WORLD GOVERNMENTS SUMMIT

PORTULANS INSTITUTE

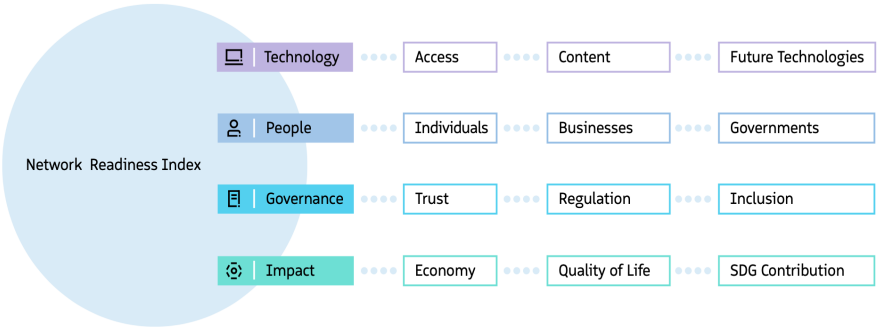
Network Readiness Index 2025

With support from: aws CNI

United Arab Emirates

The Network Readiness Index (NRI) is one of the leading global indices on the application and impact of information and communication technology (ICT) in economies around the world. In its latest version of 2025 the NRI Report maps the network-based readiness landscape of 127 economies based on their performances in four different pillars: Technology, People, Governance, and Impact. Each of these pillars is itself comprised of three sub-pillars (see Figure 1) that have been populated by a total of 53 variables.

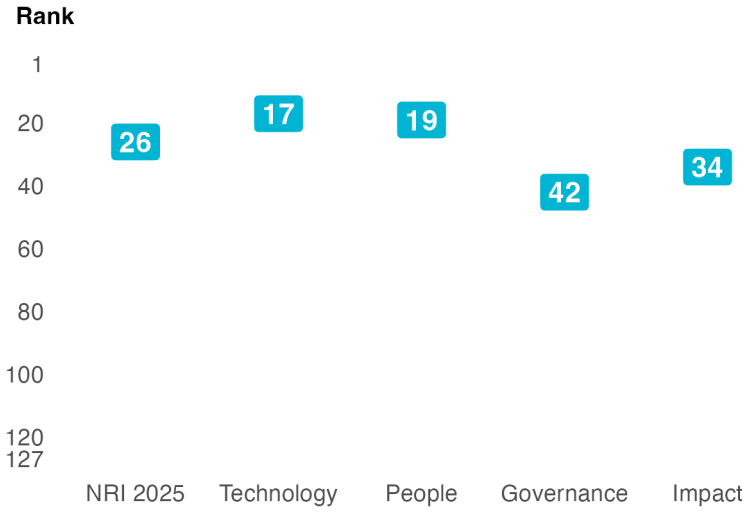
Figure 1: The NRI 2025 model



Global NRI position of United Arab Emirates

United Arab Emirates ranks 26 out of the 127 economies included in the NRI 2025 (Figure 2). Its main strength relates to Technology. The greatest scope for improvement, meanwhile, concerns Governance.

Figure 2: United Arab Emirates global ranking, overall and by pillar



Performance at sub-pillar level

When it comes to sub-pillars, the strongest showings of United Arab Emirates relate to Access, Future Technologies and Governments, among others (Table 1). More could be done, though, to improve the economy's performances in the Content, Trust and SDG Contribution sub-pillars.

