



Guide to the ITU

Amplifying Global South
Voices in Digital Rights
Policymaking - Data Privacy
2023

Article 19 - Global Team Digital

International Telecommunication Union

ITU is the United Nations specialized agency for information and communication technologies. It was founded in 1865.

ITU-D Development Sector

ITU-R Radiocommunications

ITU-T Standardization

The ITU structure

- The ITU has a multilateral governance structure and, while other actors as private, academia and non-profit can take part as member (for a 71,550 Swiss Francs fee or less if approved by the ITU), they still cannot vote. Member-states have the final word (in theory). Decisions are made based on consensus based on written contributions.

Why we engage in the ITU the case of Connectivity



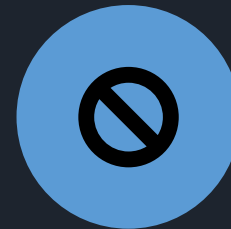
HIGH COST OF
LICENSING



REMOTE/RURAL AREAS
UNDERSERVED IN TERMS
OF ICT INFRASTRUCTURE



ALLOCATION OF
SPECTRUM IS NOT
ENOUGH TO ALLOW A
FAIR DISTRIBUTION OF
RADIO/TV CHANNELS



LIMITED UNLICENSED
SPECTRUM/AVAILABLE
SECONDARY SPECTRUM
HAVE THEIR USE
FORBIDDEN

New issues might appear or be „discovered“ during our engagement

Why we engage in the ITU Emerging Tech



IMPLICATIONS TO
COMPETITION AND
MARKET DIVERSITY



NEW TECH CAN BE
INVASIVE AND HARM
PERSONAL PRIVACY,
AMONGST OTHER HUMAN
RIGHTS



LACK OF BALANCE
BETWEEN COUNTRIES
THAT PRODUCE AND SELL
NEW TECH AND THE ONES
THAT CONSUME IT
(GLOBAL NORTH/GLOBAL
SOUTH)

New issues might appear or be „discovered“ during our engagement

Development Sector ITU-D Goals

To foster international cooperation on ICT development issues

To enhance confidence and security in the use of telecommunication and ICTs

To build human and institutional capacity and provide assistance to countries in

special needs (accessibility)

Study Questions

ITU-D Study Groups

Study Group 1 Enabling environment for meaningful connectivity

Learn more at
itu.int/itu-d/sites/studygroups

Q1/1

Strategies and policies for the deployment of broadband in developing countries

Q2/1

Strategies, policies, regulations and methods of migration to and adoption of digital technologies for broadcasting, including to provide new services for various environments

Q3/1

The use of telecommunications/ICTs for disaster risk reduction and management

Q4/1

Economic aspects of national telecommunications/ICTs

Q5/1

Telecommunications/ICTs for rural and remote areas

Q6/1

Consumer information, protection and rights

Q7/1

Telecommunication/ICT accessibility to enable inclusive communication, especially for persons with disabilities

Study Questions

ITU-D Study Groups

Study Group 2 Digital Transformation

Learn more at
itu.int/itu-d/sites/studygroups

Q1/2

Sustainable smart cities and communities

Q2/2

Enabling technologies for e-services and applications, including e-health and e-education

Q3/2

Securing information and communication networks: Best practices for developing a culture of cybersecurity

Q4/2

Telecommunication/ICT equipment: Conformance and interoperability, combating counterfeiting and theft of mobile devices

Q5/2

Adoption of telecommunications/ICTs and improving digital skills

Q6/2

ICTs for the environment

Q7/2

Strategies and policies concerning human exposure to electromagnetic fields

The ITU-D is policy oriented



More CSOs attend the meetings



We can work together building common goals
and strategies



Recommendations and best practices from ITU-D
are not binding

ITU-D Resolutions



In ITU, resolutions of conferences fall into the category of texts that legal experts refer to as "unilateral instruments of international organizations". Although the question of their legal force is quite complex, such unilateral instruments nonetheless form part of the outcomes of the conference and constitute a very useful legal means of fulfilling the organization's purposes and missions.



The terminology used in ITU to designate a specific unilateral instrument (e.g. decision, resolution, recommendation, opinion) is relatively flexible and not always consistent. Furthermore, the precise legal scope of the different instruments is not defined anywhere in the Union's basic texts.

ITU-D main meetings and conferences



World Telecommunication Development Conferences (WTDC) - every 4 years



Study Groups



Global Symposium for Regulators (GSR)



World Telecommunication/ICT Indicators Symposium (WTIS)

Standardisation Sector ITU-T Goals

The Study Groups of ITU's Telecommunication Standardization Sector (ITU-T) develop international standards known as ITU-T Recommendations which act as defining elements in the global infrastructure of information and communication technologies (ICTs).

