

China the only middle-income economy to feature in top quartile of NRI 2023

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China secures its position as the only middle-income economy in the top quartile of the 2023 Network Readiness Index (NRI) (<https://networkreadinessindex.org/>) rankings, published today. Emerging as one of this year's biggest movers, China ranks 20th globally, up five positions as compared to last year, showing a high concentration of AI talent and strong investment in technology.

The NRI, published by Portulans Institute and Saïd Business School, University of Oxford, provides a robust framework for assessing the impact of Information Communication & Technology (ICT) on society and the development of nations. It evaluates 134 economies based on 58 indicators across four dimensions of digital readiness – technology, people, governance, and impact – providing meaningful insight for business leaders and policymakers.

China leads a group of emerging economies closing the network readiness gap between high and middle-income economies. It performs above expectations in all four pillars of the NRI, and maintains its position as the top scoring economy within the upper-middle-income group.

China's achievements underscore its remarkable strength and ability to outperform both high-income and upper middle-income nations in various aspects of digital readiness. Its digital excellence is particularly evident in the People category, indicating widespread adoption of digitization within its society, particularly among individuals and businesses, which both saw improvements this year.

Additionally, China leads globally in digital access to technology, with extensive internet coverage and strong bandwidth. Noteworthy achievements also include its supremacy in AI scientific publications, government support for investment in emerging technologies, a strong domestic market, and a thriving gig economy.

This year's NRI, titled 'Trust in a Network Society: A crisis of the digital age?', draws attention to the potential for a serious crisis in public trust in the internet and related technologies in an increasingly interconnected world.

Globally, the USA secured the top spot for the second year in a row, and Finland surged by four places to secure 3rd from 7th last year. The Netherlands and Sweden have ranked 4th and 5th, respectively.

Switzerland ranks 6th, (down from 5th), Denmark ranks 8th (down from 6th), Germany ranks 9th (down from 8th), and the United Kingdom (10th) re-enters the top 10, (up from 12th).

Among the top 25 countries, 16 are from Europe, five are from Eastern and Southeastern Asia (including Singapore, the Republic of Korea, China, Hong Kong, and Japan), two come from Oceania (Australia and New

Zealand), and two are from North America (Canada and the United States).

The NRI 2023 publishes at a time characterised by dramatic technological advancement, and captures the readiness of 134 economies to capitalize on this widespread change.

The regional leaders for NRI 2023 include Kenya, United Arab Emirates, Singapore, the Russian Federation, Finland, and the United States. Overall, these regional trends in the NRI 2023 highlight the varying levels of progress and challenges faced by economies across the different parts of the world as their journey towards digital readiness and network capabilities continues.

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