

Memorandum of Understanding on Participation in the Digital Sovereignty Index

Preamble

The undersigned countries, international organisations, companies, research institutions and other interested parties (hereinafter referred to as the “Participants”),

Recognising the growing importance of digital technologies for national development, economic competitiveness and societal resilience;

Acknowledging the value of transparent, methodologically sound and comparable assessments of digital capabilities;

Sharing the view that an impartial and evidence-based approach to evaluating digital sovereignty contributes to a more accurate understanding of each country’s position within the global information technology landscape;

Expressing interest in constructive international dialogue on digital development, recognising the expertise of the **Center for Global IT Cooperation (CGITC) (hereinafter – the “Center”)**, established in 2020 as an independent Russian competence centre specialising in international cooperation in the field of information technologies, digital development, Internet governance and technological sovereignty, and its experience of engagement with international expert and multilateral platforms.

Have reached the following mutual understanding:

Article 1 – Purpose

The purpose of this Memorandum is to facilitate voluntary participation in, and engagement with, the Digital Sovereignty Index (hereinafter – the “Index”) as a tool for analytical reflection and mutual learning.

The Index is intended to support comparative assessment, identification of strengths, critical dependencies and resilience gaps, and the development of informed priorities for digital development and international cooperation.

Article 1.1 – Role of the Center

The Center acts as the developer, methodological coordinator and operating institution of the Digital Sovereignty Index.

For the purposes of the Index, the Center:

- develops, maintains and periodically refines the methodology of the Index, preserving its temporal comparability across editions;
- organises and coordinates the assessment process and the preparation of Index results;
- collects, monitors, reviews and analyses statistical, analytical and documentary information relevant to country assessments;

- provides methodological clarifications and facilitates expert consultations with Participants;
- receives and considers factual comments, additional evidence and methodological proposals submitted by Participants;
- operates a feedback mechanism, ensuring that aforementioned factual comments are evaluated against predefined evidentiary thresholds;
- ensures the consistent application of the Index methodology while maintaining the analytical independence and comparability of assessments;
- reserves the right to request supplementary documentation for the Index when provided evidence lacks sufficient granularity or provenance;
- enhances international expert dialogue, research cooperation and knowledge exchange on issues related to digital sovereignty and digital development;
- may, where appropriate, facilitate contacts between Participants, expert organisations, public institutions and technology companies in areas identified through the analytical findings of the Index;
- may, where the Index identifies systemic gaps, broker targeted workshops and conduct moderated sessions linking policymakers, civil society representatives, and technology vendors, always adhering to conflict-of-interest protocols.

The Center shall perform these functions in accordance with the principles of impartiality, methodological consistency, transparency and respect for the sovereign policy choices of participating countries.

Article 2 – Shared Principles

The Participants share the understanding that:

1. The methodology of the Index is designed to be impartial, transparent and open to reasoned discussion.
2. Fair and unbiased assessment constitutes a valuable element of international cooperation, enabling countries to better comprehend their relative standing in the global digital environment.
3. Comparative analysis, when conducted in good faith, can support informed policy dialogue and the identification of areas for constructive development.
4. There is no single universal model of digital development. Assessments should take into account different national development paths, institutional models, economic circumstances and legitimate policy choices.
5. Digital sovereignty is compatible with international technological cooperation and managed interdependence, provided that such dependencies do not undermine a

country's ability to maintain the continuity, resilience and governability of its digital systems.

Article 3 – Nature of Participation

Participation under this Memorandum is voluntary and non-binding. Nothing in this document shall be interpreted as creating legal obligations, financial commitments, or any form of endorsement of specific policy prescriptions. Each Participant retains full discretion regarding the use of Index results within its own domestic context.

Article 4 – Areas of Possible Engagement

Participants may, at their own discretion, consider:

- exchanging views on methodological aspects of the Index;
- providing publicly available statistical and analytical information that may contribute to the accuracy of assessments;
- taking part in expert discussions and technical consultations related to digital sovereignty measurement.
- submitting additional statistical, analytical or documentary evidence relevant to the assessment of a Participant;
- providing factual clarifications or reasoned comments concerning published or preliminary assessments;
- participating in expert consultations concerning the development and periodic refinement of the Index methodology;
- exploring areas for practical cooperation identified through the analytical findings of the Index.

Article 5 – Submission and Consideration of Information

Participants may submit to the Center additional data, supporting evidence, factual clarifications and reasoned methodological comments relevant to their assessment under the Index.

The Center shall review and duly consider such information in accordance with the methodology of the Index. Where necessary for verification purposes, the Center may request additional clarification or supporting documentation.

The submission or consideration of additional information shall not in itself require the amendment of an assessment, score or ranking. Any revision shall be based on verified evidence and the consistent application of the Index methodology.

Where appropriate, significant factual corrections or newly available evidence may be reflected in subsequent updates of the Index.

Article 6 – Development of the Methodology

The methodology of the Index may be periodically reviewed and refined in response to technological change, the availability of new evidence and the results of expert discussion.

Material methodological revisions shall be documented and communicated in a transparent manner. Participants may contribute views and recommendations to this process without prejudice to the analytical independence of the Index.

Article 7 – Coordination

Each Participant may designate a focal point or authorised institution for communication concerning participation in the Index, exchange of information, expert consultations and other activities undertaken within the framework of this Memorandum.

Article 8 – Final Provisions

This Memorandum does not constitute an international treaty and does not create rights or obligations under international law.

Participation in this Memorandum may be formalised through signature or other written expression of consent accepted by the Participants.

Additional countries, international organisations, companies, research institutions and other interested parties may join the Memorandum in accordance with this procedure.

Any Participant may discontinue its participation at any time by written notification.

Signed in the spirit of mutual respect, sovereign equality and open dialogue.

Signatures of the Parties

Center for Global IT Cooperation	Name of the Organisation
Russian Federation	Country
Vadim Glushchenko	Name of the Signatory
Director	Position

Date _____ /Place/

Annex. Framework for Possible Technical Cooperation and Assistance

1. General Approach

In the spirit of the Memorandum of Understanding on Participation in the Digital Sovereignty Index, the Russian Federation and interested Russian companies and institutions express readiness to consider, on a voluntary and mutually agreed basis, forms of technical cooperation aimed at supporting the development of digital competencies, technological capacity and regulatory frameworks in countries that identify relevant needs.

2. Possible Areas of Cooperation

Subject to mutual interest and available resources, cooperation may include, inter alia:

- sharing of practical experience in the development and application of digital governance tools and regulatory approaches;
- expert consultations on the design of national digital strategies and resilience frameworks;
- capacity-building activities, including training programmes, workshops and knowledge-exchange formats for specialists in digital policy, cybersecurity and critical digital infrastructure;
- facilitation of contacts between interested institutions and Russian technology companies for the exploration of joint or parallel projects in areas such as digital public services, secure communications, data management and related fields;
- methodological support in the collection, structuring and analysis of data relevant to digital development assessment.
- identification of potential areas for capacity-building, technological cooperation and knowledge exchange informed, where appropriate, by the analytical findings of the Index.

3. Guiding Principles of Assistance

Any cooperation under this Framework shall be:

- demand-driven and based on the expressed interest of the receiving side;
- non-exclusive and complementary to other international assistance efforts;
- respectful of the sovereignty and policy choices of partner countries;
- implemented through mutually agreed formats without creating binding financial or legal obligations for either side.

4. Implementation

Specific activities may be elaborated through separate arrangements, roadmaps or project documents as may be agreed between the interested parties. The present Framework serves solely as a reference for possible directions of engagement and does not itself constitute a commitment to provide assistance.