

Country Report Algeria

Country insights report 2024





Algeria

Overall score 39.8 (out of 100)

Placed **35th (out of 35)**

The Global Digital Wellbeing Index brings attention to areas in Algeria poised for improvement. Despite its 35th position among the 35 countries examined, the index reveals notable strengths, particularly in the mental health pillar, where Algeria secures the 10th spot within the sample. The education and skills pillar also showcases relatively better performance. Furthermore, there are significant opportunities for growth in pillars like work, productivity, and income; social cohesion; information quality; and cybersafety, indicating promising areas for development.

Algeria demonstrates an overall score of 39.8, below the MENA regional average of 49.6, presenting opportunities for enhancement in both the "Capturing opportunities" sub-index (43.6) and the "Balancing needs" sub-index (36.1). Recognizing the potential for improvement, there are strategic areas where focused efforts can yield substantial benefits for the digital wellbeing of Algerian citizens, and these are delineated below.

Comparative performance in the DWI



FIGURE 1 Source: Global Digital Wellbeing Index 2024

The context of digital wellbeing in the country

In alignment with Algeria's digital ambitions, the Ministry of Digitization and Statistics⁰¹ is actively shaping a comprehensive national digitization policy. This strategic initiative places a strong emphasis on regulatory updates and securing the necessary funding, accompanied by the restructuring of the ministry to prioritize digital technology and human resource training. These concerted efforts align with the broader goal of fostering an environment conducive to the expansion of digital technology across various sectors. Simultaneously, Algeria's Digital Government Portal⁰² is a cornerstone in providing seamless access to over 300 digitized public services. This strategic move centralizes digital services, eliminating the need for citizens to navigate multiple official sites. It simplifies administrative processes and ensures the delivery of quality public services to citizens, embodying the principles of effective e-governance. Additionally, the launch of Algeria's Digital ID⁰³ in 2016 has modernised government services, transforming individuals' engagement in civil, political, and economic life. It has been a pivotal step in providing legal identity for all, addressing challenges faced by millions worldwide⁰⁴. Moreover, digitization efforts in Algeria's mental health sector, particularly the establishment of electronic patient records⁰⁵, has laid a robust foundation for broader digital wellbeing considerations. By enhancing connectivity among medical professionals, this initiative supports a more comprehensive approach to patient care, addressing information guality and ensuring cybersafety within the healthcare system. In terms of digital financial inclusion, despite surpassing the MENA average in mobile broadband connectivitu. Algeria encounters challenges in mobile money adoption.⁰⁶ Addressing these issues is crucial for enhancing financial inclusion and social connectedness, contributing to a more digitally inclusive society.

The recent Digital African Summit in Algeria⁰⁷, held in October 2023, has positioned the country as a key player in Africa's digital landscape. The summit lays the groundwork for the future integration of elements related to digital wellbeing into Algeria's evolving digital initiatives. The Algerian Start-up Financing Fund (ASF)⁰⁸ has also played a pivotal role in fostering innovation, disbursing 510 million dinars to 390 tech project holders since its launch in early 2021. Just as with official policies in digitalization, these measures concentrate on incorporating digital infrastructure and technological innovation within Algeria's dynamic digital environment. However, there is room for further enhancement by integrating the digitalization process with a specific emphasis on the digital wellbeing of Algerian citizens. Leveraging the Algerian Start-up Financing Fund (ASF), the outcomes of the Digital African Summit, and the ongoing government initiatives in digitalization can serve as a robust foundation for the potential future integration of elements related to digital wellbeing into Algeria's advancing digital projects. Despite boasting a tech-savvy and connected population, Algeria faces challenges such as a lack of trust in digital services and limited adoption of advanced ICT by government institutions and businesses. While infrastructure investments are notable, issues like expensive and unstable technical infrastructure persist, hindering ecosystem development. The Digital Arabia Network's report on Digital Transformation⁰⁹ in Algeria sheds light on these challenges and underscores the nation's journey toward a more robust and inclusive digital future.

