

Global Europe Results Framework Indicator Methodology Note

| |
|---|
| 1. Indicator name |
| <p>GERF 2.12: Number of (a) countries supported by the EU to enhance..., (b) people supported by the EU with enhanced... access to digital government services</p> |
| 2. Technical details |
| <p><i>Please use the information provided in OPSYS or the SWD.</i></p> <p><u>Results Dashboard code(s)</u>: (a) 65220; (b) 65221.</p> <p><u>Unit of measure</u>: Number of (#).</p> <p><u>Type of indicator</u>: Quantitative (not qualitative) – Numeric (not percentage); Actual ex-post (not estimated or ex-ante); Cumulative (not annual); (a) Stock, (b) Flow.</p> <p><u>Level(s) of measurement</u>: Specific Objective – Outcome; Direct Output; Output.</p> <p><u>Disaggregation(s)</u>: (b) Sex (Female; Male; Intersex); Gender (Woman/girl; Man/boy; Non-binary; Prefer not to say).</p> <p><u>DAC sector code(s)</u>: 22010 – Communications policy and administrative management; 22040 – Information and communication technology (ICT).</p> <p><u>Main associated SDG</u>: 16.6 Develop effective, accountable and transparent institutions at all levels.</p> <p><u>Other associated SDGs</u>: 1.3 access to equal rights resources and services; 9.1 sustainable and resilient infrastructure; 9.5 support upgrade technology; 9.c access to internet; 16.7 participatory decision-making.</p> <p><u>Associated GERF Level 1 indicator</u>: 1.10 ITU ICT Development Index.</p> <p><u>Associated GERF Level 3 indicators</u>:</p> <p>3.2 Amount and share of EU-funded external assistance directed towards digitalisation</p> <p>3.5 Leverage of EU blending and guarantee operations financed by EU external assistance, measured as: (a) Investment leverage ratio, (b) Total eligible financial institution financing leverage ratio, (c) Private financing leverage ratio</p> <p>3.13 Number and share of EU- external interventions promoting gender equality and women's empowerment</p> <p>3.14 Number and share of EU-funded external interventions promoting disability inclusion</p> <p>3.16 Amount and share of EU-funded external assistance qualifying as ODA</p> |
| 3. Policy context and rationale |
| <p>The indicator is in line with the European Commission's objective of strengthening research, development and innovation capacity, and that of strengthening economic and social</p> |

development, including through the development of the digital economy and society.

Through developing the EU Digital Single Market, the EU has recognised that digitalisation contributes to developing businesses, creating growth, boosting productivity, promoting innovation, transforming public services and improving citizens' quality of life.

The EU recognises that economic growth and sustainable development can be enhanced by addressing digital connectivity gaps and limited ICT interoperability, and increasing support for the digitalisation of industries and the uptake of digital technologies.

The EU has a strong interest in deepening integration with its partner countries to support them in addressing digital policy challenges: close alignment fosters a coherent information society by increasing trust and cybersecurity, fostering cross-border business opportunities and leveraging digital technologies for the improvement of public services.

Digitalisation presents a major opportunity for partner countries. The Commission supports the partner countries through instruments such as regional roaming agreements, alignment of telecommunication rules, investment in high-speed broadband, transition to e-government or capacity building on cybersecurity. Through better-integrated economies and value chains, such EU-facilitated economic acceleration and approximation of standards ultimately also provide strong economic prospects for the EU.

Access to digital infrastructure and services is a crucial cross-sectoral, crosscutting factor in the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals: by facilitating and accelerating economic growth, social inclusion, equality, accessibility and accountability of public institutions, and innovation across all societal sectors, digital technologies can contribute to the majority of SDGs in partner countries.

Effective eGovernment can provide a wide variety of benefits, including more efficiency, increased productivity and savings for governments and businesses, improved interactions with business and industry, increased transparency, better online user experiences for citizens and greater participation of citizens in political life. Furthermore, eGovernment can have a transformative effect on how government and public service work, with digital transformation leading to changes in public administration. Implemented well, eGovernment enables citizens, firms and organisations to carry out their business with government more easily, more quickly and at lower cost.

