# Connect and Unite: Advocacy kit
# ITU Plenipotentiary Conference 2022

### 26 September to 14 October 2022, Bucharest, Romania



*"Countries will unite at the ITU Plenipotentiary Conference 2022 to set the direction of digital transformation for years to come, for the benefit of our planet and humanity."*

Houlin Zhao, ITU Secretary-General

*"Wake up, change course, unite, and let's try to defeat the enormous challenges we are facing today."*

António Guterres, UN Secretary-General

## Connect and Unite

The ITU Virtual Consultation of Councillors 2021 welcomed the proposal from the Host Country, Romania, and the ITU Secretariat to organize a fully green, gender-responsive and inclusive [Plenipotentiary Conference 2022 (PP-22)](#) .[1]

PP-22 will bring together the world's ICT leaders to "Connect and Unite." Climate action, gender equality and inclusion are universal, multilateral goals of the United Nations family.

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[1]    [C21/13](#) on "Proposed improvements for the Plenipotentiary Conference" (access for ITU Member States)

The PP-22 logo combines the three primary colours of the Romanian flag, showing a unified commitment to "One ITU." Its elements embody traditional Romanian embroidery and microchips as well as the three ITU Sectors of Radiocommunication, Standardization and Development.

## Key messages

**The more we share key messages with our respective constituencies, the more we are united! Below are some key messages to share in your PP-related communications:**

### Green

- As our lives become increasingly connected, a proliferation of devices is partly responsible for rising carbon emissions and e-waste (discarded electrical and electronic equipment such as phones, laptops, fridges, sensors and TVs).
- ICTs must form part of the solution to drastically reduce carbon emissions.
- Climate change has been recognized by the United Nations as "one of the greatest challenges of our time." The PP-22 Host Country agreement includes an article on the sustainability of ITU's highest governing body meeting for the first time.
- ITU is in the process of systematically integrating environmental considerations into the planning of all future events, in line with the United Nations Sustainability Strategy 2020-2030.
- ITU and the Government of Romania aim to integrate environmental considerations into various aspects of PP-22 and invite delegates to support these efforts.

### Gender-responsive

- The transformational potential of Internet access and use is not equally distributed. Of the estimated 2.9 billion unconnected, the majority are women and girls.
- The SDGs cannot be achieved without closing the digital gender gap. Broadly speaking, women are lagging behind in terms of Internet access and use, digital skills and use of digital tools, participation in science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) fields, and tech sector leadership and entrepreneurship.
- Nearly three out of 10 participants in the Plenipotentiary Conference in 2018 (PP-18) were women, up from two out of 10 at PP-14.
- For the first time in PP history, ITU Member States elected more women than men to chair PP-18 committees, with four out of seven chaired by women.
- PP-22 aims to advance gender equality by upholding actions on agenda-setting, participation, governance, working environment and decision-making.
- In addition to comprising at least 35 per cent of PP-22 delegates, the ITU Secretariat aims to support women in actively chairing key committees and working groups – thereby mainstreaming gender perspectives into ITU resolutions and decisions which are to have an impact beyond PP-22.
- Training for nominated women delegates attending PP-22 will be delivered prior to the conference, aiming to prepare women delegates for multilateral negotiation, chairing, speaking and policy-making roles.

## Inclusive

- While 74 per cent of #UN75 survey respondents see the UN as "essential" in tackling collective challenges facing humanity, respondents also want the UN to innovate and include a more diverse set of actors in the 21st century.[2]

- Decision-makers need to foster access, accessibility, affordability and use of telecommunications and information and communication technology (ICT) in all countries and regions and for all peoples, with a particular focus on women and girls, youth and older persons, marginal and vulnerable populations, low-income groups, indigenous peoples and persons with disabilities.

- ITU Council 2021 approved ITU's first-ever policy on accessibility for persons with disabilities and persons with specific needs.

- Today's world is home to around 1.8 billion young people between the ages of 10 and 24, with close to 90 per cent living in developing countries: the largest generation of youth in history.

- ITU's Generation Connect initiative aims to engage global youth as equal partners alongside the leaders of today's digital change by empowering young people with the skills and opportunities to advance their vision of a connected future. Generation Connect is the overarching initiative of the ITU Youth Strategy on the journey to the World Telecommunication Development Conference (WTDC).

- The Generation Connect Global Youth Summit will be held from 2 to 4 June 2022, preceding the World Telecommunication Development Conference (WTDC).

## Stories that move

Some of our best stories reflect the Union's expertise in and commitment to green,

gender-responsive and inclusive ICTs and activities.

Share these as well as your own ICT success stories using the hashtag #Plenipot on your social media channels.

Discover more stories on the ITU News blog.

