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2024 G7 Apulia Summit Interim Compliance Report

15 June 2024 to 20 December 2024

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15 March 2025

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“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		0	
France		0	
Germany			+1
Italy		0	
Japan		0	
United Kingdom			+1
United States			+1
European Union			+1
Average		+0.50 (75%)	

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.²⁰⁸⁶ 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.²⁰⁸⁷ 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.²⁰⁸⁸ 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.

²⁰⁸⁶ 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>

²⁰⁸⁷ Communiqué, G7 Information Center (Toronto) 22 July 2001. Access Date: 7 September 2024. <https://www.g7.utoronto.ca/summit/2001genoa/finalcommuniqu>

²⁰⁸⁸ 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.²⁰⁸⁹ 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.²⁰⁹⁰ 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.²⁰⁹¹ 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.²⁰⁹² 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.²⁰⁹³ 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.²⁰⁹⁴ Leaders also reemphasized their commitment to cooperation in a shared understanding of the applicability of existing

²⁰⁸⁹ 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>

²⁰⁹⁰ 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>

²⁰⁹¹ 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>

²⁰⁹² 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>

²⁰⁹³ 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>

²⁰⁹⁴ 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.²⁰⁹⁵ 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.²⁰⁹⁶ 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.”²⁰⁹⁷

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.”²⁰⁹⁸ 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.”²⁰⁹⁹

“Developing countries” in this context refers to the 159 countries that the United Nations has classified for monitoring and data collection purposes.²¹⁰⁰ 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.

²⁰⁹⁵ 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>

²⁰⁹⁶ 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>

²⁰⁹⁷ 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>

²⁰⁹⁸ 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

²⁰⁹⁹ Include, Merriam-Webster (Springfield) n.d. Access Date: 6 September 2024. <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/include>

²¹⁰⁰ 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.²¹⁰¹ 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.”²¹⁰²

“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.”²¹⁰³

“Gender digital divide” is understood to mean “women and girls’ lack of access to, use and development of information communication technologies.”²¹⁰⁴

“Achieving” is understood to mean “to succeed at reaching or accomplishing a goal or a result, especially through effort.”²¹⁰⁵

“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.”²¹⁰⁶

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

²¹⁰¹ 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-duttagupta-and-pazarbasioglu.htm>

²¹⁰² Close, Merriam-Webster (Springfield) n.d. Access Date: 6 September 2024. <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/close>

²¹⁰³ 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

²¹⁰⁴ 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>

²¹⁰⁵ Achieve, Merriam-Webster (Springfield) n.d. Access Date: 6 September 2024. <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/Achieve>

²¹⁰⁶ 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

concrete steps, or merely condemning countries that have backslid in progress towards digital inclusion and equality.

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: 0

Canada 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 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.²¹⁰⁷ 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.²¹⁰⁸ 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.²¹⁰⁹ This initiative, processed through the Broadband Fund, will bring high-speed internet to the Inuit communities of Kangiqsualujuaq, Aupaluk, Tasiujaq, Quaqtaq, and Kangirsuk in northern Quebec.

²¹⁰⁷Expanding 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>

²¹⁰⁸ 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>

²¹⁰⁹ 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>

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 and accessible digital services in Canada.²¹¹⁰ 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.²¹¹¹ These projects, administered 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.²¹¹² 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.²¹¹³ 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.²¹¹⁴ 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.²¹¹⁵ 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.²¹¹⁶ The funding will be processed through the

²¹¹⁰ 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>

²¹¹¹ 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>

²¹¹² 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>

²¹¹³ 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>

²¹¹⁴ 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>

²¹¹⁵ 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>

²¹¹⁶ 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>

Universal Broadband Fund and will benefit over 3,600 households in rural, remote and Indigenous 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.²¹¹⁷ In particular, they recognized the importance of bridging digital divides between G7 and African countries.

Canada 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. Canada dedicated funding to domestic projects aimed at improving high-speed internet access in underserved communities but has not taken strong action towards developing or emerging economies in bridging the digital divide, nor has it addressed the gender digital divide.

Thus, Canada receives a score of 0.