International ICT standards avoid costly market battles over preferred technologies, and for companies from emerging markets, they create a level playing field which provides access to new markets and they can reduce costs for all: manufacturers, operators and consumers.

ITU-T recommendations

- ITU-T Recommendations are the names given to telecommunications and computer protocol specification documents published by the Telecommunication Standardization Sector (ITU-T) of the International Telecommunication Union

ITU-T current Study Groups

Digital currency, IoT, smart cities, biometric systems, AI systems, metaverse are examples of emerging technologies discussed and standards defined in the T sector.



After the WTSA, the SG topics for the next 4 years are defined:

SG2 - Operational aspects

- ▶ SG2 at a Glance

SG3 - Economic and policy issues

- ▶ SG3 at a Glance

SG5 - Environment and circular economy

- ▶ SG5 at a Glance

SG9 - Broadband cable and TV

- ▶ SG9 at a Glance

SG11 - Protocols and test specifications

- ▶ SG11 at a Glance

SG12 - Performance, QoS and QoE

- ▶ SG12 at a Glance

SG13 - Future networks (& cloud)

- ▶ SG13 at a Glance

SG15 - Transport, access and home

- ▶ SG15 at a Glance

SG16 - Multimedia

- ▶ SG16 at a Glance

SG17 - Security

- ▶ SG17 at a Glance

SG20 - IoT, smart cities & communities

- ▶ SG20 at a Glance

Radiocommunication sector ITU-R Goals

To ensure the rational, equitable, efficient and economical use of the radio-frequency spectrum by all radiocommunication services.

To ensure interference free operations of radiocommunication systems.

To accommodate the launch of new services (like new satellite constellation) and facilitate any new developments.

The ITU-R has a technical goal.

- Our goal there can be, for example, to find possible harmful consequences of the proposed technical criteria and standards

ITU-R main meetings and conferences

- World Radiocommunication Conferences (WRC) - every 4 years
- Radiocommunication Assemblies (RA)
- Radiocommunication Study Groups





World Radiocommunication Conferences (WRC)

Every 3-4 years

- +revise the Radio Regulations and associated Frequency assignment
- +address any radiocommunication matter of worldwide character
- +determine Questions for study by Assembly and its Study Groups

ITU-R study groups (throughout the year)

- Develop the technical bases for decisions taken at WRC and develop global standards on radiocommunication matters.
- More than 5 000 specialists, from administrations, the telecom industry as a whole and academic organizations throughout the world, participate in the work of the Study Groups.

Some of the topics being currently discussed in the ITU-R SGs:

Study Groups

- ▶ **Study Group 1 (SG 1)**
Spectrum management
- ▶ **Study Group 3 (SG 3)**
Radiowave propagation
- ▶ **Study Group 4 (SG 4)**
Satellite services
- ▶ **Study Group 5 (SG 5)**
Terrestrial services
- ▶ **Study Group 6 (SG 6)**
Broadcasting service
- ▶ **Study Group 7 (SG 7)**
Science services
- ▶ **Coordination Committee
for Vocabulary (CCV)**

Related Groups

- ▶ **Conference Preparatory Meeting
(CPM)**
- ▶ **Chairmen and Vice-Chairmen Meeting
(CVC)**
- ▶ *Disbanded Groups*

Recommendation

The ITU-R Recommendations constitute a set of international technical standards developed by the Radiocommunication Sector (formerly CCIR) of the ITU. They are the result of studies undertaken by Radiocommunication Study Groups on the use of a vast range of wireless services, including popular new mobile communication technologies



The ITU-R Recommendations are approved by ITU Member States. Their implementation is not mandatory; however, as they are developed by experts from administrations, operators, the industry and other organizations dealing with radiocommunication matters from all over the world, they enjoy a high reputation and are implemented worldwide.

