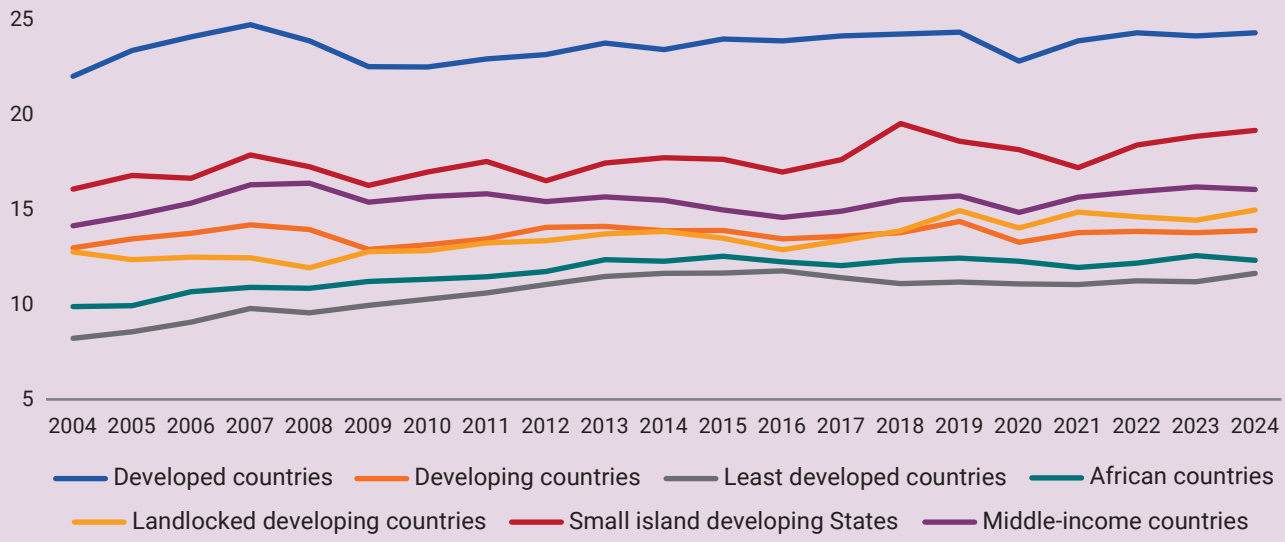
Domestic public resources **In Numbers**

Para 27: Ensuring that countries have the necessary resources and that they are collected and spent transparently and efficiently

The Sevilla Commitment reaffirms that public resources, policies and plans are central to financing sustainable development and calls for decisive national and subnational actions to strengthen fiscal systems, emphasizing broadening tax bases, improving tax administration and strengthening public financial management. It also promotes gender-responsive budgeting, environmental and green fiscal measures, and expanded financing of social protection systems.

Tax revenues have increased over time, but large differences between developed and developing countries persist. Between 2004 and 2024, both developed and developing countries increased their tax revenues as a share of GDP. This includes least developed countries (LDCs), which achieved significant increases primarily between 2004 and 2016. However, throughout the period, developed countries consistently collected far more tax revenue as a share of their GDP than developing countries. By 2024, the median tax-to-GDP ratio in developed countries was about 10 percentage points higher than in developing countries, reflecting persistent differences in economic structure and revenue capacity. There was some narrowing of these differences between 2017 and 2020, but convergence

Figure III.1.1
Tax revenue, median, by country group, 2004–2024
(Percentage of GDP)



Source: UN DESA calculations, based on IMF World Revenue Longitudinal Database (WoRLD), 2026.
Note: Tax revenues exclude social security contributions.

stalled following the COVID-19 pandemic, which marked a turning point and widened disparities, reflecting uneven recovery paths.

Advanced digital technologies are widely used in the tax administrations of developed countries but their use remains uneven and limited in developing countries. In 2023, developed countries were operating at a high level of digitalization, with almost all having implemented application programming interfaces (APIs) (96 per cent) and large majorities using data science and analytics tools (85 per cent), whole-of-government identification systems (78 per cent), and artificial intelligence (AI) and machine learning (63 per cent). While around two thirds of developing countries had adopted APIs, fewer than half used data analytics tools, only 30 per cent had whole-of-government identification systems, and just 18 per cent had adopted AI. The gap is even wider for least developed countries (LDCs), where only small minorities had data analytics, integrated identification systems or AI in place. Digital innovations are also being applied to public expenditure management. A regional example, part of the Sevilla Platform for Action (SPA), is the Integrated Budget Intelligence Toolkit (iBIT), developed by the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia, which uses data analytics and AI to assess budget effectiveness, identify inefficiencies and simulate alternative allocation scenarios.

Fiscal redistribution has increased slightly since 2000 across all country groups, but developed economies remain around six times more redistributive than developing countries. All country groups recorded some increase in progressivity of fiscal systems since 2000, measured through relative redistribution, which captures the percentage reduction in income inequality—as measured by the change in the Gini index—achieved through the combination of direct taxes collected and social protection cash benefits paid out. In developing countries, the median reduction in income inequality is small, and increased only marginally, from 5 per cent in 2000 to 6 per cent in the latest year. In developed countries, taxes and transfers reduced inequality by 34 per cent in 2000 and by 37 per cent in the latest year.