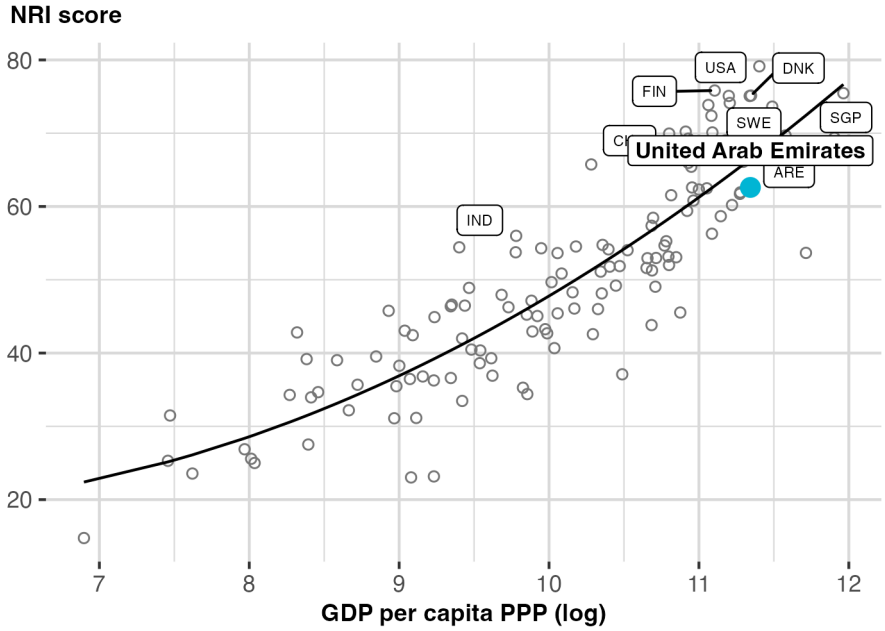
Table 1: United Arab Emirates rankings by sub-pillar

Sub-pillar	Rank	Sub-pillar	Rank
Access	5	Businesses	41
Future Technologies	6	Economy	42
Governments	11	Regulation	50
Quality of Life	11	Content	54
Individuals	16	Trust	55
Inclusion	28	SDG Contribution	61

NRI score and income

Figure 3 shows the position of United Arab Emirates in terms of both NRI score and GDP per capita (PPP). The trend line shows the expected NRI score given an economy's income level. As can be seen, United Arab Emirates is well below the trend line, which suggests that it is underachieving and that one would expect it could raise its network readiness in view of its income level.

Figure 3: NRI score and GDP per capita PPP (log)



Note: USA = United States of America (rank: 1), FIN =Finland (rank: 2), SGP = Singapore (3), DNK =Denmark (4), SWE = Sweden (5), CHN =China (24), and IND = India (45).

Performance against its income group and region

High-income countries

United Arab Emirates is ranked 25th in the group of high-income countries (Figure 4, left panel). In terms of pillar performance, it has a score higher than the income group average in two of the four pillars: Technology and People. At the sub-pillar level, it outperforms high-income countries in six of the twelve sub-pillars: Access, Future Technologies, Individuals, Governments, Inclusion and Quality of Life.

Arab States

United Arab Emirates is ranked 1st within Arab States (Figure 4, right panel). It outperforms its region in each of the four pillars. With regard to sub-pillars, it has a higher score than the regional average in each of the twelve sub-pillars.

Figure 4: Performance of United Arab Emirates against its income group and region, overall and by pillar

Table 2: United Arab Emirates scores vs. averages of its income group and region, overall and by pillar

Dimension	United Arab Emirates	High-income countries	Arab States
NRI	62.60	62.71	47.13
Technology	60.25	55.47	44.56
People	57.12	52.36	40.45
Governance	70.24	77.18	55.27
Impact	62.80	65.84	48.24

NRI 2025 At-A-Glance: United Arab Emirates

Network Readiness Index Rank: 26 (out of 127) Score: 62.60

Pillar/sub-pillar	Rank	Score
A. Technology pillar	17	60.25
1st sub-pillar: Access	5	84.90
2nd sub-pillar: Content	54	27.74
3rd sub-pillar: Future Technologies	6	68.11
B. People pillar	19	57.12
1st sub-pillar: Individuals	16	66.37
2nd sub-pillar: Businesses	41	37.83
3rd sub-pillar: Governments	11	67.17

Pillar/sub-pillar	Rank	Score
C. Governance pillar	42	70.24
1st sub-pillar: Trust	55	65.33
2nd sub-pillar: Regulation	50	67.05
3rd sub-pillar: Inclusion	28	78.33
D. Impact pillar	34	62.80
1st sub-pillar: Economy	42	38.42
2nd sub-pillar: Quality of Life	11	84.57
3rd sub-pillar: SDG Contribution	61	65.40

