



WSIS+20 Review Action Lines Milestones, Challenges and Emerging Trends beyond 2025

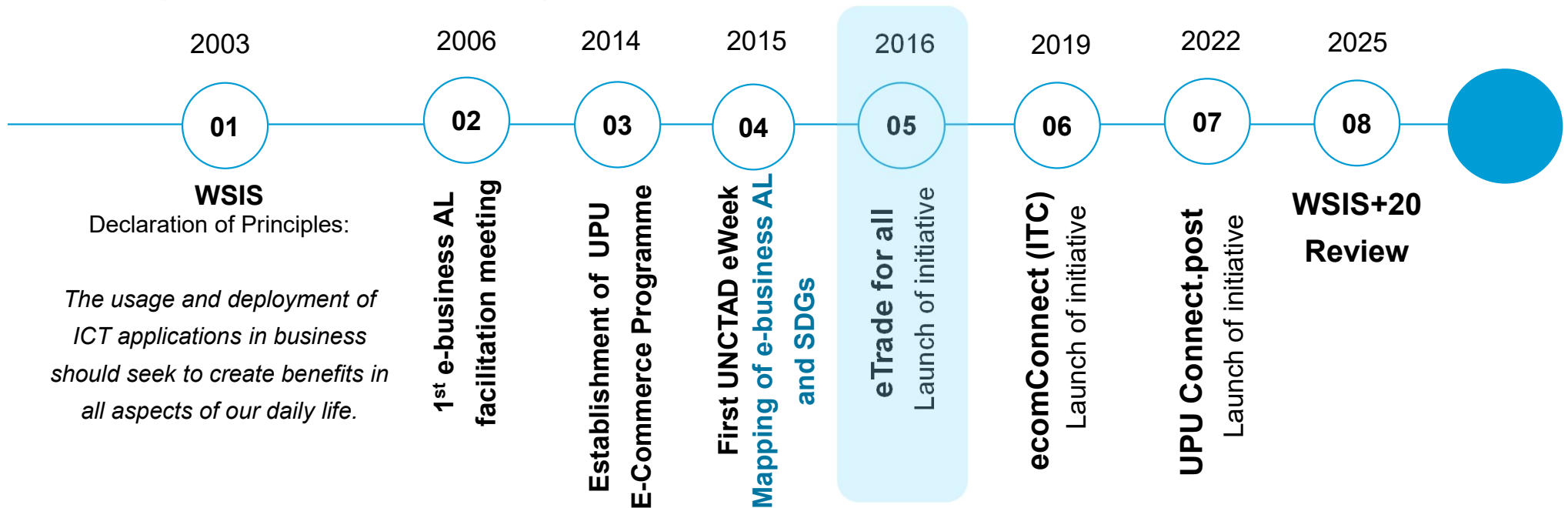
C7 E-business

Co-facilitators: International Trade Centre (ITC), Universal Postal Union (UPU), United Nations Trade and Development (UNCTAD)

The Evolution of Context

- Over the last 20 years, digital technologies have transformed the way we live, work, consume, and do business. Digitalization has facilitated participation in regional and global value chains of trade in goods and services.
- Data is now critical to be competitive in many sectors. The Internet of Things and AI are transforming how we produce and access goods and services. The data-driven digital economy could be harnessed to accelerate progress towards sustainable development goals.
- The COVID-19 pandemic accelerated the digital transformation while highlighting the persistent digital divide, both between and within countries.
- Digital technologies have become pervasive in the global economy. Effective digital cooperation is needed to ensure that e-business supports economic development outcomes that are inclusive and socially and environmentally sustainable.

Key Milestones: 20 years of Achievements



- Mapping of e-business action line to SDGs 1, 2, 5, 8, 9, and 17.
- 35 partners in the eTrade for all initiative so far
- 18 e-business action line facilitation meetings so far
- 8 editions of the UNCTAD eWeek with multi-stakeholder participation so far

Challenges in implementing the Action Line

- Many developing countries and LDCs still lack the digital infrastructure, skills, resources, enabling environments, and access to capital needed to compete in e-business with developed countries.
- They also lack official statistics on the use, value, or volume of e-business, e-commerce, and the digital economy to guide policy (evidence-based policy making).
- The COVID-19 pandemic highlighted the continued divide between developed and developing countries regarding their digital readiness and their ability to leverage the data-driven digital economy for development goals.
- Support from the international community to improve the e-business readiness of developing countries and LDCs is not yet enough to reduce the divide.

Trends and Opportunities Beyond 2025

- Global efforts to boost the digital readiness of developing countries should be scaled up.
- Least developed countries in particular need support to boost digital infrastructure, skills, and regulatory frameworks.
- The environmental footprint of the digital economy could be reduced through innovation in ICT production, e-waste management, and a shift to renewable energy.
- Women entrepreneurs in the digital economy need more support to improve their access to finance, services, and capacity building, and to involve them in crafting digital economy policy.
- It is time for a global governance approach to data, digital platforms, and technologies like AI, that will aim to ensure equal access, shared benefits, and the protection of human rights.