Analyst: Lillian Toe

France: 0

France 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 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.²¹¹⁸ 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.²¹¹⁹ 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.²¹²⁰ They are fully accessible to people with disabilities, increasing access to using public sectors’ digital services for all.

On 24 September 2024, DINUM sponsored Numérique en Commun[s], a major event focused on sustainable and inclusive digital technology.²¹²¹ This initiative included workshops, masterclasses, and plenary sessions

²¹¹⁷ 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>

²¹¹⁸ 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>

²¹¹⁹ 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>

²¹²⁰ 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/>

²¹²¹ 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/>

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.²¹²² 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.²¹²³ 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”.²¹²⁴

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.²¹²⁵

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.²¹²⁶ In particular, they recognized the importance of bridging digital divides between G7 and African countries.

France 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. France has launched several initiatives to enhance digital inclusion, including personalized support for small communities, funding for innovative digital projects, and accessible digital services, but has not taken strong action with developing countries and emerging economies in these efforts.

Thus, France receives a score of 0.

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.

²¹²² 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>

²¹²³ 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>

²¹²⁴ 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>

²¹²⁵ 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/>

²¹²⁶ 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 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 2025.²¹²⁷ 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.²¹²⁸ 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.²¹²⁹ 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.

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.²¹³⁰ 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.²¹³¹ 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.²¹³² 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

²¹²⁷ 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>

²¹²⁸ 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>

²¹²⁹ 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>

²¹³⁰ 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>

²¹³¹ 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>

²¹³² 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>

Netherlands and Tunisia.²¹³³ 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.²¹³⁴ 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.²¹³⁵ 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 Implementation Stack for Global Interoperability and Digital Governance."²¹³⁶ 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.²¹³⁷ 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.²¹³⁸ In particular, they recognized the importance of bridging digital divides between G7 and African countries.

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.

Analyst: Bo Wen Zhang

²¹³³ 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>

²¹³⁴ 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>

²¹³⁵ 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>

²¹³⁶ 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/>

²¹³⁷ 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>

²¹³⁸ 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>

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 2025.²¹³⁹ 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.²¹⁴⁰ 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.²¹⁴¹ 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.²¹⁴²

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.²¹⁴³ 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.²¹⁴⁴ 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.

²¹³⁹ 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

²¹⁴⁰ 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/>

²¹⁴¹ 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>

²¹⁴² 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>

²¹⁴³ 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>

²¹⁴⁴ 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>

On 23 August 2024, Italy and the UNDP selected 12 finalists for the AI Hub for Sustainable Development Co-Design Startup Acceleration Pilot.²¹⁴⁵ Projects include Maternanet Africa, bringing digital solutions to maternal health, and Kytabu which leverages Artificial Intelligence to improve education in Kenya.²¹⁴⁶

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.²¹⁴⁷ 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.²¹⁴⁸ 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.²¹⁴⁹

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.²¹⁵⁰ 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.²¹⁵¹ 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.

²¹⁴⁵ 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>

²¹⁴⁶ 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>

²¹⁴⁷ 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/

²¹⁴⁸ 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>

²¹⁴⁹ 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>

²¹⁵⁰ 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>

²¹⁵¹ 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://consanfrancisco.esteri.it/en/news/dal_consolato/2024/11/san-francisco-g7-conference-growing-together-building-public-private-partnerships-to-boost-the-ai-revolution/

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.²¹⁵² 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.²¹⁵³ 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.²¹⁵⁴ 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.

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.

Analyst: Bo Wen Zhang

Japan: 0

Japan 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 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.²¹⁵⁵ 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 Netherlands and Tunisia.²¹⁵⁶ This commitment aligns with the G7's dedication to fostering inclusive and sustainable digital growth.

²¹⁵² 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>

²¹⁵³ 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>

²¹⁵⁴ 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?_1741804412888

²¹⁵⁵ G20 MACEÍÓ 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>

²¹⁵⁶ 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>

On 10 October 2024, Prime Minister Shigeru Ishiba attended the 27th ASEAN-Japan Summit in Vientiane, Laos.²¹⁵⁷ 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.²¹⁵⁸ 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.²¹⁵⁹ 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.²¹⁶⁰ 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.²¹⁶¹ In particular, they recognized the importance of bridging digital divides between G7 and African countries.

