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2024 G7 Apulia Summit Final Compliance Report

15 June 2024 to 15 May 2025

Prepared by

Jacob Rudolph and Angus MacKellar
and the G7 Research Group

9 June 2025

www.g7.utoronto.ca • g7@utoronto.ca • [@g7_rg](https://twitter.com/g7_rg)

“We have meanwhile set up a process and there are also independent institutions monitoring which objectives of our G7 meetings we actually achieve. When it comes to these goals we have a compliance rate of about 80%, according to the University of Toronto. Germany, with its 87%, comes off pretty well. That means that next year too, under the Japanese G7 presidency, we are going to check where we stand in comparison to what we have discussed with each other now. So a lot of what we have resolved to do here together is something that we are going to have to work very hard at over the next few months. But I think that it has become apparent that we, as the G7, want to assume responsibility far beyond the prosperity in our own countries. That’s why today’s outreach meetings, that is the meetings with our guests, were also of great importance.”

Chancellor Angela Merkel, Schloss Elmau, 8 June 2015

G7 summits are a moment for people to judge whether aspirational intent is met by concrete commitments. The G7 Research Group provides a report card on the implementation of G7 and G20 commitments. It is a good moment for the public to interact with leaders and say, you took a leadership position on these issues — a year later, or three years later, what have you accomplished?

Achim Steiner, Administrator, United Nations Development Programme,
in G7 Canada: The 2018 Charlevoix Summit

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13. Digital Economy: Closing Digital Divides

“We will also work, including with developing countries and emerging economies, towards closing digital divides, including the gender digital divide, and achieving digital inclusion.”

Apulia G7 Leaders' Communiqué

Assessment

	No Compliance	Partial Compliance	Full Compliance
Canada			+1
France			+1
Germany			+1
Italy		0	
Japan			+1
United Kingdom			+1
United States			+1
European Union			+1
Average	+0.88 (94%)		

Background

G7 leaders have recognized the importance of bridging the digital divide as a critical step toward building a thriving digital economy since the 2000 Okinawa Summit. The digital economy encompasses concepts such as ‘the Internet’, ‘cyberspace’, ‘information technology’ (IT) and information and communication technology (ICT). The rapid evolution of ICT has raised concerns pertaining to the digital divide, especially gender digital divide. Recognizing the broader implications, G7 leaders continue to emphasize the importance of closing all forms of digital divides, not only to promote digital inclusion and equal access for marginalized groups but also to secure the economic, social, and political advancements that a robust and inclusive digital economy can offer.

At the 2000 Okinawa Summit, G8 leaders committed to expanding the reach of IT to locations and people with limited access to internet.²⁹⁹⁹ This would be accomplished through the help of the World Economic Forum’s Global Digital Divide Initiative and the Global Business Dialogue on Electronic Commerce and by leveraging the private sector. Leaders also committed to the creation of the Digital Opportunities Task Force (DOT force) which would investigate and recommend global action that can be taken to bridge the information and knowledge divide.

At the 2001 Genoa Summit, G8 leaders changed the reference of IT to ICT and assigned the DOT force with training education professionals on enhanced teaching strategies and practices involving ICT.³⁰⁰⁰ G8 leaders highlighted the need for private sector investments in ICT and digital education materials.

At the 2011 Deauville Summit, G8 leaders detailed their commitment to an annual e-G8 Internet meeting with leading internet providers and stakeholders.³⁰⁰¹ The goal of the meeting would be to establish compulsory guidelines for security, intellectual property and digital taxation that would be compatible with developing innovation in the sector. These guidelines would also protect a free and open digital landscape and access to Internet.

²⁹⁹⁹ G8 Communiqué Okinawa 2000, G7 Information Center (Toronto) 23 July 2000. Access Date: 7 September 2024.

<https://www.g7.utoronto.ca/summit/2000okinawa/finalcom.htm>

³⁰⁰⁰ Communiqué, G7 Information Center (Toronto) 22 July 2001. Access Date: 7 September 2024.

<https://www.g7.utoronto.ca/summit/2001genoa/finalcommuniqué.html>

³⁰⁰¹ The G8 Deauville Summit, G7 Information Center (Toronto) May 26, 2011. Access Date: 7 September 2024.

<https://www.g7.utoronto.ca/summit/2011deauville/2011-sarkozy-0526-en.html>

At the 2015 Elmau Summit, G7 leaders tasked the international community with promoting respect for human rights through proper governance by tackling and minimizing the spread of violence and hatred online.³⁰⁰² The promotion of respect through regulation and governance was meant to limit the spread of hateful ideology and extremism on digital platforms.

At the 2016 Ise-Shima Summit, G7 leaders emphasized the necessity for the global community to cooperate on the prevention of malicious use of cyberspace by states and non-state actors.³⁰⁰³ Leaders reiterated that a secure, reliable and accessible cyberspace is fundamental to international economic growth and prosperity. Creating this kind of digital space is also supports freedom, democracy and respect for privacy and human rights. Through the affirmation of the importance of international law in cyberspace, G7 leaders also committed to creating a strategic framework for the application of existing international law to regulate state behavior in international cyberspace. Leaders too committed to supporting an open, transparent, free, fair, and equally accessible cyberspace while respecting privacy, data protection, and cyber security. Finally, leaders reemphasized the importance of maximizing the potential of the digital economy and of cyberspace by bridging digital divides and confronting global challenges.

At the 2017 Taormina Summit, G7 leaders addressed the Next Production Revolution's (NPR) ability to make innovation and digitalization accessible for people internationally.³⁰⁰⁴ Leaders also highlighted the NPR's role in promoting women's opportunities in the fields of science, technology, engineering and mathematics.

At the 2018 Charlevoix Summit, G7 leaders committed to addressing the use of the internet as a tool for terrorism.³⁰⁰⁵ This commitment highlighted working with the Global Internet Forum to Counter Terrorism by addressing terrorism's role in recruitment, financing, training and propaganda. Moreover, in welcoming the interim analytical report by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) on the impact of the digitalization of the economy on the international tax system, leaders acknowledged that the digitalization of the economy has had a significant effect on the international tax system. Leaders committed to addressing the effect digitalization has had on the international tax system by developing a consensus-based solution for this issue by 2020. Finally, G7 leaders endorsed the Charlevoix Commitment to End Sexual and Gender-Based Violence, Abuse and Harassment in Digital Contexts that aimed to protect individual human rights in digital spaces.

At the 2019 Biarritz Summit, G7 leaders recognized the positive transformation artificial intelligence's (AI) has had on societies, the global economy, and job markets.³⁰⁰⁶ This transformation is seen to have had positive effects on individual's wellbeing and negative effects on democracy, privacy and data protection. Leaders also emphasized the need for AI development that is innovative and focused on the protection of human rights.

At the 2021 Cornwall Summit, G7 leaders committed to promoting freedom, trust and individual empowerment through a digital space that is open, reliable, secure and interoperable.³⁰⁰⁷ Leaders also reemphasized their commitment to cooperation in a shared understanding of the applicability of existing

³⁰⁰² Leaders' Declaration: G7 Summit, G7 Information Center (Toronto) June 8, 2015. Access Date: 7 September 2024. <https://www.g7.utoronto.ca/summit/2015elmau/2015-G7-declaration-en.html>

³⁰⁰³ G7 Ise-Shima Leaders' Declaration, G7 Information Center (Toronto) 27 May 2016. Access Date: 7 September 2024. <https://www.g7.utoronto.ca/summit/2016shima/ise-shima-declaration-en.html>

³⁰⁰⁴ G7 Taormina Leaders' Communiqué, G7 Information Center (Toronto) 27 May 2017. Access Date: 7 September 2024. <https://www.g7.utoronto.ca/summit/2017taormina/communique.html>

³⁰⁰⁵ The Charlevoix G7 Summit Communiqué, G7 Information Center (Toronto) June 9, 2018. Access Date: 8 September 2024. <https://www.g7.utoronto.ca/summit/2018charlevoix/communique.html>

³⁰⁰⁶ Biarritz Strategy for an Open, Free and Secure Digital Transformation, G7 Information Center (Toronto) August 26, 2019. Access Date: 8 September 2024. <https://www.g7.utoronto.ca/summit/2019biarritz/biarritz-strategy-for-digital-transformation.html>

³⁰⁰⁷ Carbis Bay G7 Summit Communiqué: Our Shared Agenda for Global Action to Build Back Better, G7 Information Center (Toronto) June 13, 2021. Access Date: 8 September 2024. <https://www.g7.utoronto.ca/summit/2021cornwall/210613-communique.html>

international law on cyberspace. G7 Leaders highlighted the need for the cooperation of the international community in addressing the global threat of criminal ransomware networks.

At the 2022 Elmau Summit, G7 leaders committed to empowering and supporting individuals, especially those in vulnerable groups to use digital technologies and the Internet in a safe and secure manner.³⁰⁰⁸ Leaders also reemphasised their commitment to protect individuals in cyberspace and welcomed the Declaration for the Future of the Internet in their efforts to oppose the trend of rising digital authoritarianism.

At the 2023 Hiroshima Summit, G7 leaders addressed the potential of AI while highlighting the need for risk mitigation and the protection of individuals, the rule of law and democratic procedures within models and generative AI.³⁰⁰⁹ Leaders acknowledged the importance of good governance for AI by welcoming the Hiroshima Process International Guiding Principles for Organizations Developing Advanced AI Systems and the Hiroshima Process International Code of Conduct for Organizations Developing Advanced AI Systems. G7 leaders also emphasized the need for cooperation with the Global Partnership for Artificial Intelligence and the OECD in developing the aforementioned systems. Leaders committed to fostering an open environment where AI use is safe, secure and trustworthy, and promotes digital inclusion and common good worldwide.

At the 2024 Apulia Summit, leaders committed to “work, including with developing countries and emerging economies, towards closing digital divides, including the gender digital divide, and achieving digital inclusion.”³⁰¹⁰

Commitment Features

This commitment underscores a collaborative approach with developing countries and emerging economies, emphasizing key objectives: closing the digital divide – particularly the gender digital divide – and achieving digital inclusion.

Definitions and Concepts

“Work towards” is understood to mean that actors are “applying international diplomacy, such as drafting proposals, putting forth new ideas, and encouraging new initiatives.”³⁰¹¹ It does not include putting forward no effort, resisting or destroying efforts put forth by other actors, or merely tagging along with the consensus reached.”

“Including” is understood to mean “to take in or comprise as a part of a whole or group.”³⁰¹²

“Developing countries” in this context refers to the 159 countries that the United Nations has classified for monitoring and data collection purposes.³⁰¹³ Although the UN has no formal definition of the term, under its current classification, all of Europe and Northern America along with Japan, Australia and New Zealand are classified as developed regions, and all other regions are developing.

³⁰⁰⁸ G7 Leaders’ Communiqué, G7 Information Center (Toronto) June 28, 2022. Access Date: 8 September 2024.

<https://www.g7.utoronto.ca/summit/2022elmau/220628-communication.html>

³⁰⁰⁹ G7 Leaders’ Statement on the Hiroshima AI Process, G7 Information Center (Toronto) October 30, 2023. Access Date: 8 September 2024. <https://www.g7.utoronto.ca/summit/2023hiroshima/231030-ai.html>

³⁰¹⁰ Apulia G7 Leaders’ Communiqué, G7 Information Centre (Toronto) 14 June 2024. Access Date: 6 September 2024.

<https://g7.utoronto.ca/summit/2024apulia/240614-apulia-communication.html>

³⁰¹¹ Compliance Coding Manual for International Institutional Commitments, Global Governance Program (Toronto) 12 November 2020. Access Date: 6 September 2024. https://www.g7.utoronto.ca/compliance/Compliance_Coding_Manual_2020.pdf

³⁰¹² Include, Merriam-Webster (Springfield) n.d. Access Date: 6 September 2024. <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/include>

³⁰¹³ Methodology, United Nations Statistics Division (New York) n.d. Access Date: 6 September 2024.

<https://unstats.un.org/unsd/methodology/m49/>

“Emerging economies” is understood to mean those with sustained strong growth and stability to produce higher-value-added goods.³⁰¹⁴ The International Monetary Fund identifies emerging economies based on their presence and participation in global trade, integration with financial market, market access and income level as measured by gross domestic product per capita in nominal United States dollars. For example, the BRICS countries of Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa, are often understood as emerging economies.

“Closing” in this context refers “to reduce to nil.”³⁰¹⁵

“Digital divides” is understood to mean “the economic, education, and social inequalities between those who have computers and online access and those who do not.”³⁰¹⁶

“Gender digital divide” is understood to mean “women and girls’ lack of access to, use and development of information communication technologies.”³⁰¹⁷

“Achieving” is understood to mean “to succeed at reaching or accomplishing a goal or a result, especially through effort.”³⁰¹⁸

“Digital inclusion” is understood to mean “equitable, meaningful, and safe access to use, lead, and design of digital technologies, services, and associated opportunities for everyone, everywhere.”³⁰¹⁹

General Interpretive Guidelines

This commitment comprises two dimensions: 1) closing the digital divide; and 2) closing the gender divide; 2) with two regional targets: 3) developing countries; and 4) emerging economies, with the welfare target of achieving digital inclusion

Full compliance, or a score of +1, will be assigned to G7 members that demonstrate several strong actions in fulfilling all four dimensions of the welfare target, closing digital divides and achieving digital inclusion, through working with developing countries and emerging economies. Several is defined as at least four. By nature, these actions must be international and collaborative in scope – domestic action does not count for full or partial compliance. Examples of strong actions include funding initiatives to establish practical and affordable digital broadband infrastructure, particularly in rural and remote areas; providing equitable and affordable access to computing devices; launching digital literacy programs; building public-private partnerships for solutions that are affordable, culturally relevant, and tailored to the unique needs of each community.

Partial compliance, or a score of 0, will be assigned to G7 members that take several strong actions across two or three of the four criteria or several weak actions across all four the criteria. Weak actions may include, but are not limited to, verbal affirmations of support, proposing initiatives that are not followed through, attending domestic or international meetings that emphasize the importance of closing the digital divide without taking concrete steps, or merely condemning countries that have backslid in progress towards digital inclusion and equality.

³⁰¹⁴ Miles to Go: The Future of Emerging Markets, International Monetary Fund (Washington D.C.) n.d. Access date: 6 September 2024. <https://www.imf.org/external/pubs/ft/fandd/2021/06/the-future-of-emerging-markets-duttgupta-and-pazarbasiglu.htm>

³⁰¹⁵ Close, Merriam-Webster (Springfield) n.d. Access Date: 6 September 2024. <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/close>

³⁰¹⁶ Compliance Coding Manual for International Institutional Commitments, Global Governance Program (Toronto) 12 November 2020. Access Date: 6 September 2024. https://www.g7.utoronto.ca/compliance/Compliance_Coding_Manual_2020.pdf

³⁰¹⁷ Inclusive Technology: The Gender Digital Divide, Human Rights & Violence Against Women, US Department of State (Washington D.C.) May 2019. Access Date: 6 September 2024. <https://www.state.gov/wp-content/uploads/2019/05/Inclusive-Technology-The-Gender-Digital-Divide-Human-Rights-Violence-Against-Women.pdf>

³⁰¹⁸ Achieve, Merriam-Webster (Springfield) n.d. Access Date: 6 September 2024. <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/Achieve>

³⁰¹⁹ Digital Inclusion, United Nations (New York) n.d. Access Date: 6 September 2024. https://www.un.org/techenvoy/sites/www.un.org.techenvoy/files/general/Definition_Digital-Inclusion.pdf

Non-compliance, or a score of -1, will be assigned to G7 members that takes only weak action to close the digital divide and achieve digital inclusion and have not done so in collaboration with developing countries or emerging economies, reasonably measured as one of the commitment's criteria, or to members that take no action or antithetical actions towards the commitment.

