INFORMATION NOTE FOR PARTICIPANTS (First Draft)

Asia-Pacific Ministerial Conference on Digital Inclusion and Transformation
Astana, Kazakhstan, 3-5 September 2024

Note: This document provides links to external and third-party websites for the convenience of meeting participants and for their use at their discretion. ESCAP cannot vouch for the information’s accuracy or correctness.

I. General

The Asia-Pacific Ministerial Conference on Digital Inclusion and Transformation will be held at the Congress Center in Astana, Kazakhstan from 3 to 5 September 2024.

The Programme is available on the official event website (https://www.unescap.org/events/2024/asia-pacific-ministerial-conference-digital-inclusion-and-transformation). The official sessions will take place from 09.00 hours to 17.00 hours and will be conducted in English with simultaneous interpretation in ESCAP’s four official languages (English, French, Russian and Chinese) and Kazakh language together with international sign language interpretation.

II. Credentials

Each delegation is REQUIRED to submit a letter of credentials, duly signed by the appropriate authority of the respective Government or organization, at the earliest convenience, prior to 25 July 2024 to escap-ids@un.org. Only delegates who appear on the credentials will be recognized in the list of participants.

Members of delegations are kindly reminded to bring official identification documents and provide them to the Secretariat staff at the registration counter, along with a copy of the letter of credentials indicating their appointment to the delegation.

III. Registration and participation

(i) Online registration

Kindly note that, in accordance with standard United Nations security procedures, all delegates who appear in the letter of credentials are required to register online at https://indico.un.org/event/1011167/ by 16 August 2024 to facilitate security clearance and entrance to the conference premises in Astana. Please note that online registration is mandatory. All delegates and participants should complete online registration individually.
(ii) Identification badge

Participants who have registered online can obtain the identification badge at the Registration Counter, located on the first floor of the Congress Centre, from 07.00 hours on the opening day of the conference on 3 September and from 08.00 hours on the second and third days of the conference.

Identification badges can also be collected in advance from 2 September 2024 at 10.00-17.00 hours at the same registration counter. Only duly registered participants will be included in the list of participants and given access to the conference.

For identification and security reasons, all participants are REQUIRED to wear their identification badges at all times, while they are in the conference venue. The loss of an identification badge should be immediately communicated to the Registration Counter or the security personnel designated to the conference so that the incident can be recorded and a new badge can be issued.

(iii) Bilateral meetings

Bilateral meetings with the Executive Secretary of ESCAP

● Please contact Mr. Mitchell M Hsieh, Chief, Communications and Knowledge Management Section (CKMS), ESCAP, by email at <hsieh@un.org> with a copy to Mr. Nikolay Pomoshchnikov at <pomoshchnikov@un.org>, Ms. Elvira Mynbayeva <mynbayeva@un.org> and Ms. Preeyamas Mayura at <mayura@un.org> by 15 August 2024.

Meeting with Kazakhstan Minister and other Ministers

● Please contact Ms. Ayazhan Mukanova, Director of International Cooperation and Investments, Ministry of Digital Development, Innovations and Aerospace Industry of the Republic of Kazakhstan by email at <meetminister@asiapacificdigitalconf.org> with a copy to Ms. Merey Myrzasheva at <m.myrzasheva@mdai.gov.kz> by 15 August 2024.

Country bilateral meetings

● To book a room for a bilateral meeting between countries, please contact Ms. Nuray Kurman, International Cooperation and Investments, Ministry of Digital Development, Innovations and Aerospace Industry of the Republic of Kazakhstan, Tel: +7 777 0913642, email: bilateral@asiapacificdigitalconf.org

(iv) Accessibility support to the conference venue

The ESCAP secretariat and the Government of Kazakhstan are committed to providing accessibility support for the conference room in Astana. Delegates and participants are kindly requested to indicate any accessibility needs during the online registration to facilitate relevant arrangements. The host country will provide international sign language interpretation.
IV. Meeting documents


Considering the carbon footprint involved in producing papers and printing documents, digital copies of meeting documents are strongly recommended to be used as much as possible.

If hard copies are needed, participants are requested to bring their own copies of the meeting documents, which the ESCAP secretariat will distribute to their Governments/Agencies/Organizations, prior to the event. Hard copies will only be made available upon request (print-on-demand service) and are limited to one set per member State delegation.

