



United Nations Conference on Trade and Development

DIGITAL ECONOMY REPORT 2019

Value Creation and Capture: Implications for Developing Countries

The rapid spread of digital technologies is transforming many economic and social activities. While creating many new opportunities, widening digital divides threaten to leave developing countries, and especially least developed countries, further behind. A smart embrace of new technologies, enhanced partnerships and greater intellectual leadership are needed to redefine digital development strategies and the future contours of globalization.

This first edition of the *Digital Economy Report* – previously known as the *Information Economy Report* – examines the scope for value creation and capture in the digital economy by developing countries. It gives special attention to opportunities for these countries to take advantage of the data-driven economy as producers and innovators – but also to the constraints they face – notably with regard to digital data and digital platforms.

Digital advances have already led to the creation of enormous wealth in record time, but this is highly concentrated in a small number of countries, companies and individuals. Meanwhile, digitalization has also given rise to fundamental challenges for policymakers in countries at all levels of development. The Report presents recent trends and discusses key policies for value creation and capture in the digital economy, notably with regard to entrepreneurship, data, trade, competition, taxation, intellectual property and employment.

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CONTACT

thomas.vangiffen@un.org

+41 22 917 5262

These are early days in the digital era and there are still more questions than answers about how to deal with the digital challenge. Given the absence of relevant statistics and empirical evidence, as well as the rapid pace of technological change, decision-makers face a moving target when trying to adopt sound policies relating to the digital economy. The Report provides valuable insights and analyses to support policymakers at the national and international levels to ensure that no one is left behind by the fast-evolving digital economy.