Scoring Guidelines

-1	The G7 member has taken only weak action in one of the four criteria of 1) closing the digital divide, 2) closing the gender digital divide, 3) working with developing countries and 4) working with emerging economies, in order to achieve the welfare target of digital inclusion, or has taken no action or action antithetical to the commitment.
0	The G7 member has taken some strong action in two or three of the four criteria or only weak action in all four criteria of: 1) closing the digital divide, 2) closing the gender digital divide 3) working with developing countries and 4) working with emerging economies, in order to achieve the welfare target of digital inclusion.
+1	The G7 member has taken several strong actions in all four criteria of 1) closing the digital divide, 2) closing the gender digital divide, 3) working with developing countries and 4) working with emerging economies, in order to achieve the welfare target of digital inclusion.

*Compliance Director: Serena Honekin
Lead Analyst: Elliot Savin*

Canada: +1

Canada has fully complied with its commitment to work, including with developing countries and emerging economies, towards closing digital divides, including the gender digital divide, and achieving digital inclusion.

On 24 June 2024, Minister of Rural Economic Development Gudie Hutchings pledged CAD97 million in combined federal and provincial funding to ROCK Network to connect more than 18,600 homes in Northern Ontario to high-speed internet.³⁰²⁰ This project aims to bring reliable and affordable internet access to underserved communities, including over 2,500 Indigenous households.

On 4 July 2024, the Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunication Commission (CRTC) committed CAD271.9 million to bring high-speed fiber internet to four remote Inuit communities in Nunavut.³⁰²¹ The goal of the project is to connect the communities of Iqaluit, Kinngait, Coral Harbour, and Kimmirut to public institutions such as schools, health centers and community learning centers for the first time.

On 22 July 2024, the CRTC announced that CAD79.4 million will be provided to the Kativik Regional Government for the improvement of internet services.³⁰²² This initiative, processed through the Broadband Fund, will bring high-speed internet to the Inuit communities of Kangiqsualujjuaq, Aupaluk, Tasiujaq, Quaqtaq, and Kangirsuk in northern Quebec.

On 25 July 2024, Innovation, Science and Economic Development of Canada (ISED) announced that the auctioning of residual spectrum licenses on 19 July 2025 had resulted in the availability of more competitive

³⁰²⁰Expanding high-speed Internet access in Northern Ontario, Government of Canada (Ottawa) 24 June 2024. Access Date: 28 September 2024. <https://www.canada.ca/en/innovation-science-economic-development/news/2024/06/expanding-high-speed-internet-access-in-northern-ontario.html>

³⁰²¹ CRTC takes action to bring fiber Internet to four Inuit communities in Nunavut for the first time, Government of Canada (Ottawa) 4 July 2024. Access Date: 28 September 2024. <https://www.canada.ca/en/radio-television-telecommunications/news/2024/07/crtc-takes-action-to-bring-fibre-internet-to-four-inuit-communities-in-nunavut-for-the-first-time.html>

³⁰²² CRTC takes action to bring fibre Internet to five Inuit communities in northern Quebec, Government of Canada (Ottawa) 22 July 2024. Access Date: 28 October 2024. <https://www.canada.ca/en/radio-television-telecommunications/news/2024/07/crtc-takes-action-to-bring-fibre-internet-to-five-inuit-communities-in-northern-quebec.html>

and accessible digital services in Canada.³⁰²³ Fifty-six residual licenses were auctioned, mostly in rural and remote regions. This will help improve internet access in underserved communities across Canada.

On 28 August 2024, the CRTC committed over CAD17 million to improving cell service along major roads in Quebec, Ontario and Newfoundland and Labrador.³⁰²⁴ These projects, administrated through the Broadband Fund, will help connect Canadians to reliable cellphone service and improve public safety.

On 1 October 2024, the G7 Industry and Technology Ministers convened to discuss digital development and bridging the digital divide in Africa, with contributions from Egypt, India, Kenya, South Africa, Korea, the Netherlands and Tunisia.³⁰²⁵ This commitment aligns with the G7's dedication to fostering inclusive and sustainable digital growth.

On 3 October 2024, the CRTC committed over CAD8 million to developing high-speed internet for sixteen rural communities in Manitoba.³⁰²⁶ This funding, processed through the Broadband Fund, will be used to build 310 kilometers of transport fiber to provide reliable internet access for over 1,400 households.

On 1 November 2024, the Minister for Women and Gender Equality and Youth, Marci Ien, announced that CAD100 million in federal funding will be dedicated to improving opportunities for women in Canada.³⁰²⁷ Funded projects include the Society for Canadian Women in Science and Technology and the Information and Communications Technology Council of Canada Inc. These organizations work to advance the digital skills of women and other underrepresented individuals in Canada's digital economy.

On 15 November 2024, ISED announced that CAD1.8 million will be dedicated to improving internet access in Eastern Ontario rural communities.³⁰²⁸ The funding will be provided through the Universal Broadband Fund and will benefit 949 households in the targeted areas.

On 15 November 2024, ISED announced that CAD38 million in federal funds will be provided to developing high-speed internet for underserved communities in Manitoba.³⁰²⁹ The funding will be processed through the Universal Broadband Fund and will benefit over 3,600 households in rural, remote and Indigenous communities.

³⁰²³ Canadians to benefit from higher-quality and more competitive telecom services, Government of Canada (Ottawa) 25 July 2024. Access Date: 1 December 2024. <https://www.canada.ca/en/innovation-science-economic-development/news/2024/07/canadians-to-benefit-from-higher-quality-and-more-competitive-telecom-services.html>

³⁰²⁴ CRTC takes action to improve cellphone service along eight major roads, Government of Canada (Ottawa) 28 August 2024. Access Date: 28 October 2024. <https://www.canada.ca/en/radio-television-telecommunications/news/2024/08/crtc-takes-action-to-improve-cellphone-service-along-eight-major-roads.html>

³⁰²⁵ G7 Industry and Technology Ministers Convene in Rome to Advance Industrial Competitiveness, Digital Innovation, and Sustainable Digital Transformation, MIMIT (Italy) 10 October 2024. Access Date: 31 October 2024. <https://www.mimit.gov.it/en/media-tools/news/g7-industry-and-technology-ministers-convene-in-rome-to-advance-industrial-competitiveness-digital-innovation-sustainable-digital-transformation>

³⁰²⁶ CRTC Broadband Fund: Projects selected in October 2024, Government of Canada (Ottawa) 3 October 2024. Access Date: 31 October 2024. <https://www.canada.ca/en/radio-television-telecommunications/news/2024/10/crtc-broadband-fund-projects-selected-in-october-2024.html>

³⁰²⁷ Federal funding to help increase opportunities for women and build a more resilient economy for everyone in Canada, Government of Canada (Ottawa) 1 November 2024. Access Date: 1 November 2024. <https://www.canada.ca/en/women-gender-equality/news/2024/11/federal-funding-to-help-increase-opportunities-for-women-and-build-a-more-resilient-economy-for-everyone-in-canada.html>

³⁰²⁸ Expanding high-speed Internet access in eastern Ontario, Government of Canada (Ottawa) 15 November 2024. Access Date: 30 November 2024. <https://www.canada.ca/en/innovation-science-economic-development/news/2024/11/expanding-high-speed-internet-access-in-eastern-ontario.html>

³⁰²⁹ Expanding high-speed Internet access for rural and Indigenous communities in Manitoba, Government of Canada (Ottawa) 15 November 2024. Access Date: 30 November 2024. <https://www.canada.ca/en/innovation-science-economic-development/news/2024/11/expanding-high-speed-internet-access-for-rural-and-indigenous-communities-in-manitoba.html>

On 26 November 2024, the G7 Foreign Ministers reiterated their commitment to protect human rights and dignity for all individuals and to promote gender equality.³⁰³⁰ In particular, they recognized the importance of bridging digital divides between G7 and African countries.

On 19 February 2025, Global Affairs Canada committed CAD3.16 million to supporting women-led entrepreneurship in the Caribbean.³⁰³¹ A key focus of this initiative is to leverage information and communication technology as a tool for development, which will enhance the digital skills of female entrepreneurs in the region.

On 20 February 2025, the Government of Canada announced a new policy framework to support the expansion of wireless services using satellite technology.³⁰³² This spectrum policy will help bring internet access to underserved communities, such as rural, remote or Indigenous communities.

On 25 February 2025, ISED published the list of organizations selected to receive CAD39.2 million in funding for digital skills training initiatives.³⁰³³ Delivered through the CanCode program, this investment aims to improve the digital literacy of Canadian youth, particularly those from underrepresented communities.

On 6 March 2025, ISED announced the release of additional spectrum in the 27.5-28.35 GHz band to support faster 5G deployment and innovation.³⁰³⁴ This move aims to enhance connectivity across Canada, including in rural, remote and Indigenous communities.

On 9 March 2025, Minister of International Development Ahmed Hussen declared that Canada will commit CAD272.1 million to international assistance projects in Bangladesh and the Indo-Pacific region.³⁰³⁵ Delivered through Global Affairs Canada, this funding includes CAD12 million dedicated to Gender-Responsive and Inclusive Vocational Education and Training, which will help upskill underprivileged youth, particularly girls, and including digital skills.³⁰³⁶

On 18 March 2025, CRTC Commissioner for British Columbia and Yukon Claire Anderson delivered a speech at the Spectrum Summit in Nanaimo, British Columbia, hosted by the Indigenous Connectivity Institute.³⁰³⁷ In her remarks, Commissioner Anderson called attention to the ongoing development of the Indigenous priority

³⁰³⁰ G7 Foreign Ministers' Meeting Statement, G7 Information Centre (Fiuggi – Anagni) 26 November 2024. Access Date: 11 December 2024. <https://www.g7.utoronto.ca/foreign/241126-statement.html>

³⁰³¹ Project profile — Generating resilient and inclusive trade for Caribbean women entrepreneurs — program 2024 to 2028, Government of Canada (Ottawa) 19 February 2025. Access Date: 16 April 2025. <https://w05.international.gc.ca/projectbrowser-banqueprojets/project-projet/details/p014243001>

³⁰³² Government of Canada publishes framework to expand wireless services via satellites, Government of Canada (Ottawa) 20 February 2025. Access Date: 16 April 2025. <https://www.canada.ca/en/innovation-science-economic-development/news/2025/02/government-of-canada-publishes-framework-to-expand-wireless-services-via-satellites.html>

³⁰³³ Government of Canada announces recipients of CanCode 4.0 funding, Government of Canada (Ottawa) 25 February 2025. Access Date: 16 April 2025. <https://www.canada.ca/en/innovation-science-economic-development/news/2025/02/government-of-canada-announces-recipients-of-cancode-40-funding.html>

³⁰³⁴ Government of Canada announces additional spectrum to support improved connectivity and innovative 5G applications, Government of Canada (Ottawa) 6 March 2025. Access Date: 16 April 2025. <https://www.canada.ca/en/innovation-science-economic-development/news/2025/03/government-of-canada-announces-additional-spectrum-to-support-improved-connectivity-and-innovative-5g-applications.html>

³⁰³⁵ Canada gives \$272M in aid to Bangladesh, Indo-Pacific as USAID shuttered, Global News (Vancouver) 9 March 2025. Access Date: 16 April 2025. <https://globalnews.ca/news/11073814/canada-aid-bangladesh-indo-pacific/>

³⁰³⁶ Backgrounder - Minister Hussen announces support for development projects in Bangladesh and the Indo-Pacific region, Government of Canada (Ottawa) 9 March 2025. Access Date: 16 April 2025. <https://www.canada.ca/en/global-affairs/news/2025/03/backgrounder---minister-hussen-announces-support-for-development-projects-in-bangladesh-and-the-indo-pacific-region.html>

³⁰³⁷ Claire Anderson to the Spectrum Summit 2025, Government of Canada (Ottawa) 18 March 2025. Access Date: 16 April 2025. <https://www.canada.ca/en/radio-television-telecommunications/news/2025/03/claire-anderson-to-the-spectrum-summit-2025.html>

window spectrum policy framework, along with other CRTC initiatives such as regulatory changes to improve access to telecom infrastructure and the development of an Indigenous stream within the Broadband Fund. These efforts will support Indigenous communities across Canada in bridging the digital divide.

On 1 April 2025, CRTC Commissioner for Ontario Bram Abramson delivered a speech to the Canadian Independent Telecommunications Association.³⁰³⁸ In his remarks, Commissioner Abramson outlined current CRTC initiatives, such as the Broadband Fund and the Mobile Virtual Network Operator system, as part of a broader strategy to foster competition, support investment, and close the digital divide across Canada.

Canada has fully complied with its commitment to work, including with developing countries and emerging economies, towards closing digital divides, including the gender digital divide, and achieving digital inclusion. Canada has taken strong action domestically and in cooperation with developing countries by dedicating funding to both domestic and international projects aimed at improving high-speed internet access and digital skills in underserved communities.

Thus, Canada receives a score of +1.

Analyst: Lillian Toe

France: +1

France has fully complied with its commitment to work, including with developing countries and emerging economies, towards closing digital divides, including the gender digital divide, and achieving digital inclusion.

On 9 July 2024, the French National Agency for the Cohesion of Territories launched the final application phase for its tailor-made digital support for small communities.³⁰³⁹ This initiative is aimed at offering personalized digital solutions to improve resident satisfaction of municipalities with fewer than 3,500 inhabitants and community groups under 15,000 residents.

On 11 July 2024, Ministry of Economics and Finance awarded four winning projects EUR 6.5 million in funding under the “ECONUM – Support for the development of an innovative, circular, and low environmental impact digital economy” initiative.³⁰⁴⁰ One of these projects aims to equip two million households in face of digital insecurity by 2027 through recycling digital equipment.

On 19 July 2024, the Interministerial Digital Directorate (DINUM) released eleven video tutorials in collaboration with seven ministries. These tutorials aim to simplify essential administrative tasks, such as reporting fraudulent bank use, requesting legal aid and applying for housing assistance.³⁰⁴¹ They are fully accessible to people with disabilities, increasing access to using public sectors’ digital services for all.

³⁰³⁸ Bram Abramson to The Canadian Independent Telecommunications Association, Government of Canada (Ottawa) 1 April 2025. Access Date: 16 April 2025. <https://www.canada.ca/en/radio-television-telecommunications/news/2025/04/bram-abramson-to-the-canadian-independent-telecommunications-association.html>

³⁰³⁹ Accompagnement numérique sur mesure des petites collectivités, Les services de l’État en Savoie (Paris) 9 July 2024. Translation provided by Google Translate. Access Date: 28 September 2024. <https://www.savoie.gouv.fr/Actualites/Espace-collectivites/Accompagnement-numerique-sur-mesure-des-petites-collectivites>

³⁰⁴⁰ France 2030 : quatre projets lauréats pour le soutien au développement d’une économie numérique innovante circulaire et à moindre impact environnemental financés à hauteur de 6,5 millions d’euros, Le ministère de l’Économie et des Finances (Paris) 11 July 2024. Translation provided by Google Translate. Access Date: 28 September 2024. <https://www.entreprises.gouv.fr/fr/presse/france-2030-4-projets-laureats-soutien-developpement-economie-numerique-innovante>

³⁰⁴¹ Simplification : l’État publie des tutoriels pour accompagner les citoyens dans leurs démarches administratives essentielles, Le numérique au service de l’efficacité de l’action publique (Paris) 19 July 2024. Translation provided by Google Translate. Access Date: 28 September 2024. <https://www.numerique.gouv.fr/actualites/simplification-letat-publie-des-tutoriels-pour-accompagner-les-citoyens-dans-leurs-demarches-administratives-essentielles/>

On 30 July 2024, the Government of France released the National Digital Decade Strategic Roadmap, a comprehensive plan to achieve key digital transformation goals by 2030.³⁰⁴² Key measures include investments through the EUR2.5 billion “Skills and Jobs of the Future” initiative to enhance digital education in schools, higher education, as well as efforts to upskill the workforce across sectors. By strengthening digital skills, improving infrastructure, and supporting digital education, this initiative aims to bridge the digital divide and promote participation in the digital economy.