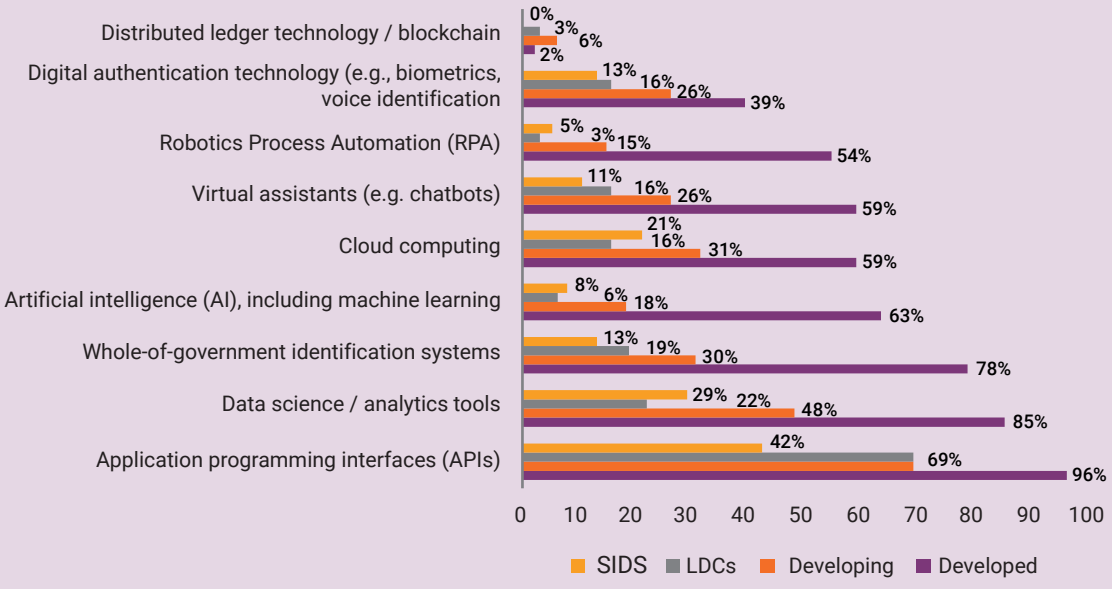
Among countries assessed, only about one quarter had comprehensive systems to track budget allocations for gender equality. Of the 123 countries assessed to monitor SDG indicator 5.c.1 in 2025, 31 had fully institutionalized gender-responsive budgeting systems. A much larger group—71 countries—had systems that partially meet good-practice standards, while 21 countries did not meet minimum requirements.

Explicit carbon pricing is expanding, while implicit fiscal measures account for a substantial share in developing countries. The share of GHG emissions covered by an ETS or a carbon tax (direct or "explicit" carbon pricing) rose from only 6 per cent in 2005 to 28 per cent by 2025. Eighty direct carbon pricing instruments were in operation worldwide in 2025—comprising 37 ETS and 43 carbon taxes—with recent growth coming from countries expanding these mechanisms to sectors such as cement,

Figure III.1.2

Adoption of advanced digtal technologies in tax administrations, by country group, 2023

(Percentage of countries per group adopting each technology)



Source: UN DESA elaboration, based on International Survey on Revenue Administration (ISORA) December 2025.

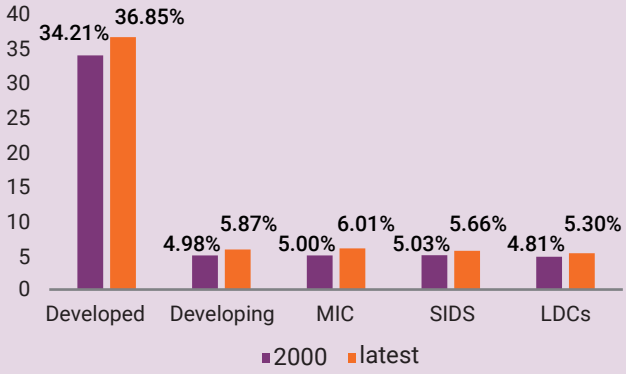
steel, aluminium and coal combustion.[1] Most of the growth in covered GHG emissions comes from ETS, while carbon taxes have remained a smaller, stable share (about 4–6 per cent). A substantial share of carbon pricing in developing countries occurs through indirect instruments such as fuel and energy taxes, value added tax (VAT) differentials and subsidies rather than through explicit carbon taxes or ETS. As these measures also raise the cost of carbon-intensive activities, focusing only on explicit carbon pricing may underestimate the extent to which carbon is already being priced in the developing world.

