

Global Digital Wellbeing Index



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.

→ Combines data from well-established secondary sources, policy assessments, and a dedicated survey of 35,000 participants

→ Framework of 12 pillars, organized into two complementary sub-indices: balancing needs and capturing opportunities.

→ The first edition covers 35 countries in seven regions, providing overall country-level scores out of 100, as well as scores for each of the 12 pillars.



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Following is a selection of key findings from the Global Digital Wellbeing Index (DWI). See the full report and explore the index at sync.ithra.com/dwi.

Key findings from the DWI

Digital Mental Health Policies

Policies to promote digital mental health are crucial to support people and help vulnerable individuals from being impacted by psychological aspects like loneliness, and anxiety, that are often associated with working or studying remotely. Currently, only eight countries have comprehensive digital mental health frameworks, with Singapore and the United Kingdom displaying the best performance.

Addressing Addiction Risks

Asian countries of China and India have implemented policies to address concerning digital habits of problematic gaming, highlighting the risks of addiction and encouraging responsible gaming, issuing advisories to parents and teachers alike. Such practices emphasize the importance of education in addressing mental and physical stress associated with digital technology and gaming.

The right to disconnect is acknowledged in some high-income countries (38%) and upper-middle-income countries (30%) but is absent in lower-middle-income nations. Fake news awareness initiatives are more prevalent in upper-middle income countries (60%), while learning about disinformation in curricula is most common in high-income countries (81%).

49% Tackling Misinformation

While countries like Australia are tackling misinformation, more concerted efforts need to be taken. Seventeen of the 35 countries assessed in the DWI have integrated disinformation awareness into their education curricula.

Education for parents on children's digital safety is remarkably high in lower-middle-income countries (78%), with similar rates in this grouping for education for parents on control tools and cyberbullying (67% and 56%).

40% Digital Education

Nigeria, Saudi Arabia, and Colombia showcase the highest adoption of digital education with 40% of respondents using digital technology for education, emphasizing the global trend towards digital learning.

Cyberbullying

Countries globally need to take assertive measures to address cyberbullying through stringent policies. However, wealthier nations like the United States, France, and Canada outperform others.

Right to disconnect

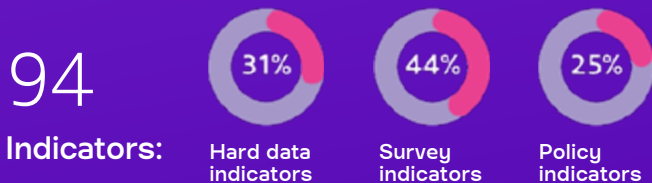
'Right to disconnect' has emerged as a major policy initiative being adopted in one-third of high and upper-middle-income countries.

Remote work

Remote work increased over the past few years. DWI reveals advanced economies taking the lead in providing remote work and flexibility, and 50% of middle-income countries have provisions for digital nomad visas.

DWI by the numbers

The Index provides insights into the digital wellbeing of 35 countries across seven regions, including Europe & Central Asia, Middle East & North Africa, Sub-Saharan Africa, East Asia & Pacific, North America, South Asia, North America and Latin America & Caribbean.