V. Visa and entry requirements

(i) Visa requirements

Participants are REQUIRED to obtain an appropriate entry visa from the Embassy or Consulate-General of Kazakhstan before entering Kazakhstan, EXCEPT for nationals for whom visas are exempt. Please visit the website of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Kazakhstan for the list of countries with visa exemption and countries with visa requirements via: https://www.gov.kz/memleket/entities/mfa/press/article/details/6764?lang=en

Delegates from countries with no Kazakh Embassy or Consulate-General in their countries may request visa exemption upon arrival for participants attending the Conference. To obtain a visa on arrival at the airports of Astana and Almaty, the arriving person must:

1. Fill out the immigration service form according to the Visa on Arrival Form in English and Russian:
   (i) [Visa Form in English.xlsx](#)
   (ii) [Visa Form in Russian.xls](#)

2. **By 15 August 2024**, it is advised to send the below documents to the ESCAP secretariat <escap-ids@un.org> with a copy to <visasupport@asiapacificdigitalconf.org>.
   (1) A completed visa application form above-mentioned (immigration service form),
   (2) A copy of the passport (passport details must match the information provided in the visa application form), and
   (3) A copy of airline tickets

3. To avoid complications when departure and at border control, it is necessary to have with you an invitation and an acceptance letter from ESCAP, confirming the registered participant, and a scan copy of the permit document* for staying in the Republic of Kazakhstan.
VI. Travel and Accommodation

(i) Travel arrangements

Participants are advised to check out up-to-date information about flight availability and schedules from reliable sources and secure their round-trip flight bookings well in advance.

(ii) Accommodation arrangement

Funded participants by organizers:

ESCAP will arrange hotel reservations at the Hilton Astana with the UN rate for funded delegates. The hotel may request guests to pay in advance when guests check-in. Please bring your credit card or cash to pay the hotel for check-in based on the hotel policy. DSA for funded delegates will be distributed from 3 September 2024 in the conference hall.

Please contact Ms. Tarnkamon Chantarawat, email: chantarawat@un.org, for more details if required.

Self-funded participants:

Participants are responsible for booking their own hotel accommodation and are advised to do in advance. Any cancellations or changes should be communicated directly to the hotel.

Before departing Astana, participants should settle all accounts directly with their hotels. This includes room charges and other expenses such as telephone calls, internet usage, business center services, laundry, transportation, mini-bar items, and dining services. Participants are also responsible for any charges due to late arrival or rescheduled departure without adequate prior notice as per the hotel's policy.

Hotels with preferential rates secured by the Host Country are listed below. When contacting the hotels, please copy accommodation@asiapacificdigitalconf.org. We strongly encourage selecting hotels within walking distance of the meeting venue to avoid traffic and minimize carbon emissions.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hotel and address</th>
<th>Room Type and Rate*</th>
<th>Reservation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hilton Astana</td>
<td>50 000 KZT/60 000 KZT Deluxe King Room (26 rooms)</td>
<td>Astana City, Heydar Aliyev Street, 14. Across from the Expo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>53 000 KZT/63 000 KZT Deluxe Expo Room (76 rooms)</td>
<td>Phone:+77172649900</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>67 000 KZT/77 000 KZT Executive King Room (10 rooms)</td>
<td>Send the application by email: <a href="mailto:Astana_Reservations@hilton.com">Astana_Reservations@hilton.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>70 000 KZT/80 000 KZT Executive Expo Room (8 rooms)</td>
<td>specifying the promo code for ESCAP participants in the ministerial conference Location: <a href="https://go.2gis.com/a5lu9">https://go.2gis.com/a5lu9</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wyndham Garden Astana</td>
<td>40 000 KZT / 50 000 KZT (When booking before 08/01/2024)*</td>
<td>Astana City, Hussein ben Talal Street 25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>50 000 kzt / 60 000 kzt (When booking before 08/25/2024)*</td>
<td>Phone: +7 7172 79 00 00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Send the application by email: <a href="mailto:reservation@wyndhamgardenastana.com">reservation@wyndhamgardenastana.com</a> by specifying the promo code: AstanaHub</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Location: <a href="https://go.2gis.com/kfjp">https://go.2gis.com/kfjp</a></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

To secure a hotel room, please submit an application that includes:

- **Delegation List:** Provide a single list of all participants in your delegation.
- **Arrival & Departure:** Indicate your check-in and check-out dates and times.