Official development assistance (ODA) for domestic revenue mobilization (DRM) has grown but remained modest at US$1.12 billion in 2024. ODA disbursements for DRM rose markedly between 2016 and 2024, driven largely by increased lending from multilateral institutions. Total support peaked in 2020, reflecting a surge in financing linked to the COVID-19 response. By 2024, multilateral institutions accounted for most of the support, primarily through loans, while Development Assistance Committee (DAC) donors continued to provide a mix of grants and loans, with grants remaining an important component. Despite this growth, ODA for DRM remains marginal relative to overall development finance. The share of total ODA allocated to DRM fluctuated between 0.17 per cent and 0.56 per cent over the period, peaking at 0.56 per cent in 2020 before remaining below that peak in subsequent years (0.27–0.41 per cent). To enhance the effectiveness and impact of ODA for DRM, it should strengthen fiscal policy coherence rather than contributing to fragmentation. To this end, it should support fiscal policy decisions across revenue, expenditure and other fiscal policies that work as mutually reinforcing parts of a single system, make trade-offs explicit and ensure that priorities are clearly reflected in fiscal choices.

Figure III.1.3

Relative redistribution, median, by country group, latest year vs. 2000

(Percentage of GINI change through taxes and transfers)

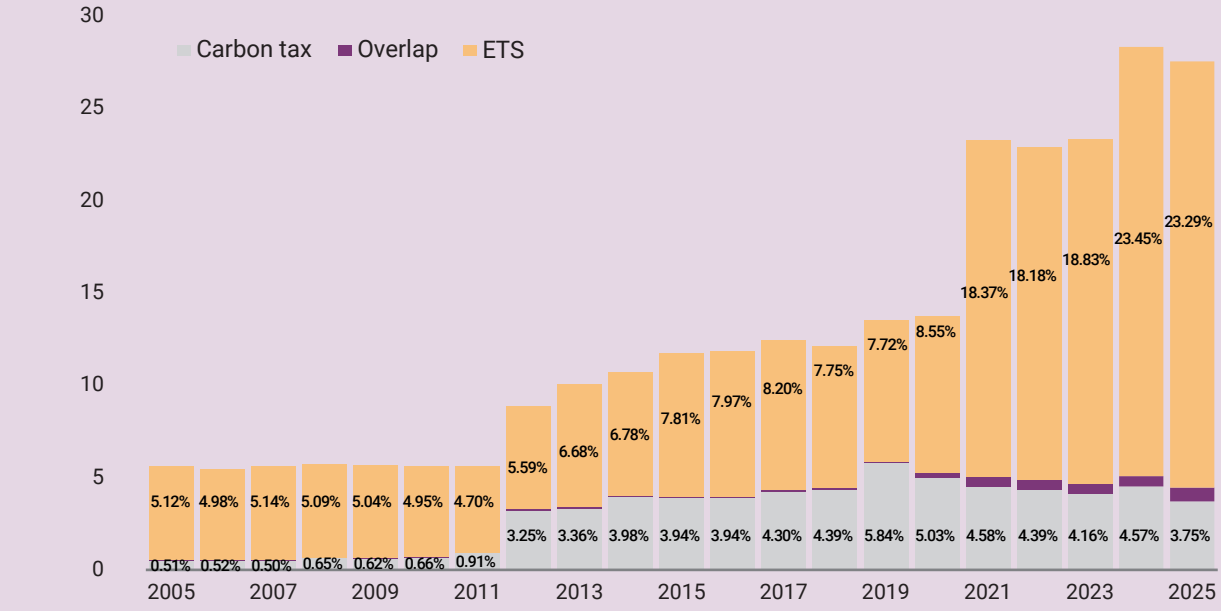


Source: UN DESA calculations, based on the Standardized World Income Inequality Database (SWIID), December 2025.
Note: The "latest year" refers to the most recent year with available data for each country (2005–2025), with over 65 per cent of observations clustered in 2021–2024.

Figure III.1.4

Share of global greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions covered by an emission trading system (ETS) or carbon tax, 2005–2025

(Percentage of GHG emissions)

