International Chamber of Commerce input to Global Symposium for Regulators 2024 Best Practice Guidelines

The International Chamber of Commerce (ICC) believes in the power of information and communication technologies (ICTs) as well as existing and emerging digital technologies (such as AI and advanced connectivity) to create positive, lasting and inclusive socio-economic impact.

As the world's largest business organization, with a network of more than 45 million companies in over 170 countries, ICC draws on the experience and evidence of businesses of all sizes and sectors to assess how digitalisation efforts driven by the private sector deliver such impact.

The transformative impact of these technologies permeates every facet of modern life, reshaping economies, industries, and societies on a global scale. They create opportunities for the private and public sectors, for growth and for regional prosperity.

Only by combining the dynamism of industry innovation with enabling policy and regulatory measures can we unleash the boundless potential of ICTs and digital technologies, and realise the desired positive impacts, leaving no one behind.[1] Although over the past decades, significant progress was achieved in building a global, seamless, digital ecosystem to advance inclusive and sustainable social-economic development, barriers still remain. **Fully unlocking the potential of ICTs and digital technologies depends among other things, on delivering universal meaningful connectivity and engaging use, enhancing cyber resilience and trust and enabling the cross-border flow of data that underpins the functioning of the global digital economy.**

For this, an appropriate mix of economic, technical, and regulatory approaches is necessary. Policymakers and regulators have a clear role to play in setting up enabling policy environments that incentivise investment and innovation to develop trustworthy technologies, and facilitating the business case for their deployment and wide-scale adoption. **Enabling policy environments and mechanisms should be non-discriminatory, technology-neutral, and supportive of innovative business models and the development and deployment of a wide range of technologies, global standards, and system architectures, effectively promoting the value of the entire communications and digital services ecosystem at all its layers: infrastructure; applications and services; and user ability and skills.**

In order to achieve the desired positive impact through the catalytic power of ICTs and digital technologies, global business encourages policymakers to:

1. **Facilitate investment across the entire digital value chain:** Policymakers should not only promote, but actively foster both private and public investment, competition, and innovation in the development and deployment of broadband services and connectivity

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[1] Find out more about how business projects fuel digitalisation through ICC's Digitalisation for People, Planet and Prosperity campaign and see real-world examples in the related case study repository.

devices, and in enabling technologies, content, applications and services that help drive and sustain adoption.[2]

2. **Improve digital infrastructure and its use:** Modern resilient and trusted telecommunication infrastructure and high-speed broadband networks will be a crucial enabler for all industries and essential for leading the way to a low-carbon society. Allocation and licensing of spectrum should be transparent, fair, economically efficient, technology-neutral, and aimed at ensuring that sufficient licensed broadband-capable spectrum is made available at reasonable cost. Unlicensed, shared, and secondary uses of spectrum should be facilitated, and operators should be incentivised to use spectrum efficiently.

3. **Enable, and foster trust in data and digital technologies:** Policymakers should ensure all citizens and companies can realise the full potential of digitalisation for innovation and economic growth, by setting policies that facilitate the adoption of new technologies and the global movement of data that supports them. Establishing clear rules and enforcing roles and responsibilities in the data processing value chain are the keys to maintaining responsibility over compliance irrespective of locality. Governments should adopt policies to build trust by ensuring that users have practical mechanisms and appropriate control over how their personal data is used. Companies should ensure that personal data is appropriately secured as technology and services evolve. Increased trustworthiness and certainty will underpin innovation, inclusion, and economic growth[3]

4. **Ground policies in evidence and data:** Policies and regulations should be evidence based, transparent and aimed to improve the ease and predictability of doing business.

5. **Embrace multistakeholder policymaking:** By encouraging the participation of all relevant stakeholders, including business, civil society, and the technical community, in policymaking processes, governments can generate policies that are timely, scalable, and innovation-enabling. Multistakeholder cooperation and in particular, public-private partnerships should go beyond project implementation and actively incorporate diversity of views from the first moments of policy creation.

6. **Invest in digital literacy and skills development:** Investment in digital literacy and skills development is essential for future-proofing digitalisation for people, planet and prosperity. Equipping individuals with the necessary digital skills is the only path to fully harness the opportunities offered in the digital economy, leaving no one behind.

7. **Promote international cooperation:** Lack of interoperability across the policy and regulatory environment can create needless administrative burdens and compliance inconsistencies across jurisdictions, stifling the opportunities and progress that can be made. Scaling up the adoption of existing principles and widely used industry standards ensures consistent approaches between countries, enable cross-border cooperation, and creates certainty and predictability for companies to continue investing and innovating.

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[2] See ICC's White Paper on Delivering Universal Meaningful Connectivity for further information and recommendations.

[3] See ICC's White Paper on Trusted Government Access to Personal Data Held by the Private Sector and Policy Primer on Non-personal Data for more information and recommendations.