

# Introduction

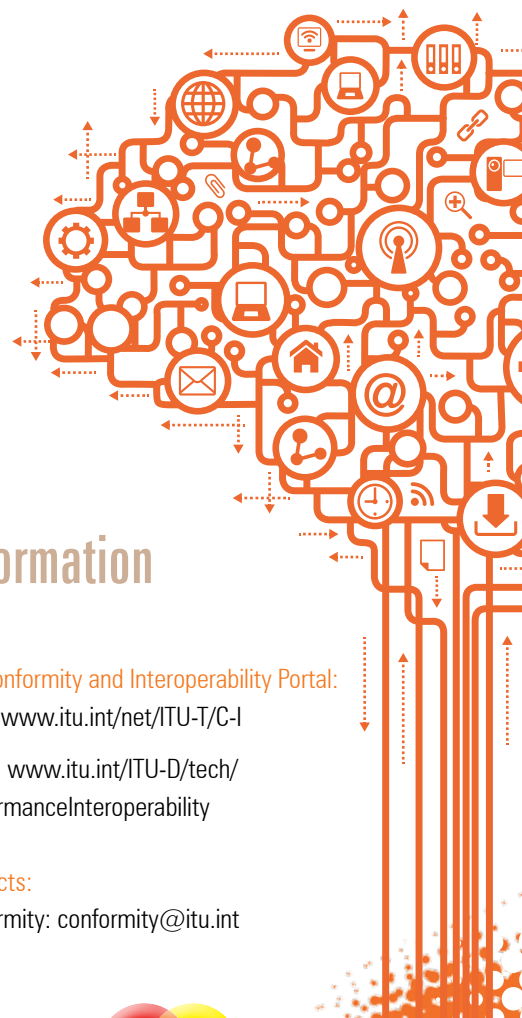
Global communications networks owe their existence to the interoperability of ICT infrastructures, services and devices developed across the world. This interoperability is afforded by international standards such as ITU-T Recommendations, which provide for common international languages enabling communications between the ICTs of different manufacturers, countries and continents.

A major concern raised at ITU World Assemblies has been the lack of conformance and interoperability of ICT equipment being introduced to the market, especially in developing countries. ITU's Conformity and Interoperability (C&I) programme seeks to increase conformance with ITU-T Recommendations and, in turn, the interoperability of ICTs globally (assessed according to international ISO/IEC standards).

Cooperation with international organizations, industry, and conformity assessment, accreditation and certification bodies is key to the success of ITU's C&I programme.

The programme is supported by four key pillars:

- **Conformity assessment**, evaluating products' degree of compliance with ITU's standards
- **Interoperability events**, analyzing the ability of different vendors' products to interoperate
- **Capacity building**, educating policy-makers and businesses on the importance of conformance and interoperability testing
- **Creation of ICT testing centres** in different regions of the world



## Information

ITU Conformity and Interoperability Portal:

ITU-T: [www.itu.int/net/ITU-T/C-I](http://www.itu.int/net/ITU-T/C-I)

ITU-D: [www.itu.int/ITU-D/tech/ConformanceInteroperability](http://www.itu.int/ITU-D/tech/ConformanceInteroperability)

Contacts:

Conformity: [conformity@itu.int](mailto:conformity@itu.int)



**More detailed information on the C&I programme is available in the ITU C&I PORTAL:**

ITU-T: [www.itu.int/net/ITU-T/C-I](http://www.itu.int/net/ITU-T/C-I)

ITU-D: [www.itu.int/ITU-D/tech/ConformanceInteroperability](http://www.itu.int/ITU-D/tech/ConformanceInteroperability)



# ITU Conformity & Interoperability Programme



# The Four Pillars of C&I

## 1. ITU-T Conformity Assessment

Conformance with ITU's international standards maximizes the probability that an ICT vendor's products will interoperate with those of other vendors.

ICT vendors are encouraged to take advantage of accredited conformance assessment centres to measure the degree to which their products conform to ITU Recommendations, and so determine the likelihood of their products interoperating with those of other vendors.

### ITU-T Conformity Database:

Open to ITU and non-ITU members, the ITU-T Conformity Database is an informative, voluntary tool permitting companies to make a public declaration of their products' conformance with ITU-T Recommendations.

### ITU-T Test Labs Database:

This database provides information on the location, technologies and accreditation status of ITU-T Recommendation test labs worldwide.



## 2. ITU-T Interop Events

ITU-T Recommendations seek above all to enable the interoperability of ICT products and services, allowing people access to the Information Society regardless of their location or chosen ICT device.

ITU-T organizes "ITU Interop events" to allow different ICT manufacturers to test and thereby ensure the interoperability of products developed according to ITU-T Recommendations.

Interop events are particularly important for the integration of new or emerging technologies with other devices and applications in existing network architectures. As such, ITU has organized events looking at Home Networking and Internet Protocol Television (IPTV), with others soon to follow.

## 3. Capacity Building

Capacity building events organized by the ITU Telecommunication Development Sector (ITU-D) educate technicians, policy-makers and businesses on the importance of C&I testing; breeding a culture of certification and accreditation based on international standards, encouraging the adoption of proven C&I test suites, and mobilizing the resources required to implement regional and national C&I programmes.



ITU capacity building events are conducted across all the world's regions, organized in cooperation with other relevant regional and international organizations.

### Specifically, the events seek to:

- Clarify fundamental aspects of C&I such as accreditation, certification, Mutual Recognition Arrangements (MRAs) and Multilateral Agreements (MLAs)
- Assist in the establishment of C&I test centres in developing countries

## 4. Assistance in establishing Test Centers

An important part of ITU's C&I programme is to assist developing countries in the establishment of regional or sub-regional C&I test centres. Mutual Recognition Arrangements (MRAs) between the test centres of different countries or regions encourage consumer confidence in tested products, increase market opportunities, encourage trade and technology transfer, and contribute to the removal of technical barriers to trade.

The ITU Telecommunication Development Sector (ITU-D) has prepared guidelines on this process which outline the technical and human resources required, the international standards to be complied with, and financial considerations to be addressed.

Regional C&I testing centres will form part of a global network of such centres, mandating the strictest adherence to best-practice guidelines on their construction.

