United Nations | Department of Economic and Social Affairs

# E-Government Survey 2022

## Small Island

## Developing States (SIDS)

# Small Island Developing States

## Background

- This document is an excerpt on the United Nations E-government Survey 2022. The link to E-Government Survey 2022 can be found of UNDESA/DPIDG website (here).

- The UN E-government Survey tracks progress of e-government development through the E-Government Development Index (EGDI). The EGDI is a composite index that comprises three normalized indices: (i) Telecommunications Infrastructure Index (TII), based on ITU data; (ii) Human Capital Index (HCI) based on UNESCO data; and (iii) Online Service Index (OSI) based on data collected by DESA, which assesses the e-government development of UN Member States. The Online Service Index is also complemented by the Member State Questionnaire (MSQ), a voluntary survey conducted by UN DESA.

- The Survey is a mapping and development tool, and DESA encourages countries to exchange policy experience and learn from one another, for those countries with low EGDI to benefit from those with High EGDI; and not to over-emphasize on rankings.

- The United Nations has identified three groups of countries in special situations that face specific challenges in their pursuit of sustainable development: least developed countries (LDCs), landlocked developing countries (LLDCs), and small island developing States (SIDS).[1] In some cases, these designations overlap.

- Mode data, analytics and infographics can he found on UNDESA/DPIDG e-Government Knowledge Base here: https://publicadministration.un.org/egovkb/en-us/Data-Center

## Megatrends at Global and Regional Level[2]

The reliance on digital technologies while mitigating the effects of COVID-19 pandemic has increased the urgency for digital transformation across the world resulting in improved EGDI value for most UN Member States. The overall e-government development, however, has not seem a sharp improvement during the last two years. In 2022 the global average EGDI reached 0.6102 compared to 0.5988 in 2020.

At a glance, 60 countries have very high EGDI values in comparison with 57 countries in 2020. A total of 73 countries has high EGDI values in comparison with 69 in 2020 and 53 countries are part of the middle EGDI group, compared to 69 in the previous edition. Seven countries (one less than in 2020) have low EGDI values. With a total of 133 countries in the group of high and very

---

[1] See the United Nations Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States, available at https://www.un.org/ohrlls/content/what-we-do.

[2] Excerpt from Chapter 5, para 5.1 of the 2022 E-Government Survey

high EGDI value (compared to 117 in 2020), the 2022 Survey reflects further improvement in global trends in e-government development and the transitioning of 15 countries from a lower to a higher EGDI group.

A growing number of countries have strengthened their institutional and legal frameworks for e-government development. Most countries have a national digital government strategy, as well as legislation on cybersecurity, personal data protection, national data policy, open government data, and e-participation. Individuals and businesses are increasingly able to interact with public institutions through online platforms, obtain information on legislation relating to freedom of information, and access public content and data.

Despite increased reliance on digital technologies during COVID-19 pandemic in both public and private sectors, the improvement in global e-government development in 2022 is largely attributable to progress made in strengthening telecommunications infrastructure, although online services provision has also improved. Driven by the COVID-19 pandemic, the majority of the countries have concentrated their government priorities in online services provision centred on health, education and social protection and in some case on e-justice. The sharpest increase in online services provision has been in the area of social protection; the number of countries with national portals that allow users to apply for benefits such as maternity care, child subsidies, pensions, housing, and food allowances has grown by 17 per cent since 2020.The number of countries providing at least 1 of the 22 online services assessed by this survey (see chapter 1) has increased by 16.7 per cent globally, with 61 per cent of the Member States offering more than 16 services.

There is a clear trend towards the full digitalization of government services, giving users the ability to complete virtually all types of transactions entirely online. But still many countries use their portals just to provide information and offer only partially digitalized services, with citizens needing to appear at government offices in person to complete most transactions.

The challenges remain, however, as the cost of mobile broadband subscriptions as a percentage of per capita gross national income remains significantly higher in Africa than in other parts of the world.

Therefore, despite some development gains and investments in technology in several groups of countries, digital divide continues to persist, this gap points to persistent challenges that continue to undermine the efforts for development of the countries in special groups and in particular the Least Developed States (LDCs).

Using the world average EGDI as a proxy indicator to measure digital divide, the 2022 report shows the world still dramatically divided in two main blocks, with about the 45% of the whole UN member states' population (3.5 billion people) lacking behind, as shown in the in figure 1.

**Figure 1 – Geographical distribution of countries above and below the world average EGDI value**
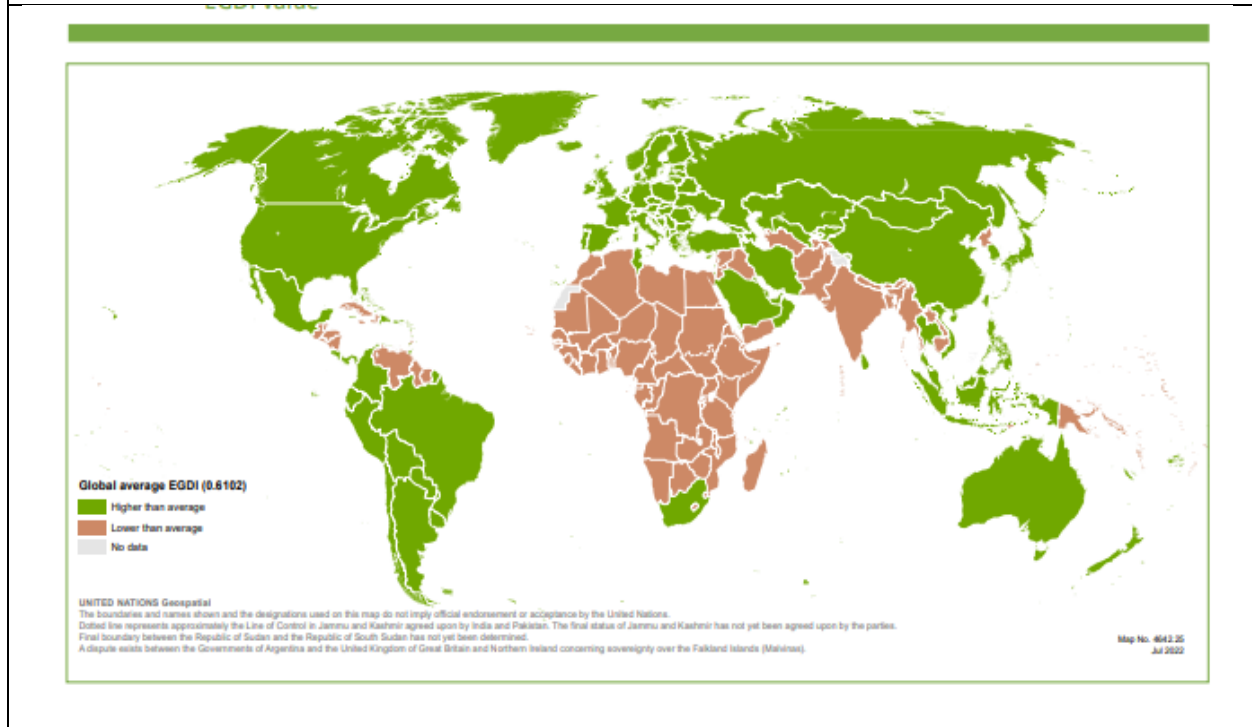


2022 E-Government Survey data analysis have highlighted how digital development is clearly accelerating across developing countries, and even if all continents are more connected, and almost all the governments produce innovative web-based applications and dynamic new business models to revamp the delivery of education, health, and other public services, the path to digital inclusive and sustainable development is yet to be ensured especially in Africa and in general in LDCs and Small Island Developing States (SIDS). Without decisive action by the international community, the digital divide will become "the new face of inequality", as pointed out by the UN Deputy Secretary-General Amina Mohammed[3].

