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| **Agenda item: ADM 1** | **Document C25/69-E** |
| **19 May 2025** |
| **Original: English** |
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| Report by the Secretary-General | |
| INCEPTION REPORT ON THE REVIEW OF ITU REGIONAL PRESENCE | |
| **Purpose**  This report presents recommendations to guide the Council’s deliberations on the Terms of Reference (ToRs) for the Review of the ITU’s Regional Presence.  **Action required by the Council**  The Council is invited **to consider** the report.  **Relevant link(s) with the Strategic Plan**  Regional presence.  **Financial implications**  Additional allocation proposed, as detailed in specified in Document [C25/9](https://www.itu.int/md/S25-CL-C-0009/en).  \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  **References**  *Resolutions* [*25 (Rev. Dubai, 2018)*](https://www.itu.int/en/council/Documents/basic-texts/RES-025-E.pdf)*,* [*25 (Rev. Bucharest, 2022)*](https://www.itu.int/en/council/Documents/basic-texts-2023/RES-025-E.pdf)*,* [*135 (Rev. Bucharest, 2022)*](https://www.itu.int/en/council/Documents/basic-texts-2023/RES-135-E.pdf) *and* [*157 (Rev. Bucharest, 2022)*](https://www.itu.int/en/council/Documents/basic-texts-2023/RES-157-E.pdf) *of the Plenipotentiary Conference;* [*Kigali Action Plan Final Report of the World Telecommunication Development Conference (Kigali, 2022)*](https://www.itu.int/en/publications/ITU-D/pages/publications.aspx?parent=D-TDC-WTDC-2022&media=electronic)*.* | |

# 1 Introduction/background

At its 19th meeting, held from 30 September to 11 October 2024, the Council Working Group on financial and human resources (CWG-FHR) decided to establish an Online Correspondence Group (OCG) to develop Terms of Reference (ToR) for ITU’s review of its regional presence, in accordance with Resolution 25, “Strengthening the ITU regional presence” (Rev. Bucharest, 2022). The OCG was tasked with reviewing a draft ToR presented during the 19th meeting and submitting its final report to the 20th meeting of the CWG-FHR.

The 20th meeting of the CWG-FHR, held from 10 to 21 February 2025, reviewed the OCG’s report, which included revised ToR. The CWG-FHR subsequently considered and adopted the ToR in preparation for their consideration by the Council at its June 2025 session (Document [C25/50](https://www.itu.int/md/S25-CL-C-0050/en)).

Following the adoption by the CWG-FHR of the ToR, an Inter-Sectoral Task Force was established to ensure a coordinated and strategic approach to the review. Chaired by the Deputy Secretary-General, the Task Force comprises all Regional Directors and representatives from each Bureau of the organization. The Task Force was mandated to:

* Draft the inception report, outlining the methodology, structure and duration, avenues for stakeholder consultations, decision-making processes and resource requirements, to guide the review.
* Support the implementation of the review in accordance with the ToR, ensuring alignment with the ITU’s strategic vision and Resolution 25.
* Facilitate collaboration across sectors, regional offices, and key departments to ensure a comprehensive and effective assessment of the ITU’s regional presence.
* Monitor progress and evaluate findings to provide informed recommendations aimed at enhancing the efficiency and impact of the ITU’s regional operations.
* Facilitate reporting to ITU governing bodies and advisory groups.

Taking into account Article 1 and Article 21 of the ITU Constitution, Article 5 of the ITU Convention, and Resolution 25 (Rev. Bucharest, 2022), this inception report presents a set of recommendations to support the Council’s deliberations on the ToR. The recommendations have been developed by the Inter-Sectoral Task Force on regional presence.

These recommendations are intended to provide greater clarity on the review’s methodology, timeline, scope, stakeholder engagement approach and resourcing requirements.

The report is structured as follows:

1) Methodology of the review – outlining the framework and approach for conducting the review.

2) Structure and duration of the review – defining the phases, milestones, and deliverables of the review process.

3) Stakeholder consultations – identifying potential forums for inclusive stakeholder engagement to ensure a well-rounded assessment.

4) Decision-making processes – recommending procedures for validation and approval during the review process.

5) Resource requirements – identifying resources needed to support the effective execution of the review.

# 2 Methodology of the review

The methodology outlined in the ToR forms the foundation of a rigorous and multidimensional review process. It includes:

– Document analysis: A comprehensive desk review of key ITU policy documents, strategic plans, audit reports, and internal and external assessments.

– Data analysis: In-depth examination of operational, financial, and staffing data to uncover trends, assess ITU performance, and improve opportunities.