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) include a commitment to invest in infrastructure, including communication technology. SDG 9 (industries, innovation and infrastructure) covers areas related to technological progress, in recognition of the fact that, today, investment in high-tech products and support for increased connection between people is key to achieving sustainable development and empowering communities.

4. Logframe inclusion

If an intervention generates the result measured by this indicator, then it must be reported in OPSYS. Corporate targets have been set for the indicators used to monitor the Strategic Plan and the Multiannual Financial Framework (see Section 9). Progress towards these targets is

reported annually in the Annual Activity Plan (for the Strategic Plan) and the Programme Performance Statements (for the Multiannual Financial Framework). These values are calculated by aggregating the results reported in OPSYS. These reports ultimately contribute to the Annual Management Performance Report submitted by the European Commission to the Council and Parliament during the annual budgetary discharge procedure. If targets are not met, explanations must be provided. Therefore, it is crucial that all results are recorded in OPSYS.

There are two ways of doing this:

- Include the indicator directly in the logframe (recommended approach);
- Match the indicator to the closest logframe indicator (only if the indicator was not originally included in the logframe and modification is not possible).

Why? The matching functionality in OPSYS only accommodates reporting current values and does not yet support encoding baselines and targets. This is a significant drawback because targets are a valuable piece of information, especially at the beginning of a Multiannual Financial Framework. Indeed, results take time to materialise as they are the last step in the chain, appearing only after programming, commitments, contracting, and spending have occurred. Targets allow to see what results are expected long before they materialise, which is reassuring to the different stakeholders concerned with accountability. **Therefore, include all corporate indicators directly in the logframe whenever possible, and reserve the matching functionality only for cases when this is not feasible.**

5. Values to report

The following values must be determined in line with the definitions provided in Section 6.

Baseline value: the value measured for the indicator in the baseline year. The baseline value is the value against which progress will be assessed. For GERF indicators, this value is usually zero. This is because the results being measured must be directly attributable to EU support; prior to the start of implementation, the specific intervention has not yet occurred and therefore cannot have generated a result. A non-zero baseline may only occur if the intervention is following up on work achieved by another intervention financed by the same instrument.

Current value:

- **For logframe indicators:** the most recent value for the indicator at the time of reporting. The current value includes the baseline value which is reported separately for logframe indicators in OPSYS.
- **For matched indicators:** the most recent value for the results achieved at the time of reporting since the start of implementation of the intervention. This value is obtained by taking the most recent value for the indicator at the time of reporting and subtracting off the baseline value which is not reported separately for matched indicators in OPSYS.

Current values will be collected at least once a year and reported cumulatively throughout the implementation period.

Final target value: the expected value for the indicator in the target year.

Intermediate target values (milestones). A tool has been developed in OPSYS to generate intermediate targets automatically¹.

- **For outputs:** the intermediate targets are generated using a linear interpolation between the baseline and target values because it is assumed that outputs materialise sooner and more progressively over implementation (than outcomes).
- **For outcomes:** the expected progression over the course of implementation will vary across interventions. During the creation of a logframe, the expected outcome profile must be selected (OPSYS offers four options²) and this selection triggers the generation of intermediate targets for all 30 June and 31 December dates between the baseline and target dates for all output and outcome quantitative indicators. All automatically generated intermediate targets values and dates can be subsequently modified by the Operational Manager or the Implementing Partner with the approval of the Operational Manager.

6. Calculation of values

Specify all assumptions made, list definitions for all technical terms, provide any relevant guidance on (double) counting, and include checklist for quality control.

The value for this indicator is calculated by counting the number of (a) countries supported by the EU to enhance..., (b) people supported by the EU with enhanced... access to digital government services, using the technical definitions and counting guidance provided below. Please double check your calculations using the quality control checklist below.