On 24 September 2024, DINUM sponsored Numérique en Commun[s], a major event focused on sustainable and inclusive digital technology.³⁰⁴³ This initiative included workshops, masterclasses, and plenary sessions aimed at bridging the digital divide. By fostering collaboration among professionals, the event promoted innovative strategies to improve digital access and inclusion.

On 1 October 2024, the G7 Industry and Technology Ministers convened to discuss digital development and bridging the digital divide in Africa, with contributions from Egypt, India, Kenya, South Africa, Korea, the Netherlands and Tunisia.³⁰⁴⁴ This commitment aligns with the G7’s dedication to fostering inclusive and sustainable digital growth.

On 4 October 2024, President Emmanuel Macron, alongside the leaders of other French-speaking countries, issued the Villers-Cotterêts Call to promote a safe, transparent digital space.³⁰⁴⁵ This declaration aims to counter disinformation through digital literacy, implementing mechanisms to flag illegal content and collaborative frameworks to uphold reliable digital standards across the Francophone world, with a focus on building an “inclusive, pluralistic, high-quality and trustworthy digital space”.³⁰⁴⁶

On October 10, 2024, DINUM launched a barometer to address the gender divide in the digital sector by gathering insights into the experiences of women in the state’s digital workforce and supporting their career advancement.³⁰⁴⁷

On 26 November 2024, the G7 Foreign Ministers reiterated their commitment to protect human rights and dignity for all individuals and to promote gender equality.³⁰⁴⁸ In particular, they recognized the importance of bridging digital divides between G7 and African countries.

³⁰⁴² France - National Digital Decade strategic roadmap, Digital Skills and Jobs Platform (Brussels) 30 July 2024. Access Date: 11 April 2025. <https://digital-skills-jobs.europa.eu/en/actions/national-initiatives/national-strategies/france-national-digital-decade-strategic-roadmap>

³⁰⁴³ La DINUM partenaire de Numérique en Commun[s] à Chambéry, Le numérique au service de l'efficacité de l'action publique (Paris) 21 September 2024. Translation provided by Google Translate. Access Date: 1 November 2024.

<https://www.numerique.gouv.fr/agenda/la-dinum-partenaire-de-numerique-en-commun-s-a-chambery/>

³⁰⁴⁴ G7 Industry and Technology Ministers Convene in Rome to Advance Industrial Competitiveness, Digital Innovation, and Sustainable Digital Transformation, MIMIT (Italy) 10 October 2024. Access Date: 31 October 2024. <https://www.mimit.gov.it/en/media-tools/news/g7-industry-and-technology-ministers-convene-in-rome-to-advance-industrial-competitiveness-digital-innovation-sustainable-digital-transformation>

³⁰⁴⁵ The Villers-Cotterêts Call for an honest, trustworthy digital space in the Francophone world (4 October 2024), Ministry of Europe and Foreign Affairs (Paris) 4 October 2024. Translation provided by Google Translate. Access Date: 1 November 2024. <https://www.diplomatie.gouv.fr/en/french-foreign-policy/francophony-and-the-french-language/news/article/the-villers-cotterets-call-for-an-honest-trustworthy-digital-space-in-the>

³⁰⁴⁶ The Villers-Cotterêts Call for an honest, trustworthy digital space in the Francophone world (4 October 2024), Ministry of Europe and Foreign Affairs (Paris) 4 October 2024. Translation provided by Google Translate. Access Date: 1 November 2024. <https://www.diplomatie.gouv.fr/en/french-foreign-policy/francophony-and-the-french-language/news/article/the-villers-cotterets-call-for-an-honest-trustworthy-digital-space-in-the>

³⁰⁴⁷ Féminisation de la filière numérique de l'État : répondez au baromètre pour agir en faveur de la parité, Le numérique au service de l'efficacité de l'action publique (Paris) 10 October 2024. Translation provided by Google Translate. Access Date: 11 November 2024. <https://www.numerique.gouv.fr/actualites/feminisation-de-la-filiere-numerique-de-letat-repondez-au-barometre-pour-agir-en-faveur-de-la-parite/>

³⁰⁴⁸ G7 Foreign Ministers’ Meeting Statement, G7 Information Centre (Fiuggi – Anagni) 26 November 2024. Access Date: 11 December 2024. <https://www.g7.utoronto.ca/foreign/241126-statement.html>

On 28 February 2025, the Interministerial Directorate for Digital, in partnership with Déclic (France's national federation of Public Operators of Digital Services), launched the Baromètre Numérique & Collectivités as part of the Transformation Numérique des Territoires program.³⁰⁴⁹ The barometer will annually document and measure the level of digital transformation of local authorities to provide insights into their digital usage and strategy. The initiative aims to enhance digital strategies, improve access to online public services, and reduce disparities in digital access across France's territories.

France has fully complied with its commitment to work, including with developing countries and emerging economies, towards closing digital divides, including the gender digital divide, and achieving digital inclusion. France has taken strong action to bridge the digital divide both domestically and with developing economies, including through the National Digital Decade Strategic Roadmap, the Villers-Cotterêts Call, and the AI Action Summit.

Thus, France receives a score of +1

Analyst: Ethan Zingariello

Germany: +1

Germany has fully complied with its commitment to work, including with developing countries and emerging economies, towards closing digital divides, including the gender digital divide, and achieving digital inclusion.

On 15 July 2024, the Federal Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs (BMAS) launched its Youth Guarantee initiative, aiming to provide 100,000 young people with access to training and job opportunities in digital skills by 2025.³⁰⁵⁰ This initiative is critical for reducing the digital divide among youth by equipping them with the necessary competencies for the digital economy, ultimately fostering greater employment prospects and economic participation.

On 22 July 2024, the German Foreign Office outlined the goals of the EU Global Gateway initiative, which has a budget of EUR300 billion earmarked for projects enhancing sustainable development, including digital connectivity efforts.³⁰⁵¹ By fostering reliable digital infrastructure, this initiative seeks to improve access to digital technologies for underserved communities, contributing to broader efforts in achieving digital inclusion across Europe and beyond.

On 31 July 2024, BMAS published a comprehensive Digitalization Strategy for Public Employment and Social Protection Services, designed to enhance access to social services through digital means.³⁰⁵² This strategy promotes user-friendly and inclusive digital interfaces, aiming to reach 1 million marginalized individuals by 2026, thereby facilitating their integration into the digital economy and improving overall digital literacy.

³⁰⁴⁹ Baromètre Collectivités & Numérique : Acteurs des territoires, découvrez les premiers résultats du baromètre et répondez jusqu'au 23 mai 2025 à la dernière consultation !, Direction interministérielle du Numérique (Paris) 28 February 2025. Translation provided by Analyst. Access Date: 10 Apr 2025. <https://www.numerique.gouv.fr/actualites/barom%C3%A8tre-collectivit%C3%A9s--num%C3%A9rique--acteurs-des-territoires-d%C3%A9couvrez-les-premiers-r%C3%A9sultats-du-barom%C3%A8tre-et-r%C3%A9pondez-jusquau-23-mai-2025-%C3%A0-la-derni%C3%A8re-consultation/>

³⁰⁵⁰ The Youth Guarantee, Federal Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs (Berlin) 15 July 2024. Access Date: 30 October 2024. <https://www.bmas.de/EN/Europe-and-the-World/Europe/Employment-and-social-policy-in-the-EU/youth-guarantee.html>

³⁰⁵¹ EU Global Gateway: Global Partnerships for Democratic and Sustainable Standards, German Federal Foreign Office (Berlin) 22 July 2024. Access Date: 30 October 2024. <https://www.auswaertiges-amt.de/en/aussenpolitik/europe/eu-global-gateway--globale-partnerschaften-fuer-demokratische-und-nachhaltige-standards/2607028>

³⁰⁵² Digitalization Strategy for Employment and Social Protection Services: Improving Access through Digital Means, Federal Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs (Berlin) 31 July 2024. Access Date: 30 October 2024. <https://www.bmas.de/EN/Services/Publications/a900-digitalisation-strategy-public-employment-social-protection-services.html>

On 1 September 2024, the German Foreign Office introduced its updated Humanitarian Action and Human Rights Strategy, which emphasizes integrating digital technologies into humanitarian efforts.³⁰⁵³ The strategy specifically targets enhancing access to essential services for 500,000 vulnerable individuals, with a focus on fostering digital literacy among marginalized groups, particularly women and children, ensuring they can benefit from digital advancements.

On 25 September 2024, the German Foreign Office announced new policy guidelines for the Indo-Pacific region, which emphasize digital cooperation with partner nations.³⁰⁵⁴ These guidelines aim to support the development of digital infrastructure and connectivity in the region, helping at least 20 countries overcome digital divides and aligning with Germany's commitment to international collaboration for digital inclusion.

On 25 September 2024, the German Foreign Office released a Progress Report on the German-Latin American and Caribbean Partnership, highlighting initiatives to promote digital cooperation and sustainable development.³⁰⁵⁵ Specific actions include providing technical assistance to five Latin American countries to enhance their digital infrastructures, alongside capacity-building programs aimed at improving digital skills for 10,000 marginalized community members, particularly women.

On 1 October 2024, the G7 Industry and Technology Ministers convened to discuss digital development and bridging the digital divide in Africa, with contributions from Egypt, India, Kenya, South Africa, Korea, the Netherlands and Tunisia.³⁰⁵⁶ This commitment aligns with the G7's dedication to fostering inclusive and sustainable digital growth.

On 10 October 2024, the Federal Ministry of Digital and Transport initiated a National Strategy for Sea and Inland Ports, focusing on modernizing logistics through digital infrastructure improvements.³⁰⁵⁷ This strategy is projected to enhance operational efficiency in 20 major ports, significantly improving trade capabilities with developing countries and thus aiding in bridging digital divides and facilitating economic growth.

On 16 October 2024, Federal Minister for Economic Cooperation and Development Svenja Schulze addressed the sixth German-Arab Women's Forum, emphasizing the empowerment of 50,000 women through digitalization and international partnerships.³⁰⁵⁸ This initiative directly addresses the gender digital divide and promotes gender equality in digital spaces, fostering greater participation of women in technology sectors.

On 19 November 2024, Deputy Head of Division for Digital Technologies Katharina Mänz attended the 2024 Tallinn Digital Summit and kicked off the session titled "Bridging the Digital Divide: GovStack as the DPI

³⁰⁵³ Federal Foreign Office Strategy for Humanitarian Assistance Abroad, German Federal Foreign Office (Berlin) 1 September 2024. Access Date: 30 October 2024. <https://rom-io.diplo.de/fao-en/aktuelles/-/2678106>

³⁰⁵⁴ Intensifying security policy cooperation, strengthening economic relations and tackling the climate crisis: The Federal Government adopts the fourth Progress report on the implementation of the Federal Government's policy guidelines for the Indo-Pacific, German Federal Foreign Office (Berlin) 25 September 2024. Access Date: 30 October 2024. <https://www.auswaertiges-amt.de/en/aussenpolitik/policy-guidelines-indo-pacific/2677534>

³⁰⁵⁵ Progress report on the implementation of the Federal Government's policy guidelines for the Indo-Pacific for the year 2024, German Federal Foreign Office (Berlin) 25 September 2024. Access Date: 30 October 2024. <https://www.auswaertiges-amt.de/en/aussenpolitik/policy-guidelines-indo-pacific/2677534>

³⁰⁵⁶ G7 Industry and Technology Ministers Convene in Rome to Advance Industrial Competitiveness, Digital Innovation, and Sustainable Digital Transformation, MIMIT (Italy) 10 October 2024. Access Date: 31 October 2024. <https://www.mimit.gov.it/en/media-tools/news/g7-industry-and-technology-ministers-convene-in-rome-to-advance-industrial-competitiveness-digital-innovation-sustainable-digital-transformation>

³⁰⁵⁷ The National Ports Strategy, Federal Ministry of Digital and Transport (Berlin) 10 October 2024. Access Date: 30 October 2024. <https://bmdv.bund.de/SharedDocs/EN/Articles/WS/national-strategy-for-sea-and-inland-ports-2015.html>

³⁰⁵⁸ Speech by Federal Minister Svenja Schulze at the 6th German-Arab Women's Forum, Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (Berlin) 16 October 2024. Access Date: 30 October 2024. <https://www.bmz.de/en/news/speeches-and-contributions/minister-svenja-schulze/speech-6th-german-arab-womens-forum-232796>

Implementation Stack for Global Interoperability and Digital Governance.”³⁰⁵⁹ This session explored how open, modular digital building blocks can create inclusive digital ecosystems to bridge the global digital divide.

On 21 November 2024, the Federal Ministry for Digital and Transport hosted the first International Digital Dialogues Conference.³⁰⁶⁰ The conference included over 100 selected representatives from the public and private sector, civil society and academia to discuss current digital issues with the goal of providing the opportunities of the global digital transformation to all.

On 26 November 2024, the G7 Foreign Ministers reiterated their commitment to protect human rights and dignity for all individuals and to promote gender equality.³⁰⁶¹ In particular, they recognized the importance of bridging digital divides between G7 and African countries.

On 23 January, the Federal Ministry for Digital Affairs and Transport approved a budget of EUR1.2 billion to be made available specifically and exclusively for infrastructure funding and the digital gap-closing programme.³⁰⁶² This additional funding, in addition to the EUR2 billion earmarked for the project in 2024, contributes to the national expansion of fiber optic cables which provide digital services and connectivity to 440,000 households as of January 2025. The continuation of this project aims to create digital participation for all by ensuring that all citizens have access to digital infrastructures.

On 28 January, Federal Digital Minister Volker Wissing opened an Innovation and Quality Center for artificial intelligence in Berlin.³⁰⁶³ The center, located at the German Museum of Technology and funded by the Federal Ministry for Digital Affairs and Transport, is the latest step in Germany’s Mission KI, a national initiative for artificial intelligence and data economy.³⁰⁶⁴ The inauguration of this center marks progress towards strengthening digital competitiveness and making frontier digital technologies available to all. Furthermore, the center will be open to all public and private education institutions, hoping to expose children of all socioeconomic backgrounds to digital technologies and incite them to pursue careers in the domain.

On 7 February 2025, the Federal Ministry for Digital Affairs and Transport pledged EUR870,000 for the construction of a platform in the North Sea intended for launching satellites.³⁰⁶⁵ The project, called the “Offshore Spaceport - Finding Solutions and Infrastructure Development for Orbital Launches” initiative will allow for increased satellite activity and provide better access to important digital services such as communications and 5G networks in remote and less digitally serviced areas.