- 01 Ministry of Digitization and Statistics
- 02 Algeria Press Service (2022). Digital Government Portal.
- 03 Ministry of Interiors (2015). CNIBE.
- 04 World Bank (2019). Achieving Universal Access to ID.
- 05 Algeria Press Service (2023). Strengthening the electronic patient file with mental health data
- 06 World Bank (2020). Digital Financial Services.
- 07 Resilient Digital Africa (2023). Digital African Summit.
- 08 Resilient Digital Africa (2022). Startup Financing Fund.
- 09 Digital Arabia Network (2020). Digital Transformation in Algeria

The country's strengths and areas for improvement

Algeria demonstrates notable strength in the mental health pillar, securing a score of 60, placing it 10th in the index sample. Although digital mental health is not addressed in educational curricula, the official recognition of online addiction sets Algeria apart, a step that few other governments have taken. The commendable scores in this area underscore the significance of this initiative. Further initiatives could involve integrating digital wellbeing components into digital/ICT strategies and embedding considerations for digital mental health in educational curricula. Algeria registers just below the DWI average in the education and skills pillar, scoring 62.3 (25th in the sample). The acknowledgement of online micro-credentials enhances the digital skills environment, allowing individuals to validate and demonstrate their proficiency. Enhancing internet connectivity in schools and integrating digital and ICT skills into education would additionally strengthen digital literacy, promoting a more connected and digitally adept society, ultimately benefiting digital wellbeing.

Several areas present opportunities for progress, such as work, productivity, and income, receiving a score of 27.9 (29th in the DWI sample). While there is some acknowledgement of remote work, the government could explore initiatives like digital nomad visas and introduce more flexible working arrangements. A substantial reinforcement of the ICT workforce promises considerable advantages, ensuring heightened productivity and collaboration through increased technology usage. The entertainment and culture pillar, with a score of 24.3 (35th), identifies another avenue for improvement, where the government can seize readily achievable opportunities by offering incentives to boost tourism and culture digitally. Currently, a limited number of respondents use technology for creating or enjoying art, and a significantly lower proportion of citizens utilize it to discover offline events and activities compared to other countries. The potential for improvement in access to services and goods is promising, securing a score of 26.8 (35th): the Algerian Telecom/ICT regulator could assume official responsibility for e-applications like e-health and digital finance. With survey participants currently displaying lower engagement with digital devices for online shopping or financial management, there is a positive trajectory for growth in this domain.

Enhancing social cohesion, with a score of 31.6 and currently placed 35th, necessitates the development of an inclusive ICT strategy for individuals with disabilities while also prioritizing digital literacy initiatives, focusing on policies that guarantee equitable access to remote/digital learning, especially for children in remote areas or lower socioeconomic backgrounds. Additionally, efforts should target achieving digital gender parity and promoting digital socio-economic inclusion, ensuring a balanced utilization of the internet across genders and socioeconomic groups. In terms of information guality, currently placed 35th with a score of 26.5, there is potential for improvement by including learning opportunities about recognising disinformation. Boosting awareness initiatives against fake news is another vital component of this improvement strategy. To fortify cybersecurity, scoring 32.2 (35th), it is crucial to establish a dedicated regulatory authority focused on internet-related issues. Pursuing initiatives to enhance awareness among citizens about personal cybersafety and data protection is imperative. Additionally, there is room to strengthen efforts against cyberbullying and provide education, particularly targeting children, while also engaging their parents.

