

National Digital Strategy 2030

1 Introduction

Sri Lanka is ambitious in transforming the country's economy and society through the full integration of digital technologies and be amongst the digital leader in the Asia-Pacific. This involves ensuring that it can compete globally in areas such as innovation, entrepreneurship, and digital skills. It also includes promoting sustainability and inclusiveness in the digital economy to ensure that no one is left behind and that all citizens benefit from the opportunities provided by the digital revolution.

A National Digital Strategy for Sri Lanka will support the building of one of the three pillars identified for the new economy. Through its implementation, the strategy shall accelerate Sri Lanka's development trajectory towards becoming a developed country. For this, a strategy should position Sri Lanka to use digital technologies to:

1. Enhance economic competitiveness to drive exports and foreign exchange earnings
2. Create high paying jobs for young people, women, and rural populations.
3. Deliver trusted and inclusive public services to everyone, everywhere

2 Components of the National Digital Strategy 2030

The following thematic areas have been identified as the components that constitute the National Digital Strategy 2030.

Theme	Summary	Possible Indicators of Success
Broadband Connectivity, Access, and Use	Promoting universal access to inclusive, affordable, safe, and resilient connectivity and usage through effective telecommunications policy and regulation, stimulating broadband infrastructure investment, and boosting digital literacy and access to internet-connected devices.	Universal access to affordable high-speed broadband (>100 Mbps)
Digital Data and Services Infrastructure	Maximizing the social and economic value of data by encouraging investment in data infrastructure and services, strengthening data governance, and development of integrated data management infrastructure, platforms, and analytical capabilities.	All public services have a digital channel available to citizens
Digital Transactions	Create secure and trusted mechanisms—including identification and financial services—for people, businesses, and government to engage in transactions seamlessly, creating the basis for an inclusive, transparent, and efficient digital economy	All Sri Lankan people and businesses have the ability to transact online
Digital Safeguards	Building and strengthening trust in usage of digital platforms and services among people, governments, and businesses by strengthening data privacy protections, raising cyber awareness, and building capacity to protect critical infrastructure and systems from cyber threats.	Sri Lanka's government, critical infrastructure, and businesses are cyber secure; personal data is protected through a consent architecture

Theme	Summary	Possible Indicators of Success
Digital Industry, Skills and Jobs	Boosting economic growth and creating jobs by encouraging investment in ICT and ICT enabled services industries; facilitating industry-academia partnerships to develop digital skills, talent pool, and job placement programs tailored to market demand.	IT services exports contribute a significant share to national trade; Sri Lanka is recognized as a leading global destination for digital services. Sri Lankan education system is fit for purpose for emerging technology trends
Accelerate Digitization of Key Economic Sectors	Support sectors to accelerate the deployment of digital technologies and utilization of data to drive innovation, increase operational efficiency, and develop more accessible, user-friendly, and productive digital products, services, and other use cases. Identify 3-5 key sectors as beachheads to drive digital transformation.	SMEs and businesses across sectors adopt digital tools and technologies; key sectors of the economy (for example, agriculture, education, health) use digital technology to boost productivity and innovation

3 Cross-cutting Areas of Attention

- **Digital for Climate**

Supporting governments to plan, build, procure, and operate climate resilient infrastructure, reducing GHG emissions by building and operating green and climate resilient infrastructure, and by managing e-waste. This also includes supporting governments to leverage digital technologies and data to accelerate climate change action. Reducing the environmental footprint and strengthening the climate resilience of digital infrastructure and systems, and deployment of digital technologies, business models and data to mitigate greenhouse gas emissions and support climate resilience and across key sectors.

- **Social Inclusion**

Narrowing the gap in access, adoption, and usage of digital technologies, data, and services by reducing affordability, cultural, and physical barriers, and utilizing digital tools to expand access to markets, employment, and educational opportunities for all.

- **Private Capital Mobilization**

Mobilizing private investment in digital infrastructure and services at scale. This includes fostering policy, regulatory, and institutional reforms to enhance the enabling environment for private investments in the digital sector, as well as catalyzing the use of public financing and risk mitigation tools to close the viability gap for private digital investments.