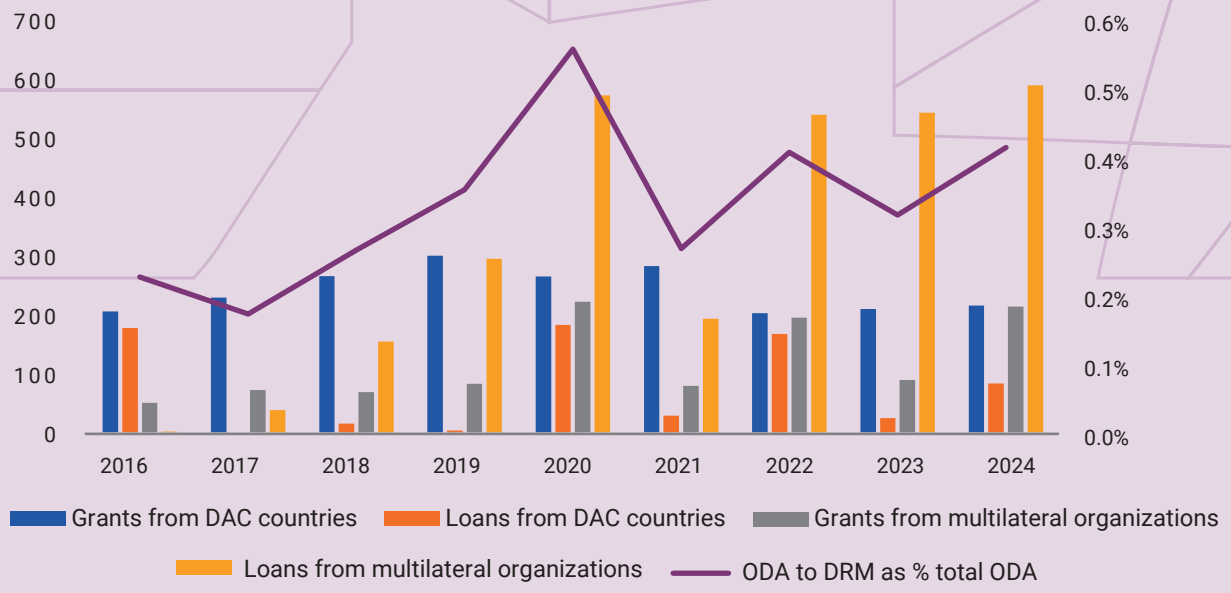


Source: World Bank, State and Trends of Carbon Pricing 2025.

Figure III.1.5

ODA disbursements for DRM, 2015–2024

(Millions of US dollars, 2023 constant prices, percentage of DRM ODA of total ODA)

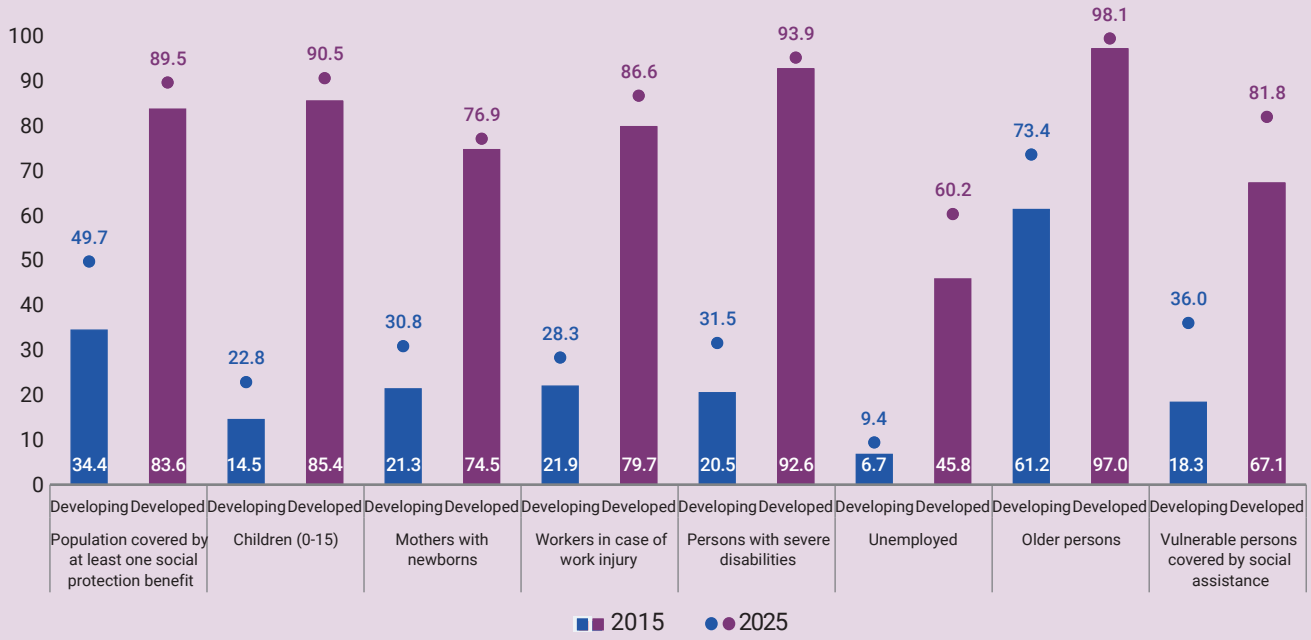


Source: OECD.
Note: From ODA creditor reporting system. Data is for gross disbursements registered for purpose code 15114 (Domestic Revenue Mobilization). Grants from DAC countries is bilateral grants—including bilateral support delivered through multilateral organizations.

Figure III.1.6

Effective social protection coverage, by country group, 2015 and 2025

(Percentage of the population group)



Source: ILO estimates, 2025.
Note: The 2025 estimates are provisional and should be interpreted with caution. They are based on a limited set of available national data and are calculated using average annual growth rates for the period since 2015. These estimates will be revised in 2026 as additional national data become available.

