



PORTULANS  
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# Network Readiness Index 2021

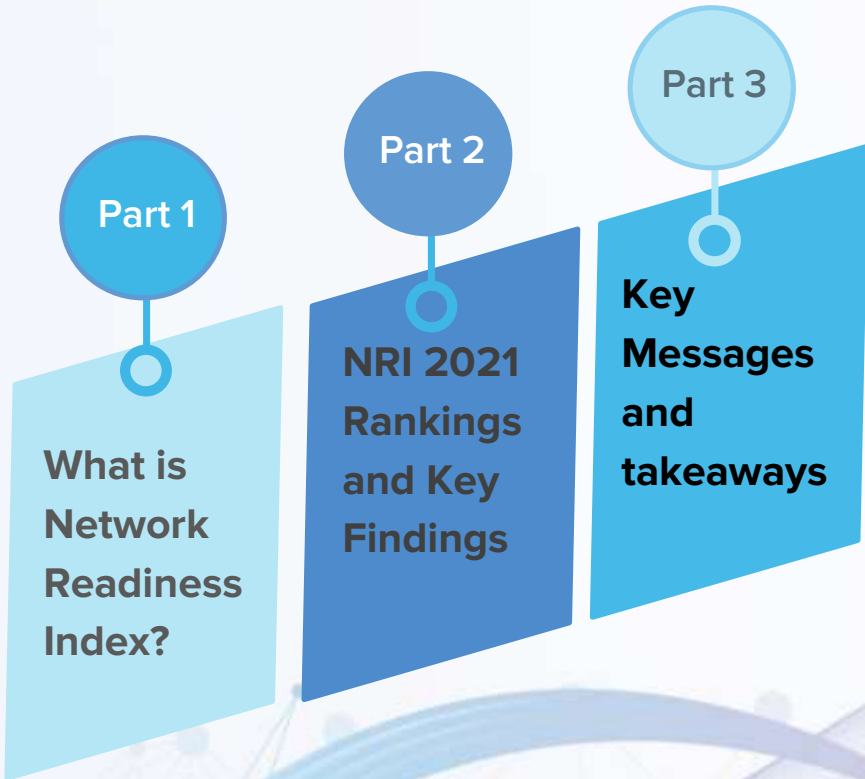
Shaping the Global Recovery: How digital technologies can make the post-Covid world more equal

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# Presentation Overview



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# What is the Network Readiness Index?



# The NRI 2020 model

Underlying principle: our collective future will require a harmonious integration of people and technology

Structure of model:

4

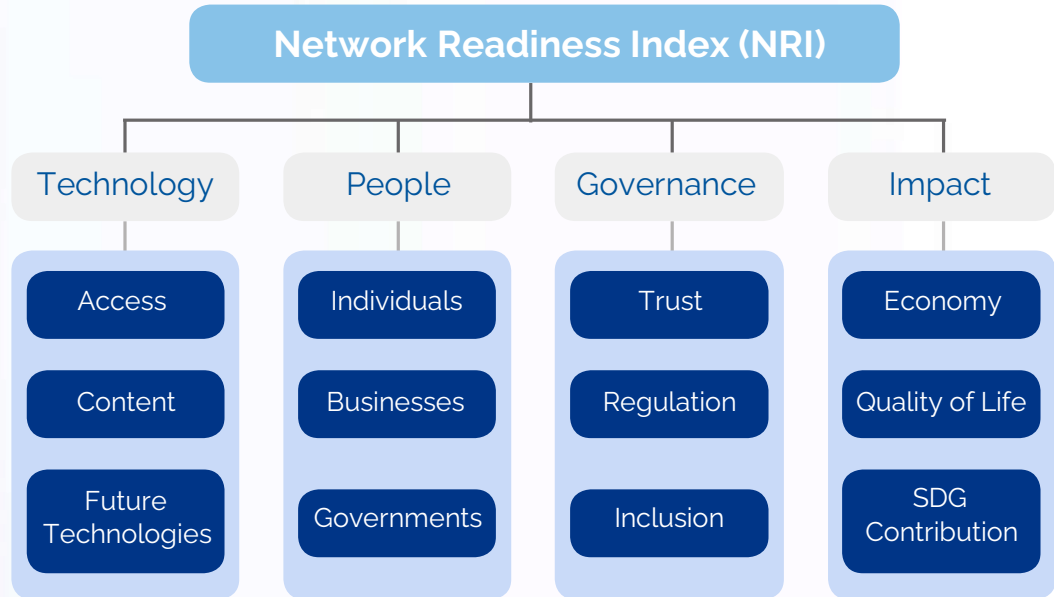
Pillars

12

Sub-pillars

60

Indicators





# NRI 2021 Theme

**Shaping the Global Recovery: How digital technologies can make the post-Covid world more equal.**





# 2021 Theme

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## Can technology be a post-COVID equalizer?

Before the COVID-19 pandemic onset, positive trends in technological adoption across the globe gave reason for optimism concerning the reduction of digital divides.

However, when COVID-19 broke out and an increased reliance on digital technology swept through the global economy, the positive trends partially reversed, giving renewed importance to existing divides while creating new ones.

Identifying and addressing the inequalities in both access and literacy through targeted measures is a crucial strategy that can further promote inclusive and sustainable digital-driven growth.



# 2021 Theme

4/4

## Striving for K-shaped recovery

The smart use of technology is a crucial aspect towards turning the K-shaped recovery into a V-shape, helping create an inclusive and global recovery process.



# 2021 Rankings



# NRI 2021 rankings

## Main Results

- Top 3 economies: **The Netherlands, Sweden, Denmark**
- **Europe, The Americas, and Asia & Pacific** dominate the top 10
- All **high-income group economies** at the top 25
- **China (29)** and **Malaysia (38)** are the two **upper middle-income economies** closing the gap

Economy	NRI Rank	NRI Score
Netherlands	1	82.06
Sweden	2	81.57
Denmark	3	81.24
United States	4	81.09
Finland	5	80.47
Switzerland	6	80.20
Singapore	7	80.01
Germany	8	78.95
Norway	9	78.49
United Kingdom	10	76.60

# NRI 2021: Top rankings by pillar



## TECHNOLOGY

1. United States of America
2. Switzerland
3. The Netherlands

## PEOPLE

1. Rep. of Korea
2. Denmark
3. Finland

## GOVERNANCE

1. Norway
2. The Netherlands
3. Denmark

## IMPACT

1. Singapore
2. Sweden
3. The Netherlands



# NRI 2021: Top rankings by income group

## HIGH

The Netherlands (1)  
Sweden (2)  
Denmark (3)

## UPPER MIDDLE

China (29)  
Malaysia (38)  
Russian Federation (43)

## LOWER MIDDLE

Ukraine (53)  
Viet Nam (63)  
India (67)

## LOW

Rwanda (101)  
Tajikistan (111)  
Gambia (113)

All top 25 economies are part of the high-income group

China is the only upper middle-income economy in the NRI top quartile

Ukraine and Viet Nam are the only lower middle-income economies with performance above the NRI mean