³⁰⁵⁹ GovStack at the Tallinn Digital Summit, Digital Global (Berlin) 19 November 2024. Access Date: 11 December 2024. <https://www.bmz-digital.global/en/event/govstack-tallinn-digital-summit/>

³⁰⁶⁰ International Digital Dialogues Conference – Shaping digital policy together, Federal Ministry for Digital and Transport (Berlin) 21 November 2024. Access Date: 11 December 2024. <https://digital-dialogues.net/en/events/details/international-digital-dialogues-conference-shaping-digital-policy-together>

³⁰⁶¹ G7 Foreign Ministers’ Meeting Statement, G7 Information Centre (Fiuggi – Anagni) 26 November 2024. Access Date: 11 December 2024. <https://www.g7.utoronto.ca/foreign/241126-statement.html>

³⁰⁶² New funding round ensures continuity in fiber optic expansion (Berlin), 28 January 2025. Translation provided by Google Translate. Access Date: 23 January 2025. <https://bmdv.bund.de/SharedDocs/DE/Pressemitteilungen/2025/004-wissing-gigabitfoerderung-glasfaserausbau.html>

³⁰⁶³ Federal Minister Wissing opens AI Center in Berlin, Federal Ministry of Transport and Digital Infrastructure (Berlin), 28 January 2025. Translation provided by Google Translate. Access Date: 16 February 2025. <https://bmdv.bund.de/SharedDocs/DE/Pressemitteilungen/2025/005-wissing-eroeffnet-ki-zentrum.html>

³⁰⁶⁴ Federal Minister Wissing opens AI center in Berlin, National Initiative for Artificial Intelligence and Data Economy (Berlin), 28 January 2025. Translation provided by Google Translate. Access Date: 16 February 2025. <https://mission-ki.de/en/federal-minister-wissing-opens-ai-center-in-berlin>

³⁰⁶⁵ BMDV promotes planning for mobile satellite launches in the North Sea, Federal Ministry of Transport and Digital Infrastructure (Berlin), 7 February 2025. Translation provided by Google Translate. Access Date: 16 February 2025. <https://bmdv.bund.de/SharedDocs/DE/Pressemitteilungen/2025/008-schnorr-welttraum-ist-zukunftsmarkt.html>

On 5 March 2025, the Federal Ministry for Digital Affairs and Transport announced a EUR 40 million investment and a new call for funding to expand the Gap Closing Pilot Program³⁰⁶⁶. This initiative will support the goal of achieving nationwide gigabit access in Germany, particularly in technologically underserved areas that do not benefit from private sector expansion.

Germany has fully complied with its commitment to work, including with developing countries and emerging economies, towards closing digital divides, including the gender digital divide, and achieving digital inclusion. The country has launched several initiatives aimed at enhancing digital skills and connectivity, creating opportunities for women to close the digital literacy gap and has collaborated with developing countries and emerging economies in these efforts, such as the Indo-Pacific region and the Caribbean.

Thus, Germany receives a score of +1.

Analysts: Bo Wen Zhang and Raphaël Bitter

Italy: 0

Italy has partially complied with its commitment to work, including with developing countries and emerging economies, towards closing digital divides, including the gender digital divide, and achieving digital inclusion.

On 28 June 2024 the Joint Committee for Development Cooperation, chaired by Council Vice President and Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation Antonio Tajani, approved the creation of a flagship initiative on digital development to be linked to the Mattei Plan, granting the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) a financial contribution for technical assistance aimed at drafting the project document by July 2025.³⁰⁶⁷ Project development remains ongoing with four beneficiary countries: Ivory Coast, Ghana, Senegal and Mozambique.

On 1 July 2024, Ministry of Economy and Finance announced the launch of FiberCop as an open-access wholesale telecommunications network, providing nationwide end-to-end connectivity services.³⁰⁶⁸ This strategic partnership aims to accelerate Italy's transition from copper to fiber-optic infrastructure, supporting the country's digital transformation and economic development across all regions.

On 4 July 2024, Ministry of Enterprises and Made in Italy released a public notice for projects aimed at enhancing digital and media literacy among minors, with a total funding of EUR 1.7 million.³⁰⁶⁹ The projects are required to create educational materials and awareness campaigns targeting children aged 8 to 18, while also addressing secondary audiences such as parents, educators, and child protection workers.

On 12 July 2024, Ministers of Labor and Social Policies Marina Calderone and Eugenia Roccella raised concerns about the potential for AI to introduce new workplace discrimination, highlighting this as a key topic for the G7 Labour Ministerial in Cagliari.³⁰⁷⁰

³⁰⁶⁶ New call for funding for the gap-closing pilot program launched, Federal Ministry of Transport and Digital Infrastructure (Berlin), 5 March 2025. Translation provided by Google Translate. Access Date: 21 April 2025.

<https://bmdv.bund.de/SharedDocs/DE/Pressemitteilungen/2025/014-wissing-gigabitfoerderung-lueckenschluss.html>

³⁰⁶⁷ INIZIATIVE APPROVATE, Ministero degli affari esteri e della cooperazione internazionale (Rome) 28 June 2024. Access Date: 11 March 2025. https://www.esteri.it/wp-content/uploads/2024/07/Elenco-Delibere_IV-Riunione-Comitato-Congiunto_28.06.2024.pdf

³⁰⁶⁸ Joint statement on the FiberCop closing day, Il Ministero dell'Economia e delle Finanze (Rome) 1 July 2024. Access Date: 28 September 2024. <https://www.mef.gov.it/en/ufficio-stampa/comunicati/2024/Joint-statement-on-the-FiberCop-closing-day-00001/>

³⁰⁶⁹ Alfabetizzazione mediatica e digitale a tutela dei minori: online l'avviso pubblico, Il Ministero delle Imprese e del Made in Italy (Rome) 4 July 2024. Access Date: 28 September 2024. <https://www.mimit.gov.it/it/notizie-stampa/alfabetizzazione-mediatica-e-digitale-a-tutela-dei-minori-on-line-lavviso-pubblico>

³⁰⁷⁰ The National Conference of the Equality Counsellors (consiglieri di parità) at the Ministry of Labour and Social Policies, Ministry of Labour and Social Policies (Rome) 12 July 2024. Access Date: 28 September 2024. <https://www.lavoro.gov.it/g7-labour/news/national-conference-equality-counsellors-ministry-labour-and-social>

On 18 July 2024, Italy and the UNDP launched the first public report on the co-design of the Artificial Intelligence (AI) Hub for Sustainable Development.³⁰⁷¹ This report outlines a framework for leveraging artificial intelligence to promote social and economic development in vulnerable regions. By focusing on partnerships and innovative applications of technology, this initiative demonstrates Italy's commitment to advancing sustainable development goals through collaborative efforts.

On 19 July 2024, Italy and the UNDP opened a call for applications to the AI Hub for Sustainable Development Co-Design.³⁰⁷² Startup initiatives can cover three areas, compute access and affordability, skill gaps, and data public goods. Part of the Mattei Plan, projects can operate in Algeria, Republic of the Congo, Côte D'Ivoire, Egypt, Ethiopia, Kenya, Morocco, Mozambique, or Tunisia.

On 23 August 2024, Italy and the UNDP selected 12 finalists for the AI Hub for Sustainable Development Co-Design Startup Acceleration Pilot.³⁰⁷³ Projects include Maternanet Africa, bringing digital solutions to maternal health, and Kytabu which leverages Artificial Intelligence to improve education in Kenya.³⁰⁷⁴

On 19 September 2024, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation Edmondo Cirielli participated in a ceremony to sign a convention focused on public digital infrastructure development projects.³⁰⁷⁵ This initiative aims to enhance digital capabilities in Italy, facilitating greater access to technology and services for over 60 million citizens. By investing in digital infrastructure, this action supports G7 commitments to promote technological inclusivity and enhance public service delivery, ensuring that all citizens can benefit from advancements in technology.

On 1 October 2024, the G7 Industry and Technology Ministers convened to discuss digital development and bridging the digital divide in Africa, with contributions from Egypt, India, Kenya, South Africa, Korea, the Netherlands and Tunisia.³⁰⁷⁶ This commitment aligns with the G7's dedication to fostering inclusive and sustainable digital growth.

On 10 October, Minister of Enterprises and Made in Italy Adolfo Urso and Deputy Minister Cirielli signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the UNDP and the International Telecommunication Union to further collaboration on supporting AI startups in Africa.³⁰⁷⁷

³⁰⁷¹ The Italian G7 Presidency and UNDP launch first public report on the co-design of the AI Hub for Sustainable Development, Il Ministero delle Imprese e del Made in Italy (Rome) 18 July 2024. Access Date: 31 October 2024. <https://www.mimit.gov.it/en/media-tools/news/the-italian-g7-presidency-and-undp-launch-first-public-report-on-the-co-design-of-the-ai-hub-for-sustainable-development>

³⁰⁷² AI Hub for Sustainable Development Co-Design, United Nations Development Programme (New York) 19 July 2024. Access Date: 12 March 2025. <https://www.undp.org/digital/ai/startup-acceleration-pilot>

³⁰⁷³ AI Hub for Sustainable Development Co-Design, United Nations Development Programme (New York) n.d.. Access Date: 12 March 2025. <https://www.undp.org/digital/ai/startup-acceleration-pilot>

³⁰⁷⁴ AI Hub Co-Design Programmes: Startup Accelerator Pilot, AI Hub for Development (Rome) n.d. Access Date: 12 March 2025. <https://www.aihubfordevelopment.org/startup-accelerator-pilot>

³⁰⁷⁵ Deputy Minister Cirielli at the ceremony for the signing of an agreement for development projects in the field of public digital infrastructures, Ministry of Foreign Affairs (Rome) 19 September 2024. Access Date: 31 October 2024. https://www.esteri.it/it/sala_stampa/archivionotizie/comunicati/2024/09/il-vice-ministro-cirielli-alla-cerimonia-per-la-firma-di-una-convenzione-per-progetti-di-sviluppo-in-materia-di-infrastrutture-digitali-pubbliche/

³⁰⁷⁶ G7 Industry and Technology Ministers Convene in Rome to Advance Industrial Competitiveness, Digital Innovation, and Sustainable Digital Transformation, Il Ministero delle Imprese e del Made in Italy (Rome) 10 October 2024. Access Date: 31 October 2024. <https://www.mimit.gov.it/en/media-tools/news/g7-industry-and-technology-ministers-convene-in-rome-to-advance-industrial-competitiveness-digital-innovation-sustainable-digital-transformation>

³⁰⁷⁷ MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING BETWEEN THE UNITED NATIONS DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME, THE INTERNATIONAL TELECOMMUNICATION UNION, THE MINISTRY OF ENTERPRISES AND MADE IN ITALY AND THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION OF THE ITALIAN REPUBLIC, International Telecommunication Union (Geneva) 10 October 2024. Access Date: 12 March 2025. <https://www.itu.int/en/ITU-T/extcoop/Documents/mou/ITU-UNDP-Italy-20241010.pdf>

On 18 October 2024, the Department for Digital Transformation released its first series of publications dedicated to examining the level of digital skills in Italy.³⁰⁷⁸ The results of the report are relevant for future policies regarding social inclusion, employment and access to other various opportunities.

On 12 November 2024, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, the Ministry of Enterprises and Made in Italy, the National Promotional Institution (CDP) and the UNDP organized the G7 Conference Growing Together: Building Public-Private Partnerships to Boost the AI Revolution.³⁰⁷⁹ The conference, aimed at public-private collaboration, brought together investors, institutional representatives and startups with a mission driven by sustainable development and the Mattei Plan for Africa. Startup participants included companies from the Italy-UNDP AI Hub for Sustainable Development accelerator programs.

On 26 November 2024, the G7 Foreign Ministers reiterated their commitment to protect human rights and dignity for all individuals and to promote gender equality.³⁰⁸⁰ In particular, they recognized the importance of bridging digital divides between G7 and African countries.

On 9 December 2024, the Inter-Ministerial Committee for Development Cooperation approved the three-year programming and direction document outline for development cooperation policy.³⁰⁸¹ The plan outlines the digital transformation as a key driver of sustainable development and aims to enhance technological access in developing countries and close digital divides in public service delivery.³⁰⁸² The document incorporates integrates gender considerations across all cooperation initiatives for 2024-2026 and particularly promotes information and communication technologies access to empower women. Italy's Global Gateway collaboration with the EU aims to bring infrastructure and digital connectivity investment to emerging economies across Asia, Latin America, and Africa.

On 9 January 2025, the Department for Digital Transformation published the findings of a joint study between Connect Italy and the National Agency for Investment Attraction and Business Development.³⁰⁸³ This study mapped the coverage of national territory with 4G and 5G mobile networks by 5 of the largest internet operators. The presentation of the findings works to attenuate the digital divide by physically mapping internet access and providing the Department for Digital Transformation with the data of which areas are most developed, and which require consideration regarding the digital divide.³⁰⁸⁴

³⁰⁷⁸ È online il primo Quaderno di Repubblica Digitale, dedicato alle competenze digitali, Repubblica Digitale (Roma) 18 October 2024. Translation provided by Google Translate. Access Date: 11 December 2024. <https://repubblicadigitale.gov.it/portale/-/al-via-a-torino-la-terza-edizione-del-festival-del-digitale-popolare-duplica-1>

³⁰⁷⁹ San Francisco, G7 Conference Growing Together: Building Public-Private Partnerships to Boost the AI Revolution, Italian Consulate General in San Francisco (San Francisco) 19 November 2024. Access Date: 12 March 2025. https://conssanfrancisco.esteri.it/en/news/dal_consolato/2024/11/san-francisco-g7-conference-growing-together-building-public-private-partnerships-to-boost-the-ai-revolution/

³⁰⁸⁰ G7 Foreign Ministers' Meeting Statement, G7 Information Centre (Fiuggi – Anagni), 26 November 2024. Access Date: 11 December 2024. <https://www.g7.utoronto.ca/foreign/241126-statement.html>

³⁰⁸¹ RESOLUTION 9 December 2024, Gazzeta Ufficiale Della Repubblica Italiana (Rome) 9 December 2024. Access Date: 12 March 2025. <https://www.gazzettaufficiale.it/eli/id/2025/02/03/25A00622/SG>

³⁰⁸² Schema di Documento triennale di programmazione e di indirizzo della politica di cooperazione allo sviluppo, riferito agli anni 2024-2026, Camera dei Deputati (Rome) 3 February 2025. Access Date: 12 March 2025. <https://documenti.camera.it/leg19/dossier/pdf/ES0252.pdf>

³⁰⁸³ Esiti Mappatura delle reti mobili 2024: conclusa l'analisi dei dati forniti dagli operatori, Infratel Italia (Roma), 8 January 2025. Translation provided by Google Translate. Access Date: 11 February 2025. <https://www.infratelitalia.it/archivio-documenti/documenti/esiti-mappatura-reti-mobili-2024>

³⁰⁸⁴ Reti Ultraveloci e 5G: pubblicati gli esiti della mappatura reti mobili 2024, Dipartimento per la trasformazione digitale (Roma), 9 January 2025. Translation provided by Google Translate. Access Date: 11 February 2025. <https://innovazione.gov.it/notizie/articoli/reti-ultraveloci-e-5g-pubblicati-gli-esiti-della-mappatura-reti-mobili-2024/>

On 28 January 2025, the Agency for Digital Italy published the data on the Monitoring Project as part of the Digital Accessibility Initiative.³⁰⁸⁵ Having analysed more than 4.7 million web pages, 29,409 internet sites, and 780,152 PDF files, this report aims to promote a fair digital environment in which no user is excluded from the benefits that frontier digital technologies provide.³⁰⁸⁶ The data is used by the Agency for Digital Italy to develop training programmes which target accessibility barriers in public administration websites and reduce the digital divide.