Technical definitions

Digital government services, also known as eGovernment services or online government services, refer to the provision of government services and information to citizens, businesses and other government entities through digital means such as websites, mobile applications and other online platforms. These services aim to make government operations more efficient,

¹ This has been done in the context of the Primary Intervention Questionnaire (PIQ) for the EAMR. Three new KPIs provide an overall assessment of ongoing interventions (current performance and future performance) and completed interventions (final performance). Scores will be calculated for all INTPA and NEAR interventions participating in the annual results data collection exercise.

- *KPI 10* reflects the relevance, efficiency and effectiveness of ongoing interventions. The information on relevance is provided by the Operational Manager's response to a question in a survey. The information on efficiency and effectiveness is provided either by the logframe data, if sufficient data is available, or the response to a question in a survey, if not.
- *KPI 11* reflects expectations regarding the most probable levels of relevance, efficiency, effectiveness and sustainability that can be achieved by ongoing interventions in the future. In this case, all the information is provided by the Operational Manager's responses to questions in a survey.
- *KPI 12* reflects the relevance, efficiency and effectiveness of completed interventions. The information on relevance is provided by the Operational Manager's response to a question in a survey. The information on efficiency and effectiveness is provided by the logframe data if sufficient data is available, or the response to a question in a survey, if not.

² a. *steady progress*: The outcomes are achieved continuously throughout implementation; b. *accelerating progress*: The outcomes are achieved towards the end of implementation; c. *no progress until end*: The outcomes are mostly achieved at the end of implementation; d. *none of the above*.

transparent and accessible to the public. Examples of digital government services include:

- online payment systems: citizens can pay taxes, utility bills, fines and fees electronically through secure online payment portals provided by government agencies;
- online application and registration: citizens can apply for various government permits, licenses, benefits and registrations (e.g. driver's licenses, passports, social welfare benefits) through online portals;
- information portals: government websites and mobile apps provide information on public services, policies, regulations, procedures and news updates, enabling citizens to access relevant information conveniently;
- interactive forms and transactions: citizens can fill out and submit forms, applications and other documents electronically, streamlining bureaucratic processes and reducing paperwork;
- government portals and dashboards: comprehensive online portals and dashboards aggregate government services and information, providing users with a centralised platform from which to access various services and track their interactions with government agencies;
- e-voting systems: some countries offer electronic voting systems that allow citizens to cast their votes remotely through secure online platforms during elections;
- digital identity and authentication: government-issued digital identity systems enable citizens to authenticate their identities online, facilitating secure access to government services and transactions;
- feedback and complaint mechanisms: online feedback forms and complaint systems allow citizens to provide feedback, report issues and seek assistance from government agencies, enhancing citizen engagement and accountability;
- open data platforms: governments publish datasets and information in open data formats, promoting transparency and enabling citizens, businesses and researchers to access and analyse government data for various purposes;
- mobile applications: government agencies develop mobile applications to provide specific services, such as public transportation information, emergency alerts and health services, accessible via smartphones and tablets.

Overall, digital government services leverage information and communication technology (ICT) to modernise government operations, improve service delivery, enhance citizen engagement and promote transparency and accountability in governance processes. However, eGovernment involves much more than just ICT. It also involves rethinking organisations and processes, and changing behaviour so that public services are delivered more efficiently to people. It has become clear that legal and organisational challenges are frequently underestimated. Governments often view eGovernance and digital transformation as purely technical matters, which limits their capacity to effectively manage the transformation.

Access to digital government services can be supported through various means:

- infrastructure development: more and better infrastructure, including broadband networks, mobile connectivity and data centres, enables more citizens, especially those in remote or underserved areas, to access digital government services;

- capacity development: capacity development initiatives to train government officials and citizens in digital literacy ensure that they have the necessary skills to use digital government services effectively. This includes training on how to use computers, smartphones and the internet, and education on cybersecurity and data privacy;
- service digitisation: government services can be digitised so that they are available online through user-friendly platforms and mobile applications. This digitisation streamlines processes, reduces bureaucracy and enhances convenience for citizens accessing government services;
- access to devices: affordable or subsidised digital devices such as computers, tablets and smartphones can be made available to underserved populations. Access to these devices is crucial in enabling citizens to engage with digital government services, especially in low-income communities where the cost of devices may be a barrier;
- localisation and customisation: localisation and customisation of digital government services can be used to cater to the specific needs and languages of diverse populations. This ensures that services are accessible and relevant to all citizens, including those from marginalised communities or linguistic minorities;
- data security and privacy: the implementation of robust cybersecurity measures and data protection policies safeguards citizens' personal information and ensures trust in digital government services. This is essential for promoting the widespread adoption and usage of online platforms for government interactions.