## Green

- Greening the Blue - and ITU - My ITU
- Reimagine, recreate, restore: How we can make digital transformation sustainable - My ITU
- The technology sector's environmental duty - My ITU
- How ITU is stemming the e-waste surge with standards, studies and more - My ITU

## Gender-responsive

- When women take the helm: Wisdom from radiocommunication leaders - My ITU
- Building and nurturing women's digital leadership - My ITU
- Increasing women's leadership in financial technology - My ITU
- New tools to support gender equality in the technology sector: Houlin Zhao - My ITU

## Inclusive

- Generation Connect Visionaries Board: Amplifying young voices to advance digital inclusion - My ITU
- From conversation to inclusive leadership: How ICTs – and ITU – are advancing UN75 survey priorities - My ITU
- Technology and older persons: Ageing in the digital era - My ITU
- ITU News Magazine on Digital Youth

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[2]    UN75 Report: The Future We Want, The UN We Need | United Nations

# How *you* can help

Here are some ways the ITU Secretariat, Host Country, Member States and delegates can make PP-22 as green, gender-responsive and inclusive as possible - before, during and after the conference.

| | Green | Gender-responsive | Inclusive |
|---|---|---|---|
| **ITU Secretariat** | Use digital screens instead of printed signage where possible and consider the environmental impact of what is printed. | Develop and deliver a training programme for women delegates prior to PP-22, e. g. in negotiation and chairing skills. | Offer captions for webcasts. |
| | Minimize the use of paper. | Track and report on gender-based participation (man, woman, other, prefer not to say) before, during and after the event. | Caption all videos in the six languages of the Union. |
| | Communicate greening aim to all stakeholders. | | Make PP fully ICT accessible (website, webcasts, videos, documents, etc.). |
| | Create a green event webpage incl. a "sustainable participant" guide. | Create a safe and inclusive environment for everyone (ITU Zero Tolerance policy) free from harassment, sexism and discrimination. | Prepare speaking points for ITU Elected Officials to demonstrate strong political will related to youth. |
| | Reduce flights by making use of remote participation services and local staff as much as possible. | Improve gender balance in the composition of the ITU Secretariat and support services, including nomination of women as secretaries (alternates) of the committees. | Track and report participation of youth delegates. |
| | Measure event-related greenhouse gas emissions. | | Interview and highlight young leaders working on digital development and SDG implementation. |
| | ITU will offset emissions from staff flights in the context of its yearly greenhouse gas inventory. | Prepare speaking points for ITU Elected Officials to demonstrate strong political will. | |
| | | Interview women role models, plan specific photo coverage on women behind the scenes at work. | |
| | | Where possible, organize seating plans to balance gender at tables. | |
| | | Report on the implementation of the gender-responsive PP-22 plan and propose lessons learned and next steps for future ITU conferences. | |

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|---|---|---|---|
| **Host Country Romania** | Give preference to local and seasonal food and beverages.<br><br>Offer exciting vegetarian options.<br><br>Rent materials instead of buying.<br><br>Promote a power down policy for rooms and equipment that are not in use.<br><br>Avoid generation of waste and properly recycle different waste streams.<br><br>Minimize bottled water and other single-use products.<br><br>Offer reduced public transport tickets, provide walking routes to the venue and offer electric buses for delegate shuttles.<br><br>Offer choice of hotels with good sustainability credentials in walking distance of the venue.<br><br>Consider offsetting the event emissions.<br><br>Inform all event stakeholders, suppliers and partners about the greening aim and ask them to support the efforts. | Make all accommodation, transfers and all venues related to the conference safe for women.<br><br>Collect and publish data and statistics on the gender balance of local staff.<br><br>Physical layout and facilities at the venue should encourage participation by women – for instance, separate bathrooms, equal numbers and at the same distance from the main rooms.<br><br>Put a women's toilet in close vicinity of the VIP room.<br><br>Promote the gender-responsive PP-22 in the interaction with the press. | Enable accessibility for people with reduced mobility (e.g., access to buildings and stages with ramps).<br><br>Offer an ICT accessible conference app, also to help all delegates find their way around the venue.<br><br>Offer an ICT accessible venue.<br><br>Invite local youth from universities and youth networks.<br><br>Organize social events with local youth entertainers and influencers. |

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| **Member States** | Choose the most environmentally-friendly way to travel to the event.

Offset CO2 emissions that cannot be avoided, for example via UNFCCC's *Climate Neutral Now* platform.

Avoid individual transport arrangements and instead choose a hotel in walking distance to the venue or use public transportation.

For receptions, favour local and seasonal food and request reusable tableware instead of single-use items.

Avoid gifts. If gifts are unavoidable, gifts and giveaways are ideally virtual, or eco-friendly, ethically and locally-sourced and without excess packaging. Donate left-over gifts to a local charity.

Avoid paper. Send any campaign brochures to ppelections@itu.int in order to be posted on the PP-22 website. | Encourage greater participation and active leadership of women by nominating more women to conference preparation and leadership roles, such as Committee Chairs and Heads of Delegation, at and beyond PP-22.