The Network Readiness Index in detail

Indicator	Rank	Score	
A. Technology pillar	17	60.25	
1st sub-pillar: Access	5	84.90	
1.1.1 Mobile tariffs	22	86.25	
1.1.2 Handset prices	1	100.00	●
1.1.3 FTTH/building Internet subscriptions	43	39.36	
1.1.4 Population covered by at least a 3G mobile network	1	100.00	●
1.1.5 International Internet bandwidth	15	83.77	
1.1.6 Internet access in schools	1	100.00	●
2nd sub-pillar: Content	54	27.74	
1.2.1 GitHub commits	50	14.26	
1.2.2 Internet domain registrations	44	10.24	
1.2.3 Mobile apps development	12	77.28	●
1.2.4 AI scientific publications	48	9.17	
3rd sub-pillar: Future Technologies	6	68.11	
1.3.1 Adoption of emerging technologies	3	99.14	●
1.3.2 Investment in emerging technologies	10	79.50	●
1.3.3 Robot density	n/a	n/a	
1.3.4 Computer software spending	34	25.69	
B. People pillar	19	57.12	
1st sub-pillar: Individuals	16	66.37	
2.1.1 Mobile broadband internet traffic within the country	33	31.61	
2.1.2 ICT skills in the education system	7	84.80	●
2.1.3 Use of virtual social networks	2	99.23	●
2.1.4 Adult literacy rate	16	98.46	
2.1.5 AI talent concentration	36	17.74	○
2nd sub-pillar: Businesses	41	37.83	

Indicator	Rank	Score	
C. Governance pillar	42	70.24	
1st sub-pillar: Trust	55	65.33	
3.1.1 Secure Internet servers	59	67.25	
3.1.2 Cybersecurity	1	100.00	●
3.1.3 Online access to financial account	n/a	n/a	
3.1.4 Internet shopping	61	28.74	
2nd sub-pillar: Regulation	50	67.05	
3.2.1 Regulatory quality	30	68.31	
3.2.2 ICT regulatory environment	59	75.62	
3.2.3 Regulation of emerging technologies	9	81.88	●
3.2.4 E-commerce legislation	1	100.00	●
3.2.5 Privacy protection by law content	125	9.44	○
3rd sub-pillar: Inclusion	28	78.33	
3.3.1 E-Participation	37	76.81	
3.3.2 Socioeconomic gap in use of digital payments	29	90.27	
3.3.3 Gender gap in Internet use	31	67.93	
3.3.4 Rural gap in use of digital payments	n/a	n/a	
D. Impact pillar	34	62.80	
1st sub-pillar: Economy	42	38.42	
4.1.1 ICT patent applications	37	4.99	
4.1.2 Domestic market scale	37	64.06	
4.1.3 Technology-Enabled Work Flexibility	20	72.28	
4.1.4 ICT services exports	66	12.34	
2nd sub-pillar: Quality of Life	11	84.57	
4.2.1 Happiness	21	78.17	
4.2.2 Freedom to make life choices	15	89.84	

Indicator	Rank	Score	
2.2.1 Firms with website	n/a	n/a	
2.2.2 Number of venture capital deals invested in AI	18	35.11	
2.2.3 Annual investment in telecommunication services	29	51.30	
2.2.4 Public cloud computing market scale	28	27.07	
3rd sub-pillar: Governments	11	67.17	
2.3.1 Government online services	16	89.93	
2.3.2 Data Capabilities	20	57.54	
2.3.3 Government promotion of emerging technologies	2	97.73	●
2.3.4 Gross expenditure on R&D	27	23.49	

NOTE: ● indicates a strength and ○ indicates a weakness.

Indicator	Rank	Score	
4.2.3 Income inequality	7	93.37	●
4.2.4 Healthy life expectancy at birth	33	78.03	
3rd sub-pillar: SDG Contribution	61	65.40	
4.3.1 SDG 3: Good Health and Well-Being	1	100.00	●
4.3.2 SDG 4: Quality Education	46	36.99	
4.3.3 SDG 5: Women's economic opportunity	72	74.55	○
4.3.4 SDG 7: Affordable and Clean Energy	105	54.90	○
4.3.5 SDG 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities	19	90.37	

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