On 2 April 2025, the Agency for Digital Italy and the Ministry of University and Research announced the launch of phase two of the “Innovative Virtual and Augmented Reality Applications for Persons with Autism Spectrum Condition (ASC)”.³⁰⁸⁷ Marked by the execution of the EUR 2 million research grant for phase one and the announcement of an additional EUR 4 million for the winners of phase two, this initiative seeks to utilise frontier technologies such as augmented reality to promote the digital inclusion of individuals living with disabilities.

Italy has partially complied with its commitment to work, including with developing countries and emerging economies, towards closing digital divides, including the gender digital divide, and achieving digital inclusion. Italy has taken strong action to close digital divides in Africa through the AI Hub for Sustainable Development and Mattei Plan. All Italy’s 2024-2026 development work integrates gender considerations and specific projects in Kenya demonstrate this emphasis. Italy has engaged with emerging economies but has not directly collaborated projects in these countries. Italy’s compliance remains partial as they have yet to advance four strong actions that cover each of the four compliance criteria.

Thus, Italy receives a score of 0.

Analysts: Bo Wen Zhang and Raphaël Bitter

Japan: +1

Japan has fully complied with its commitment to work, including with developing countries and emerging economies, towards closing digital divides, including the gender digital divide, and achieving digital inclusion.

On 13 September 2024, Japan, as part of the G20 Ministers responsible for the Digital Economy, convened in Maceió, Brazil, to address digital inclusion and reducing digital inequalities.³⁰⁸⁸ This meeting reaffirmed the commitment to cut the gender digital divide in half by 2030 and emphasized the need for affordable, secure, and meaningful connectivity for underserved populations. The Ministers highlighted the importance of digital literacy and skills to empower individuals for safe and productive engagement in the digital world.

On 1 October 2024, the G7 Industry and Technology Ministers convened to discuss digital development and bridging the digital divide in Africa, with contributions from Egypt, India, Kenya, South Africa, Korea, the

³⁰⁸⁵ Cronologia del progetto: Scopri gli aggiornamenti in arrivo e rivedi i dettagli degli aggiornamenti passati, Monitoraggio Accessibilità (Roma), 16 January 2025. Translation provided by Google Translate. Access Date: 11 February 2025. <https://monitoraggio.accessibilita.agid.gov.it/cronologia>

³⁰⁸⁶ Accessibility monitoring, Q4 2024 data online, Agenzia per l'Italia Digitale (Roma), 28 January 2025. Translation provided by Google Translate. Access Date: 11 February 2025. <https://www.agid.gov.it/en/news/accessibility-monitoring-q4-2024-data-online>

³⁰⁸⁷ Smarter Italy, Agid and MUR launch phase 2 of the innovation procurement on autism technologies (Roma), 2 April 2025. Translation provided by Google Translate. Access Date: 21 April 2025. <https://www.agid.gov.it/en/news/smarter-italy-agid-and-mur-launch-phase-2-innovation-procurement-autism-technologies>

³⁰⁸⁸ G20 MACEIÓ MINISTERIAL DECLARATION ON DIGITAL INCLUSION FOR ALL, G20 Brazil (Maceió) 13 September 2024. Access Date 1 November 2024. <https://www.g20.org/en/tracks/shepa-track/digital-economy>

Netherlands and Tunisia.³⁰⁸⁹ This commitment aligns with the G7's dedication to fostering inclusive and sustainable digital growth.

On 10 October 2024, Prime Minister Shigeru Ishiba attended the 27th ASEAN-Japan Summit in Vientiane, Laos.³⁰⁹⁰ Prime Minister Ishiba announced Japan's commitment to advancing digital transformation in the Association of South East Asian Nations through initiatives such as AI human resources development in partnership with the Economic Research Institute for ASEAN and East Asia and promoting the rollout of 5G infrastructure. These measures aim to bridge digital divides and foster trust in the digital ecosystem across the ASEAN region.

On 11 October 2024, Prime Minister Ishiba and Vietnamese Prime Minister Pham Minh Chinh held a meeting during the ASEAN-related summit meetings.³⁰⁹¹ The leaders reaffirmed their commitment to advance the "Comprehensive Strategic Partnership for Peace and Prosperity in Asia and the World," and agreed to deepen cooperation in high technology, digital transformation, and human resource development. This initiative aligns with Japan's commitment to close digital divides and achieve digital inclusion by fostering collaborative efforts with Vietnam to promote digital skills and services.

On 15 November 2024, Prime Minister Ishiba participated in the second Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation Forum Leaders' Dialogue with the APEC Business Advisory Council in Lima, Peru.³⁰⁹² Prime Minister Ishiba emphasized the importance of leveraging AI and digital technologies to address social challenges and advocated for regional knowledge-sharing initiatives.

On 16 November 2024, Prime Minister Ishiba Shigeru met with Vietnamese President Luong Cuong during the APEC summit held in Peru.³⁰⁹³ Both leaders agreed to deepen their cooperation under the Comprehensive Strategic Partnership for Peace and Prosperity in Asia and the World, with a focus on digital transformation, infrastructure development and human resource development. This initiative seeks to bridge technological gaps and foster sustainable growth, aligning with Japan's goals to create an inclusive digital economy.

On 26 November 2024, the G7 Foreign Ministers reiterated their commitment to protect human rights and dignity for all individuals and to promote gender equality.³⁰⁹⁴ In particular, they recognized the importance of bridging digital divides between G7 and African countries.

On 2 December 2024, the Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications held the Digital Academy in collaboration with the World Bank.³⁰⁹⁵ The event focused on addressing the digital divide, promoting digital

³⁰⁸⁹ G7 Industry and Technology Ministers Convene in Rome to Advance Industrial Competitiveness, Digital Innovation, and Sustainable Digital Transformation, MIMIT (Italy) 10 October 2024. Access Date: 31 October 2024. <https://www.mimit.gov.it/en/media-tools/news/g7-industry-and-technology-ministers-convene-in-rome-to-advance-industrial-competitiveness-digital-innovation-sustainable-digital-transformation>

³⁰⁹⁰ The 27th ASEAN Japan Summit, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan (Tokyo) 21 October 2024. Access Date: 20 November 2024. https://www.mofa.go.jp/a_o/rp/pageite_000001_00606.html

³⁰⁹¹ Japan-Viet Nam Summit Meeting (Summary), Prime Minister's Office of Japan (Tokyo) 11 October 2024. Access Date: 22 November 2024. https://japan.kantei.go.jp/102_ishiba/diplomatic/202410/11vietnam.html

³⁰⁹² APEC Leaders' Meeting 2024 (Session II: APEC Leaders Dialogue with APEC Business Advisory Council (ABAC)) (Summary), Prime Minister's Office of Japan (Tokyo) 15 November 2024. Access Date: 21 November 2024. https://japan.kantei.go.jp/103/diplomatic/202411/15apec_s2.html

³⁰⁹³ Japan-Vietnam Summit Meeting (Summary), Prime Minister's Office of Japan (Tokyo) 16 November 2024. Access Date: 21 November 2024. <https://japan.kantei.go.jp/103/diplomatic/202411/16vietnam.html>

³⁰⁹⁴ G7 Foreign Ministers' Meeting Statement G7 Information Centre (Fiuggi – Anagni) 26 November 2024. Access Date: 11 December 2024. <https://www.g7.utoronto.ca/foreign/241126-statement.html>

³⁰⁹⁵ Results of the Digital Academy in Collaboration with the World Bank, Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications (Tokyo) 6 December 2024. Access Date: 19 February 2025. https://www.soumu.go.jp/main_sosiki/joho_tsusin/eng/pressrelease/2024/12/6_1.html

resilience and leveraging ICT to tackle social issues, and was attended by 21 countries from Asia, the Pacific, the Caucasus and Eastern Europe.³⁰⁹⁶

On 4 December 2024, the Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications announced that representatives from Japan, Australia, Kiribati, the Federated States of Micronesia, Nauru and the United States held the Fifth Meeting of the East Micronesia Cable Project Executive Board online, to reaffirm the progress that had been made since the previous meeting.³⁰⁹⁷ The East Micronesia Cable project is jointly funded by Australia, Japan and the United States, and seeks to provide fast and reliable internet connectivity for up to 100,000 people across the Federated States of Micronesia, Kiribati and Nauru, via a submarine cable.³⁰⁹⁸

On 22 January 2025, the Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications, the Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry and the Digital Agency along with UK Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State at the Department for Science, Innovation and Technology held the third ministerial council of the Japan-UK digital partnership.³⁰⁹⁹ The participants released a joint statement outlining the future direction of the partnership including bilateral Beyond 5G/6G R&D initiatives, cyber resilience knowledge-sharing and the promotion of DFFT in multilateral forums.

On 23 January 2025, Ambassador to Cambodia Ueno Atsushi and Cambodian Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation Prak Sokhonn signed and exchanged notes regarding a grant aid project for the provision of election-related digital equipment.³¹⁰⁰ The grant aid project has a grant provision of up to JPY750 million, and aims to promote safe and secure elections in Cambodia by providing election servers and cyber-security equipment in light of Cambodia's aging equipment and the increasing scale of cyber-attacks.

On 12 February 2025, Ambassador to the Philippines Endo Kazuya and Philippine Secretary for Foreign Affairs Enrique A. Manalo signed and exchanged notes regarding a grant aid project for the provision of Open RAN telecommunications equipment.³¹⁰¹ The grant aid project has a grant provision of up to JPY444 million, and is expected to strengthen Filipino information and communication infrastructure as the country undergoes a digitalization of its public services.

On 27 February 2025, Ambassador to Cambodia Atsushi Ueno and Cambodian Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation Prak Sokhonn signed a grant agreement worth JPY 404 million to provide Cambodia with educational ICT equipment.³¹⁰² The project will supply the Techo Sen Institute of Public Works and Transport with ICT tools manufactured by Japanese companies, enhancing digital education for students trained to lead public works projects.

³⁰⁹⁶ Tokyo Digital Academy Program – Leveraging Digital Transformation for Resilience: Ideas Actioned, World Bank Group (Washington, D.C.) 5 December 2024. Access Date: 19 February 2025. <https://www.worldbank.org/en/events/2024/10/24/tokyo-digital-academy-program-leveraging-digital-transformation-for-resilience-ideas-actioned>

³⁰⁹⁷ The Fifth Meeting of the East Micronesia Cable Project Executive Board, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan (Tokyo) 4 December 2024. Access Date: 19 February 2025. https://www.mofa.go.jp/press/release/pressite_000001_00785.html

³⁰⁹⁸ East Micronesia Cable, East Micronesia Cable System (Canberra) 5 June 2023. Access Date: 19 February 2025. <https://www.eastmicronesiacable.com/>

³⁰⁹⁹ Outcomes of the Third Ministerial Council of the Japan-UK Digital Partnership, Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications, JAPAN (Tokyo) 22 January 2025. Access Date: 19 February 2025. https://www.soumu.go.jp/main_sosiki/joho_tsusin/eng/pressrelease/2025/1/22_1.html

³¹⁰⁰ Signing and Exchange of Notes Concerning Grant Aid Project to the Kingdom of Cambodia, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan (Tokyo) 23 January 2025. Access Date: 19 February 2025. https://www.mofa.go.jp/press/release/pressite_000001_00940.html

³¹⁰¹ Signing and Exchange of Notes Concerning the Provision of Open RAN-related Equipment to the Republic of the Philippines (Grant Assistance “Economic and Social Development Program”), Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan (Tokyo) 12 February 2025. Access Date: 19 February 2025. https://www.mofa.go.jp/press/release/pressite_000001_00988.html

³¹⁰² Signing and Exchange of Notes Concerning the Provision of educational ICT equipment to the Kingdom of Cambodia (Grant Assistance “Economic and Social Development Program”), Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan (Tokyo) 27 February 2025. Access Date: 30 March 2025. https://www.mofa.go.jp/press/release/pressite_000001_01031.html

On 25 March 2025, Special Advisor to the Prime Minister Mori Masafumi, Philippine Secretary of Finance Ralph Recto and Philippine Secretary of National Economic and Development Authority Arsenio Balisacan co-chaired the 15th meeting of the Japan-Philippines High Level Joint Committee on Infrastructure Development and Economic Cooperation in the Philippines.³¹⁰³ The meeting addressed key areas of bilateral and trilateral collaboration, disaster prevention, regional development, and both sides further agreed to increase cooperation in ICT.

Japan has fully complied with its commitment to work, including with developing countries and emerging economies, towards closing digital divides, including the gender digital divide, and achieving digital inclusion. Japan has worked towards bridging the digital divide domestically and with developing countries, specifically in the Indo-Pacific region.

Thus, Japan receives a score of +1.

Analysts: Serena Honekin and Ethan Zingariello

United Kingdom: +1

The United Kingdom has fully complied with its commitment to work, including with developing countries and emerging economies, towards closing digital divides, including the gender digital divide, and achieving digital inclusion.

On 8 July 2024, the Department for Science, Innovation and Technology (DSIT) announced its expansion, integrating experts in data, digital, and AI from the Government Digital Service, Central Digital and Data Office, and the Incubator for artificial intelligence.³¹⁰⁴ The expansion aims to transform public services, making them more personalized and efficient for citizens, and to distribute the benefits of digital expansion fairly across the United Kingdom.

On 26 July 2024, the UK and the members of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) met at the ASEAN Post-Ministerial Conference.³¹⁰⁵ Both parties stressed the importance of joint efforts to address digital, technological, and AI gaps. They agreed to explore potential collaboration on digital transformation within the ASEAN Villages Network to improve connectivity in rural areas, ensuring equal access to digital services. They also explored ways to expand the UK's Digital Access Programme to support internet connectivity across ASEAN communities to bridge the digital divide.

On 13 August 2024, the UK government announced up to GBP800 million in funding to modernize broadband infrastructure in rural areas of England, Scotland, and Wales.³¹⁰⁶ This investment will provide rural homes and businesses with improved internet speeds, aiming to bridge the digital divide and boost connectivity across Britain.

³¹⁰³ 15th Meeting of the Japan–Philippines High Level Joint Committee on Infrastructure Development and Economic Cooperation, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan (Tokyo) 24 March 2025. Access Date: 30 March 2025. https://www.mofa.go.jp/s_sa/sea2/ph/pageite_000001_00867.html

³¹⁰⁴ DSIT bolstered to better serve the British public through science and technology, GOV.UK (London) 8 July 2024. Access Date: 28 September 2024. <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/dsit-bolstered-to-better-serve-the-british-public-through-science-and-technology>

³¹⁰⁵ ASEAN-UK joint ministerial statement: enhancing connectivity for a prosperous and sustainable future, July 2024, Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office (Vientiane) 26 July 2024. Access Date: 30 October 2024. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/asean-uk-joint-ministerial-statement-enhancing-connectivity-for-a-prosperous-and-sustainable-future/asean-uk-joint-ministerial-statement-enhancing-connectivity-for-a-prosperous-and-sustainable-future-july-2024>

³¹⁰⁶ 312,000 rural homes and businesses to get access to faster broadband in overhaul of old infrastructure, gov.uk (London) 13 August 2024. Access Date: 1 November 2024. <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/312000-rural-homes-and-businesses-to-get-access-to-faster-broadband-in-overhaul-of-old-infrastructure>

On 26 August 2024, the UK government activated four new masts delivering 4G coverage in Britain's national parks following government funding to reduce signal loss in remote areas.³¹⁰⁷ This action is part of the UK government's efforts to close the digital divide, ensuring that residents across Britain have equal access to connectivity and opportunities.