In the African region - for example – none of the countries reaches very-high EGDI value and only 4 countries - namely South Africa, Mauritius, Seychelles and Tunisia- out of 54 - score higher than the world average, with 94 percent of the whole African population lacking behind. Nevertheless – even if fragmented – positive signals on digital transformation can be witnessed in this region, such as the up movements of Côte d'Ivoire, Zambia and Rwanda from middle to high-EGDI or the significant EGDI improvements of Guinea, Madagascar, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Egypt, Algeria and Benin.

While all regions have improved their average EGDI values in 2022, Oceania has recorded a decline for the first time since 2016, largely owning to challenges in improving telecommunications infrastructure. In Oceania, 12 out of the 13 SIDS score lower than the world average value with more than 92 per cent of their population experienced digital divide. For this

---

[3] https://news.un.org/en/story/2021/04/1090712

region, excluding the top world leading countries New Zeeland and Australia, it is worthy to notice the promising performance of Fiji - the only SIDS with an EGDI higher than the world average, as well as the significant up movement of the EGDI value for Nauru and Vanatu.

While Asia has further distinguished itself as the region with the highest percentage (51 percent) of countries that significantly improved their EGDI, at a glance it mirrors the world megatrend, with 19 countries out of 47 below the world average and more than 44 percent of its population lacking behind. Nevertheless, within these 19 countries, successful developing patterns - such as those of Jordan and Bangladesh, that increased significantly their EGDI values, or the ones of Lebanon, Nepal and Tajikistan, that moved to a higher EGDI group – show the possibility for all the Asian developing countries to strengthen their digital capacity and benefit from the growing opportunities of digitalization to achieve the SDGs.

The Americas show a more encouraging trend, with 21 countries out of 35 above the world EGDI average value and only the 10 percent of its total population still suffering digital divide. At the same time, disparities remain within and among countries below the world average, with member states such as Grenada, Suriname, Jamaica, Saint Kitts and Nevis that meaningly enhanced their high EGDI; others such Guyana and Belize that moved up from middle to high EGDI, others (Dominica, El Salvador, Honduras, Nicaragua and Venezuela) decreasing their EGDI value and Haiti dropping down to the lowest EGDI group.

General Assembly resolution 73/218 emphasized that "there is a pressing need to address the major impediments that developing countries face in accessing new technologies". It further stressed that "important and growing digital divides remain between and within developed and developing countries in terms of the availability, affordability and use of information and communications technologies and access to broadband".

For many developing countries and countries in special situations, the digital economy continues to represent itself as a massive, complex challenge. If it is advanced further without the requisite institutional support, adequate regulations and a well-thought-out strategy, this could result in increased inequalities, job losses, as well as data privacy and security issues. ICTs have the potential to provide new solutions to development challenges and to integrate developing and least developed countries into the global economy. These risks call for international guidance and support, through a two-pronged multilateral and multistakeholder approaches in UN and other global and regional platforms. The global community can best support the digital transformation of developing countries through forging effective partnerships with regional and national regulatory and development organizations, as well as the private sector, and improving local technical capabilities in the process, at both institutional and individual levels.

But these megatrends also show that now "is the time to act" as the digital divide, which existed long before COVID-19, was only made worse by the crisis, adding obstacles to national and local digital transformation. This humanitarian, economic and health crisis particularly affects the most vulnerable people, especially children, women and girls, the old persons and people with disabilities. In addressing these challenges, governments must prioritise vulnerable people and ensure that their health, rights and dignity are safeguarded.

However, recovery offers the chance for true transformation, and using the SDGs as a guide for the post-Covid recovery, can ensure that no one is left behind, and no one is left offline. To do so, infrastructure and collaboration of all kinds (between cities, regional cooperation, and collaborations led by international organizations) should be strengthened to ensure e-services are accessible for all.

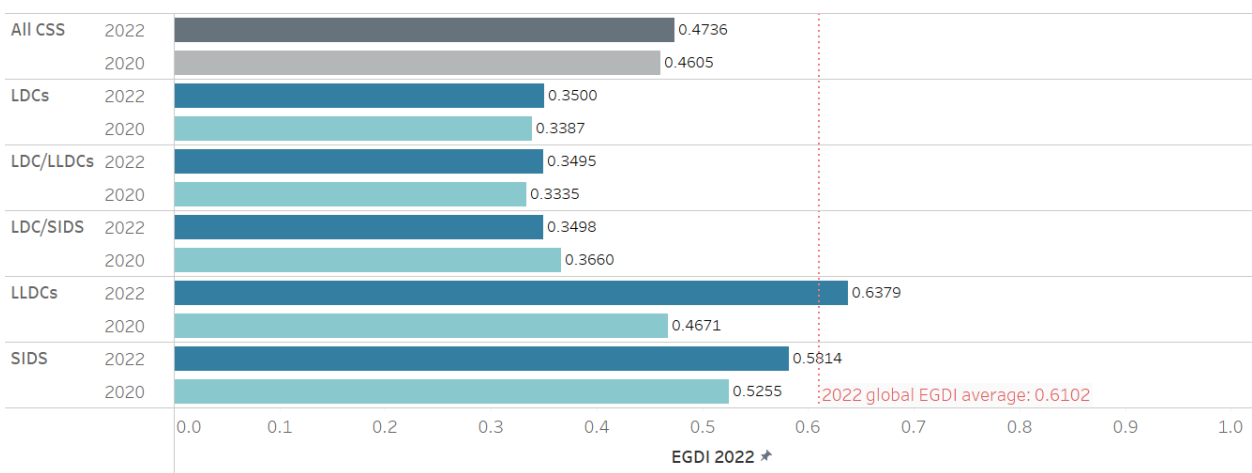## Data analysis from 2022 E-Government Survey related to SIDS

SIDS tend to have a narrow resource base; high costs for energy, infrastructure, transportation, communication and services; little resilience to natural disasters; high volatility in economic growth; limited opportunities for the private sector and a proportionately large reliance of their economies on the public sector; and fragile natural environments. There are 38 Member States in this group:

**Figure 2. List of Small Island Developing States**

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 1. Antigua and Barbuda | 15. Haiti[*] | 29. St. Kitts and Nevis |
| 2. Bahamas | 16. Jamaica | 30. St. Lucia |
| 3. Barbados | 17. Kiribati[*] | 31. St. Vincent and the Grenadines |
| 4. Belize | 18. Maldives | 32. Seychelles |
| 5. Cabo Verde | 19. Marshall Islands | 33. Solomon Islands[*] |
| 6. Comoros[*] | 20. Micronesia (Federated States of) | 34. Suriname |
| 7. Cook Islands | 21. Mauritius | 35. Timor-Leste[*] |
| 8. Cuba | 22. Nauru | 36. Tonga |
| 9. Dominica | 23. Niue | 37. Trinidad and Tobago |
| 10. Dominican Republic | 24. Palau | 38. Tuvalu[*] |
| 11. Fiji | 25. Papua New Guinea | 39. Vanuatu |
| 12. Grenada | 26. Samoa | |
| 13. Guinea-Bissau[*] | 27. São Tomé and Príncipe[*] | |
| 14. Guyana | 28. Singapore | |
| * Also Least Developed Country | | |

*Source*: United Nations Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States (https://www.un.org/ohrlls/content/list-sids)

The average EGDI value for SIDS is 0.5814, which rose by nearly 10 per cent between 2020 and 2022 but remains well below the world average of 0.6201(see figure 3).

**Figure 3. Average EGDI values for countries in special situations, 2020 and 2022**

| | | EGDI value |
|---|---|---|
| All CSS | 2022 | 0.4736 |
| | 2020 | 0.4605 |
| LDCs | 2022 | 0.3500 |
| | 2020 | 0.3387 |
| LDC/LLDCs | 2022 | 0.3495 |
| | 2020 | 0.3335 |
| LDC/SIDS | 2022 | 0.3498 |
| | 2020 | 0.3660 |
| LLDCs | 2022 | 0.6379 |
| | 2020 | 0.4671 |
| SIDS | 2022 | 0.5814 |
| | 2020 | 0.5255 |

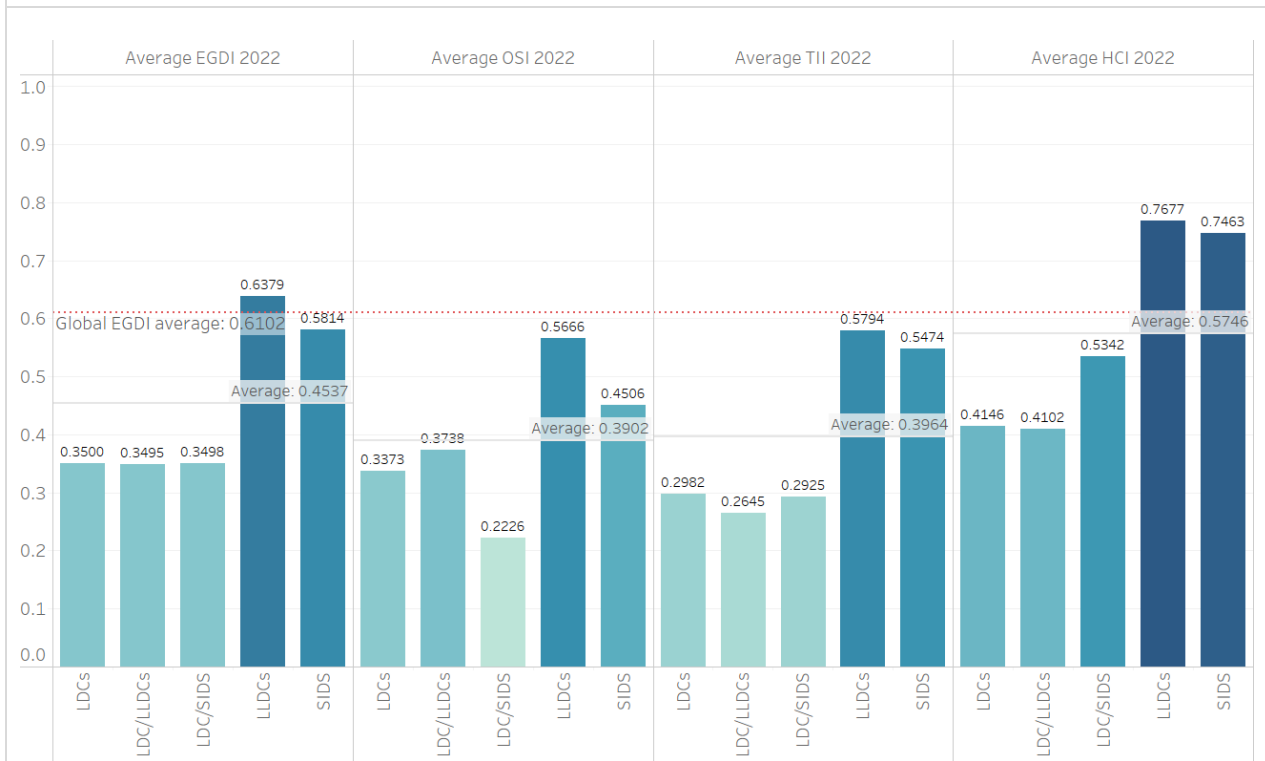2022 global EGDI average: 0.6102

EGDI 2022

*Note:* Countries in Special Situation (CSS) include Least Developed Countries (LDCs), Landlocked Developing Countries (LLDCs) and Small Island Developing States (SIDS).

*Sources*: 2020 and 2022 United Nations E-Government Surveys.
*The graph corresponds to Figure 2.18 in 2022 E-Government survey, Chapter 2*

As shown in figure 4, the variance in EGDI subindex values for countries in special situations is pronounced within each distinct subgroup. The average OSI, TII and HCI values for SIDS are higher than the same averages values for LDCs, but lower than those for LLDCs.