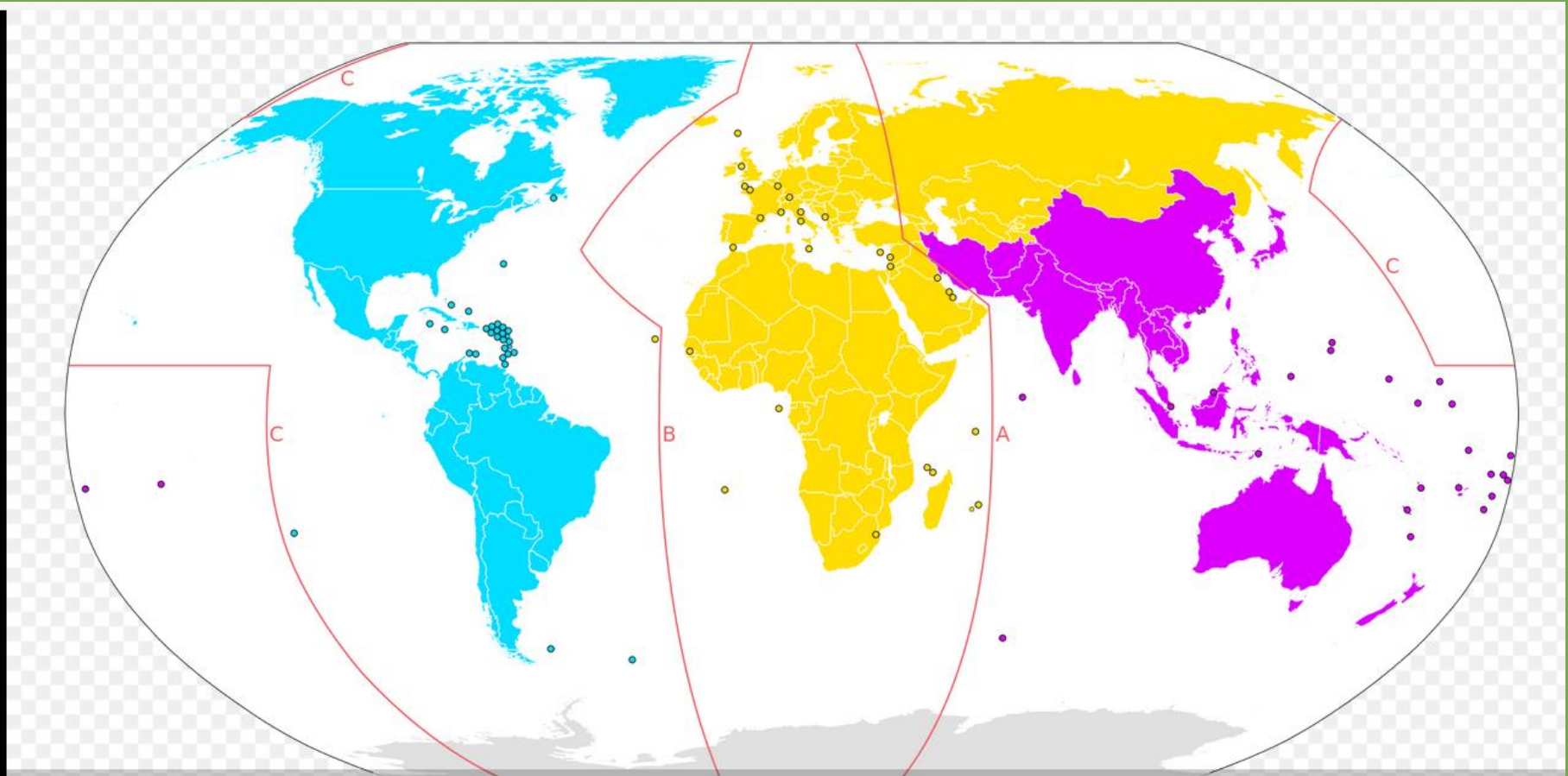
Workflow example: *Allocation, allotment and assignment*

The ITU-R has three terms in their standard regulations [allocation, allotment, and assignment](#). The allocation refers to the services

1 - The ITU allocated a frequency band of the spectrum to service for primary use: eg, broadcast media, specifically, TV. The criteria for this are primarily technical (quality of transmission and reception, lack or acceptable level of interference in neighboring bands, etc.). It was the outcome of years, sometimes decades of discussions.

2 - After the service use is defined for a specific spectrum range, ITU [Regions](#), eg, the CEPT, explain how they will use it. They agreed on using that frequency band for TV broadcasting in the region.

3 - The last step is to assign parts of that spectrum to specific stations (or a group of stations, depending on how the TV companies are organized commercially). It is the competence of countries since the spectrum use belongs to them in their geographic area. They have sovereignty in this decision; meaning countries are above the ITU region's decisions.



ITU regions and the dividing lines between them. █ Region 1 █ Region 2 █ Region 3

Resources

Text „Navigating the ITU

[“https://www.article19.org/resources/navigating-the-itu-breaking-down-the-roadblocks-to-accessing-information/](https://www.article19.org/resources/navigating-the-itu-breaking-down-the-roadblocks-to-accessing-information/)

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Civil Society ITU mailing list
pp18_cs_coord@lists.apc.org

Internet Standards Almanac
<https://almanac.article19.org/>

IoR fellowship 2023 for Standard Developing Organizations engagement
<https://www.article19.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/02/Call-for-Applications-2023-IoR-Fellowship.pdf>



Thank you!

Q&A