Japan 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. Japan has taken mostly weak action in support of this commitment but has done so across all four criteria.

Thus, Japan receives a score of 0.

Analyst: Serena Honekin

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.

²¹⁵⁷ 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

²¹⁵⁸ 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

²¹⁵⁹ 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

²¹⁶⁰ 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>

²¹⁶¹ 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 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.²¹⁶² 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.²¹⁶³ 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.²¹⁶⁴ This investment will provide rural homes and businesses with improved internet speeds, aiming to bridge the digital divide and boost connectivity across Britain.

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.²¹⁶⁵ 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.²¹⁶⁶ 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.²¹⁶⁷ 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.

²¹⁶² 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>

²¹⁶³ 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>

²¹⁶⁴ 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>

²¹⁶⁵ 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>

²¹⁶⁶ 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>

²¹⁶⁷ £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>

On 19 September 2024, the Fourth ASEAN Economic Ministers (AEM)–UK Consultation took place in Vientiane.²¹⁶⁸ 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.²¹⁶⁹ 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.²¹⁷⁰ 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.²¹⁷¹ 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.

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.²¹⁷² 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.²¹⁷³ 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.²¹⁷⁴ 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.

²¹⁶⁸ 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>

²¹⁶⁹ 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>

²¹⁷⁰ 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>

²¹⁷¹ 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>

²¹⁷² 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>

²¹⁷³ 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>

²¹⁷⁴ 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>

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 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.

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.²¹⁷⁵ 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.²¹⁷⁶ 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.²¹⁷⁷ 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.²¹⁷⁸ These funds will be used to support Dominican organizations and women-led businesses in causes such as advancing women's digital literacy.

²¹⁷⁵Technology 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.

²¹⁷⁶ 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>

²¹⁷⁷ 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>

²¹⁷⁸ 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.²¹⁷⁹ 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.²¹⁸⁰ 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.²¹⁸¹ 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.²¹⁸² 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.²¹⁸³ 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.²¹⁸⁴ 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.

²¹⁷⁹ 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>

²¹⁸⁰ 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>

²¹⁸¹ 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>

²¹⁸² 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>

²¹⁸³ 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>

²¹⁸⁴ 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.²¹⁸⁵ 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.²¹⁸⁶ 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.²¹⁸⁷ 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.²¹⁸⁸ 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.²¹⁸⁹ 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.²¹⁹⁰ 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.²¹⁹¹ 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.

²¹⁸⁵ 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>

²¹⁸⁶ 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>

²¹⁸⁷ 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>

²¹⁸⁸ 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>

²¹⁸⁹ 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>

²¹⁹⁰ 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>

²¹⁹¹ 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.²¹⁹² 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.²¹⁹³ 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.²¹⁹⁴ 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.²¹⁹⁵ 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.²¹⁹⁶ 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.²¹⁹⁷ 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.²¹⁹⁸ In particular, they recognized the importance of bridging digital divides between G7 and African countries.

²¹⁹² 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>

²¹⁹³ 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>

²¹⁹⁴ 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>

²¹⁹⁵ 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>

²¹⁹⁶ 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/>

²¹⁹⁷ 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>

²¹⁹⁸ 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>

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.”²¹⁹⁹ 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.²²⁰⁰ The EU and its member states would actively support 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.²²⁰¹ 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.²²⁰² 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.

²¹⁹⁹ 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/>

²²⁰⁰ 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

²²⁰¹ 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>

²²⁰² 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

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.²²⁰³ 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.²²⁰⁴ 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.²²⁰⁵ 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, The Netherlands and Tunisia.²²⁰⁶ 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.²²⁰⁷ 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.²²⁰⁸ President Michel announced the EU's

²²⁰³ 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>

²²⁰⁴ 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>

²²⁰⁵ 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

²²⁰⁶ 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>

²²⁰⁷ 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

²²⁰⁸ 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/>

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.²²⁰⁹ 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.²²¹⁰ 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.²²¹¹ In particular, they recognized the importance of bridging digital divides between G7 and African countries.

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.

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²²⁰⁹ 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>

²²¹⁰ 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

²²¹¹ 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>