Counting guidance

1. (a) only: where support is provided for digital government services (eGovernment), the number of countries should be reported under this indicator (GERF 2.12). Where support is specifically provided for the investment climate environment (DAC code 250 - Business & Other Services), the number of countries should be reported under GERF 2.16 *Number of countries supported by the EU to strengthen investment climate*.
2. (a) only: if the intervention supports enhanced access to government digital services, then it is mandatory to include this indicator in the logframe, even if the intervention is implemented in one single country and the value to be reported is one. Indeed, this indicator might not be useful for monitoring purposes, but it is necessary to ensure accurate corporate reporting.
3. Part (a) can include support provided to enhance access to digital government services for both people and firms because it counts countries. However, part (b) cannot include the support provided to enhance access to digital government services for firms because it counts people.
4. (a) only: the countries counted may include those providing support at national or sub-national (including municipal) government level.
5. For multi-country regional interventions promoting access to digital government services, each individual country/person supported should be counted separately.
6. Double counting is not allowed: a country/person can be counted only once in the same reporting period. This means that if the same country/person benefits from one or more forms of support, over one or more years of the same reporting period, from the same intervention or different interventions, this country/person should be counted only once.

7. (b) only: However, there are exceptions to the double-counting rule: people counted under GERF 2.12 can also be counted under the following GERF indicators if the relevant conditions are met:
 - GERF 2.20 *Number of migrants, refugees, and internally displaced people or individuals from host communities protected or assisted with EU support*;
 - GERF 2.39 *Number of people directly benefiting from EU supported interventions that aim to reduce social and economic inequality*.
8. If a value is reported under (b), then a value should be reported under (a).

Quality control checklist

1. Has the indicator been included directly in the logframe? Reserve the OPSYS matching functionality only for cases when this is not feasible.
2. If the indicator has been included directly in the logframe, does the current value *include* the baseline value? If the indicator has been matched to a logframe indicator, does the current value *exclude* the baseline value?
3. (a) only: Have OCTs been included? OCTs are counted as countries.
4. Have all the individual countries/people included in the intervention been counted? If support is provided via a multi-country intervention, all the individual countries/people included in the intervention should be counted.
5. If a value has been reported for part (b), has a value also been reported for part (a)?
6. (b) only: Does the intervention focus on migration? If so, this result should also be reported under GERF 2.20 *Number of migrants, refugees, and internally displaced people or individuals from host communities protected or assisted with EU support*, if all conditions are verified. Double counting with GERF 2.20 is allowed.
7. (b) only: Does the intervention focus on inequalities? If so, this result should also be reported under GERF 2.39 *Number of people directly benefiting from EU supported interventions that aim to reduce social and economic inequality*, if all conditions are verified. Double counting with GERF 2.39 is allowed.
8. Has any other double counting been avoided? Countries/people should be counted only once, except for the cases mentioned above.
9. (b) only: Have the countries been listed in the comments field? This facilitates quality control of potential double counting between national and regional interventions.
10. Have all calculations been recorded in the calculation method field? Has all relevant information, including the geographic location of results, been reported in the comment field?

7. Examples of calculations

Example 1

In Country A, the EU is supporting the establishment of a well-functioning one-stop shop to support citizens' access to social security information. In 2024, the one-stop shop opens to the public. The government reports that there are 10.1 million citizens with social security numbers in 2024, while, according to the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) World Telecommunication/ICT Indicators Database (as presented by the World Bank: <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/IT.NET.USER.ZS>), 18% of the population was using the

internet in 2021 (this is the most recent data available).

- a) The total number of countries supported by the EU to strengthen access to digital government services is one.
- b) The total number of people supported by the EU to strengthen access to digital government services is 10.1 million x 0.18 = 1.818 million.