Effective social protection coverage has expanded globally, yet large gaps persist. Effective social protection coverage expanded between 2015 and 2025 across all country groups and across all categories of social protection. In 2025, the proportion of the population covered by at least one social protection benefit reached 89.5 per cent in developed countries, compared with 49.7 per cent in developing countries. These gaps are particularly pronounced for child benefits, where coverage remains low in developing countries (22.8 per cent) relative to developed economies (90.5 per cent). Substantial differences are also evident for persons with severe disabilities, workers in case of work injury, and unemployment protection.

Para 28: Strengthening international tax cooperation

The Sevilla Commitment states that revenue efforts must be supported by inclusive and effective international tax cooperation that reflects the needs and capacities of all countries, especially developing countries. Member States commit to continue to engage constructively in the negotiations on a United Nations Framework Convention on International Tax Cooperation, encourage support for the process, and promote enhanced tax transparency, cooperation among tax authorities, country-by-country reporting, beneficial ownership transparency, and capacity-building.

Participation in international tax cooperation frameworks varies across country groups. Existing multilateral tax cooperation instruments are primarily implemented through OECD-housed bodies, including the OECD/G20 Inclusive Framework on BEPS and the Global Forum on Transparency and Exchange of Information for Tax Purposes. As of 2025, 131 United Nations Member States and 17 jurisdictions participated in the Inclusive Framework, and 155 Member States and 17 jurisdictions were members of the Global Forum. SIDS and middle-income countries (MICs) show the highest participation across most instruments. Participation among LDCs remains limited, with 11 per cent having signed the Multilateral Competent Authority Agreement on the Common Reporting Standard (CRS), 7 per cent committed to Automatic Exchange of Information (AEOI), and 9 per cent signatories of the Base Erosion and Profit Shifting Multilateral Instrument (BEPS MLI) and the Multilateral Competent Authority Agreement on the Exchange of Country-by-Country Reports (MCAA CbCR). Regarding the Multilateral Convention on Mutual Administrative Assistance in Tax Matters (MAC), 20 per cent of LDCs are signatories. African countries also show limited participation, including 43 per cent in MAC and 30 per cent in BEPS MLI, with lower participation in CRS (20 per cent), AEOI (17 per cent) and 23 per cent in CbCR exchanges.

Negotiations on new international tax instruments are taking place under the United Nations, with the fourth substantive session held in February 2026. The Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee on the United Nations Framework Convention on International Tax Cooperation (UNFCITC) is an open, universal process in which all Member States have the right to take part without preconditions.

Para 29: Combating illicit financial flows

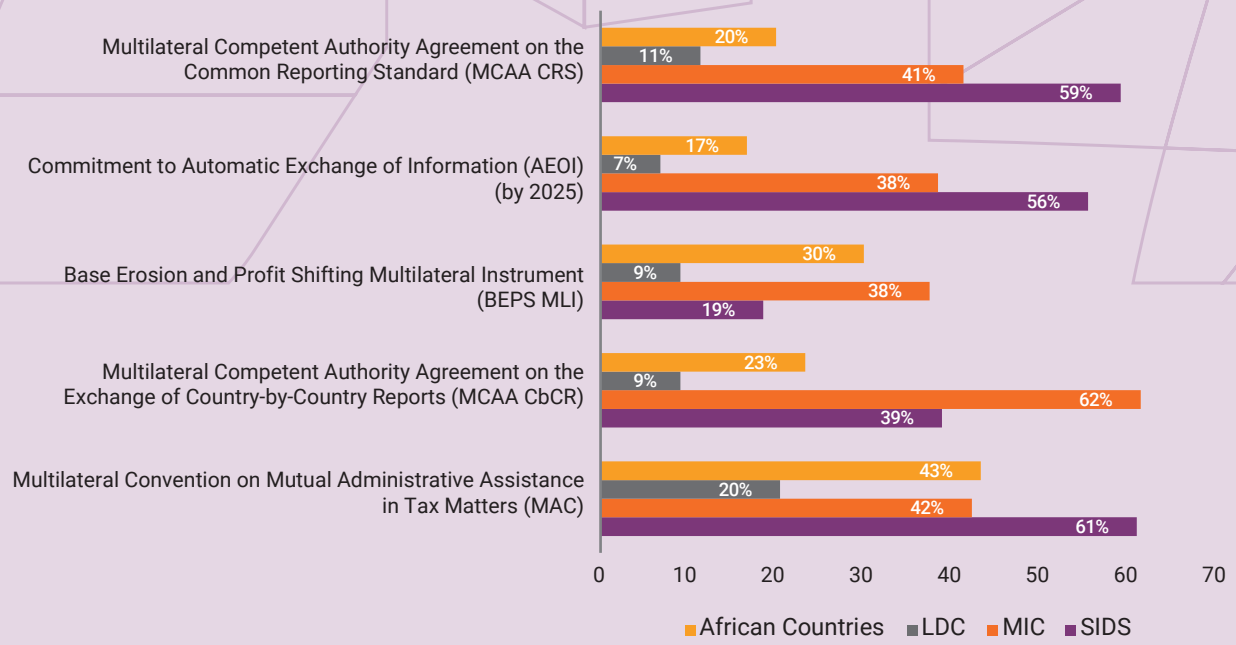
The Sevilla Commitment identifies illicit financial flows (IFFs) as a major constraint on domestic resource mobilization and commits countries to stronger action on financial integrity, anti-corruption, anti-money laundering and international cooperation. The Commitment emphasizes strengthening legal, institutional and technical capacities.

