

Preface

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The 13th edition of *The Global Information Technology Report* is released at a time when economies need to solidify the recovery of the past year and leave the worst financial and economic crisis of the past 80 years behind. Developed economies need to sustain their incipient economic recovery and find new areas of growth and employment creation; emerging and developing economies need to build their resilience against turbulence in the markets and foster their innovation potential in order to sustain the rapid economic growth they experienced in the past decade.

Against this backdrop, information and communication technologies (ICTs)—in their role as key enablers of innovation and new employment opportunities—are drawing more attention than ever before. As the benefits of ICTs increasingly materialize into tangible assets, building and strengthening digital ecosystems becomes increasingly important.

The GITR series has been published by the World Economic Forum in partnership with INSEAD since 2002. The *Report* has accompanied and monitored ICT progress for more than a decade and raised awareness of the importance of ICTs for long-term competitiveness and well-being. Through the lens of the Networked Readiness Index (NRI), the driving factors and impacts of networked readiness and ICT leveraging have been identified, highlighting the joint responsibility of all social actors—individuals, businesses, and governments.

The Global Information Technology Report 2014 features the latest results of the NRI, offering an overview of the current state of ICT readiness in the world. This year's coverage includes a record number of 148 economies, accounting for over 98 percent of global GDP. In addition, it features a number of essays that inquire into the rewards and risks accruing from big data, an unprecedented phenomenon in terms of the volume, velocity, and variety of sources of the creation of new data. These essays also advise on the changes that organizations, both public and private, will need to adopt in order to manage, make sense of, and obtain economic and social value from this vast quantity of newly generated data. In addition, the *Report* presents a wealth of data, including detailed profiles for each economy covered and data tables with global rankings for the NRI's 54 indicators.

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