

RESOLUTION 205 (REV. BUCHAREST, 2022)

ITU's role in fostering telecommunication/information and communication technology-centric innovation to support the digital economy and society

The Plenipotentiary Conference of the International Telecommunication Union (Bucharest, 2022),

recalling

- a) Resolution 198 (Rev. Bucharest, 2022) of this conference, on empowerment of youth through telecommunication/information and communication technology (ICT);
- b) Resolution 204 (Rev. Bucharest, 2022) of this conference, on the use of ICTs to bridge the financial inclusion gap;
- c) Resolution 90 (Kigali, 2022) of the World Telecommunication Development Conference (WTDC), on fostering telecommunication/ICT-centric entrepreneurship and digital innovation ecosystems for sustainable digital development;
- d) United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) Resolution 70/1, on transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development;
- e) UNGA Resolution 70/125, on the outcome document of the UNGA high-level meeting on the overall review of the implementation of the outcomes of the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS);

f) UNGA Resolution 68/220, on science, technology and innovation for development;

g) UNGA Resolution 75/1, on the declaration on the commemoration of the 75th anniversary of the United Nations, which included a declaration to improve digital cooperation,

considering

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

b) that the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic demonstrated the critical role of telecommunications/ICTs in connecting societies and accelerating digital transformation;

c) that new and emerging telecommunications/ICTs can create opportunities and challenges that may be addressed by international collaboration;

d) that ITU's role in increasing access to and promoting development of telecommunications/ICTs contributes to the development of the digital economy, and that its benefits contribute greatly to the overall economy;

e) the Kigali Declaration and the Kigali Action Plan adopted at WTDC-22;

f) relevant WTDC and Plenipotentiary Conference resolutions, in particular Resolution 17 (Rev. Kigali, 2022) of WTDC, on implementation of and cooperation on approved regional initiatives at the national, regional, interregional and global levels;

g) that the Union, among others, plays a fundamental role in providing global perspectives on the development of the information society as regards telecommunications/ICTs;

h) that the sixth World Telecommunication/ICT Policy Forum (WTPF-21) addressed the theme of policies for mobilizing new and emerging telecommunications/ICTs for sustainable development,

further recognizing

- a) that telecommunication/ICT-centric entrepreneurial ecosystems are vehicles for socio-economic development and community revitalization, driving sustainable development while increasing inclusion and providing economies of scale and bridging digital divides;
- b) that capacity building for all stakeholders promotes sustainable development and strengthening institutions;
- c) that digital transformation can be accelerated through bridging the data divide, in turn unlocking opportunities and accelerating data-driven decision-making in support of sustainable development,

noting

- a) Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) 8 and 9 of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development;
- b) ITU's role in the organization of dedicated annual events addressing innovation dynamics at the regional and international levels;
- c) that existing ITU partnerships advance programmes and initiatives that aim to improve ICT education and equip people, especially youth, with digital skills and improve digital literacy,

bearing in mind

- a) that the benefits brought about by the digital economy have not been experienced equally by developing countries¹ and developed countries;
- b) that both phases of WSIS made commitments to bridge the digital divide and create digital opportunities;
- c) that affordability and availability of telecommunication/ICT equipment have an impact on innovation and entrepreneurship,

¹ These include the least developed countries, small island developing states, landlocked developing countries and countries with economies in transition.

resolves

1 that the Union, within its mandate, should seek to foster telecommunication/ICT-centric innovation in the development and deployment of telecommunication/ICT infrastructure and digital entrepreneurship that contribute to the development of the digital economy and information society and facilitate the sustainable development of telecommunications/ICTs, the benefits of which contribute greatly to the overall economy;

2 that the Union, within its mandate and existing mechanisms, should support Member States, upon request, in promoting an enabling environment for telecommunication/ICT-centric innovation by all stakeholders, including government, academia, the private sector, small and medium enterprises (SMEs), start-ups, incubation centres and young entrepreneurs, supporting relevant activities with other international agencies;

3 that the Union should continue to collaborate with other related United Nations agencies and other international organizations to assist Member States in providing capacity building related to digital skills, which are considered a core foundation for digital transformation;

4 that the Union should continue supporting WSIS action lines, consistent with its role as specified in Resolution 140 (Rev. Bucharest, 2022) of this conference, through responding to the global need to foster telecommunication/ICT-centric innovation ecosystems and entrepreneurship that accelerate the digital transformation of society and the economy;

