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| Contribution by Germany and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland | |
| DRAFT OPINION ON STRENGTHENING ICT-CENTRIC INNOVATION ECOSYSTEMS AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP | |
| **Purpose**  Draft opinion on strengthening ICT-centric innovation ecosystems and entrepreneurship.  **Action required**  The Informal Expert Group on WTPF-26 is invited to **consider** this document. | |

DRAFT OPINION

Strengthening ICT-centric innovation ecosystems and entrepreneurship

The seventh World Telecommunication/ICT Policy Forum (Geneva, 2026),

recalling

*a)* United Nations General Assembly Resolution 70/125 on the outcome document of the high-level meeting of the General Assembly on the overall review of the implementation of the outcomes of the World Summit on the Information Society;

*b)* Resolution 70/1 of the United Nations General Assembly, on transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, in particular, Sustainable Development Goals 8, on Decent Work and Economic Growth, and 9, on Industry, Innovation, and Infrastructure;

*c)* Resolution 198 (Rev. Bucharest, 2022) of the Plenipotentiary Conference, on empowerment of youth through telecommunication/information and communication technology (ICT);

*d)* Resolution 205 (Rev. Bucharest, 2022) of the Plenipotentiary Conference, on the ITU's role in fostering telecommunication/information and communication technology- centric innovation to support the digital economy and society;

*e)* Resolution 209 (Rev. Bucharest, 2022) of the Plenipotentiary Conference on “Encouraging the participation of small and medium enterprises in the work of the Union”;

*f)* Resolution 90 (Kigali, 2022) of the World Telecommunication Development Conference, on “Fostering telecommunication/ICT-centric entrepreneurship and digital innovation ecosystems for sustainable digital development”,

considering

*a)* that the ongoing digital transformation of the economy and society enables innovation and promotes sustainable and inclusive economic development;

*b)* stakeholders in the private sector, civil society, the technical community and academia have important roles to play in the creation and maintenance of an ecosystem which encourages and supports ICT-centric innovation and entrepreneurship,

recognising

*a)* that telecommunication/ICT-centric entrepreneurial ecosystems are vehicles for socioeconomic development and community revitalization, driving sustainable development while increasing inclusion and providing economies of scale and bridging digital divides;

*b)* that as digital natives, young people have important roles to play in ICT-centric innovation ecosystems and entrepreneurship,

noting

that existing the ITU partnerships advance programmes and initiatives that aim to improve ICT education and equip people, especially youth, with digital skills and improve digital literacy,

is of the view

1 telecommunications/ICTs can be an important enabler for entrepreneurship across societies;

2 green and sustainable telecommunications/ICTs represent an area of growth and opportunity for innovation and entrepreneurship;

3 that public-private partnerships, including for financing, play an important role in fostering ICT-centric innovation ecosystems and entrepreneurship;

4 innovation and entrepreneurship benefit from open and competitive markets, allowing new players to enter the market and grow;

5 evidence-based policymaking and transparent, proportionate and predictable regulatory frameworks are important for creating an enabling environment for innovation and entrepreneurship;

6 the availability and quality of digital skilling opportunities, including through school curricula and lifelong learning, can affect the innovation and entrepreneurship potential within a society;

7 it is important to ensure that historically unserved and underserved communities are empowered as entrepreneurs and can access enablers of innovation such as financing;

8 governments need to work with other stakeholders to create an enabling environment that is robust and suitably flexible to keep up with innovation in the sector,

invites Member States

1 to strengthen evidence-based policy-making and transparent, proportionate and predictable regulatory frameworks in order to foster an enabling environment for innovation;

2 to invest and encourage investment in research and development related to green and sustainable telecommunications/ICTs;

3 to encourage foreign and domestic investments in digital ecosystems and consider removing barriers in this regard;

4 to consider how best to make it easier for the private sector to invest and innovate;

5 to foster an awareness of environmental challenges such as climate change and its mitigation in developing policies to advance sustainable development;

6 to promote widespread affordable access to telecommunication/ICT services by supporting telecommunication/ICT-centric innovation ecosystems through encouraging competition, innovation, private investment and public-private partnerships;

7 to adopt competition and taxation policies which enhance the affordability and availability of telecommunication/ICT equipment to support innovation and entrepreneurship;

8 to support research into any barriers that individuals from historically unserved and underserved communities may face while pursuing entrepreneurial activities and implement tailored strategies to address these barriers;

9 to share best practice on regional, local and national initiatives aimed at promoting telecommunication/ICT-centric innovation ecosystems and entrepreneurship;

10 to promote skills related to telecommunication/ICT-centric innovation ecosystems within national education systems;

11 to take steps to address the gender digital divide in order to support innovation and entrepreneurship by women and girls in the telecommunications/ICT sector,

invites Member States and Sector Members

1 to facilitate public-private investment by promoting closer cooperation between education and research centres and the private sector in emerging areas;

2 to consider funding internships and scholarships related to research and development and ICT-centric innovation ecosystems and entrepreneurship;

3 to support and establish initiatives to promote entrepreneurship amongst the young people;

4 to facilitate an enabling environment through innovative access to finance, including through public-private partnership models;

5 to promote competition and private sector investment to encourage the continuing growth and adoption of new and emerging telecommunication/ICT services and technologies that will advance economic growth and opportunities at the national, regional and global levels;

6 to encourage innovation and entrepreneurship in local populations, including by encouraging community support for entrepreneurship and locally based programmes, including those for complementary solutions and networks;

7 to consult with all stakeholders, including the private sector, civil society, the technical community and academia to ensure that an enabling policy environment implemented at the national level reflects stakeholder views and needs,

invites the Secretary-General

to continue to strengthen the ITU efforts to provide a platform for collaboration and dialogue among key stakeholders, including Member States, the private sector, civil society, the technical community and academia to enable them to strengthen ICT-centric innovation ecosystems and entrepreneurship.

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