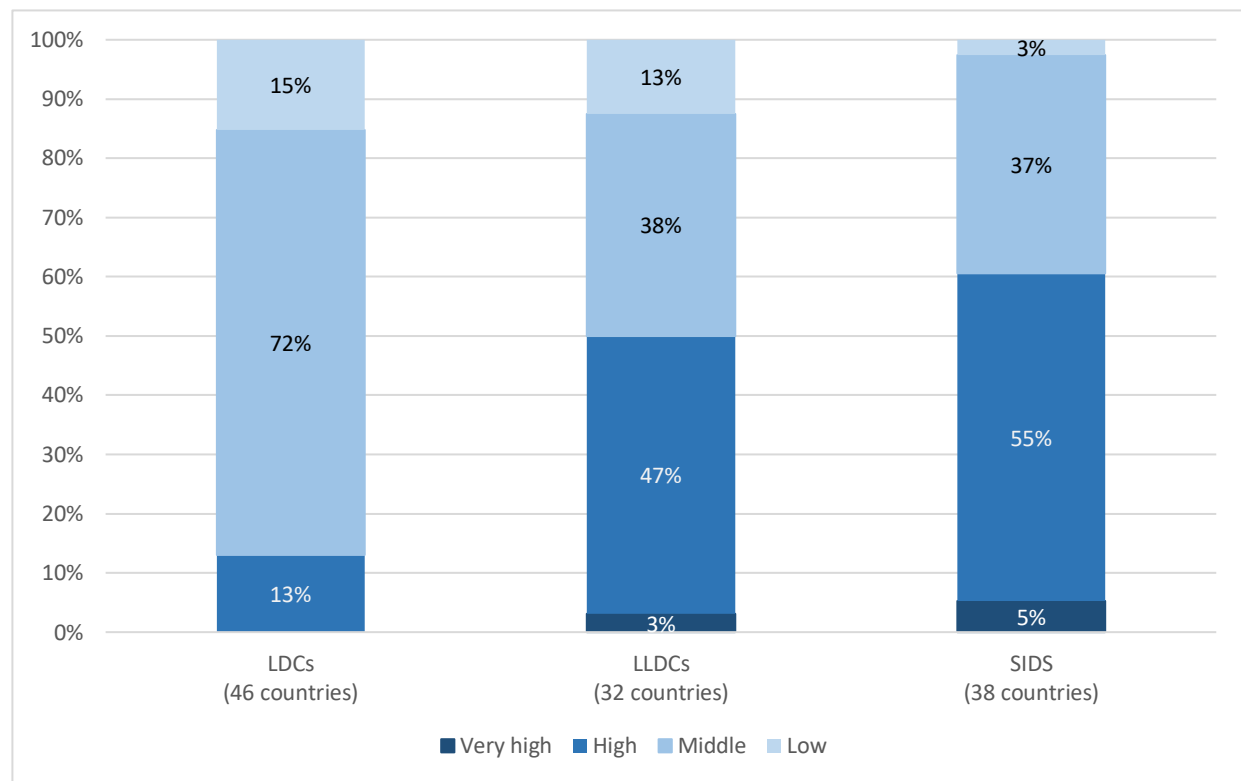**Figure 4. EGDI and subindex values for countries in special situations, 2022**



*Sources*: 2022 United Nations E-Government Survey.
*Note*: Countries in special situations include least developed countries (LDCs), landlocked developing countries (LLDCs), and small island developing States (SIDS).
*The graph corresponds to Figure 2.19 in 2022 E-Government survey, Chapter 2*

The proportion of SIDS in the high EGDI group increased from 50 to 55 per cent between 2020 and 2022, with a corresponding 5-percentage-point decline (from 42 to 37 per cent) in their representation in the middle EGDI group (see figure 5). Only 5 per cent of SIDS have very high EGDI values.

**Figure 5. The distribution of countries in special situations among EGDI levels, 2022**



*Source*: 2022 United Nations E-Government Survey.
*Note*: Countries in special situations include least developed countries (LDCs), landlocked developing countries (LLDCs), and small island developing States (SIDS).
*The graph corresponds to Figure 2.20 in 2022 E-Government survey, Chapter 2*

Table 1 presents the SIDS with the highest EGDI values in 2022. SIDS are characterized by the highest variance in EGDI values, which range from 0.2481 in Haiti to 0.9133 in Singapore. The latter is in the highest (VH) rating class of the very high EGDI group and is one of the world leaders in e-government development. Bahrain remains the only SIDS other than Singapore in the very high EGDI group, though this country saw its EGDI value decline from 0.8213 in 2020 to 0.7707 in 2022, with a corresponding drop from the V2 to the V1 rating class.

The other 21 countries featured in the table are all in the high EGDI group and have an average EGDI value of 0.6115—an improvement over the corresponding figures for 2020 (19 countries in the high EGDI group and an average EGDI value of 0.5716). Only 12 of the 38 SIDS (Antigua and Barbuda, Bahamas, Bahrain, Barbados, Dominican Republic, Fiji, Grenada, Mauritius, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Seychelles, Singapore, and Trinidad and Tobago) have EGDI values above the global average of 0.6201.

**Table 1. Small island developing States with the highest EGDI values**

| Country | Rating class | EGDI rank | Subregion | OSI value | HCI value | TII value | EGDI (2022) | EGDI (2020) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Singapore | VH | 12 | South-Eastern Asia | 0.9620 | 0.9021 | 0.8758 | 0.9133 | 0.9150 |
| Bahrain | V1 | 54 | Western Asia | 0.7523 | 0.8154 | 0.7444 | 0.7707 | 0.8213 |
| Grenada | HV | 66 | Caribbean | 0.5507 | 0.8977 | 0.7348 | 0.7277 | 0.5812 |
| Bahamas | HV | 67 | Caribbean | 0.6214 | 0.7641 | 0.7976 | 0.7277 | 0.7017 |
| Mauritius | HV | 75 | Eastern Africa | 0.6282 | 0.7733 | 0.7588 | 0.7201 | 0.7196 |
| Barbados | H3 | 79 | Caribbean | 0.5388 | 0.8645 | 0.7318 | 0.7117 | 0.7279 |
| Seychelles | H3 | 85 | Eastern Africa | 0.4424 | 0.7758 | 0.8198 | 0.6793 | 0.6920 |
| Saint Kitts and Nevis | H3 | 87 | Caribbean | 0.3307 | 0.8724 | 0.8293 | 0.6775 | 0.6352 |
| Dominican Republic | H3 | 92 | Caribbean | 0.6183 | 0.7539 | 0.5567 | 0.6429 | 0.6782 |
| Trinidad and Tobago | H3 | 93 | Caribbean | 0.4892 | 0.7409 | 0.6717 | 0.6339 | 0.6785 |
| Fiji | H3 | 97 | Melanesia | 0.4813 | 0.7957 | 0.5935 | 0.6235 | 0.6585 |
| Antigua and Barbuda | H2 | 99 | Caribbean | 0.4231 | 0.8128 | 0.5981 | 0.6113 | 0.6055 |
| Jamaica | H2 | 102 | Caribbean | 0.4914 | 0.7148 | 0.5658 | 0.5906 | 0.5392 |
| Maldives | H2 | 104 | Southern Asia | 0.4873 | 0.6937 | 0.5845 | 0.5885 | 0.5740 |
| Saint Vincent and the Grenadines | H2 | 107 | Caribbean | 0.4526 | 0.7420 | 0.5486 | 0.5811 | 0.5605 |
| Suriname | H2 | 108 | South America | 0.3418 | 0.6921 | 0.7089 | 0.5809 | 0.5154 |
| Dominica | H2 | 109 | Caribbean | 0.2954 | 0.6810 | 0.7604 | 0.5789 | 0.6013 |
| Cabo Verde | H2 | 110 | Western Africa | 0.4965 | 0.6507 | 0.5507 | 0.5660 | 0.5604 |
| Saint Lucia | H2 | 114 | Caribbean | 0.4007 | 0.7049 | 0.5683 | 0.5580 | 0.5444 |
| Guyana* | H1 | 123 | South America | 0.4509 | 0.6546 | 0.4643 | 0.5233 | 0.4909 |
| Tonga | H1 | 124 | Polynesia | 0.3296 | 0.8675 | 0.3496 | 0.5155 | 0.5616 |
| Palau | H1 | 132 | Micronesia | 0.2373 | 0.8946 | 0.3735 | 0.5018 | 0.5109 |
| Belize* | H1 | 133 | Central America | 0.4425 | 0.6707 | 0.3882 | 0.5005 | 0.4548 |

*Sources*: 2020 and 2022 United Nations E-Government Surveys.
* Countries that have moved from the middle to the high EGDI group.
*The table corresponds to table 2.9 in 2022 E-Government survey, Chapter 2*

In 2022, Guyana and Belize transitioned from the middle to the high EGDI group, and Guinea-Bissau transitioned from the low to the middle EGDI group.