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FIGURE 2

AlgeriaDWI Average

Source: Global Digital Wellbeing Index 2024



Performance of Algeria by index pillars compared to DWI sample

Overall performance by index pillars

TABLE 5 Source: Global Digital Wellbeing Index 2024

Dimensions	Score (0 to 100)	Placed (out of 35)	Key findings	
Connectivity	69	29	Despite widespread 4G access, internet connectivity is impacted by international bandwidth, while internet penetration could be increased too.	
Social connectedness	51.5	34	664.6% of survey participants actively utilize the most popular social media app, with some also opting for local alternatives. Additionally, 74.4% employ digital technologies to maintain connections, although a smaller proportion, only 16.9%, leverage these technologies for involvement in significant or important matters.	
Education and skills	62.3	25	Certain digital and ICT skills are acknowledged in education curricula, and official recognition is granted to micro-credentials. While the significance of technology for educational access is widely acknowledged among respondents, only 26.2% have utilized digital technologies to engage in online courses or formal degree programs.	
Work, productivity and income	27.9	35	Significantly, there is acknowledgment of remote work in the legal framework, presenting a substantial opportunity for expanding the ICT workforce and revitalizing the tech sector community. Although digital devices are utilized for work-related tasks, the engagement in e-commerce remains low	
Entertainment and culture	24.3	35	The government has the opportunity to introduce incentives aimed at fostering digital tourism and culture. The utilization of digital technology for entertainment, travel, and engagement in offline activities is lower compared to other countries.	
Access to services and goods	26.8	35	The telecom/ICT regulator lacks official responsibility for e-applications such as e-health or digital finance. Survey participants predominantly use digital devices for transportation, with significantly less involvement in online shopping or digital payments.	
Social cohesion	31.6	35	There is a significant opportunity to enhance digital literacy by ensuring equitable access to remote/digital learning, addressing digital socioeconomic as well as gender inclusion, and establish a regulatory framework for ICT accessibility for individuals with disabilities.	
Mental health	60	10	This positive score is driven by the official recognition of online addiction and the inclusion of some indicators related to digital well- being in the national ICT/digital strategy.	
Physical health	36.3	34	It would be beneficial to offer guidelines that promote the responsible use of digital technology and integrate information about the physical health risks associated with its usage into the ICT education curriculum.	
Ability to disconnect	29.6	30	The lack of guidelines on the right to disconnect poses challenges in maintaining a clear boundary between work and personal life, especially in remote study or work situations. A minority of survey respondents consistently incorporate digital wellness measures into their daily routines.	
Information quality	26.5	35	The government has the potential to enhance awareness about misinformation through official campaigns and by integrating educational content on identifying disinformation into curricula. Despite a moderate level of trust in online information, survey respondents intermittently verify the accuracy of information when faced with doubts.	
Cybersafety	32.2	35	While there are a few existing frameworks on cybersecurity, there is room for increased commitments, encompassing efforts to assist individuals in safeguarding their data and the implementation of policies addressing cyberbullying and cybersafety	

Suggestions that may contribute to improvements across the digital ecosystem:

Advancing social cohesion through digital literacy:

To promote social cohesion, Algeria can prioritize digital literacy in education. This involves boosting internet access in schools, fostering digital skills, and emphasizing technology's importance in education. By expanding online learning opportunities, the approach addresses key social cohesion aspects, including universal access, digital literacy for all, inclusive remote learning, digital gender and socio-economic inclusion, and increased internet coverage. This strategic focus ensures equitable access to digital resources, fostering a united and empowered Algerian citizenry.

Increasing information quality

Embedding critical thinking in education, launching nationwide anti-misinformation campaigns, and partnering with digital platforms can fortify responsible content dissemination. Community workshops, digital literacy programs, and real-time fact-checking using technology will equip citizens with practical skills. Encouraging diverse online content access, further contributes to building a discerning and informed online community. These efforts would set the stage for a resilient and digitally literate society, ensuring a positive and trustworthy digital environment for Algerian citizens.

Empowering digital resilience

Reinforcing cybersafety measures in Algeria would not only reduce cyber threats but also boost confidence in secure online transactions and protects personal data. It would foster secure digital communication, fortify trust in digital platforms, and enhance resilience against cyberattacks. These efforts would contribute to a positive and secure online experience, empowering citizens to navigate the digital landscape with confidence. Additionally, implementing frameworks to educate and prevent cyberbullying would ensure a comprehensive and resilient digital ecosystem.

Tech-driven empowerment

Leveraging technology in Algeria's digital transformation is vital for enhancing digital wellbeing in work, productivity, and income. Embracing flexible work practices, promoting new job opportunities, and lowering barriers for micro-entrepreneurship through simplified regulations and digital platforms would empower citizens. Continuous skill development and global job market access, facilitated by technology, would ensure adaptability and inclusive economic growth. This strategic approach fosters individual satisfaction, economic inclusivity, and resilience in the digital era.