Promote equal representation of men and women in delegations.

Include ICTs for women empowerment and bridging the gender digital divide in policy statements.

Mainstream a gender perspective in as many resolutions as possible and revise ITU Resolution 70 (Mainstreaming a gender perspective in ITU.) | Come with inclusive Member State delegations, including youth.

Organize side events, intergenerational dialogues, workshops, etc. with and for young delegates.

Invite the Generation Connect Youth Envoys from Member States to join. |

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| **Delegates** | Switch off equipment and lights when not in use.<br><br>Use energy-efficient devices (e.g., laptops instead of PCs).<br><br>Avoid printing and consider eliminating the use of paper business cards. Many smartphone apps support digital business cards that update automatically.<br><br>Use the recycling stations throughout the venue.<br><br>Choose transportation with the lowest footprint and offset flight emissions.<br><br>Bring own reusable water bottle for use at the water dispensers (or buy it at the ITU bookshop on site). | Advance gender mainstreaming in PP-22 speeches, policy statements, resolutions and decisions.<br><br>Offer all attendees an event free from harassment, sexism and discrimination by providing a safe and inclusive environment for everyone.<br><br>Give women spaces to step up their influence in the decision-making process and networking. | Be mindful of other delegates that may have a disability or specific need so they can fully participate in the PP-22 programme.<br><br>Support the development of inclusive digital communities and the mainstreaming of digital accessibility.<br><br>Mentor young delegates.<br><br>Advance inclusion and youth mainstreaming in PP-22 speeches, policy statements, resolutions and decisions.<br><br>Engage global youth and encourage their participation as equal partners alongside the leaders of today's digital change, empowering young people with the skills and opportunities to advance their vision of a connected future. |

# Advocacy opportunities

Mark your calendar: the dates below are ideal to highlight progress towards a gender-responsive, green and inclusive Plenipotentiary Conference 2022 in the run-up to the big event.

| | Gender-responsive | Green | Inclusive |
|---|---|---|---|
| **May** | | 22 - International day for Biological Diversity | 17 - World Telecommunication and Information Society Day |
| **June** | | 5 - World Environment Day<br>8 - World Oceans Day (UNESCO) | 2-4 Generation Connect Global Youth Summit |
| **July** | | | 15 - World Youth Skills Day |
| **August** | | | 12 International Youth Day |
| **September** | | 7 - International Day of Clean Air for blue skies<br>25 - World Maritime Day | |

## More resources for you

The following backgrounders are available in the 6 languages of the Union:

- [Accessibility to ICTs (itu.int)](#)
- [Bridging the gender divide (itu.int)](#)
- [Climate change (itu.int)](#)
- [Creating a circular economy for ICT equipment (itu.int)](#)
- [Connect 2030 – An agenda to connect all to a better world (itu.int)](#)
- [How is ITU funded?](#)
- [All ITU backgrounders](#)

In English only:

- ITU podcasts, including on accessibility, climate change and gender: [Podcasts (itu. int)](#)
- [Measuring digital development: Facts and figures 2021 (itu.int)](#)

Green:

- [Environment and climate change (itu.int)](#)
- [Report on ITU's environmental sustainability,](#) including recommendations from the Joint Inspection Unit
- [ITU environmental sustainability statement](#)
- [Proposed improvements for the plenipotentiary conference](#)

Gender-responsive:

- [Mainstreaming a gender perspective in ITU and promoting gender equality and the empowerment of women through ICTs](#)
- [Mainstreaming a gender perspective in ITU and promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of women through telecommunications/information and communication technologies](#)
- [ITU's activities related to resolution 70 (Rev. Dubai, 2018)](#), including ITU gender equality and mainstreaming (GEM) policy.

Inclusive:

- [Youth, Innovation and Academia (itu.int)](#)
- [Empowerment of youth through telecommunication/information and communication technology (Resolution 198 (Busan, 2014))](#)
- [Youth Strategy, Roadmap to 2021 and beyond](#), ITU draft youth strategy

UN resources:

[UN Sustainability Strategy 2020-2030](#)

## About the ITU Plenipotentiary Conference

ITU's Plenipotentiary Conference is held every four years, convening representatives of the organization's 193 Member States to oversee global radio spectrum allocation, the creation of global technical standards for information and communication technology (ICT) networks and services, and efforts to promote digital inclusion in under-served communities. It also serves to set ITU's general policies, adopt four-year strategic and financial plans, and address key ICT issues as requested by ITU members.

Furthermore, the conference elects ITU's next Secretary-General, Deputy Secretary-General and Directors of the Bureaux of the Radiocommunication Sector, the Telecommunication Standardization Sector and the Telecommunication Development Sector, along with the members of the Radio Regulations Board. The Plenipotentiary Conference also elects the Member States that constitute the next [ITU Council](#), which acts as ITU's governing body in the interval between plenipotentiary conferences.