Figure 6 reflects the persistent challenges that continue to undermine the efforts of SIDS to improve their telecommunications infrastructure, online services provision and human capital development. The eight SIDS that are also LDCs (Comoros, Guinea-Bissau, Haiti, Kiribati, Sao Tome and Principe, Solomon Islands, Timor-Leste and Tuvalu) have a lower average EGDI value (0.3498) than do the other SIDS (0.5814). They also tend to have low TII and OSI values, as nearly all LDC/SIDS are low-income or lower-middle-income countries and lack the resources needed to invest in areas vital for e-government development.

Among the other SIDS, Asia has the highest average EGDI value (0.7339), followed by Africa (0.6551), the Americas (0.6094) and Oceania (0.4516). Most SIDS in Asia and the Americas are upper-middle-income and high-income countries, whereas in Africa and Oceania national income levels vary widely.

If e-government leaders such as Singapore and Bahrain are excluded from the analysis of e-government performance among SIDS, the average EGDI value for this group becomes 0.5628 (lower than the global average), reflecting the capacity constraints experienced by these countries as a consequence of their small size, remoteness and dispersion

**Figure 6.  EDGI and subindex performance for small island developing States, 2022**
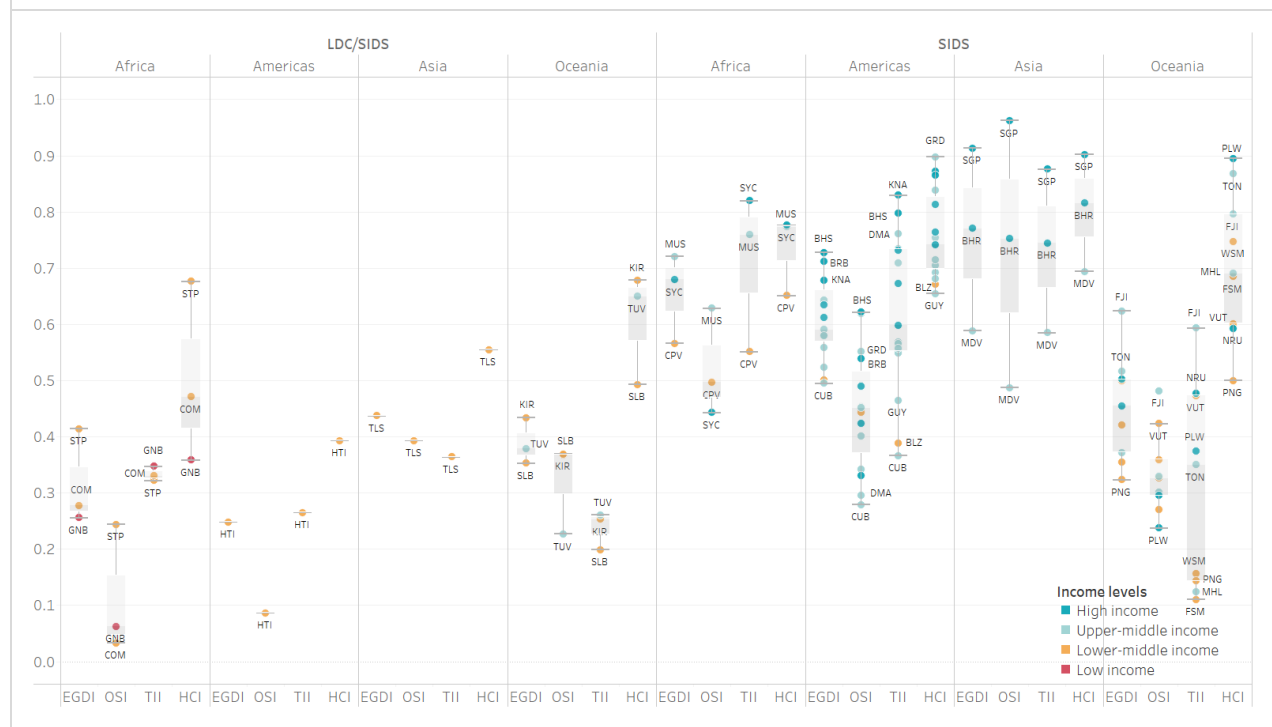


*Source*: 2022 United Nations E-Government Survey.

*Notes*: Countries in special situations include least developed countries (LDCs), landlocked developing countries (LLDCs), and small island developing States (SIDS). The internationally recognized three-letter country codes can be found here and in Survey annex table 12.

*The graph corresponds to Figure 2.23 in 2022 E-Government survey, Chapter 2*

## Insights to regional analysis of SIDS from 2022 E-Government Survey

### *Africa*

Africa faces persistent challenges linked to inadequate investment in e-government development. Low-income and lower-middle-income countries make up 85 per cent of the regional total, and two thirds of these countries are LDCs, LLDCs and/or SIDS. Africa is home to 39 of the 91

countries in special situations worldwide. The lowest EGDI and subindex values are found among the LDCs, including those that are also LLDCs and SIDS (see figure 7); the average EGDI value for this group is 0.3233. The SIDS in Africa have an average EGDI value of 0.3872; Mauritius has the highest OSI value, and Seychelles has the top TII value.