On 1 September 2024, the UK-Ukraine digital trade deal entered into force, allowing businesses in both countries to benefit from quicker and cheaper trade of digitally delivered services and digital products.³¹⁰⁸ The agreement is part of a series of digital initiatives by the UK government to support Ukraine's digital economy and thus narrow international digital divides.

On 17 September 2024, the UK government announced GBP1.9 million in funding to strengthen science, technology and innovation in Ghana and Nigeria.³¹⁰⁹ The investment would support the UK government's partnership with governments in Nigeria and Ghana on technology and innovation and enhance government digital delivery services in these regions.

On 19 September 2024, the Fourth ASEAN Economic Ministers (AEM)–UK Consultation took place in Vientiane.³¹¹⁰ At the meeting, the Department for Business and Trade and the AEM reaffirmed their commitment to enhancing economic integration and cooperation in digital transformation and sustainability. The meeting emphasized the importance of economic cooperation in key areas due to the ASEAN-UK Economic Integration Programme, which supports ASEAN's efforts toward digital integration.

On 1 October 2024, the G7 Industry and Technology Ministers convened to discuss digital development and bridging the digital divide in Africa, with contributions from Egypt, India, Kenya, South Africa, Korea, the Netherlands and Tunisia.³¹¹¹ This commitment aligns with the G7's dedication to fostering inclusive and sustainable digital growth.

On 30 October 2024, His Majesty's Treasury published the Autumn Budget 2024, which allocates over GBP500 million for 2025-26 to support Project Gigabit and the Shared Rural Network.³¹¹² This funding aims to expand digital infrastructure in underserved areas of the UK, with the goal of achieving full gigabit broadband coverage by 2030.

On 7 November 2024, the DSIT appointed prominent leaders from the business, academic, and charity sectors as non-executive directors.³¹¹³ These individuals would oversee DSIT and bring extensive expertise to help DSIT address the digital divide, transform public services and drive innovation-led economic growth.

³¹⁰⁷ Signal boost for bank holiday ramblers as UK government's 4G rollout picks up pace in Great British countryside, gov.uk (London) 26 August 2024. Access Date: 1 November 2024. <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/signal-boost-for-bank-holiday-ramblers-as-uk-governments-4g-rollout-picks-up-pace-in-great-british-countryside>

³¹⁰⁸ UK-Ukraine digital trade set to grow, gov.uk (London) 1 September 2024. Access Date: 1 November 2024. <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/uk-ukraine-digital-trade-set-to-grow>

³¹⁰⁹ £1.9 Million Announced for Science, Technology and Innovation in West Africa, gov.uk (London) 17 September 2024. Access Date: 1 November 2024. <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/19-million-announced-for-science-technology-and-innovation-in-west-africa>

³¹¹⁰ The Fourth AEM-UK Consultation, gov.uk (Vientiane) 19 September 2024. Access Date: 30 November 2024. <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/the-fourth-aem-uk-consultation>

³¹¹¹ G7 Industry and Technology Ministers Convene in Rome to Advance Industrial Competitiveness, Digital Innovation, and Sustainable Digital Transformation, MIMIT (Italy) 10 October 2024. Access Date: 31 October 2024. <https://www.mimit.gov.it/en/media-tools/news/g7-industry-and-technology-ministers-convene-in-rome-to-advance-industrial-competitiveness-digital-innovation-sustainable-digital-transformation>

³¹¹² Autumn Budget 2024 (HTML), His Majesty's Treasury (London) 30 October 2024. Access Date: 1 November 2024. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/autumn-budget-2024/autumn-budget-2024-html>

³¹¹³ Refreshed DSIT board to guide plans to transform public services and close digital divide, gov.uk (London) 7 November 2024. Access Date: 4 December 2024. <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/refreshed-dsit-board-to-guide-plans-to-transform-public-services-and-close-digital-divide>

On 14 November 2024, the UK government announced seven 4G mast upgrades in North, South West and West Wales, delivering reliable connectivity to thousands of residents, local businesses and organizations.³¹¹⁴ The UK government expected that improving outdated mobile connectivity networks in rural areas would stimulate regional economic growth, expand access to opportunity and help bridge the digital divide between urban and rural communities.

On 26 November 2024, the G7 Foreign Ministers reiterated their commitment to protect human rights and dignity for all individuals and to promote gender equality.³¹¹⁵ In particular, they recognized the importance of bridging digital divides between G7 and African countries.

On 27 November 2024, the UK government announced up to GBP3.5 million in funding for projects testing hybrid connectivity solutions in remote areas.³¹¹⁶ Key initiatives include portable gigabit-capable internet access and hybrid networks for rural islands in Shetland and Northern Ireland. The funding includes GBP2 million to enhance wireless connectivity for education, healthcare, and businesses, along with an additional GBP1 million to improve broadband and mobile services on Papa Stour, addressing persistent infrastructure challenges.

On 7 January 2025, the Government of the United Kingdom and Openreach signed GBP289 million in contracts to connect some of Britain's most remote locations, providing people with better access to crucial online services like healthcare and education.³¹¹⁷ This broadband boost would benefit rural villages and towns in the UK, helping around 131,000 hard-to-reach homes and businesses to get fast broadband speeds and breaking down barriers to opportunity.

On 20 January 2025, the Government of the United Kingdom reaffirmed its commitment to promoting greater participation of girls and women in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) subjects through a written response in the House of Lords.³¹¹⁸ Minister for Skills Jacqueline Smith emphasized ongoing government efforts and stated that the UK government has made significant investments in mathematics, digital, and technical education to support this goal.

On 22 January 2025, the Secretary of State for Education Bridget Phillipson announced plans to drive a digital revolution in schools.³¹¹⁹ She highlighted how a lack of tech awareness widens the digital divide, leaving some students and staff struggling with basic tools while others benefiting from the opportunities of new technologies. To address this, she introduced several services to guide schools on where to invest in technology. This initiative ensures schools build strong digital foundations to fully leverage technology in education and improve students' digital literacy.

On 10 February 2025, the Government of the United Kingdom and other co-signatories of the Global Partnership for Action on Gender-Based Online Harassment and Abuse urged full gender integration at the

³¹¹⁴ Roll out of faster and more reliable 4G to reach thousands of businesses and households across rural Wales, gov.uk (London) 14 November 2024. Access Date: 4 December 2024. <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/roll-out-of-faster-and-more-reliable-4g-to-reach-thousands-of-businesses-and-households-across-rural-wales>

³¹¹⁵ G7 Foreign Ministers' Meeting Statement <https://www.g7.utoronto.ca/foreign/241126-statement.html> 26 November 2024. Access Date: 11 December 2024. <https://www.g7.utoronto.ca/foreign/241126-statement.html>

³¹¹⁶ Satellite communications to improve connectivity in remote areas, gov.uk (London) 27 November 2024. Access Date: 4 December 2024. <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/satellite-communications-to-improve-connectivity-in-remote-areas>

³¹¹⁷ Hundreds of thousands of Brits in rural villages and towns to benefit from UK government broadband boost, gov.uk (London) 7 January 2025. Access Date: 18 Feb 2025. <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/hundreds-of-thousands-of-brits-in-rural-villages-and-towns-to-benefit-from-uk-government-broadband-boost>

³¹¹⁸ STEM Subjects: Women, UK Parliament (London) 20 January 2025. Access Date: 10 April 2025. <https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2025-01-20/HL4219>

³¹¹⁹ Education Secretary outlines plans to modernise education sector, gov.uk (London) 22 January 2025. Access Date: 18 Feb 2025. <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/education-secretary-outlines-plans-to-modernise-education-sector>

upcoming AI Action Summit in Paris and reaffirmed their commitment to bridging digital gender divides.³¹²⁰ They called for stronger efforts to prioritize women's rights in the digital space and promote AI literacy for all, especially women and girls. They emphasized equitable access and participation in the digital sphere, empowering women to engage with AI and combat gender biases.

On 11 February 2025, the Government of the United Kingdom and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) Secretariat opened applications for Women in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) Scholarships.³¹²¹ This is an initiative under the ASEAN-UK Supporting the Advancement of Girls' Education (ASEAN-UK SAGE) Program. ASEAN-UK SAGE "tackles gender barriers to basic digital skills for employment, aiming to support the development of basic digital skills for marginalized groups" to help narrow the development gap in ASEAN and bridge the digital divide.³¹²² The Women in STEM Scholarships align with this mission by providing financial aid to disadvantaged women, enabling them to access STEM education in the UK.

On 26 February 2025, the Government of the United Kingdom introduced a Digital Inclusion Action Plan that outlines five "first actions:" launching a Digital Inclusion Innovation Fund to increase local digital participation, enhancing the framework that helps people get essential digital skills, cooperating with the Digital Poverty Alliance to donate devices, improving the accessibility of government digital services, and measuring effective strategies for digital inclusion.³¹²³ The UK government would also establish a Digital Inclusion and Skills Unit and an expert advisory committee to guide long-term efforts. It would also collaborate with industry partners to expand connectivity, provide devices, and offer digital training.

On 26 February 2025, the UK Parliament announced that the House of Lords will hold a debate on 6 March 2025 to mark International Women's Day and discuss advancing women's roles in science and technology.³¹²⁴ The Parliament provided a briefing on relevant data, research and government policy. Commentators argued for more investment in STEM education for women to close the digital divide and ensure AI development considers gender impacts to avoid widening gender gaps in the job market.

On 21 March 2025, the Government initiated a consultation on its proposal to make digital standards a requirement for schools across the country.³¹²⁵ The UK government aims to ensure that students, particularly those in schools with weaker digital infrastructure, can acquire essential digital skills. To support this goal, the UK government made a GBP 45 million investment to "boost school infrastructure, including GBP25 million to upgrade wireless networks... boosting standards where it is most needed."

The United Kingdom has fully complied with the commitment to work, including with developing countries and emerging economies, towards closing digital divides, including the gender digital divide, and achieving

³¹²⁰ The Global Partnership for Action on Gender-Based Online Harassment and Abuse calls for gender to be an integral part of the AI Action Summit, gov.uk (London) 10 February 2025. Access Date: 18 Feb 2025.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-global-partnership-for-action-on-gender-based-online-harassment-and-abuse-calls-for-gender-to-be-an-integral-part-of-the-ai-action-summit/the-global-partnership-for-action-on-gender-based-online-harassment-and-abuse-calls-for-gender-to-be-an-integral-part-of-the-ai-action-summit>

³¹²¹ ASEAN-UK SAGE Women in STEM Scholarships 2025 Open to Empower Women to Lead in STEM, gov.uk (London) 11 February 2025. Access Date: 18 Feb 2025. <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/asean-uk-sage-women-in-stem-scholarships-2025-open-to-empower-women-to-lead-in-stem>

³¹²² ASEAN-UK SAGE Women in STEM Scholarships 2025 Open to Empower Women to Lead in STEM, gov.uk (London) 11 February 2025. Access Date: 18 Feb 2025. <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/asean-uk-sage-women-in-stem-scholarships-2025-open-to-empower-women-to-lead-in-stem>

³¹²³ Digital Inclusion Action Plan: First Steps, gov.uk (London) 26 February 2025. Access Date: 10 April 2025. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/digital-inclusion-action-plan-first-steps/digital-inclusion-action-plan-first-steps>

³¹²⁴ International Women's Day 2025: Women in science and technology, UK Parliament (London) 26 February 2025. Access Date: 10 April 2025. <https://lordslibrary.parliament.uk/international-womens-day-2025-women-in-science-and-technology/#heading-7>

³¹²⁵ No child left behind in plans to narrow the digital divide in education, gov.uk (London) 21 March 2025. Access Date: 10 April 2025. <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/no-child-left-behind-in-plans-to-narrow-the-digital-divide-in-education>

digital inclusion. The UK has launched several initiatives to close the digital divides, such as investing in digital infrastructure in rural areas within the UK and in developing countries, signifying strong action in at least two of the commitment criteria. The UK also took adequate actions to address gender specifically, including increasing women's participation in STEM, empowering women to engage with AI, and tackling gender barriers to basic digital skills for employment.

Thus, the United Kingdom receives a score of +1.

Analyst: Sonia Siming Tao

United States: +1

The United States has fully complied with its commitment to work, including with developing countries and emerging economies, towards closing digital divides, including the gender digital divide, and achieving digital inclusion.

On 18 June 2024, the Technology Modernization Fund (TMF) announced investments with the goal of improving digital services for public servants, tribal communities and political campaign filers.³¹²⁶ These initiatives include modernizing, upgrading and creating the websites of 183 Bureau of Indian Education funded schools with the intention of reemphasizing TMF's commitment to providing essential digital services for all Americans.

On 21 June 2024, the Department of Agriculture Rural Development Secretary Basil Gooden pledged USD25 million through the Broadband Technical Assistance Program to help local cooperatives, Tribes and organizations develop and expand affordable and reliable high-speed internet projects in rural communities.³¹²⁷ Through partnerships with small towns, Tribes, local utilities, private companies and rural cooperatives, the investment aims to deliver critical digital services to communities and ensure that the digital economy is expanding within rural areas.

On 25 July 2024, the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) released its 2024-2034 Digital Policy.³¹²⁸ The new policy reflects USAID's growing commitment to bridging the global digital divide through infrastructure investments and the improvement of digital skills. As part of this policy change, USAID will provide USD14.6 million in new funding for global initiatives and will cooperate with Estonia and Latvia to help other countries enhance their digital economies.

On 7 August 2024, USAID Administrator Samantha Power, announced that USAID will grant USD2.5 million to the Dominican Republic through the Gender Equity and Equality Action Fund.³¹²⁹ These funds will be used to support Dominican organizations and women-led businesses in causes such as advancing women's digital literacy.

³¹²⁶Technology Modernization Fund announces investments to modernize Tribal school websites, campaign finance software, federal HR system, U.S. General Services Administration (Washington D.C.) 18 June 2024. Access Date: 28 September 2024. <https://www.gsa.gov/about-us/newsroom/news-releases/technology-modernization-fund-announces-investment-06182024>

³¹²⁷ Biden-Harris Administration Announces Availability of \$25 Million to Help Expand High-Speed Internet Access in Rural Areas, U.S. Department of Agriculture (Washington D.C.) 21 June 2024. Access Date: 28 September 2024. <https://www.rd.usda.gov/newsroom/news-release/biden-harris-administration-announces-availability-25-million-help-expand-high-speed-internet-access>

³¹²⁸ In Keynote Speech, Administrator Samantha Power Announces Agency's New Digital Policy, United States Agency for International Development (Washington D.C.) 25 July 2024. Access Date: 28 October 2024. <https://www.usaid.gov/news-information/press-releases/jul-25-2024-keynote-speech-administrator-samantha-power-announces-agencys-new-digital-policy>

³¹²⁹ The United States Announces More Than \$87 Million in Assistance for the People of the Dominican Republic through USAID and DFC, United States Agency for International Development (Washington D.C.) 7 August 2024. Access Date: 28 October 2024. <https://www.usaid.gov/news-information/press-releases/aug-07-2024-united-states-announces-more-87-million-assistance-people-dominican-republic-through-usaid-and-dfc>

On 20 September 2024, USAID announced that it would be working with two new partners, the Reliance Foundation and the UPS Foundation, to help global gender-based digital inclusion efforts.³¹³⁰ These partners will add funds to and work with the Women in the Digital Economy Fund (WiDEF), which is a US-led initiative to address the gender digital divide.