– Stakeholder consultations: Structured engagements with internal and external stakeholders to capture diverse insights on the effectiveness of regional operations and HQ’s support functions

– Stakeholder surveys: Broad-based surveys targeting Member States, relevant UN agencies, and ITU memberships to assess satisfaction, challenges, and expectations.

To strengthen the analytical rigor and relevance of the review, the secretariat further recommends the inclusion of:

– Benchmarking analysis: To study of ITU’s regional and area offices against peer institutions in the UN system.

– Combined methodology: To ensure the review is evidence-based, inclusive, and strategically oriented to the evolving needs of ITU, in particular its regional presence.

# 3 Structure and duration of the review

The review will span 11 months and will be organized into four sequential phases. The sequencing and deliverables from each phase of the review are detailed below.

Phase 1: Preliminary assessment (July – August 2025)

Deliverables:

– Formation of the review team and establishment of working protocols.

– Articulation of the objective of the review with methodology.

– Development of tailored tools for data collection (e.g. surveys, interview questions).

– Alignment of review metrics with ITU’s KPIs and strategic objectives.

**Phase 2: Data collection and initial analysis (September – November 2025)**

Deliverables:

– Implementation of interviews and surveys across stakeholder groups.

– Benchmarking exercises.

– Initial analysis and identification of emerging patterns and key themes.

**Phase 3: Detailed analysis and drafting (December 2025 – February 2026)**

Deliverables:

– Comprehensive analysis of findings based on the findings and initial analysis.

– Preparation of a draft review report including preliminary recommendations.

**Phase 4: Validation and reporting (March – May 2026)**

Deliverables:

– Validation of draft review report.

– Incorporation of feedback from validation.

– Drafting of final review report for consideration by the Council and the 2026 Plenipotentiary Conference (PP-26).

# 4 Stakeholder consultations

Stakeholder engagement will be fundamental to the success of the review, ensuring that the insights and experiences of those directly impacted by regional operations are fully reflected in the analysis. A strong consultation process will not only strengthen the outcomes of the review but also enhance their legitimacy and sustainability. Engaging a broad range of perspectives will also help surface new perspectives, enrich the quality of the recommendations, and support a holistic assessment.

The ToR highlights key consultation groups as internal ITU secretariat (General Secretariat, Bureaux, and regional/area offices), Member States, Regional Telecommunication Organizations, Sector Members, and Academia.

Consultation tools and mechanisms will include online surveys, semi-structured interviews, stakeholder workshops, and interactive virtual engagement.

The table below highlights an initial non-exhaustive list of events where stakeholders may be engaged as part of the consultation process. These events provide opportunities to gather input, validate findings, and ensure that diverse perspectives are reflected in the review. The participants to stakeholder consultations will be carefully selected for the appropriateness and relevance to the study.

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| Date | Sector | Title | Place |
| 22–23 September 2025 | ITU-D | 20th World Telecommunication/ICT Indicators Symposium | Geneva, Switzerland |
| 17-28 November 2025 | ITU-D | World Telecommunication Development Conference 2025 | Baku, Azerbaijan |
| 26-30 January 2026 [TBC] | ITU-S | Telecommunication Standards Advisory Group | TBC |
| 30 March –1 April 2026 | ITU-R | Radiocommunication Advisory Group | Geneva, Switzerland |
| Various | ITU-D | Meetings of Regional Telecommunication Organizations | Various |

# 5 Decision-making processes

The review will be embedded within ITU’s existing governance framework to ensure transparency, accountability, and institutional ownership. This shall consist of:

– Internal oversight through the Inter-Sectoral Task Force on regional presence, with escalated reporting to the Coordination Committee, as appropriate.

– Progress and outputs will be regularly shared with the ITU Council and the CWG-FHR.

To enhance legitimacy and ensure Member States’ ownership, the secretariat proposes the establishment of a **Member States Advisory Group on regional presence**. This group would:

– Provide strategic oversight and guidance throughout the review.

– Offer feedback on preliminary findings.

– Review and validate recommendations from the review before submission to ITU Governing Bodies.

# 6 Resource requirements

A robust and well-supported review requires both financial and human resources to ensure it is inclusive, methodologically sound, and operationally feasible. These resources are essential to enable evidence-based analysis and broad stakeholder engagement. Resources envisioned include the recruitment of a short-term consultant to support the Task Force with research, administration of surveys, data synthesis, and drafting tasks, as well as financial resources to support the convening of stakeholder consultations. To cover the resource requirements, an additional allocation proposed as specified in Document [C25/9](https://www.itu.int/md/S25-CL-C-0009/en).

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