**Figure 7. Countries in special situations in Africa, 2022**
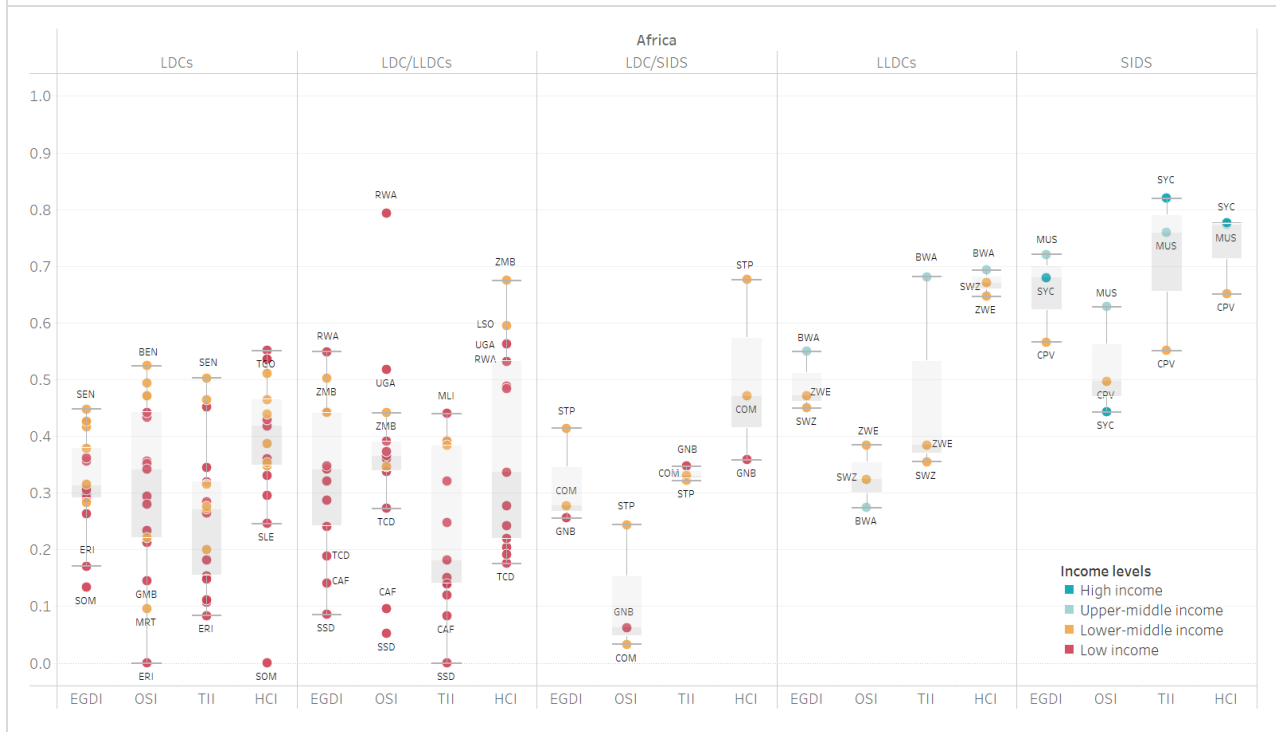


*Source*: 2022 United Nations E-Government Survey.

*Notes*: Countries in special situations include least developed countries (LDCs), landlocked developing countries (LLDCs), and small island developing States (SIDS). The internationally recognized three-letter country codes can be found here and in Survey annex table 12.

*The graph corresponds to Figure 2.13 in 2022 E-Government survey, Chapter 2*

## *The Americas*

Among the 35 countries in the Americas region, 18 are in special situations, and all but two of the latter are SIDS. The average EGDI value for SIDS in the Americas is 0.6450—higher than the global EGDI average and the average EGDI values for SIDS in Africa (0.4555) and Oceania (0.4301). This can be explained in part by the fact that SIDS in the Americas are mostly upper-middle-income and high-income countries that have more resources to invest in telecommunications infrastructure and human capital development. As figure 8 suggests, however, the potential exists in this group of countries for improved online services development.

**Box 1. Granada**

Grenada is on its way to becoming a Smart Small State, defined by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) "as one that leverages the power of data and digital technologies to strengthen the country's resilience, enhance sustainability, and improve the well-being of its people by creating economic opportunity that is led by an agile and efficient Government". Its collaboration with UNDP has allowed Grenada to extend the national digital strategy into the National Sustainable Development Plan 2020-2035, aimed at guiding the country's efforts to become a Smart Small State and achieve the SDGs. Over the past two years, Grenada has launched some innovative initiatives to address climate change. The Blue Bot project uses artificial intelligence to analyse images captured by underwater reef robots and monitor species and climate change patterns to better guide conservation efforts and sustainable fisheries management. On land, data are collected as part of the climate Smart Agriculture and Rural Enterprise Programme to monitor real-time changes in climate, soil conditions and market prices, and the information gathered is used to guide decision-making across the food supply chain to promote more climate-resilient and sustainable agriculture. As part of the climate Resilient Infrastructure for Integrated landscape initiative, the Government has launched an app to provide citizens with real-time information via mobile alerts on how to respond during natural disasters. The next step is a smart government programme to digitalize public administration, provide high-quality online services, and create an innovation hub platform to meaningfully engage citizens.

*Source*: United Nations Development Programme, Barbados and the Eastern Caribbean, *Grenada Smart Small State: Developing the Vision* (quoted portion from p. 3), available at https://www.undp.org/barbados/publications/grenada-smart-small-state-developing-vision.

*Source*:  United Nations Development Programme, Barbados and the Eastern Caribbean, *Grenada Smart Small State: Developing the Vision* (quoted portion from p. 3), available at
https://www.undp.org/barbados/publications/grenada-smart-small-state-developing-vision.
*The box corresponds to Box 2.8 in 2022 E-Government survey, Chapter 2*