On 1 October 2024, the G7 Industry and Technology Ministers convened to discuss digital development and bridging the digital divide in Africa, with contributions from Egypt, India, Kenya, South Africa, Korea, the Netherlands and Tunisia.³¹³¹ This commitment aligns with the G7's dedication to fostering inclusive and sustainable digital growth.

On 10 October 2024, the National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA) announced that it had processed over 700 applications under the Digital Equity Competitive Grant Program, which provides federal funding for organizations working to improve digital access in underserved communities.³¹³² The program will make available approximately USD1 billion in the first round of funding.

On 17 October 2024, the NTIA announced the approval of Alabama and Florida's "Internet for All" Initial Proposals, which allows the two states to access over USD2.5 billion in the implementation of the Broadband Equity, Access, and Deployment (BEAD) program.³¹³³ The funding will be used to provide affordable high-speed internet access for underserved communities. It is part of the BEAD program, which makes available USD42.45 billion for states, territories, and Native Entities to build or upgrade internet infrastructure for the bridging of the country's digital divides.

On 16 October 2024, the NTIA has approved over USD6.3 million to Idaho to implement its Digital Equity Plans.³¹³⁴ This funding comes from the USD1.44 billion State Digital Equity Capacity Grant Program, one of three Digital Equity Act grant programs created by the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law.

On 25 October 2024, the NTIA approved over USD70 million to California to implement its Digital Equity Plans.³¹³⁵ This funding comes from the USD1.44 billion State Digital Equity Capacity Grant Program, one of three Digital Equity Act grant programs created by the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law.

³¹³⁰ USAID Announces New Partners to the Women in the Digital Economy Fund Ahead of New Funding Rounds, United States Agency for International Development (Washington D.C.) 20 September 2024. Access Date: 28 October 2024. <https://www.usaid.gov/news-information/press-releases/sep-20-2024-usaid-announces-new-partners-women-digital-economy-fund-ahead-new-funding-rounds>

³¹³¹ G7 Industry and Technology Ministers Convene in Rome to Advance Industrial Competitiveness, Digital Innovation, and Sustainable Digital Transformation, MIMIT (Italy) 10 October 2024. Access Date: 31 October 2024. <https://www.mimit.gov.it/en/media-tools/news/g7-industry-and-technology-ministers-convene-in-rome-to-advance-industrial-competitiveness-digital-innovation-sustainable-digital-transformation>

³¹³² NTIA Receives More Than 700 Applications Seeking Over \$6.5 Billion for Digital Equity Projects, National Telecommunications and Information Administration (Washington D.C.) 10 October 2024. Access Date: 28 October 2024. <https://www.ntia.gov/press-release/2024/ntia-receives-more-700-applications-seeking-over-65-billion-digital-equity-projects>

³¹³³ Biden-Harris Administration Approves Alabama and Florida's "Internet for All" Initial Proposals, National Telecommunications and Information Administration (Washington D.C.) 17 October 2024. Access Date: 1 November 2024. <https://www.ntia.gov/press-release/2024/biden-harris-administration-approves-alabama-and-florida-s-internet-all-initial-proposals>

³¹³⁴ Biden-Harris Administration Awards \$6.3M to Idaho to Implement Digital Inclusion Efforts (Washington D.C.) 16 October 2024. Access Date: 31 November 2024. <https://www.ntia.gov/press-release/2024/biden-harris-administration-awards-63m-idaho-implement-digital-inclusion-efforts>

³¹³⁵ Biden-Harris Administration Approves and Recommends for Award California's Digital Equity Capacity Grant Application for More Than \$70 Million (Washington D.C.) 25 October 2024. Access Date: 31 November 2024. <https://www.ntia.gov/press-release/2024/biden-harris-administration-approves-and-recommends-award-california-s-digital-equity-capacity-grant>

On 25 October 2024, the NTIA has approved over USD8 million to New Mexico to implement its Digital Equity Plans.³¹³⁶ This funding comes from the USD1.44 billion State Digital Equity Capacity Grant Program, one of three Digital Equity Act grant programs created by the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law.

On 25 October 2024, the NTIA has approved over USD37 million to Georgia and Indiana to implement its Digital Equity Plans.³¹³⁷ This funding comes from the USD1.44 billion State Digital Equity Capacity Grant Program, one of three Digital Equity Act grant programs created by the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law.

On 30 October 2024, the NTIA has approved over USD12 million to Minnesota to implement its Digital Equity Plans.³¹³⁸ This funding comes from the USD1.44 billion State Digital Equity Capacity Grant Program, one of three Digital Equity Act grant programs created by the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law.

On 30 October 2024, the NTIA has approved over USD9 million to Connecticut to implement its Digital Equity Plans.³¹³⁹ This funding comes from the USD1.44 billion State Digital Equity Capacity Grant Program, one of three Digital Equity Act grant programs created by the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law.

On 31 October 2024, the NTIA has approved over USD36 million to New York to implement its Digital Equity Plans.³¹⁴⁰ This funding comes from the USD1.44 billion State Digital Equity Capacity Grant Program, one of three Digital Equity Act grant programs created by the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law.

On 1 November 2024, the NTIA announced the approval of West Virginia's Digital Equity Capacity Grant Application, which allows the state to access over USD9 million in the implementation of its Digital Equity Plan.³¹⁴¹ The funding will provide affordable devices and improve the digital skills of eligible West Virginia residents. This initiative is part of the federal Digital Equity Capacity Grant Program, which makes available USD1.44 billion for states, territories, and Native Entities to empower underserved communities with meaningful access to affordable and high-speed internet.

On 1 November 2024, the NTIA has approved over USD13 million to Wisconsin to implement its Digital Equity Plans.³¹⁴² This funding comes from the USD1.44 billion State Digital Equity Capacity Grant Program, one of three Digital Equity Act grant programs created by the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law.

³¹³⁶ Biden-Harris Administration Approves and Recommends for Award New Mexico's Digital Equity Capacity Grant Application for More Than \$8 Million (Washington D.C.) 25 October 2024. Access Date: 31 November 2024. <https://www.ntia.gov/press-release/2024/biden-harris-administration-approves-and-recommends-award-new-mexico-s-digital-equity-capacity-grant>

³¹³⁷ Biden-Harris Administration Approves and Recommends for Award Digital Equity Capacity Grant Applications Totaling More Than \$37 Million (Washington D.C.) 25 October 2024. Access Date: 31 November 2024. <https://www.ntia.gov/press-release/2024/biden-harris-administration-approves-and-recommends-award-digital-equity-capacity-grant-applications>

³¹³⁸ Biden-Harris Administration Approves and Recommends for Award Minnesota's Digital Equity Capacity Grant Application for More Than \$12 Million (Washington D.C.) 30 October 2024. Access Date: 31 November 2024. <https://www.ntia.gov/press-release/2024/biden-harris-administration-approves-and-recommends-award-minnesota-s-digital-equity-capacity-grant>

³¹³⁹ Biden-Harris Administration Approves and Recommends for Award Connecticut's Digital Equity Capacity Grant Application for More Than \$9 Million (Washington D.C.) 30 October 2024. Access Date: 31 November 2024. <https://www.ntia.gov/press-release/2024/biden-harris-administration-approves-and-recommends-award-connecticut-s-digital-equity-capacity>

³¹⁴⁰ Biden-Harris Administration Approves and Recommends for Award New York's Digital Equity Capacity Grant Application for More Than \$36 Million (Washington D.C.) 31 October 2024. Access Date: 31 November 2024. <https://www.ntia.gov/press-release/2024/biden-harris-administration-approves-and-recommends-award-new-york-s-digital-equity-capacity-grant>

³¹⁴¹ Biden-Harris Administration Approves and Recommends for Award West Virginia's Digital Equity Capacity Grant Application for More Than \$9 Million, National Telecommunications and Information Administration (Washington D.C.) 1 November 2024. Access Date: 1 November 2024. <https://www.ntia.gov/press-release/2024/biden-harris-administration-approves-and-recommends-award-west-virginia-s-digital-equity-capacity>

³¹⁴² Biden-Harris Administration Approves and Recommends for Award Wisconsin's Digital Equity Capacity Grant Application for More Than \$13 Million (Washington D.C.) 1 November 2024. Access Date: 31 November 2024. <https://www.ntia.gov/press-release/2024/biden-harris-administration-approves-and-recommends-award-wisconsin-s-digital-equity-capacity-grant>

On 1 November 2024, the NTIA has approved over USD20 million to Alabama and Utah to implement its Digital Equity Plans.³¹⁴³ This funding comes from the USD1.44 billion State Digital Equity Capacity Grant Program, one of three Digital Equity Act grant programs created by the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law.

On 7 November 2024, the NTIA has approved over USD8 million to Alaska and Ohio to implement its Digital Equity Plans.³¹⁴⁴ This funding comes from the USD1.44 billion State Digital Equity Capacity Grant Program, one of three Digital Equity Act grant programs created by the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law.

On 12 November 2024, the NTIA awarded over USD72 million to the Department of Hawaiian Home Lands to improve internet access and digital literacy training for Native Hawaiians.³¹⁴⁵ The funding will be processed through the Tribal Broadband Connectivity Program, which provides USD3 billion for the expansion of internet infrastructure in Tribal Lands through the “Internet For All” Initiative.

On 14 November 2024, the NTIA has approved over USD68 million for Delaware, Louisiana, Missouri, Oklahoma, Tennessee and Puerto Rico to implement their Digital Equity Plans.³¹⁴⁶ This funding comes from the USD1.44 billion State Digital Equity Capacity Grant Program, one of three Digital Equity Act grant programs created by the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law.

On 18 November 2024, the WiDEF announced the recipients of its first round of funding. The ten selected recipients will each receive between USD500,000 and USD1.5 million in funding to address the global gender digital divide.³¹⁴⁷ Awardees include non-profit organizations in Nigeria, Pakistan, Kenya, Ethiopia, Mexico, Malawi, Ghana, Tanzania and Guatemala.

On 19 November 2024, the NTIA announced that “Internet For All” Initial Proposals had been processed and approved in every state and territory.³¹⁴⁸ These proposals detail plans to expand internet access to unserved communities in the United States. Their approval allows states, territories and Native Entities to utilize USD42.45 billion in federal funding through the BEAD program.

On 26 November 2024, the G7 Foreign Ministers reiterated their commitment to protect human rights and dignity for all individuals and to promote gender equality.³¹⁴⁹ In particular, they recognized the importance of bridging digital divides between G7 and African countries.

³¹⁴³ Biden-Harris Administration Approves and Recommends for Award Digital Equity Capacity Grant Applications Totaling More Than \$20 Million (Washington D.C.) 1 November 2024. Access Date: 31 November 2024. <https://www.ntia.gov/press-release/2024/biden-harris-administration-approves-and-recommends-award-digital-equity-capacity-grant-applications-0>

³¹⁴⁴ Biden-Harris Administration Awards More Than \$28 Million to Alaska and Ohio to Implement Digital Inclusion Efforts (Washington D.C.) 7 November 2024. Access Date: 31 November 2024. <https://www.ntia.gov/press-release/2024/biden-harris-administration-awards-more-28-million-alaska-and-ohio-implement-digital-inclusion>

³¹⁴⁵ Biden-Harris Administration Awards \$72 Million to Expand Internet Access and Digital Literacy for Native Hawaiians, National Telecommunications and Information Administration (Washington D.C.) 12 November 2024. Access Date: 31 November 2024. <https://www.ntia.gov/press-release/2024/biden-harris-administration-awards-72-million-expand-internet-access-and-digital-literacy-native>

³¹⁴⁶ Biden-Harris Administration Approves and Recommends for Award Digital Equity Capacity Grant Applications Totaling More Than \$68 Million (Washington D.C.) 14 November 2024. Access Date: 31 November 2024. <https://www.ntia.gov/press-release/2024/biden-harris-administration-approves-and-recommends-award-digital-equity-capacity-grant-applications-1>

³¹⁴⁷ WiDEF announces first awardees of funding to close the gender digital divide, CARE (Geneva) 18 November 2024. Access Date: 31 November 2024. <https://www.care.org/media-and-press/widef-announces-first-awardees-of-funding-to-close-the-gender-digital-divide-ten-trailblazing-organizations-from-the-global-south-to-receive-over-14-million-for-digital-inclusion-efforts/>

³¹⁴⁸ Every State and Territory is Ready to Implement Internet for All, National Telecommunications and Information Administration (Washington D.C.) 19 November 2024. Access Date: 31 November 2024. <https://www.ntia.gov/blog/2024/every-state-and-territory-ready-implement-internet-all>

³¹⁴⁹ G7 Foreign Ministers’ Meeting Statement G7 Information Centre (Fiuggi – Anagni) 26 November 2024. Access Date: 11 December 2024. <https://www.g7.utoronto.ca/foreign/241126-statement.html>

On 4 December 2024, US representatives joined representatives from Japan, Australia, Kiribati, the Federated States of Micronesia and Nauru to hold the Fifth Meeting of the East Micronesia Cable Project Executive Board online, to reaffirm the progress that had been made since the previous meeting.³¹⁵⁰ The East Micronesia Cable project is jointly funded by Australia, Japan and the United States, and seeks to provide fast and reliable internet connectivity for up to 100,000 people across the Federated States of Micronesia, Kiribati and Nauru, via a submarine cable.³¹⁵¹

On 16 December 2024, the NTIA awarded over USD273 million to support high-speed internet access on forty-four tribal lands.³¹⁵² This funding is part of the Tribal Broadband Connectivity Program, which makes available USD3 billion under the “Internet for All” initiative for helping eligible tribal entities bridge the digital divide.

On 19 December 2024, the NTIA announced the approval of the U.S. Virgin Islands’ Digital Equity Capacity Grant Application, which allows the territory to access USD2.1 million in the implementation of its Digital Equity Plan.³¹⁵³ The funding will promote digital literacy of eligible U.S. Virgin Islands residents, particularly those facing language barriers or from low-income households. This initiative is part of the federal Digital Equity Capacity Grant Program, which makes available USD1.44 billion for states, territories, and Native Entities to empower underserved communities with meaningful access to affordable and high-speed internet. As of 19 February 2025, the U.S. Virgin Islands is the latest of fifty-five states and territories to receive federal approval for its Digital Equity Capacity Grant Application.³¹⁵⁴

On 6 January 2025, the NTIA recommended for award over USD250 million to twenty-four organizations for expanding digital skills training across the country.³¹⁵⁵ This funding is part of the Digital Equity Competitive Grant Program, which allocates USD1.25 billion for initiatives that support equitable community access to digital skills and resources.