International asset recovery has enabled the return of significant sums over the past 15 years. Between 2010 and 2025, the combined value of assets returned internationally, as recorded in the Stolen Asset Recovery (StAR) database, reached US$6.6 billion, underscoring the role of international cooperation to recover the proceeds of corruption and financial crime. Annual returns have been highly volatile, reflecting the case-based nature of asset recovery. Several years recorded exceptionally large recoveries, including over US$1.1 billion in 2011, while other years saw much more limited returns, for example 2022 (US$6 million). Between 2020 and 2025, 108 countries and jurisdictions responded to one or more of the four questionnaires or submitted information on an ad hoc basis, and the database documented 228 cases involving asset returns.

Figure III.1.7

Participation rates in international tax cooperation instruments, by country group, 2025

(Percentage of countries)

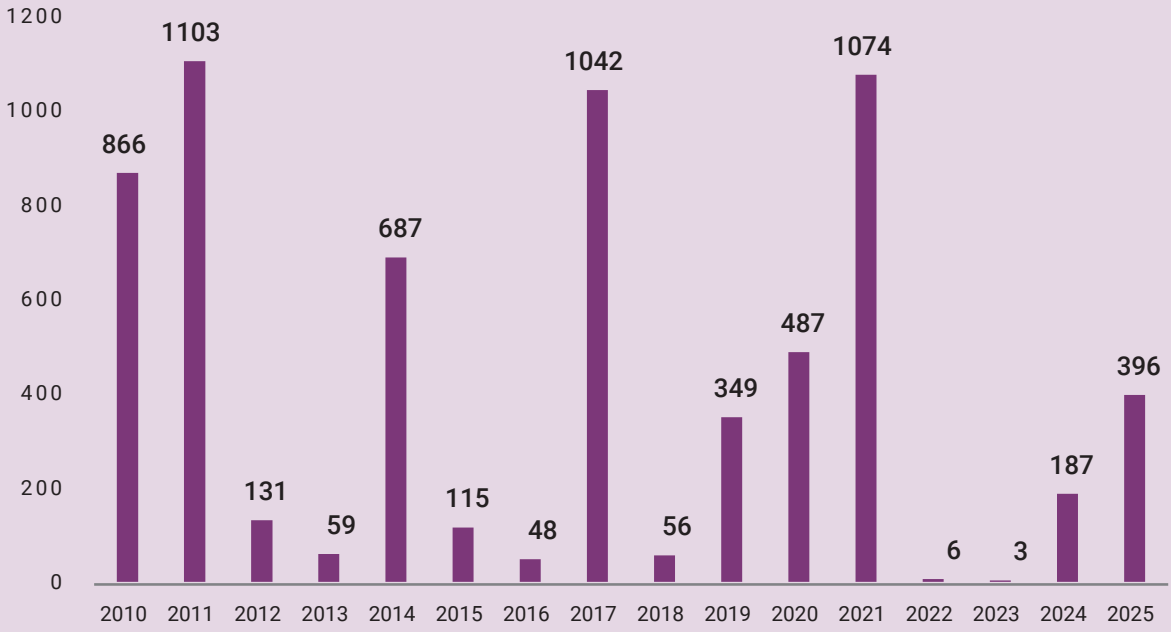


Source: UN DESA elaboration, based on OECD Global Forum Data, December 2025.

Figure III.1.8

Global asset returns, 2010–2025

(Millions of US dollars)



Source: UNODC/World Bank Stolen Asset Recovery (StAR) Initiative.

Para 30: National public development banks

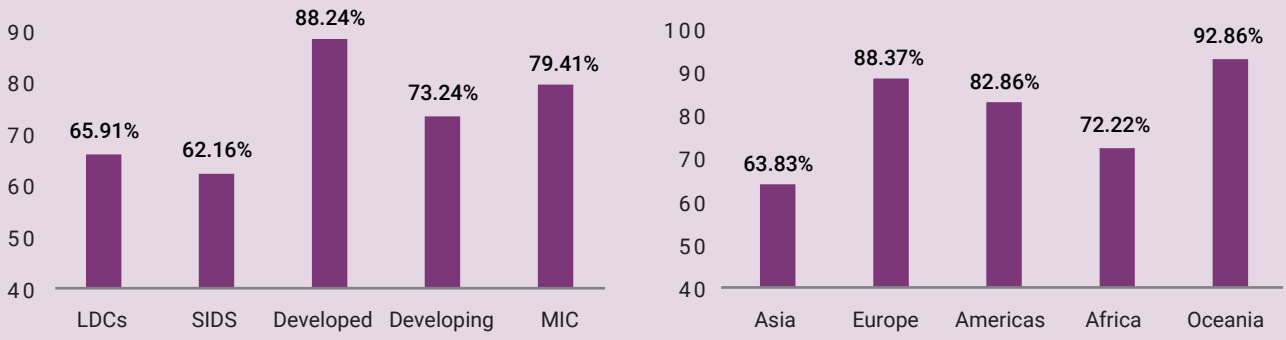
The Sevilla Commitment recognizes national public development banks as crucial institutions for mobilizing resources for sustainable development and addressing financing gaps. It calls for strengthening their mandates, governance, financial sustainability and alignment with national development priorities; enhancing cooperation between national PDBs, MDBs and development partners; and supporting countries without development banks to establish them.