Example 2

In Country B, the EU is supporting the government to simplify business processes, making it easier to register and license a business.

- a) Since this support contributes to improving the investment climate environment (DAC code 250 - Business & Other Services), Country B should be reported under GERF 2.16 *Number of countries supported by the EU to strengthen investment climate*, NOT under GERF 2.12a.
- b) Since this support benefits firms and not people, there is nothing to report under GERF 2.12b.

8. Data sources and issues

Please use the data source categories specified in OPSYS.

EU intervention monitoring and reporting systems: *Progress and final reports for the EU-funded intervention; ROM reviews; Baseline and endline surveys conducted and budgeted by the EU-funded intervention.*

Include any issues relating to the availability and quality of the data.

9. Reporting process & Corporate reporting

The data collected on this indicator will be reported in OPSYS by the Implementing Partner. The values encoded in OPSYS will be verified, possibly modified and ultimately validated by the Operational Manager. Once a year the results reported will be frozen for corporate reporting. The methodological services in HQ that are responsible for GERF corporate reporting will perform quality control on the frozen data and aggregate as needed to meet the different corporate reporting requirements.

Please replace ○ with ● for the relevant items below.

This indicator is used for corporate reporting in the following contexts:

- NDICI via the Annual Report
- NDICI via the 2021-27 Programme Performance Statements
- INTPA Strategic Plan 2020-24 via the Annual Activity Report
- INTPA Strategic Plan 2025-29 via the Annual Activity Report
- NEAR Strategic Plan 2020-24 via the Annual Activity Report
- ENEST Strategic Plan 2025-29 via the Annual Activity Report
- MENA Strategic Plan 2025-29 via the Annual Activity Report
- FPI Strategic Plan 2020-24 via the Annual Activity Report
- FPI Strategic Plan 2025-29 via the Annual Activity Report

This indicator has been included in the following other Results Measurement Frameworks:

- EFSD+
- GAP III
- IPA III
- TEI-MORE

10. Baseline alignment & Annualisation

Corporate reports most often cover different timeframes. Only rarely does the 7-year Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF) start in the same year as the 5-year Strategic Plans. Because the MFF drives the funding for these interventions, it serves as the primary baseline for data collection. To report against other cycles with different start dates, results must first be annualised and then re-cumulated starting from the required baseline year.

The annualisation method depends on the type of indicator, which can be found in Section 2:

- **Flow Indicators** (discrete achievements): These measure "one-off" events or new beneficiaries reached within a specific timeframe (e.g., Number of people trained). To find the annual result, we calculate the variation (the difference between the cumulative total at the end of the year and the beginning of the year).

Example: If a project reached 500 total people by 2024 and 800 by 2025, the 2025 annual result is 300 (the new results generated that year).

- **Stock Indicators** (continuous support): These measure an ongoing state or sustained support (e.g., Number of countries supported). To find the annual result, we take the total cumulative value at the end of the year, as this represents the full extent of the EU's active footprint.

Example: If the EU supports 10 countries in 2024 and continues supporting those same 10 in 2025, the 2025 annual result remains 10 (the total "stock" of support active that year).

In this case, the result is often achieved at the onset of the intervention and remains ongoing throughout implementation. When re-baselining for a new corporate cycle, these results are maintained rather than recalculated as variations. The annual value is the total number of entities under active support at the end of the reporting year, regardless of whether that support commenced before or after the new baseline year.

11. Other uses

GERF 2.12 can be found in the following groups of EU core indicators available in OPSYS, along with other related indicators:

- [Human Rights](#)

In addition, GERF 2.12a can be found in the following groups of EU core indicators available in OPSYS, along with other related indicators:

- Democracy - Media
- Digitalisation (*a only*)

| |
|--|
| <p>- Human rights (<i>a only</i>)</p> <p>For more information, see: Core indicators for design and monitoring of EU-funded interventions Capacity4dev (europa.eu)</p> <p><i>Include references to external bodies using the same or similar indicator.</i></p> |
| 12. Other issues |
| |