For Hilton Astana, the official check-in time is 15:00hrs, and the official check-out time is 12:00hrs. Early check-in from 10:00hrs to 14:00hrs is subject to the availability of rooms with an additional charge of 50% of the fare. In the case of arrival earlier than 10:00hrs, a full day is charged. Late check-out is subject to the availability of rooms with an additional charge of 50% of the fare at check-out from 12:00hrs to 18:00 hrs. In case of departure later than 18:00hrs, a full day is charged.

For other hotels, participants may wish to check official check-in and check-out times in advance to make arrangements with the hotels directly. In case of early arrival or late departure, delegates will be responsible for any additional charges.

- **Room Type:** Specify your preference for single or double occupancy.
- **Contact Information:** Include your phone number and email address.
- **ESCAP Affiliation:** Mention your participation in the ESCAP conference.
*NOTE: ESCAP cannot vouch for the information’s accuracy or indicative rates in the document. The information provided is meant for reference and ease of participants. Please confirm room availability and room rates directly with the hotels.

(iii) Transportation from/to the airport

The Host Country will arrange for the scheduled shuttle service from the Astana airport to the above-mentioned hotels between 1 and 2 September 2024, and from the above-mentioned hotels to the Astana airport between 5 and 6 September 2024. Participants who arrive on different days or stay in other hotels that are not listed in the Information Note should make their own transportation arrangements from and to the airport(s) in Astana. Many metered taxis are available at the exit gate of the airport. Passengers should take a queue number for ordering taxis. Payment could be made before or after the ride in local currencies.

APMCDIT will have a sign/logo/information desk to ensure that travelers are transferred from international to domestic terminals in both Almaty and Astana (TBC).

For travelers transferring in Almaty, please note that international terminals and domestic terminals are in two separate but adjacent buildings. After immigration, you will need to leave the international terminal, turn left, walk 100 meters and enter into the domestic terminal. The departure is on the second floor. When checking-in, please ensure that your luggage is checked all the way through the final destination (Astana), so you do not have to pick it up in Almaty and check-in again.

(iv) Transportation to/from the conference venue

The Host Government will provide scheduled shuttle services from/to Wyndham Garden Hotel to the Congress Centre. The Hilton Hotel is the walking distance of the Congress Centre, a 2-3 minute walk.

Participants who stay in other hotels should make their own transport arrangements to and from the meeting venue. Metered taxis are readily available in the city. You may also book transportation via applications such as Yandex, etc.

Please contact if you have questions regarding transportation by email <transportation@asiapacificdigitalconf.org>.

(v) Foreign currency declaration

Delegates traveling outside the Customs Union (including Kazakhstan) should be aware of currency regulations. You must declare it at customs if you carry more than US$10,000 in cash (or equivalent) when entering or leaving Kazakhstan. Not doing so or providing incorrect information could result in fines or criminal charges.

For your safety and convenience, we recommend exchanging currency only at authorized locations like banks or official exchange offices. These places offer secure transactions and fair exchange rates.
We recommend using the online banking system or a credit card to cover your accommodation expenses at the hotel. Please inquire at the hotel reception about the nearest bank or ATM machine.

(vi) Weather:

With pleasant temperatures and low rainfall, September is one of the best months to visit Astana. Here’s a breakdown:

- Average minimum temperature: 5°C to 10°C (41°F to 50°F) refer to timeanddate.com for weather averages in Astana
- Average maximum daytime temperature: 19°C (66°F)
- Rainfall: Low

Packing recommendations:
Since mornings and evenings can be cool, pack layers including long-sleeved shirts, light jackets, and comfortable pants. During the day, a T-shirt and shorts or a light dress will be suitable.

(vii) Electric plug and socket

Kazakhstan uses Type C (Europlug) and Type F (Schuko plug) sockets, with a standard voltage of 220-230V and a frequency of 50 Hz. If your devices use a different plug type or are incompatible with the local voltage, you must bring a power adapter and possibly a voltage converter.

Please note: Delegates are kindly encouraged to bring their own adapters for laptops and other electronic devices. While the organizers cannot provide these directly, a variety of shops selling electronics and electrical items can be found throughout the city for your convenience.

(viii) Local SIM cards and roaming

To stay connected throughout your visit, consider purchasing a local prepaid SIM card upon arrival in Kazakhstan. This will provide you with mobile data access in addition to the Wi-Fi available at the conference venues and hotel.