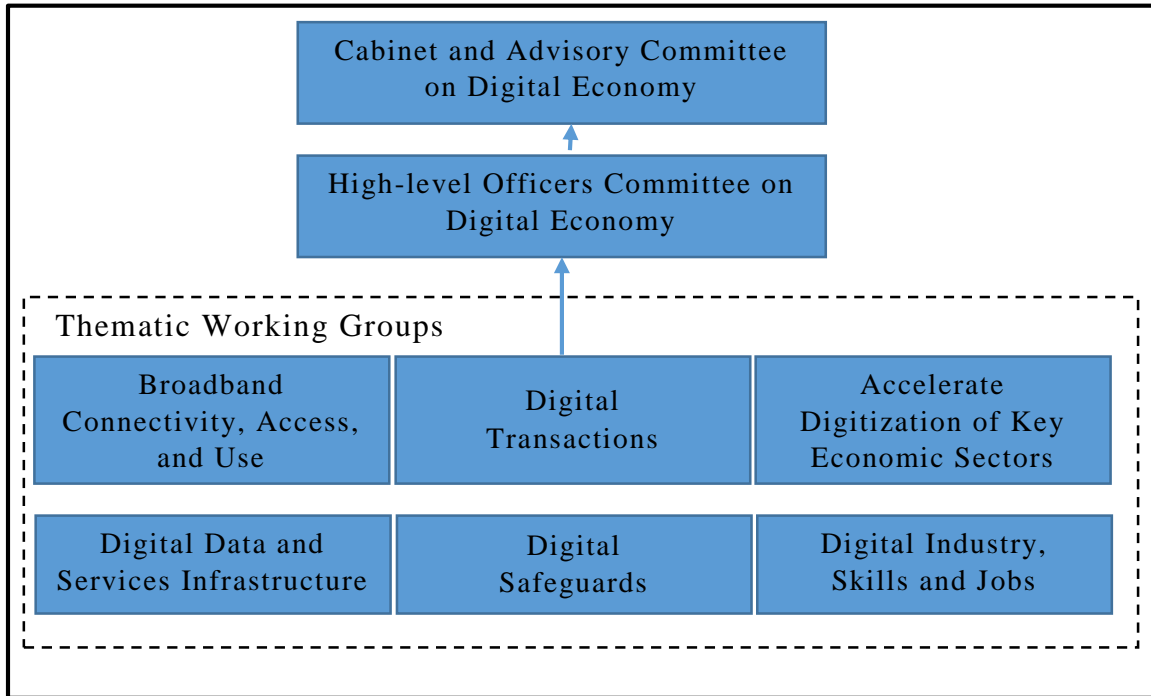
- **Institutional and Legal Reforms and Capacity Development**

Reform and streamline the legal and institutional frameworks to ensure that the enabling environment for the digital economy's development is in place and responsive to changes in technology, business models, and social aspirations. Build the capacity of public employees and civil servants to design, implement, and lead the digital transformation of the nation, especially through the provision of high quality public services and to implement the strategy.

- **Incorporating the Sri Lankan identity**

Sri Lankan identity plays a crucial role in shaping the digital strategy for Sri Lanka. As a diverse nation with a rich cultural heritage and a unique identity, it is essential to incorporate and promote these elements in the country's digital initiatives.

4 Digital Economy Strategy – Institutional Arrangement for Preparation



4.1 Cabinet and Advisory Committee on Digital Economy (CACDE)

A Cabinet Committee along with the Advisory Committee, chaired by His Excellency the President and will be the main advisory body, who will advise and endorse the Digital Economy strategy and workings submitted by the ‘High-Level Officers Committee’ (HLOC).

The CACDE will lead the country's transformation into a digital-first economy that is globally competitive, sustainable, and inclusive. And to mobilize public and private sector resources to fund and implement the national digital economy strategy.

4.2 High-Level Officers Committee on Digital Economy (HLOC)

HLOC will be the main working committee which will carry out the development of the main Digital Economy Strategy and roadmaps, supported by the many Thematic Working Groups (TWGs). It is a Central Coordination group that drive, coordinate and monitoring the Digital Economy initiative.

The HLOC will advise the Government on creating a comprehensive national digital strategy that reflects the Government's vision for the country's digital future. The strategy should identify the critical areas for investment and development in the

digital economy, such as infrastructure, data governance, cyber security, and digital skills.

4.3 Thematic Working Groups (TWG)

Each theme will have a thematic working group, focusing on one specific theme identified as part of the overall national digital economy strategy. The aim is to develop clear and actionable recommendations and strategies that would support the growth and development of the digital economy in the TWG's area of focus. The TWG will be responsible to develop a comprehensive document with recommendations that would align with the broader goals of the national digital economy strategy through an iterative process.

Each TWG should factor in the cross-cutting areas of attention Narrowing the gap in access, adoption, and usage of digital technologies, data, and services by reducing affordability, cultural, and physical barriers, and utilizing digital tools to expand access to markets, employment, and educational opportunities for all.

5 Strategy Implementation Timeline

- March 2023: Define the scope of the thematic groups and the themes
- April 2023: Invite members of the HLOC
- April 2023: Organize the first HLOC
- May 2023: First draft of each thematic group ready; first conference
- June 2023: Second draft of each thematic group; public consultation
- July 2023: Finalization of thematic papers and preparation of the first strategy draft
- August-September 2023: Public consultation on strategy and finalization for HEP
- Late September 2023: Submission of final draft for consideration by HEP and Cabinet
- By October 2023: Adoption by the Cabinet
- November 2023: Launch of the strategy