Enhanced access

Promoting access to technology-enabled goods and services in Algeria, encompassing digital financial transactions, online shopping, electronic public services, travel planning, and more, holds substantial benefits for citizens' digital wellbeing. This strategic enhancement aims to foster economic inclusion, financial literacy, and streamlined administrative processes, ultimately contributing to an enriched and interconnected digital experience for the Algerian populace. Additionally, aligning with global trends, the Telecom/ICT regulator could play a pivotal role by officially overseeing e-applications like e-health and digital finance, further amplifying the positive impact on digital wellbeing.

Global Digital Wellbeing Index Executive Summary

Digital technologies have reshaped how we connect, work, and perceive the world. As our dependence on these tools grows, so too does the need to understand and optimize the balance between technology use and wellbeing. The Global Digital Wellbeing Index (DWI) explores the foundational elements of digital wellbeing, acknowledging the complex and multifaceted dimensions involved. The DWI aims to stimulate global discussions, influence policymakers, and provide a benchmark for stakeholders to navigate the evolving landscape of digital wellbeing. It covers 35 countries and combines data from well-established secondary sources (e.g. UN, World Bank), a dedicated survey, and policy assessments into a framework that consists of 12 pillars, organized into two complementary components or sub-indices (1) balancing needs and (2) capturing opportunities. The DWI provides overall country-level scores out of 100, as well as scores for both components and for each of the 12 pillars (also out of 100).

In terms of overall scores on the index, Canada, Australia, Singapore, Estonia, France, the United Kingdom, Germany, the United States, and Italy do especially well. China stands out with a strong performance among middle-income countries. While wealthier countries achieve the best scores on average, having a higher income does not always guarantee a better performance: for example, China, Argentina, Colombia, Malaysia, Mexico, and Bulgaria achieve scores equal to or above the global average (57 out of 100). Across the entire sample, the pillars with the highest scores are connectivity (78) and social cohesion (74). Those with the lowest scores, requiring the most attention, are work, productivity and income (39), physical health (48), and the ability to disconnect (48). As highlighted throughout this report, each country has its relative digital wellbeing strengths as well as areas for growth and enhancement.

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TABLE 1

Source: Global Digital Wellbeing Index 2024

Overall performance in the DWI

Rank	Country		Score (0-100)
1	•	Canada	69.8
2	#	Australia	69.0
3	۩	Singapore	68.1
4		Estonia	67.1
5		France	66.8
6		United Kingdom	66.3
7		Germany	65.2
8		United States	61.0
=9	•)	China	60.5
=9		Italy	60.5
11	•	Argentina	60.2
12		Sweden	60.2
=13		Chile	59.6
=13	۲	Republic of Korea	59.6
15		Colombia	58.1
16		United Arab Emirates	57.9
17	C	Malaysia	57.8
=18	0	India	57.5
=18	•	Japan	57.5
20	÷	Mexico	57.4
21		Bulgaria	57.2
22		Brazil	55.1
=23		Indonesia	54.5
=23		Kenya	54.5
25	C+	Türkiye	54.4
26	*	Viet Nam	54.1
27	-	Saudi Arabia	53.8
28		South Africa	53.0
29	*	Ghana	50.6
30		Kuwait	50.0
31		Nigeria	48.4
32	÷	Egypt	46.6
33	C	Pakistan	45.1
34		Bangladesh	44.1
35	¢.	Algeria	39.8

Balancing Needs

The "Balancing Needs" sub-index includes six pillars examining the risks posed by digital technology and to what extent these risks are being addressed. This component of the DWI captures the most direct action being taken around the world to support digital wellbeing.



For the Balancing Needs component, data collected for the DWI reveals:

Policies to support digital mental health can help vulnerable individuals – an area with the potential to be improved across the board.

Singapore leads in the mental health pillar, followed by the United Kingdom and the Republic of Korea. Generally, advanced economies have better scores, but China and Algeria stand out among middle-income nations. Only eight countries have complete frameworks for digital mental health — that is, the use of digital technology to directly support mental health care and service provision — with Singapore, the United Kingdom, and Canada showcasing successful integration into education. Bangladesh, India, and the United Arab Emirates report greater levels of distress associated with extended digital technology use, while the United States, Australia and Canada report the most significant psychological impacts such as feelings of loneliness and anxiety linked with remote working or studying. Less affluent countries report lower levels of such distress, potentially due to less common remote activities, which can be linked to connectivity gaps and lower flexibility of work arrangements.