5 that, through cooperation with stakeholders, the Union should foster enabling environments that are conducive to institutional capacity building and sustainable telecommunication/ICT development and that encourage innovation,

instructs the Secretary-General

1 to coordinate cross-Sectoral activities in the Union and collaborate with other relevant United Nations agencies and stakeholders in implementing this resolution;

2 to ensure implementation of this resolution within the allocated resources in the financial plan and biennial budget as approved by the ITU Council;

3 in implementing this resolution, to take into consideration the discussions and initiatives under way within the United Nations system and relevant international organizations which address new and emerging telecommunications/ICTs in support of sustainable development;

4 to support the relevant ITU capacity-building activities that promote education, digital literacy, training and skills development on new and emerging telecommunications/ICTs, fostering sustainable development and digital empowerment and inclusion for all;

5 to provide annually to the Council a comprehensive report detailing the activities, actions and engagements that the Union is undertaking in response to this resolution;

6 to prepare and submit a progress report on ITU activities related to this resolution to the next plenipotentiary conference in 2026,

instructs the Directors of the Telecommunication Standardization Bureau and Radiocommunication Bureau

1 to take this resolution into account when carrying out activities in their respective Sectors;

2 to encourage the participation of SMEs in study groups and relevant ITU activities,

instructs the Director of the Telecommunication Development Bureau

1 to provide technical assistance and capacity-building support to developing countries upon request for facilitating/strengthening their respective telecommunication/ICT-centric innovation ecosystems and digital entrepreneurship and developing telecommunication/ICT infrastructures, in support of the achievement of the SDGs;

2 to cooperate with other related international and regional organizations on enhancing the Digital Skills Toolkit to support Member States in designing national strategies for digital skills development;

3 in close collaboration with the Directors of the Telecommunication Standardization Bureau and the Radiocommunication Bureau, to consolidate all guidelines, recommendations, technical reports and best practices developed by all the Sectors that facilitate telecommunication/ICT-centric innovation and its contribution to the development of digital economy and society, and make them effectively accessible to the developing countries to accelerate the sharing of information and transfer of knowledge to narrow the development gap;

4 to continue to develop practical toolkits for institutional capacity building, fostering digital entrepreneurship and digital innovation ecosystems at the national level, that can be used by the ITU membership and all stakeholders;

5 to continue supporting, within the resources and remit of ITU, the Global Innovation Forum events as a platform for sharing knowledge and best practices, networking and promoting the development of digital innovation ecosystems and entrepreneurship;

6 to assist in the identification of global trends in the development of telecommunication/ICT-centric innovation and entrepreneurship policies and strategies for evidence-based decision-making, especially in developing countries;

7 to cooperate with other relevant organizations and contribute to efforts to measure development of the digital economy and society, by sharing information from ongoing Telecommunication Development Bureau measurements of telecommunication/ICT infrastructure, access and use by households and individuals;

8 to provide, within the mandate of ITU, capacity building on closing the data divide for developing countries, enabling their digital ecosystems to take full advantage of telecommunications/ICTs and innovation to accelerate digital transformation,

invites Member States

- 1 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;
- 2 to promote awareness and involvement of the public in telecommunication/ICT-centric innovation through the promotion of national initiatives with the assistance of ITU, and enhance digital skills development, especially among marginalized groups and persons with specific needs, including women and girls, children and youth, older persons, persons with disabilities and indigenous peoples, to foster digital empowerment and inclusion for all;
- 3 to participate actively, in collaboration with other stakeholders, in the activities of the Union related to digital entrepreneurship and innovation ecosystems, while facilitating the participation of telecommunication/ICT-related entrepreneurs, SMEs, start-ups and incubation and acceleration centres;
- 4 to exchange best practices on enhancing digital literacy and skills for the purpose of fostering telecommunication/ICT-centric innovation;
- 5 to consider establishing policies/strategies that foster telecommunication/ICT-centric innovation and entrepreneurship;
- 6 to take appropriate action to enhance the affordability and availability of telecommunication/ICT equipment to support innovation and entrepreneurship,

invites Member States, Sector Members, Associates and Academia

1 to contribute by sharing their experiences and expertise on fostering innovation and entrepreneurship in supporting the development and deployment of telecommunications/ICTs as described in this resolution;

2 within the framework of this resolution, to encourage the participation of telecommunication/ICT-related entrepreneurs, SMEs, start-ups and incubation and acceleration centres in the ITU Telecom World and other relevant events;

3 to collaborate with ITU on activities related to the implementation of this resolution that leverage digital entrepreneurship and innovation ecosystems to accelerate the achievement of the SDGs.

(Dubai, 2018) – (Rev. Bucharest, 2022)