Mobile operators:

- Beeline.kz
- activ.kz
- Altel.kz
- Tele2.kz

Roaming Services: Your existing mobile phone plan might offer roaming services in Kazakhstan. We recommend contacting your local provider for details on rates and conditions before your trip.
VII. Safety and security

For security and safety reasons, participants are reminded NOT to leave their personal belongings unattended. Belongings left unattended within the meeting venue may be removed.

All occupants of the meeting venue MUST comply at all times with all lawful directions given from Kazakhstan.

(i) Emergency numbers in Astana, Kazakhstan

We hope your visit to Astana is filled with positive experiences! While emergencies are unlikely, it's always good to be prepared. Here's a list of important emergency services in Astana:

- **112**: Unified Emergency Rescue Service (for any urgent situation)
- **101**: Fire Service
- **102**: Police
- **103**: Ambulance
- **104**: Gas Emergency Service

**Important**: All emergency numbers listed above are free to call from any mobile or landline phone in Kazakhstan.

(ii) Zero tolerance toward harassment

The United Nations has a zero-tolerance policy for any form of harassment, including sexual misconduct, sexual harassment, and sexual exploitation and abuse, and will deal with such complaints promptly. Please refer to the United Nations Code of Conduct and report any incident to the respective Event Organizer either in person or by extension at 102 or 9102.

(iii) Security protocols for UN personnel

In line with security procedures for UN staff, travel notification through the Travel Request Information Process (TRIP) is required prior to any official travel. Upon notification of travel on TRIP, UN staff members will automatically receive updated security advice for UN visitors to Kazakhstan. Please visit [https://dss.un.org](https://dss.un.org) to apply for this travel notification.

In addition, the UN Department of Safety and Security requires all UN personnel, including interns and consultants, to complete the mandatory BSAFE Security Awareness Training. Relevant security certifications must also be completed prior to commencing official travel.

VIII. Facilities and services at the Congress Centre, Astana

(i) The Plenary session for Ministerial Conference

The Plenary session will be held in **Astana Hall** located on the first floor.

(ii) Side event
The eight side events will be held in **Almaty Room 1, Almaty Room 2, Caspian Hall and Turkistan Hall**, located on the first floor, during lunch time (12:15-13.45 hours) on 3 and 4 September 2024.

(iii) Catering services

Catering services will become available on the first floor of the Congress Centre for the meeting participants to purchase coffee, tea and lunch. Their operating hours are 08:00 to 18:30, and participants can pay in cash and by credit card.

A welcome dinner will be organized by the Host Government for all the country delegations and invited guests at the Hilton Astana Hotel on 3 September 2024 (TBC).

A Gala dinner will also be organized for invited guests at the Hilton Astana on 4 September 2024.

Following the sessions on 5 September, there will be a buffet dinner for invited guests at the conference.

(iv) Sightseeing program

Sightseeing on a travel bus (CityPass) will be available for delegates during 09.00-16.00 hours with a duration of three hours each day from September 3rd to September 5th. It is **REQUIRED** to sign up for the activity in advance using the following link. [https://astana.citypass.kz/en/](https://astana.citypass.kz/en/)

(v) Internet services

Free wireless internet access is available in all conference and meeting rooms and public areas of the conference venue.

(vi) Prayer and meditation rooms

Prayer rooms are located on the second and third floors of the Congress Centre, Astana.

(vii) Postal and banking facilities

**National Post:** Delegates are kindly advised that postal services will not be offered on-site at the conference venue. However, Kazpost branches are readily available throughout Astana.

**Kazpost:** Handles letters, parcels, express delivery (EMS), money transfers, bill payments, pensions, and magazine subscriptions. [https://qazpost.kz/](https://qazpost.kz/)

**Private Couriers:**

**DHL:** Offers international express delivery. [https://www.dhl.com/kz-en/home.html](https://www.dhl.com/kz-en/home.html)

Banking services are available as follows:
Location: Mega Silkway, Astana, Kabanbai Batyr Ave., 62, 1 floor.

Banks:
Halyk Bank: Mega Silkway 1st floor.
ForteBank: Mega Silkway 1st floor.

ATM:
- Bank RBK
- Jusan Bank
- Bereke Bank
- Forte Bank
- Halyk Bank
- Eurasian Bank
- Kaspi Bank:

Location: Hilton Astana Hotel, Heydar Aliyev Street, 14 Astana, 01000-0 Kazakhstan

ATM:
- Halyk Bank