



## BDT MEMBER COMMUNIQUÉ

# ITU's 2023 ICT Development Index shows strong correlation between digital and economic development

Geneva, 13 December 2023

After a six-year hiatus, the ICT Development Index – or IDI – was launched today. Based on a new methodology developed through an inclusive and iterative process, the IDI 2023 covers 169 economies and aims to assess the extent to which connectivity is universal and meaningful around the world.

The IDI 2023 contains 10 indicators – organised under the two ‘pillars’ of Meaningful connectivity and Universal connectivity – which are assessed on a scale from 0 to 100, where 100 means the ‘ideal state’ has been reached.

The overall picture is positive, with a global average IDI score of 72.8 out of 100.

However, the results show that there is a strong correlation between IDI performance and income levels, approximated with gross national income (GNI) per capita. The average IDI score by income group is 31.5 for low-income countries, 62.0 for lower-middle-income countries, 76.4 for upper-middle countries, and 90.1 for high-income countries.

“Ensuring that everyone has a safe, satisfying, enriching and productive online experience at an affordable cost is an imperative for us all – and a core strategic goal for ITU. The IDI is an informative and enriching tool to help advance universal and meaningful connectivity,” said Dr Cosmas Luckyson Zavazava, Director of ITU’s Telecommunication Development Bureau. “I would like to express my deep gratitude to our Member States and to the members and Chairs of the Expert Groups on Household ICT Indicators and Telecommunication/ICT indicators for contributing to the development of the new IDI methodology. I have no doubt that our membership will find the IDI useful for more informed decision making.”

### What do the results mean?

The lowest score in IDI 2023 is 20.0, the highest 98.2 out of 100, a score gap of almost 80 points.

Thirty-three countries achieve an IDI score between 90 and 100. Another 47 countries have a score between 80 and 90, and 50 countries score between 60 and 80. At the other end of the scale, nine countries lie between 50 and 60, and 30 countries score below 50. These results suggest that the world has made significant progress towards UMC, with half of the countries almost at or past the 80-point mark. Still, half of countries are spread across a 60-point range, with a few scoring in the low 20s.

The correlation between the IDI 2023 scores and population, population density and land area are zero or almost zero, indicating that smaller, less populated, or more densely populated countries are not necessarily advantaged when it comes to connectivity.

The 2023 edition of the IDI is just a snapshot, future editions will allow time series analysis, providing further insights.

### **A new methodology**

The process of developing the new methodology was inclusive, iterative and transparent involving Member States and the members of the Expert groups on Household ICT Indicators and on Telecommunication/ICT indicators. The proposed methodology was submitted to Member States and was approved by 98 per cent of respondents. It will remain valid for four years.

The IDI 2023 results cannot be compared with previous editions of the IDI because the methodologies are different.

Detailed information about the process, including links to the methodology documents, circulars, and summary reports of events, is available [on this page](#).

### **A guide to the IDI results**

The results should be interpreted with caution, contextualized, and supplemented with additional data. Limited availability and quality of data constrained the selection of indicators included in the index. A robust performance in the IDI does not necessarily mean that UMC has been achieved, because performance could be lacking in dimensions for which no indicators were included in the index.

Because of the lag in the submission, processing and validation of data, the results of the IDI 2023 are based on data for 2021, and in some cases 2020.

Furthermore, the overall IDI score can conceal disparities among pillars and individual indicators. Similarly, country-level values measure the 'average' situation of a country and can conceal disparities across regions and demographic groups.

The development of the IDI highlighted the need for countries to improve their statistical capabilities and the availability of ICT indicators. To support countries in measuring connectivity, ITU continues to provide guidelines, data collection tools, capacity and skills development activities, and technical assistance.

To complement the IDI 2023 publication and the accompanying dataset, a dashboard will be available on the [ITU DataHub](#) as of April 2024.

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### **Resources and background information:**

- [2023 ICT Development Index website](#)

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### **About the International Telecommunication Union (ITU)**

The International Telecommunication Union (ITU) is the United Nations specialized agency for information and communication technologies (ICTs), driving innovation in ICTs together with 193 Member States and a membership of over 900 companies, universities, and international and regional organizations. Established over 150 years ago in 1865, ITU is the intergovernmental body responsible for coordinating the shared global use of the radio spectrum, promoting international cooperation in assigning satellite orbits, improving communication infrastructure in the developing world, and establishing the worldwide standards that foster seamless interconnection of a vast range of communications systems. From broadband networks to cutting-edge wireless technologies, aeronautical and maritime navigation, radio astronomy, oceanographic and satellite-based earth monitoring as well as converging fixed-mobile phone, Internet and broadcasting technologies, ITU is committed to connecting the world. For more information, visit [www.itu.int](http://www.itu.int)