Maintaining physical health is a challenge given growing exposure to digital technologies, stressing the need for more dedicated policies.

Canada, France, and Australia lead in the physical health pillar; overall, richer countries attain higher scores in this area. Eight countries have clear government recommendations on the healthy use of digital technologies. Only Canada, India, Estonia, and Ghana fully address physical health risks in school curricula. Viet Nam, Malaysia, Ghana, and Nigeria reported more physical health complaints associated with digital technologies including dry eyes, headaches, and back pain. Algeria, Ghana, and Bangladesh reported greater disruption to offline activities such as in-person engagement with family and friends, and missing work and school related activities.

"Right to disconnect"⁰¹ policies show decisive action to promote digital wellbeing and represent one area with the potential to be developed around the world.

Affluent countries are generally stronger in this area, with Australia, Italy, and Germany leading in the ability to disconnect pillar. Argentina, Mexico, and Colombia, middle-income countries, demonstrate a strong performance too. Nine countries in the DWI – Australia, Argentina, Canada, Chile, Colombia, France, Germany, Italy, and Mexico – have established legislation on the right to disconnect. When it comes to remote work or study, challenges in maintaining healthy boundaries show no significant differences across income segments, but advanced economies show overall higher adoption rates of measures to promote digital wellbeing at work.

Misinformation and disinformation pose risks to wellbeing that require government action around the world.

Estonia leads in the information quality pillar, followed by Argentina, and Canada. Fourteen countries demonstrate clear governmental action against misinformation. Seventeen countries, across all income levels integrate disinformation awareness into education. Trust in online information is highest in Nigeria, followed by Bangladesh, Germany, and Estonia with generally similar levels across income segments. Viet Nam, Indonesia, and Malaysia are the most active in verifying information accuracy.

Challenges in data safety are more evident in middle-income countries, while cyberbullying needs more policy action around the world.

The top performers in the cybersafety pillar are the United States, France, and Singapore. The United States, Saudi Arabia, and the United Kingdom lead in cybersecurity commitment. More secure internet servers are found in wealthier nations. Australia, China, and Canada lead in user strategies to protect personal data. The United States leads in cyberbullying and cybersafety policies, followed by Canada and France. Across most countries, policies focused on parents are well established. These include resources and digital safety toolkits for parents to deal with cyberbullying. However, policies focused on children and youth, such as e-safety guidelines and provisions for cyber wellness in education curriculum, are less common.

⁰¹ Refers to the "Right to disconnect" is defined as the right not to engage in work-related electronic communications during non-work hours.

Capturing Opportunities

The "Capturing Opportunities" sub-index/component examines six pillars comprising enablers of digital adoption and opportunity across a range of contexts. This component captures the pre-requisites for adopting digital technologies and the extent to which opportunities are maximized.



component, data collected for the DWI reveals:

For the Capturing Opportunities Digital interaction does not always lead to meeting people offline, and some of the least affluent countries are the most dunamic in online activism.

The strongest social connectedness is evidenced in the United Arab Emirates, Chile, Bulgaria, Colombia, and Malaysia. Social media engagement averages 68% across all countries, with advanced economies leading. Meeting new people using digital devices is less common in high-income nations (35%) compared with upper-middleincome (55%) and lower-middle-income countries (59%). China and India lead in online engagement, while Nigeria and Kenya are leaders in online activism. Generally, emerging economies score higher in active online engagement and activism.

Middle-income countries embrace online education and training, but still have a journey ahead in integrating digital skills (e.g. using digital safety tools, ability to verifu misinformation) in curricula.

Estonia leads the education and skills pillar, followed by Indonesia, the Republic of Korea, Singapore, and Kenya. While this reflects a mix of income levels, richer countries generally score higher. Internet access in schools is led by advanced economies, and less affluent nations face challenges in integrating digital skills. Most countries recognize micro-credentials, indicating a widespread trend among both employees and employers to be more open to new types of qualifications. Middle-income countries show strong engagement with digital tools in education, and digital device use for accessing information is also high across this group.