**Figure 8. Countries in special situations in the Americas, 2022**
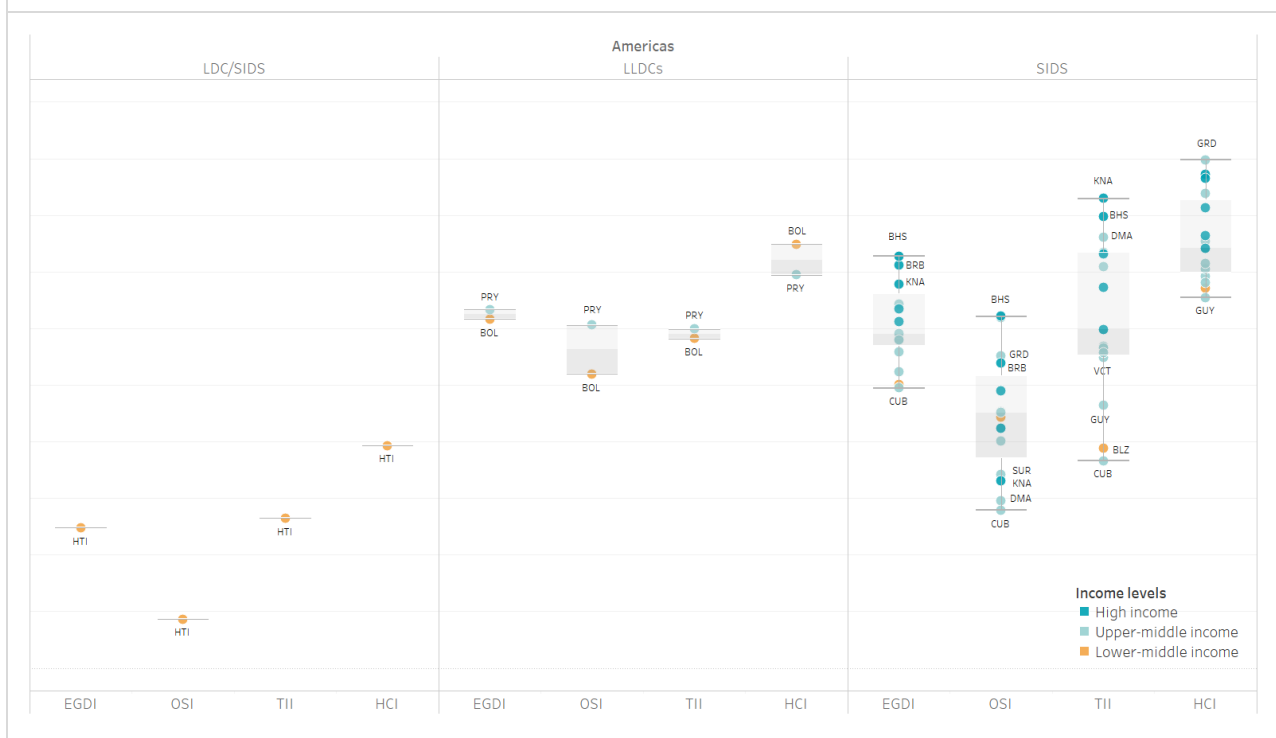


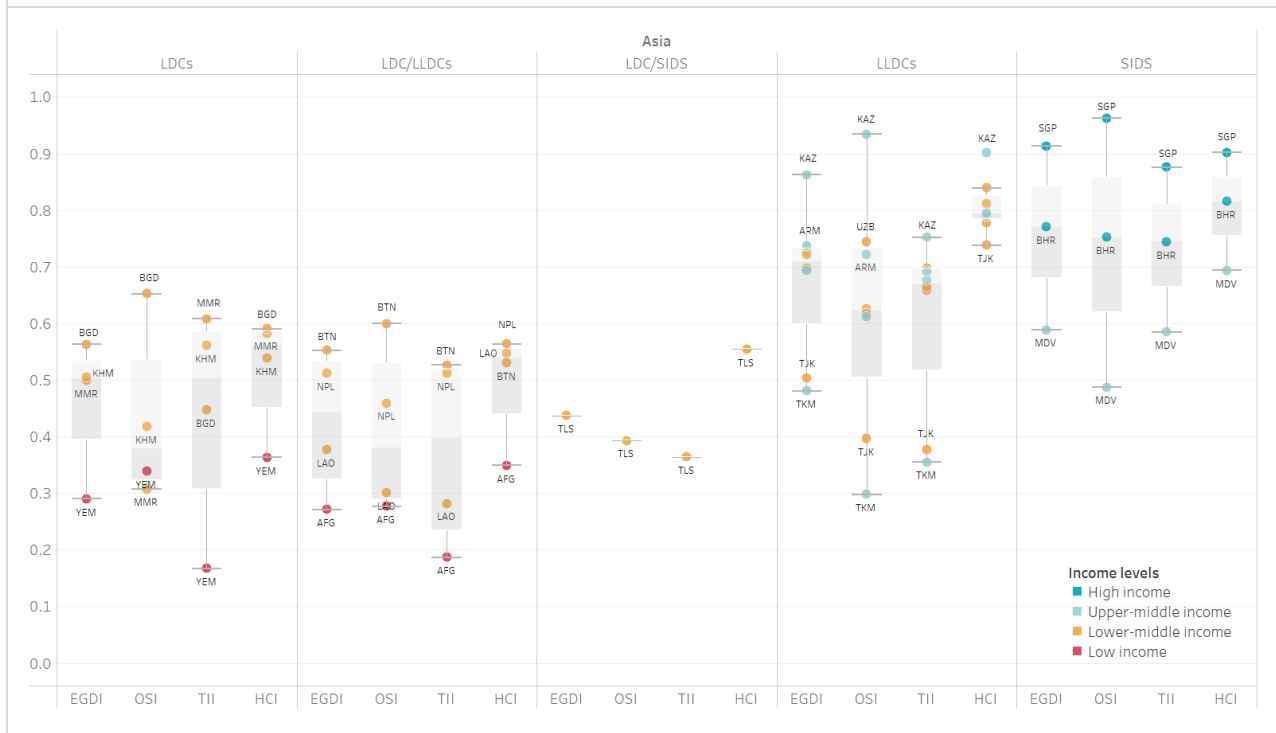*Source*: 2022 United Nations E-Government Survey.

*Notes*: Countries in special situations include least developed countries (LDCs), landlocked developing countries (LLDCs), and small island developing States (SIDS). The internationally recognized three-letter country codes can be found here and in Survey annex table 12.

*The graph corresponds to Figure 2.14 in 2022 E-Government survey, Chapter 2*

## *Asia*

Asia has the second largest number of countries in special situations after Africa (20 versus 39), though the average EGDI value for these countries is higher in Asia (0.5851) than in Africa (0.3588). As shown in figure 9, the LDCs in Asia, including those that are also LLDCs and SIDS, have lower EGDI values than do the LLDCs and SIDS—similar to the findings for Africa. The three SIDS in Asia with high or very high EGDI values are Maldives (0.5885), Bahrain (0.7707) and Singapore (0.9133).

**Figure 9. Countries in special situations in Asia, 2022**



*Source*: 2022 United Nations E-Government Survey.

*Notes*: Countries in special situations include least developed countries (LDCs), landlocked developing countries (LLDCs), and small island developing States (SIDS). The internationally recognized three-letter country codes can be found here and in Survey annex table 12.

*The graph corresponds to Figure 2.15 in 2022 E-Government survey, Chapter 2*

## *Oceania*

All 14 countries in Oceania are listed in table 2 owing to the small size of the region. Australia and New Zealand—with respective EGDI values of 0.9405 and 0.9432 and global rankings of 4th and 7th—are in the highest (VH) rating class of the very high EGDI group and are among the world leaders in e-government development. The countries in the high EGDI group include Fiji (0.6235), Tonga (0.5155) and Palau (0.5109), and the remaining countries are in the middle EGDI group. The countries in the region other than Australia and New Zealand have an average EGDI value of 0.4358—less than half the corresponding values of the regional front-runners and substantially lower than the global average of 0.6201. These 12 countries are all SIDS, and three of them (Kiribati, Solomon Islands and Tuvalu) are also LDCs. Vanuatu graduated from LDC status in 2020.

The least developed SIDS have the lowest EGDI values in the region (averaging 0.3884), mainly because of their poorly developed telecommunications infrastructure (reflected in the low average TII value of 0.2375). For comparison, all other SIDS in Oceania have an average EGDI value of 0.4516 and an average TII value of 0.3110—though the disparities in telecommunications infrastructure development are greater for this group than for the least developed SIDS (see figure

14

10). Oceania struggles to capitalize on its highly developed human capital (reflected in the average HCI value of 0.7268) and achieve meaningful progress in e-government development.