On 10 January 2025, the NTIA announced that, as part of the Tribal Broadband Connectivity Program, it had awarded an additional USD18 million for expanding high-speed internet access in or near seven tribal entities in Alaska, Washington, Arizona and North Dakota.³¹⁵⁶

³¹⁵⁰ The Fifth Meeting of the East Micronesia Cable Project Executive Board, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan (Tokyo) 4 December 2024. Access Date: 19 February 2025. https://www.mofa.go.jp/press/release/pressite_000001_00785.html

³¹⁵¹ East Micronesia Cable, East Micronesia Cable System (Canberra) 5 June 2023. Access Date: 19 February 2025. <https://www.eastmicronesiacable.com/>

³¹⁵² Biden-Harris Administration Recommends for Award More Than \$276 Million to Expand Internet Use on Tribal Lands, National Telecommunications and Information Administration (Washington, D.C.) 16 December 2024. Access Date: 19 February 2025. <https://www.ntia.gov/press-release/2024/biden-harris-administration-recommends-award-more-276-million-expand-internet-use-tribal-lands>

³¹⁵³ Biden-Harris Administration Approves and Recommends for Award Digital Equity Capacity Grant Applications Totaling More Than \$60.6 Million, National Telecommunications and Information Administration (Washington, D.C.) 19 December 2024. Access Date: 19 February 2025. <https://www.ntia.gov/press-release/2024/biden-harris-administration-approves-and-recommends-award-digital-equity-capacity-grant-applications-5>

³¹⁵⁴ News and Events, National Telecommunications and Information Administration (Washington, D.C.) 19 December 2024. Access Date: 19 February 2024.

https://www.ntia.gov/newsroom?type=All&tid=All&funding_programs=541&categories=All&program=

³¹⁵⁵ Biden-Harris Administration Recommends for Award More Than \$250 Million to Expand Digital Skills, National Telecommunications and Information Administration (Washington, D.C.) 6 January 2025. Access Date: 19 February 2025. <https://www.ntia.gov/press-release/2025/biden-harris-administration-recommends-award-more-250-million-expand-digital-skills>

³¹⁵⁶ Biden-Harris Administration Announces Nearly \$18 Million in Internet for All Grants to Tribal Lands, National Telecommunications and Information Administration (Washington, D.C.) 10 January 2025. Access Date: 19 February 2025. <https://www.ntia.gov/press-release/2025/biden-harris-administration-announces-nearly-18-million-internet-all-grants-tribal-lands>

On 16 January 2025, the NTIA announced that, as part of the Tribal Broadband Connectivity Program, it had awarded an additional USD162 million for expanding high-speed internet access in or near four tribal lands.³¹⁵⁷ These tribal entities include those in the Old Harbor and Bering Strait regions of Alaska, as well as the Pueblo de Cochiti and Taos Pueblo of New Mexico.

On 17 January 2025, the NTIA recommended for award an additional USD369 million to expand digital skills across the country.³¹⁵⁸ This funding is part of the Digital Equity Competitive Grant Program, and will be allocated to forty-one organizations for purposes such as digital skills training and affordable technological access.

On 5 March 2025, Secretary of Commerce Howard Lutnick released a statement declaring upcoming reforms to the BEAD program.³¹⁵⁹ The proposed changes include adopting a more technology-neutral approach by removing the current preference for fiber infrastructure over alternatives like satellite broadband.

The United States has fully complied with its commitment to work, including with developing countries and emerging economies, towards closing digital divides, including the gender digital divide, and achieving digital inclusion. The United States dedicated funding to both domestic and international projects aimed at improving high-speed internet access and digital literacy for underserved individuals, including women. For example, a key initiative is the Digital Equity Capacity Grant Program under the “Internet for All” initiative to fund digital equity plans across states. Moreover, the United States worked with emerging economies and developing countries, such as Latvia, Estonia and Dominica.

Thus, the United States receives a score of +1.

Analyst: Lillian Toe

European Union: +1

The European Union has fully complied with the commitment to work, including with developing countries and emerging economies, towards closing digital divides, including the gender digital divide, and achieving digital inclusion.

On 11 June 2024, the European Union kicked off project “REDI: Rural Development Through Digital Inclusion.”³¹⁶⁰ This initiative aims to bridge the digital gap between rural and urban areas in Georgia and empower citizens through teaching digital skills.

On 1 July 2024, Stavros Lambrinidis, Ambassador of the European Union to the United Nations, made a statement to announce the EU’s strong support for a Global Digital Compact, aiming to build an inclusive, sustainable, and equitable digital future for the globe.³¹⁶¹ The EU and its member states would actively support

³¹⁵⁷ Biden-Harris Administration Recommends for Award More Than \$162 Million to Expand Internet Use on Tribal Lands, National Telecommunications and Information Administration (Washington, D.C.) 16 January 2025. Access Date: 19 February 2025. <https://www.ntia.gov/press-release/2025/biden-harris-administration-recommends-award-more-162-million-expand-internet-use-tribal-lands>

³¹⁵⁸ Biden-Harris Administration Recommends for Award More Than \$369 Million to Invest in Digital Skills, National Telecommunications and Information Administration (Washington, D.C.) 17 January 2025. Access Date: 19 February 2025. <https://www.ntia.gov/press-release/2025/biden-harris-administration-recommends-award-more-369-million-invest-digital-skills>

³¹⁵⁹ Statement from U.S. Secretary of Commerce Howard Lutnick on the BEAD Program, National Telecommunications and Information Administration (Washington, D.C.) 5 March 2025. Access Date: 16 April 2025. <https://www.ntia.doc.gov/press-release/2025/statement-us-secretary-commerce-howard-lutnick-bead-program>

³¹⁶⁰ Kick-off of the new EU-funded project REDI: Rural Empowerment Through Digital Inclusion, Delegation of the European Union to Georgia (Tbilisi) 11 June 2024. Access Date: 28 September 2024. <https://eu4georgia.eu/kick-off-of-the-new-eu-funded-project-redi-rural-empowerment-through-digital-inclusion/>

³¹⁶¹ EU Statement - Informal Consultations on the Global Digital Compact, Delegation of the European Union to the United Nations in New York (New York) 1 July 2024. Access Date: 30 October 2024. https://www.eeas.europa.eu/delegations/un-new-york/eu-statement-informal-consultations-global-digital-compact_en

countries worldwide in their digital and green transitions through global official development assistance, capacity-building, and investments. Funds are increasingly directed toward digital infrastructure to bridge the digital divides.

On 3 July 2024, the European Union and UNESCO co-chaired an event in Brussels to discuss the ethical dimensions and opportunities of digital technologies.³¹⁶² This dialogue emphasized their commitment to harness digital innovation for sustainable development, cultural diversity, human rights, and gender equality while addressing the growing digital divides and threats such as disinformation.

On 22 July 2024, Antti Karhunen, Director for ‘Sustainable Finance, Investment and Jobs; Economy that works for the People’ at the European Commission, delivered a General Statement at the 4th International Conference on Financing for Development highlighting the EU’s Global Gateway strategy.³¹⁶³ The Global Gateway strategy aims to support digital transitions in partner countries across Africa, Asia and the Pacific, and Latin America and the Caribbean. Through this strategy, the EU is dedicated to closing digital divides by investing in areas such as digital services, skills, innovation, data centers, last-mile networks, and submarine cables.

On 8 August, 2024, Mario Milouchev, Director of Common Agricultural Policy Strategic Plans II at the European Commission’s Directorate-General for Agriculture and Rural Development, highlighted the EU’s advancements toward achieving its long-term vision of digitalization for rural areas.³¹⁶⁴ He shared various initiatives focused on enhancing digital connectivity and skills to close the rural-urban digital divide, aiming to build stronger, more connected, resilient, and prosperous rural areas by 2040.

On 12 August 2024, the European Commission released the ‘Women in Digital Scoreboard 2024’ to evaluate the inclusion of women in digital jobs, careers and entrepreneurship.³¹⁶⁵ It measures progress across EU member states using 13 indicators grouped into three key dimensions: internet usage, internet user skills and specialist skills and employment. The scoreboard provides systematic measurements to track EU’s progress in closing the digital gender gap.

On 30 September 2024, the EU and the East African Community (EAC) launched the EU-EAC Regional Co-creation Workshop on Digital Transformation in Arusha, Tanzania.³¹⁶⁶ The EU reaffirmed its commitment to promoting a human-centric approach to digital transformation in East Africa by using technology and innovation. The workshop brought together stakeholders from the EAC region and result in key recommendations for collaborative efforts.

On 1 October 2024, the G7 Industry and Technology Ministers convened to discuss digital development and bridging the digital divide in Africa, with contributions from Egypt, India, Kenya, South Africa, South Korea,

³¹⁶² Thematic EU-UNESCO Partnerships Dialogue on Human Rights-based Digital Transformation for Sustainable Development, UNESCO (Brussels) 5 July 2024. Access Date: 28 September 29 2024. <https://www.unesco.org/en/articles/thematic-eu-unesco-partnerships-dialogue-human-rights-based-digital-transformation-sustainable>

³¹⁶³ EU General Statement – 4th International Conference on Financing for Development: 1st PrepCom Session, Delegation of the European Union to the United Nations in New York (New York) 22 July 2024. Access Date: 30 October 2024. https://www.eeas.europa.eu/delegations/un-new-york/eu-general-statement-%E2%80%93-4th-international-conference-financing-development-1st-prepcom-session_en

³¹⁶⁴ Mario Milouchev on digital connectivity and skills for thriving rural areas, European Commission (Brussels) 8 August 2024. Access Date: 30 October 2024. <https://digital-strategy.ec.europa.eu/en/news/video-mario-milouchev-digital-connectivity-and-skills-thriving-rural-areas>

³¹⁶⁵ Women in Digital Scoreboard 2024, European Commission (Brussels) 12 August 2024. Access Date: 5 December 2024. <https://digital-strategy.ec.europa.eu/en/news/women-digital-scoreboard-2024>

³¹⁶⁶ EAC-EU convene a digital transformation co-creation to accelerate East Africa's digital economy, Delegation of the European Union to the United Republic of Tanzania and the East African Community (Arusha), 30 September 2024. Access Date: 1 November 2024. https://www.eeas.europa.eu/delegations/tanzania/eac-eu-convene-digital-transformation-co-creation-accelerate-east-africas-digital-economy_en

The Netherlands and Tunisia.³¹⁶⁷ This commitment aligns with the G7's dedication to fostering inclusive and sustainable digital growth.

On 3 October, 2024, during the 79th Session of the United Nations General Assembly Third Committee, the EU delivered a statement affirming its commitment to ensuring that all global stakeholders can equally benefit from the digital transition.³¹⁶⁸ The EU emphasized the importance of closing digital divides through its Digital Strategy, highlighting its investments in a high-capacity internet network for research and education in Africa. The EU also stressed that women's full participation in the development and use of digital technologies is essential to bridging the digital divide.

On 10 October 2024, President of the European Council Charles Michel made a keynote speech at the Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN) Business and Investment summit in Laos, emphasizing on the importance of digital connectivity with Southeast Asian Nations.³¹⁶⁹ President Michel announced the EU's plan to finalize negotiations for an ASEAN Digital Economy Framework Agreement in 2025 to promote intra-ASEAN digital trade and international investments.

On 14 October 2024, the 12th edition of EU Code Week started, uniting participants across Europe to promote coding and digital skills.³¹⁷⁰ Running until 27 October, the initiative offers resources in 29 languages to support organizers, including teachers, and features an interactive map of activities. This year's event highlights inspiring stories of women in tech and advances in digital education, aiming to improve digital literacy and bridge the gender digital divide.

On 29 October 2024, the EU introduced a new initiative to fund media skills projects aimed at promoting gender equality and empowering young women in Uzbekistan.³¹⁷¹ Running from 2024 to 2026, these projects will work to combat gender-based disinformation and encourage active participation of women in digital public spaces.

On 26 November 2024, the G7 Foreign Ministers of Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, the United Kingdom and the United States of America and the High Representative of the European Union reiterated their commitment to protect human rights and dignity for all individuals and to promote gender equality.³¹⁷² In particular, they recognized the importance of bridging digital divides between G7 and African countries.

³¹⁶⁷ G7 Industry and Technology Ministers Convene in Rome to Advance Industrial Competitiveness, Digital Innovation, and Sustainable Digital Transformation, MIMIT (Italy) 10 October 2024. Access Date: 31 October 2024. <https://www.mimit.gov.it/en/media-tools/news/g7-industry-and-technology-ministers-convene-in-rome-to-advance-industrial-competitiveness-digital-innovation-sustainable-digital-transformation>

³¹⁶⁸ EU Statement – UN General Assembly 3rd Committee: Interactive Dialogue with UN DESA, Delegation of the European Union to the United Nations in New York (New York) 3 October 2024. Access Date: 30 October 2024. https://www.eeas.europa.eu/delegations/un-new-york/eu-statement-%E2%80%93-un-general-assembly-3rd-committee-interactive-dialogue-un-desa_en

³¹⁶⁹ Keynote speech of President Charles Michel at the ASEAN Business and Investment summit in Laos, European Council (Vientiane) 10 October 2024. Access Date: 30 October 2024. <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2024/10/10/keynote-speech-of-president-charles-michel-at-the-asean-business-and-investment-summit-in-laos/>

³¹⁷⁰ EU Code Week 2024 kicks off to encourage young people to acquire coding and digital skills, European Commission (Brussels) 11 October 2024. Access Date: 4 December 2024. <https://digital-strategy.ec.europa.eu/en/news/eu-code-week-2024-kicks-encourage-young-people-acquire-coding-and-digital-skills>

³¹⁷¹ European Union launched a new initiative on gender equality on media skills in Uzbekistan, Delegation of the European Union to Uzbekistan (Tashkent) 29 October 2024. Access Date: 30 October 2024. https://www.eeas.europa.eu/delegations/uzbekistan/european-union-launched-new-initiative-gender-equality-media-skills-uzbekistan_en

³¹⁷² G7 Foreign Ministers' Meeting Statement G7 Information Centre (Fiuggi – Anagni) 26 November 2024. Access Date: 11 December 2024. <https://www.g7.utoronto.ca/foreign/241126-statement.html>

On 6 December 2024, the European Council approved conclusions on the European Commission's White Paper titled "How to master EU's digital infrastructure needs".³¹⁷³ The Council's conclusion emphasizes the need to drive investment in digital infrastructures to advance the EU's digital transformation goals, which could support reducing regional digital divides.

On 13 February 2025, the Delegation of the European Union to Kenya announced that the DigiKen Joint Program, funded by the EU, selected 15 innovation hubs.³¹⁷⁴ These selected hubs support digital innovation and equip young people, women, and marginalized communities in Kenya with essential digital skills and resources, helping bridge the digital divide and create opportunities for underserved communities.

On 27 March 2025, the European Commission allocated EUR1.3 billion through the Digital Europe Programme to advance AI, cybersecurity, and digital skills.³¹⁷⁵ A key focus is supporting European Digital Innovation Hubs, which offer access to technical expertise and digital skills training to help individuals and businesses adopt new technologies.

The European Union has fully complied with the commitment to work, including with developing countries and emerging economies, towards closing digital divides, including the gender digital divide, and achieving digital inclusion. The EU has launched several initiatives to close the digital divides, including partnering with developing countries to increase digital literacy and invest in digital infrastructure. These initiatives, such as the one in Uzbekistan, also address the gender digital divide.

Thus, the European Union receives a score of +1.

Analyst: Sonia Siming Tao

³¹⁷³ Digital infrastructure: Council approves conclusions on the Commission's White Paper, European Council (Brussels) 6 December 2024. Access Date: 19 February 2025. <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2024/12/06/digital-infrastructure-council-approves-conclusions-on-the-commission-s-white-paper/>

³¹⁷⁴ Advancing Kenya's digital future: 15 innovation hubs selected through the DigiKen initiative, Delegation of the European Union to Kenya (Nairobi) 13 February 2025. Access Date: 19 February 2025. https://www.eeas.europa.eu/delegations/kenya/advancing-kenya%E2%80%99s-digital-future-15-innovation-hubs-selected-through-digiken-initiative_en

³¹⁷⁵ Commission to invest €1.3 billion in artificial intelligence, cybersecurity and digital skills, European Commission (Brussels) 27 March 2024. Access Date: 11 April 2025. https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/ip_25_907