National public development banks (PDBs) are widespread, but their footprint varies greatly. National PDBs are present in a majority of countries across all major country groups. Developed countries show the highest level of institutionalization, with 88 per cent having at least one national PDB. MICs also display high coverage, at 79 per cent, while 73 per cent of developing countries overall have a national PDB. Coverage is lower among LDCs (66 per cent) and SIDS (62 per cent). Regional patterns mirror these disparities. Oceania has the highest coverage, with 93 per cent of countries hosting a national PDB, followed by Europe (88 per cent) and the Americas (83 per cent). Coverage is lower in Africa (72 per cent) and Asia (64 per cent).

Figure III.1.9

Share of countries with at least one public national or subnational development bank, by country group and region, 2025

(Percentage)



Source: UN DESA calculations, based on Public Development Banks and Development Financing Institutions Database (Peking University), 2025.

Domestic and international private business and finance **In Numbers**

Para 32: Promoting investment in sustainable development and building domestic financial and capital markets

In paragraph 32, the Sevilla Commitment calls for efforts to: strengthen domestic private sector and financial market development by promoting enabling environments aligned with national sustainable development objectives; lower borrowing costs and facilitate access to finance, particularly to MSMEs; and reduce the costs of remittances.

Domestic private sector development and enabling environments

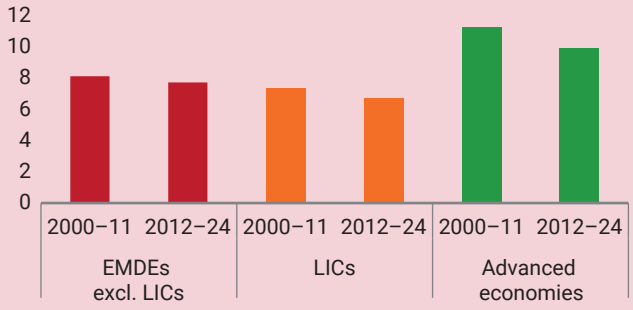
To contribute to sustainable development, policies aimed at fostering private sector development need to be aligned with sustainable development objectives. While some countries have made important progress in promoting enabling environments, much remains to be done to support vibrant and resilient business sectors that contribute to sustainable development, both in terms of the policy environment and physical infrastructures.

National efforts are counterbalanced by slowing global private sector dynamism. Geopolitical uncertainty and significant structural changes, including a shift from greenfield investment in manufacturing sectors towards asset-light, digital business models, have stifled investment pipelines and decreased private investment growth. Accordingly, the growth in private investment has been stagnant or falling in developed countries for decades and is now also falling below 2000–2009 rates in developing countries.

Figure III.2.1

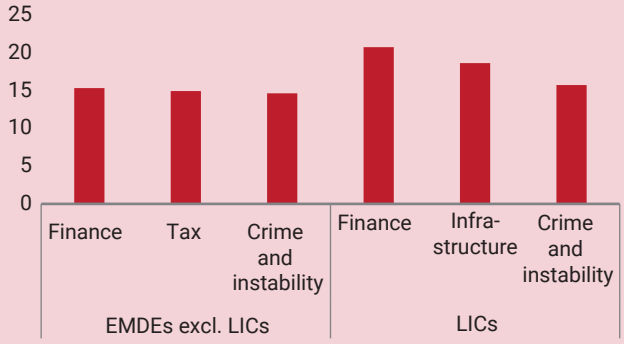
Investment climate

(Index, 0–12, 12=highest)



Biggest obstacles for firms in EMDEs

(Percent)



Source: PRS Group's International Country Risk Guide (ICRG); World Bank.
Note: EMDEs = emerging market and developing economies; LICs = low-income countries. Medians of ICRG's investment profile index. Sample includes 36 advanced economies and 102 EMDEs, of which 18 are LICs.