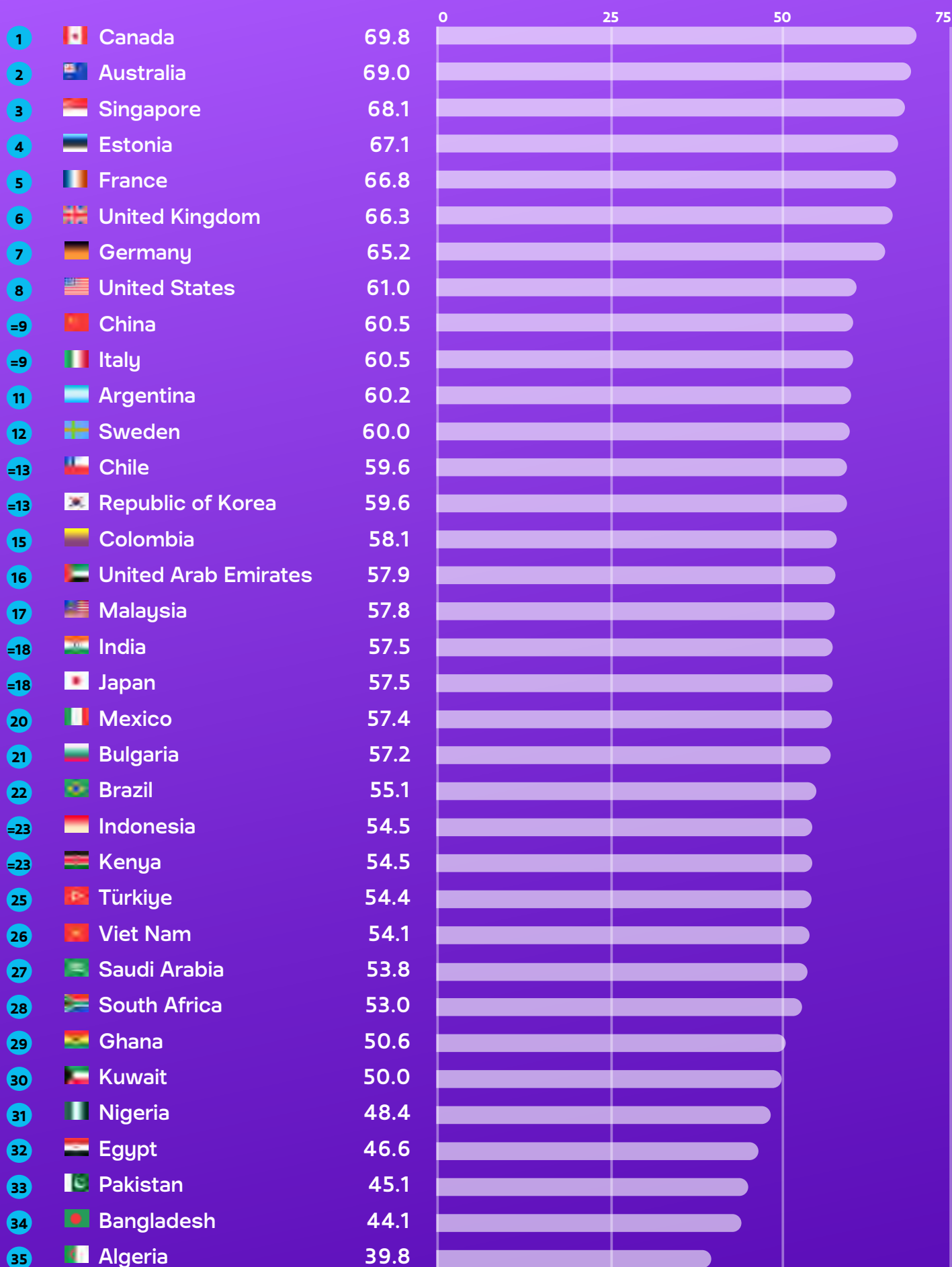
35,000
Global survey
Participants

35
Countries from
seven regions

3,290
Data points

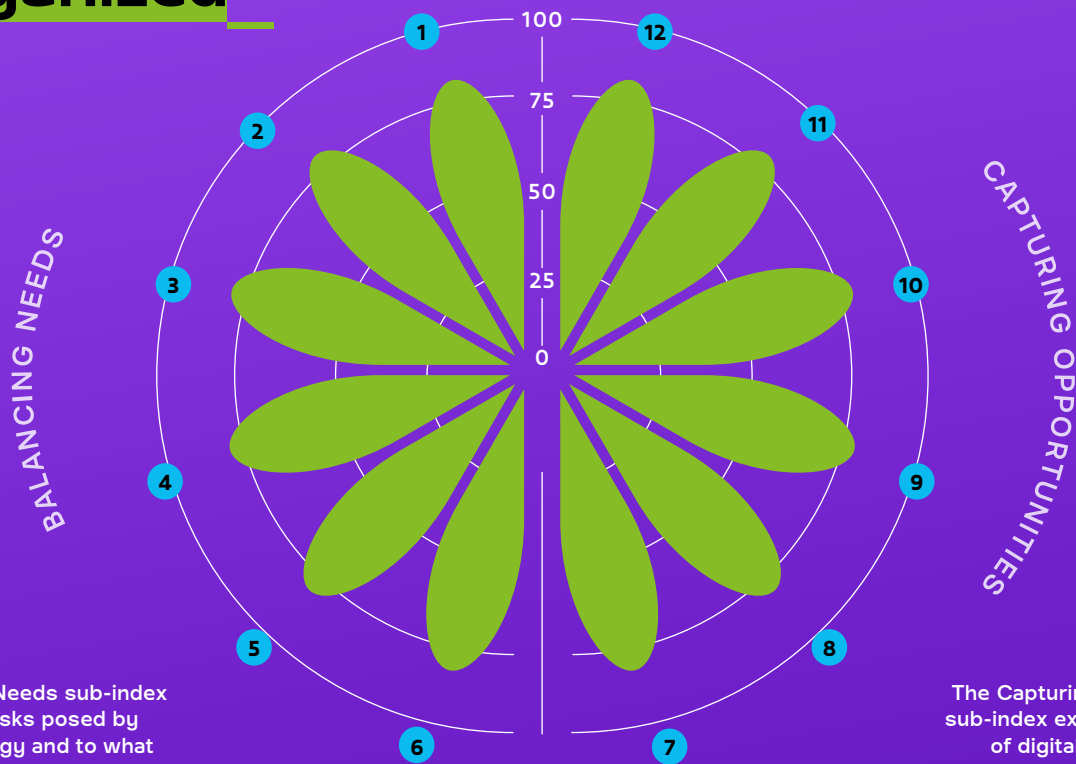
12
Pillars across two
sub-indices

2024 DWI rankings



How the Global Digital Wellbeing Index is organized

The research to develop the DWI considers support from policies and institutions as well as individual skills and awareness in a country. Looking through the lenses balancing needs and capturing opportunity, the DWI measures countries across 12 pillars.



The Balancing Needs sub-index examines the risks posed by digital technology and to what extent they are addressed to support digital wellbeing.

The Capturing Opportunities sub-index examines enablers of digital adoption and to what extent opportunities are adopted and maximised.

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| <p>1 Social Cohesion</p> <p>Ensuring equal access to digital technology opportunities and involving citizens of different ages and socio-economic backgrounds in the digital space.</p> | <p>4 Information Quality</p> <p>Access to varied online content and ability to apply critical thinking when navigating it, awareness and ability to identify false news, non-expert advice and influence.</p> | <p>7 Social Connectedness</p> <p>Opportunities to stay connected with family and friends, as well as wider social and professional network. It also includes the opportunity to form online communities that cross physical boundaries.</p> | <p>10 Work & Income</p> <p>Technology-enabled new ways of working (e.g. remote work and digital nomadism, working with global teams, using digital online tools to foster creativity, increase work efficiency and reduce menial tasks), new types of jobs and ways of income generation, and reduced barriers for micro-entrepreneurship.</p> |