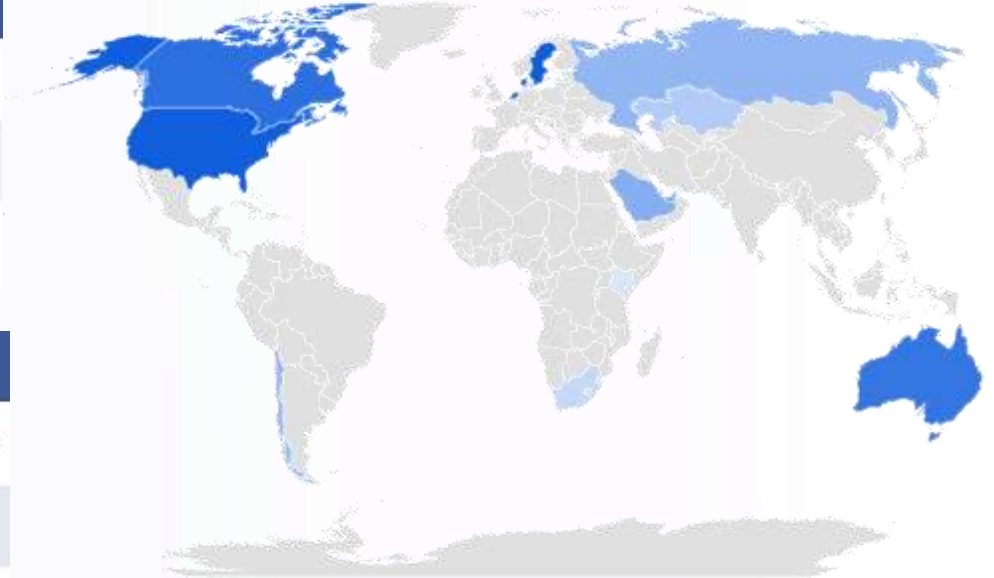
Tajikistan is the only non-Africa region economy in the low-income group and NRI 2021

# NRI 2021: Top rankings by region

Africa	Arab States	Asia & Pacific
1. South Africa (70)	1. United Arab Emirates (34)	1. Singapore (7)
2. Mauritius (71)	2. Saudi Arabia (40)	2. Korea, Rep. (12)
3. Kenya (84)	3. Qatar (42)	3. Australia (13)

CIS	Europe	The Americas
1. Russian Federation (43)	1. Netherlands (1)	1. United States (4)
3. Armenia (60)	2. Sweden (2)	2. Canada (11)
3. Kazakhstan (61)	3. Denmark (3)	3. Chile (44)

