

Europe dominates this year's global Network Readiness Index, with 16 nations featuring in the top 25 ranking, as Finland surges into third place for first time

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Sixteen out of the top 25 countries rated in the 2023 Network Readiness Index (<https://networkreadinessindex.org/>), published today, hail from Europe. Finland makes advances to feature in the top three globally with a surge of four places due in part to improved performance across the Technology, Governance and Impact categories.

Placing fourth and fifth globally are the Netherlands and Sweden. Completing the continent's top ten spots are Switzerland (sixth, down from fifth), Denmark (eighth, down from sixth), Germany (ninth, down from eighth), and the United Kingdom (10th, up from 12th), which re-enters the top 10 partly due to its strength in the Technology and marked improvements in ICT adoption by individuals, businesses, and governments. Conversely, Norway has experienced a significant decline, now standing at 16th place, down from 10th in 2022.

Ukraine (47th) maintains its position as the top performing lower middle-income economy and emerges as one of this year's biggest movers, rising seven places. Closing in on its high-income regional peers, the nation continues to make notable progress in People category, now ranking 25th, but receives its lowest score in Technology, to reflect their geopolitical position of a country responding to an active war environment.

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.

This year's report, 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.

Soumitra Dutta, co-editor of the NRI and Peter Moores Dean at Saïd Business School, said:

'European nations continue to lead the rankings, demonstrating robust performances across all dimensions of network readiness. Finland, the Netherlands, and Sweden emerge as the region's most network ready nations, with France and Norway also demonstrating solid digital infrastructures. Ukraine also continues to excel, underlining a commitment to digital innovation.'

The top 10 performers in NRI 2023 underscore that advanced economies in Europe, primarily Northern and Western Europe are leading the way in terms of network readiness. Finland, a high-income economy is the

global leader in the Governance pillar, with the Netherlands in second place in this category. Finland is placed second in the Impact measurement, followed closely by Ireland which maintains its global lead in the area of SDG Contribution.

The Governance pillar remains dominated by Northern European countries, with four of the top 5 leaders from this region. After Finland and the Netherlands are Denmark (3rd), Norway (4th), and Sweden (5th). This European dominance within the Governance pillar underscores the region's outstanding performance in the sub-pillar areas of Trust, Regulation, and Inclusion. Specifically, Finland claims the top spot in this pillar due to its robust digital security and Trust (6th), strong digital Regulations (2nd), and commitment to digital inclusion (6th).

Similarly, the Netherlands exhibits notable strengths in Trust (3rd), Regulations (5th), and Inclusion (2nd). Denmark follows closely in the rankings, characterised by a high level of security and Trust (1st) in its digital capabilities. It retains its global leadership in the number of Secure Internet Servers (1st) and excels in Online Access to Financial Accounts (2nd) and the popularity of Online shopping (2nd). Norway maintains its strong performance in Trust (2nd) and Regulation (3rd) concerning digital technologies. Additionally, Singapore and Luxembourg continue to be global leaders in Inclusion (1st) and Regulation (1st), respectively.

Globally, the USA secured the top ranking for the second year in a row, whilst Singapore retained its second-place position. The Republic of Korea achieved 7th place (up from 9th).

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.

Reflecting on this year's NRI, Bruno Lanvin, co-editor of NRI, said:

'You cannot improve what you cannot measure. But can you improve anything that remains imperfectly defined? As our digital world continues to evolve and shape before us, policy makers, investors, analysts, academics and ordinary citizens are often expected to make fast decisions and articulate sound assessments about rapidly changing trends and practices. The need for fact-based and quantifiable descriptions of our network societies has never been so urgent. This is an area in which, for several decades, NRI has been trying to inform the choices to be made by business, government and civil society.'

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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For more information, or to speak to Professor Soumitra Dutta, contact Jonny Stone at jonny@bluesky-pr.com or call +44 (0) 1582 7990704.