| <p>2 Cybersafety</p> <p>Efforts to ensure safe cyber environment from threats such as child pornography, dangerous content, cyberbullying, personal data crimes, cyber attacks and other, as well as personal awareness and ability to identify and take measures against these threats.</p> | <p>5 Mental Health</p> <p>Refers to the ability to use technology in a way that does not undermine, and ideally promotes, mental health.</p> | <p>8 Access to Service & Goods</p> <p>Technology-enabled goods and services that cover basic needs and increase life convenience, such as digital financial transactions, online shopping, electronic public services, travel planning and others.</p> | <p>11 Education & Skills</p> <p>Increased access to education and new forms of learning and sharing knowledge.</p> |
| <p>3 Ability to Disconnect</p> <p>Mechanisms and habits that support healthy use of technology and helps set boundaries between use of technology and other areas of life.</p> | <p>6 Physical Health</p> <p>Ability to use technology in a way that does not undermine and in the ideal case promotes physical health.</p> | <p>9 Entertainment & Culture</p> <p>Technology-amplified exposure to different cultures and more varied information, new forms of entertainment and content.</p> | <p>12 Connectivity</p> <p>General access to technology through internet availability, penetration and affordability – the base pillar that enables other opportunities.</p> |



As digital technologies continue to evolve — we are still in the early stages of exploring and evaluating their impact on our health — it is already evident that some problems require a policy response.

Globally, a movement is rising to create safeguards against problematic technology use. Navigating the digital era requires ongoing efforts to foster digital wellbeing, both at an individual and societal level. Read the full DWI report and explore the index at sync.ithra.com/dwi

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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.

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