**Table 2. Countries in Oceania listed in descending order by EGDI value**

| Country | Rating class | EGDI rank | Subregion | OSI value | HCI value | TII value | EGDI (2022) | EGDI (2020) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| New Zealand | VH | 4 | Australia and New Zealand | 0.9579 | 0.9823 | 0.8896 | 0.9432 | 0.9339 |
| Australia | VH | 7 | Australia and New Zealand | 0.9380 | 1.0000 | 0.8836 | 0.9405 | 0.9432 |
| Fiji | H3 | 97 | Melanesia | 0.4813 | 0.7957 | 0.5935 | 0.6235 | 0.6585 |
| Tonga | H1 | 124 | Polynesia | 0.3296 | 0.8675 | 0.3496 | 0.5155 | 0.5616 |
| Palau | H1 | 132 | Micronesia | 0.2373 | 0.8946 | 0.3735 | 0.5018 | 0.5109 |
| Vanuatu | MH | 135 | Melanesia | 0.4228 | 0.6009 | 0.4727 | 0.4988 | 0.4403 |
| Nauru | MH | 139 | Micronesia | 0.2952 | 0.5925 | 0.4768 | 0.4548 | 0.4150 |
| Kiribati | M3 | 148 | Micronesia | 0.3686 | 0.6785 | 0.2530 | 0.4334 | 0.432 |
| Samoa | M3 | 152 | Polynesia | 0.3592 | 0.7470 | 0.1558 | 0.4207 | 0.4219 |
| Tuvalu | M3 | 158 | Polynesia | 0.2265 | 0.6492 | 0.2607 | 0.3788 | 0.4209 |
| Marshall Islands | M3 | 160 | Micronesia | 0.3004 | 0.6903 | 0.1236 | 0.3714 | 0.4055 |
| Micronesia (Federated States of) | M2 | 164 | Micronesia | 0.2703 | 0.6845 | 0.1102 | 0.3550 | 0.3779 |
| Solomon Islands | M2 | 165 | Melanesia | 0.3676 | 0.4925 | 0.1988 | 0.3530 | 0.3442 |
| Papua New Guinea | M2 | 170 | Melanesia | 0.3263 | 0.4996 | 0.1430 | 0.3230 | 0.2827 |

*Sources*: 2020 and 2022 United Nations E-Government Surveys.
*The table corresponds to Table 2.6 in 2022 E-Government survey, Chapter 2*

**Box 2 Fiji: expanding the provision of digital services to improve accessibility**

In Fiji, the Digital Government Transformation Programme (digitalFIJI) is being implemented as part of the 20-year National Development Plan and focuses primarily on strengthening public administration, government services, and the telecommunications infrastructure. Aiming to enhance the quality and accessibility of public services, the Government is working to achieve full digitalization by the end of 2022. The digitalFIJI website currently allows users to register births, apply for and retrieve birth certificates, and register companies or businesses. Two digital platforms have been created to facilitate communication and engagement. The Government Directory provides contact information for every public agency and public official, and the myFeedback platform provides users with an online space to discuss issues and comment on governance and government services; the latter project is handled by the Feedback Unit, which is responsible for promptly redirecting messages to the appropriate ministries and agencies for response and timely resolution.

*Sources*: 2022 Member States Questionnaire for Fiji; additional information on the services and platforms is available at https://www.fiji.gov.fj/digitalFIJI and https://carefiji.digitalfiji.gov.fj/about-us/.

*Sources*: 2022 Member States Questionnaire for Fiji; additional information on the services and platforms is available at https://www.fiji.gov.fj/digitalFIJI and https://carefiji.digitalfiji.gov.fj/about-us/.
*The box corresponds to Box 2.5 in 2022 E-Government survey, Chapter 2*

**Figure 10. Countries in special situations in Oceania, 2022**

*Source*: 2022 United Nations E-Government Survey.
*Notes*: Countries in special situations include least developed countries (LDCs), landlocked developing countries (LLDCs), and small island developing States (SIDS). The internationally recognized three-letter country codes can be found here and in Survey annex table 12.
*The graph corresponds to Figure 2.17 in 2022 E-Government survey, Chapter 2*

## Conclusions[4]

The Internet and digital technologies have shown unlimited capacity to support and advance our societies. The United Nations Secretary-General Antonio Guterres referred to the Internet as a "global public good" and to some extent also government data as public resources, can be considered "national public good" and should be seen and used as public good, to deliver public values.

Today, with growing technological capacity to process in real time ever-larger and more complex data sets, policymakers can have better insight, and foresight, and make e-services more efficient, accountable, inclusive and responsive – and even anticipatory, predictive services. The potential and opportunities surrounding data are almost unlimited and governments together with all the stakeholders should working forward the achievement of data as public good.

To do so, governments should not underestimate all the risks and challenges associated with new data-driven technologies – especially the use of not reliable data, the existing data gaps, data security, personal privacy and ethics and of course data fraud and crime. In the absence of a common set of principles based on human rights, data privacy, ethics and protection, people increasingly worry about data breaches and misuse of personal data for unjustified purposes. There are legitimate concerns regarding the risks associated with handling and processing of data, particularly in light of the current fragmented regulatory landscape.

Technology does not come risk-free, and the digital governments should address privacy concerns and cybersecurity.

The purpose of digital government is not and should not be digitization of existing bureaucracies. The examples from digitally advanced societies show that the most innovative countries and cities take action to eliminate points of friction between governments and people they serve. Making bureaucratic and sectoral boundaries permeable and bringing together different players of society to innovate - makes all the difference.

Successful digital governments shift from being ever-present in people's lives to becoming rather invisible while proactively offering automated services accessible anytime from anywhere at your convenience. This approach helps to re-imagine the ways in which governments collaborate and interact with their constituencies.

As a result, the trend of adopting frontier technologies in government sector intensified -- signalling an irreversible shift towards digital transformation. Technology and advancement of complex systems analysis, AI and big data allow the governments to build up also anticipatory

---

[4] Excerpt from Chapter 5, para 5.7 of the 2022 E-Government Survey

capabilities and actively shape the future development scenarios. Anticipatory government helps in responding to problems as they emerge.

The 2022 Survey has showed how many benefits around digital transformation have yet to be realized, especially in least developed countries, Small Island developing States, landlocked developing countries, and economies in transition. As for 2022 assessment, the average E-Government Development Index for almost fifty per cent of the world population remains well below the global average.

One reason for this is still the poor and uneven accessibility to Internet in the least developed countries. Fulfilling our vision for leaving no one behind will require to leave no one offline. Governments need to ensure that every person has safe and affordable access to the Internet by 2030, including meaningful use of digitally enabled services, in line with the Sustainable Development Goals. To do so, governments need to put efforts in proactively reaching to the most vulnerable people and enhancing their access to online services.

The future of digital governments has an imperative to bridge the digital divides.

Based on 2022 assessment, digital divides persist and may widen without the adoption of targeted and systematic measures to assist low-income and lower-middle-income countries and countries in special situations (including LDCs, LLDCs and SIDS comprising more than a quarter of the UN Member States). Although countries with higher-income tend to have better e-government development, there are also many developing countries that achieved high and very high levels of e-government development by improving their online services provision despite limited resources. This suggests that ad-hoc targeted investments and policies supporting e-government development can be effective in bridging digital divides in those countries.

The 2030 Agenda for sustainable development remains the government blueprint setting a course for a healthier and more resilient future in the post-COVID world.

While there is increasing emphasis on implementing digital government for public service delivery, it is not clear whether all the UN Member States have been given sufficient attention on digital transformation and have been institutionalized it to be more effective, accountable and trustworthy. Effective, accountable and trustworthy governance need strong public leaderships, guided by ethical principles and role of law, and instituted by clear and unbiased rules and processes able to capture the evolving security and privacy risks.

UN Secretary-General António Guterres recently called for a 'new social contract' as part of post-pandemic recovery -- based on inclusivity and sustainability and highlighted the need for governments to prioritize investment in digital infrastructure for social cohesion.

Therefore, governments from all over the world, should strategize and invest more in a long-term national digital transformation plan driven by the adoption of a comprehensive and innovative multi-stakeholder framework that capture the needs of all people, to leave no one behind.