Advanced economies lead in work flexibility, while digital technologies and regulation allow middle-income countries to participate more fully in the knowledge economy.

Estonia, Singapore, Australia, and the United Arab Emirates lead in the work, productivity, and income pillar, with upper-middle-income countries outperforming high-income ones on average. Less affluent countries - including India, Viet Nam, and Bangladesh – have ample room for growth. Remote work frameworks are more advanced in richer nations, while digital nomad visas⁰² are prominent in middle-income countries such as Argentina, Colombia, and Brazil. Estonia and Singapore have some of the strongest tech sectors. Ghana and Kenya, meanwhile, have growing tech sectors, demonstrating how the digital economy can empower emerging economies.

Digital technologies are democratizing access to art and entertainment.

Argentina leads in the entertainment and culture pillar, followed by Estonia, the Republic of Korea, India, and Sweden. The DWI notes widespread government support for digital tourism and culture, particularly in wealthier countries. Estonia stands out in experiencing art digitally, while China leads in using technology for creating and sharing art. Middle-income countries generally report greater use of digital devices for consuming artistic and cultural content online compared to their high-income counterparts.

⁰² "A digital nomad visa is a type of visa that allows you to work remotely for a country registered outside of the country you have chosen to currently live in. Typically, to work in another country, you must have a work permit, and be registered as a taxpayer. This requires you to uproot your entire life back home. Digital nomad visas, on the other hand, have the benefit of becoming a temporary resident of another country, while you work (and pay taxes) in your home country. In the majority of cases, digital nomads are not required to pay taxes in their host country." Source Schengen Visa Info https://www.schengenvisainfo.com/digital-nomad-visa/

There is widespread availability of key digital services for the population, but participatory policymaking remains nascent in some countries.

Seventeen out of the 35 countries have a telecom or ICT regulator for managing digital applications such as e-health and e-education. Meanwhile, Estonia leads in access to services and goods, followed by China and Singapore, with advanced economies dominating the top half of the list. China excels in overall digital health engagement, with lower-middle-income countries surpassing their higher-income counterparts. Digital payments have a 71% engagement rate globally. China leads in online shopping (80%), while Sweden and the United Kingdom do well in managing finances online, additionally, Estonia, Sweden, China, and Colombia show strong engagement with transportation technologies (e.g. car sharing or public transport apps).

Universal internet access is a goal around the world, but some disparities highlight the need for further government support.

The United Kingdom, followed by Canada and France, leads in social cohesion, which focuses on universal access policies, digital literacy for all, and digital inclusion). Almost all countries have universal access and service policies, while 16 countries, mostly high-income, feature comprehensive regulatory frameworks for information and communications technology accessibility. Digital literacy initiatives outside formal education show progress across countries, with notable examples in middle-income countries. The International Telecommunication Union gender parity score indicates that more women than men use the internet in some affluent countries, while Germany, the United Kingdom, and Estonia lead in socio-economic inclusion.

Some countries still require infrastructure investment to reach universal connectivity.

The United Arab Emirates, Saudi Arabia, and Kuwait excel in connectivity, with Malaysia and Bulgaria challenging the notion that only the wealthiest economies provide comprehensive connectivity. Despite widespread 4G coverage, some emerging economies face challenges in network infrastructure. Internet penetration rates vary significantly, with high-income countries at 93%, upper-middle-income countries at 79%, and lower-middle-income countries at 53%. Affordability issues reflect economic disparities, with people in richer nations spending less than 0.1% of their income on connectivity, compared with 2.3% and 5.4% in upper-middle and lower-middle-income countries.







Sync is a digital wellbeing initiative by King Abdulaziz Center for World Culture (Ithra) with a vision to create a world where we are all in control of our digital lives.

The program is guided by extensive research - in collaboration with global entities - to understand the implications of technology and how it's affecting our lives, and translate the knowledge we gain into awareness campaigns, tools, experiences, educational content and programs aiming to raise global awareness around the topic.

sync.ithra.com

