity building	5%
Be of added value for its membership (value for money)	5%
Resource mobilization	3%
Manage threat of regionalisation vs. global interoperability	3%
Modify traditional decision making	3%
Ethics while using new technologies	3%
Network reliability and resilience	3%

Q15 Most important themes of work for the future



themes of work	%
Global connectivity	39%
Digital inclusion	34%
Artificial Intelligence	15%
Global radio spectrum and satellite orbits	15%
Cybersecurity, trust, security and privacy	10%
Interoperable telecom. standards	10%
Big Data / analytics	10%
Environment and climate change	7%
Digital transformation	7%
IoT / IoE applications	7%
Digital skills / capacity building	7%
5G networks	5%
Ethics applied to new technologies	5%
Blockchain	5%
ICT Statistics	2%
LDCs, LLDCs, SIDS, economies in transition	2%
UN agenda (e.g. Digital cooperation)	2%
UN-wide RBM / strategic planning	2%
Mainstream One ITU	2%
Industry 4.0	2%
Collaboration with other SDOs	2%
Costs associated with OTTs	2%
Quantum technologies	2%
Human rights in telecoms	2%
Digitalization of telcos	2%
Machine Learning	2%
SDNs	2%
ICT regulation	2%
Emergency telecoms	2%
Autonomous systems	2%
Unity of ITU members	2%
IMT-2030	2%
Robotics	2%
Virtual reality	2%
Digital economy for all	2%
SDGs	2%

Q16 Key challenges for ITU in 2024-27

key challenges	%
Adapting to rapid change (e.g. digital transformation, standards for future networks) and staying relevant	30%
Achieving to connect the unconnected / digital inclusion / digital transformation	25%
Funding challenges / mobilizing resources during a global economic slowdown	20%
Enhancing partnerships and global collaboration with stakeholders and organizations	18%
Ensuring organizational efficiency, less bureaucracy, more transparency, modern working methods	15%
Servicing and focusing on ITU's core mandate / streamlining the activities of the Union	13%
Enhancing stakeholder participation , including from developing world, LDCs and SIDSs	10%
Cybersecurity / data protection / trust	10%
Responding to climate change challenges, environmental protection and sustainable use of natural resources	8%
Conducting work in the post-COVID-19 environment	8%
Avoiding duplication of work within the ITU Sectors, UN agencies and international/regional organisations	8%
Keeping neutrality in geopolitical disputes / avoiding political activities	8%
Responding to diverse demands and membership needs	8%
Advancing the achievement of the 2030 SDGs	5%
Achieving consensus among membership / ensuring efficient conferences	5%

Q17 Improving internal collaboration among Sectors

suggestions	%
Practical implementation of One ITU , with clear roles and specific outcomes , promoting inter-sectoral work where this has benefits, avoiding duplication of overlapping activities	36%
Improve internal communication with better collaboration of focal points / regular collaborative sessions & meetings / cross-sector workshops to discuss requirements, planning	21%
Improve operational efficiencies , integrate coordination systematically at all stages of work processes of ITU Sectors / unify processes	15%
Improve coordination between the secretariat's Inter-Sectoral Coordination Task Force (ISC-TF) and the membership Inter-Sector Coordination Group (ISCG)	9%
Improve coordination of the 3 Sectors at a regional level / strengthen regional structures	9%
Integrate non-governmental stakeholders in the discussions and decision making / create forum for brainstorming on partnership, programme, or projects	6%
Foster partnerships with other organizations / coordination across UN system and resource mobilization	6%
Strengthen application of ITU Recommendations to all members	6%
Strengthen monitoring, evaluation and control	6%
Improve agility in technical work	3%
Improve capacity and skills of ITU human resources	3%
Clear foundation (architecture and frameworks) in standardization	3%
Improve compliance to oversight bodies recommendations	3%
Improve external communication	3%
Have clarity on the Member States' priorities	3%
Strengthen the virtual meeting environments	3%
Create Study Groups in charge of integration , coordination and collaboration	3%
Promote harmonization of spectrum to take advantage of economies of scale	3%