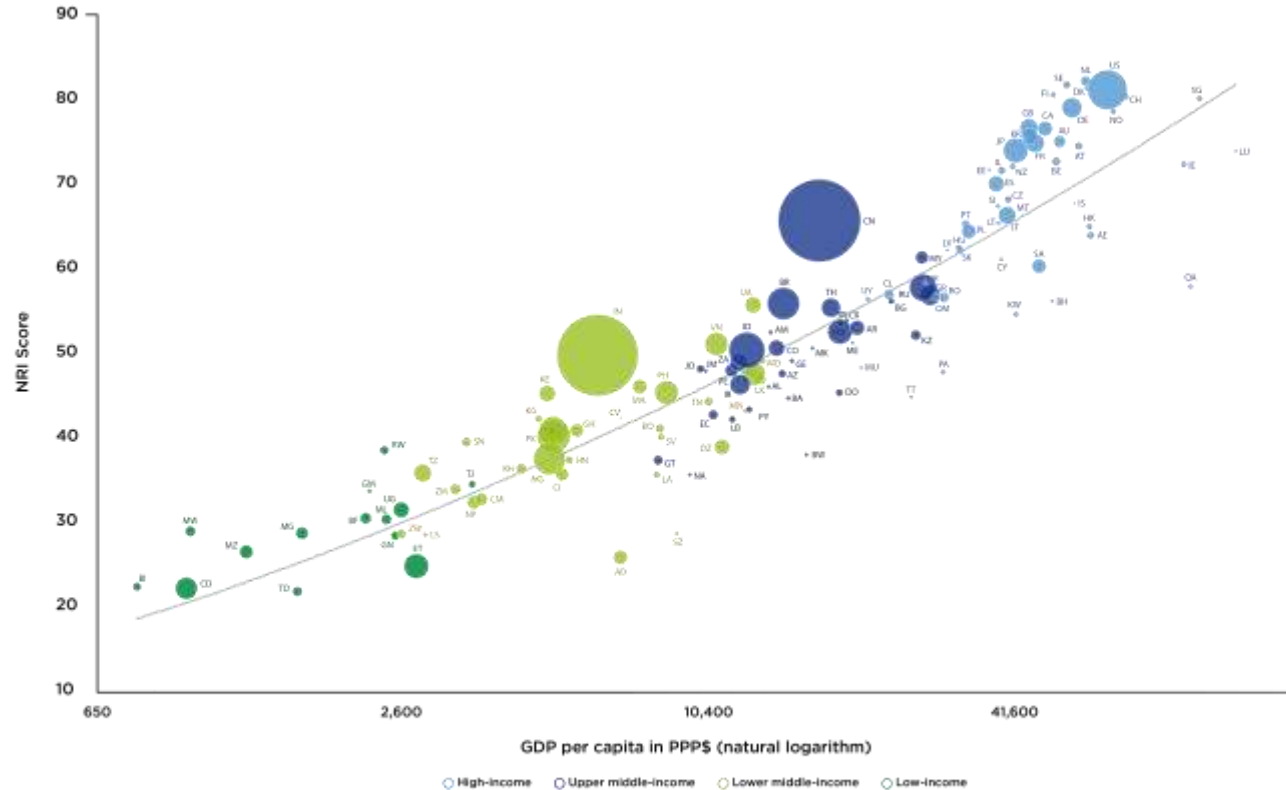


Note: Only top 3 economies highlighted. Darker shades represent higher NRI scores.



# NRI 2021: performance versus GDP per capita

- High-income, developed economies compose 90% of top 50 ranked
- **China (29), Ukraine (53), and Rwanda (101)** are at the forefront of bridging the technological divide
- **Africa** trails all regions behind **the Americas**



Source: NRI Database, Portulans Institute, 2021.

# Key Messages and Takeaways



# Key Message 1

**The pandemic turned digital transformation from a priority into a global imperative**

Over the past two years, the COVID-19 pandemic increased our dependence on technology and accelerated the inevitable process of digital transformation as many aspects of life moved online.

The shift towards an increased reliance on technology has caused recognizable social, economic, and political changes that will have a lasting impact.

# Key Messages 2

**The new landscape of digital transformation is creating new divides and highlighting existing ones**

Divides in access exist not just between regions and economies but also remain persistent between genders.

The digital gender divide continues to present a significant barrier to meaningful participation in a digital society, a barrier exacerbated by the effects of the pandemic.

# Key Messages 3

Technology can help equalize the global recovery.

As a growing number of economies adopt stimulus and fiscal packages, anticipating the shape that the global recovery will take becomes easier.

Four primary areas are likely to receive the bulk of such recovery efforts:

- Health
- Greening of the economy
- Infrastructure
- Digital transformation

# Key Messages 4

## Network readiness requires holistic approaches.

The leading countries in network readiness have balanced, dynamic economies that excel in multiple areas and demonstrate strong performances across all pillar dimensions of the NRI.

As the new digital economy becomes more established, the ability to integrate people and technology within the proper governance structures is key to fostering resilience and sustainability.

# Key Messages 5

Technology readiness remains a “fair game” at the global stage.

Although economies in higher-income region clusters remain the most network-ready, some of the most noteworthy efforts in overall performance identified this year are among the African countries of the middle and lower-income groups.



# Key Messages 6

**Digital technology champions are helping bridge income group gaps.**

China (29), Ukraine (53), Vietnam (63), India (67), and Rwanda (101) are a few of the economies that continue to close the performance gap between income groups.

These economies score above the median performance in their respective income groups across one or more pillars.

# Key Messages 7

**Connectivity is not an end in itself—it is a tool designed to create value for societies.**

While connectivity is critical, it is also important, the availability, affordability of connected devices, and fragmented regulatory environments, may prevent individuals from fully leveraging digital technologies to create economic and social value.

Removing these barriers will help to ensure that Internet access contributes to equal opportunity, rather than becoming a means that increases social and economic inequality.



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# Thank you for your attention!

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