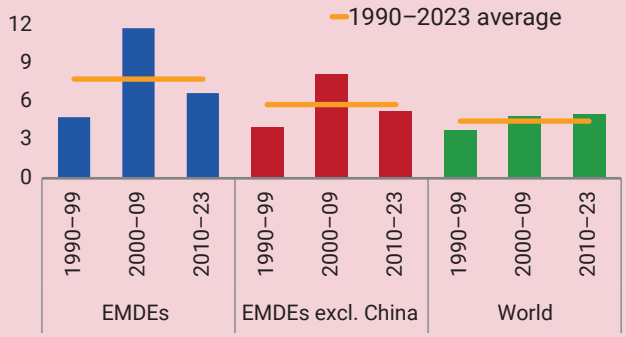
Source: World Bank; World Bank Enterprise Surveys.
Note: EMDEs = emerging market and developing economies; LICs= low-income countries. Average shares of firms identifying specific aspects as their biggest obstacle for doing business, using the latest year available for each country. Based on up to 128 EMDEs, of which 23 are LICs.

To support strong and resilient private sectors that support long-term sustainable development domestically, a gradual development of domestic financial and capital markets is key. Savings rates continue to be subdued and are even falling in many developing countries, making the building of a robust savings base a key policy priority. At the same time, there is scope to scale up new instruments and increase resilience and preparedness against disaster risks, including through more effective risk management and risk-informed financing policies.

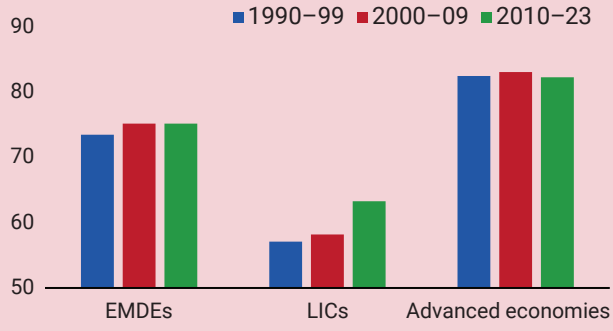
Access to financing, remittances and correspondent banking relationships

Access to finance for micro-, small- and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs) continues to be a challenge, particularly for the so-called

Figure III.2.2
Investment growth
(Percent)



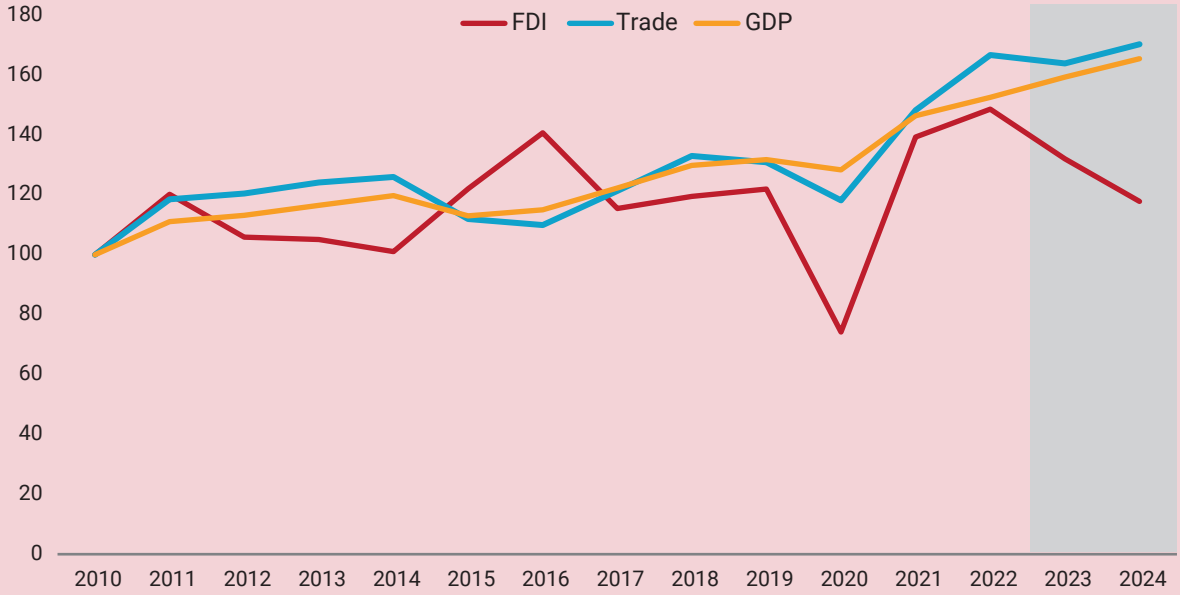
Share of private investment in total investment
(Percent of total)



Source: Haver Analytics; Investment and Capital Stock Dataset (IMF 2021a); WDI (database); World Bank.
Note: EMDEs = emerging market and developing economies. Average annual investment growth calculated using countries' investment in constant international dollars as weights. Sample includes 162 economies, of which 125 are EMDEs.

Source: Haver Analytics; Investment and Capital Stock Dataset (IMF 2021); World Bank.
Note: EMDEs = emerging market and developing economies; LICs = low-income countries. Group median share of private investment in total investment. Sample includes 162 economies, of which 125 are EMDEs.

Figure III.2.3
FDI is losing pace with trade and GDP
(FDI, GDP and trade indexed, 2010 = 100)

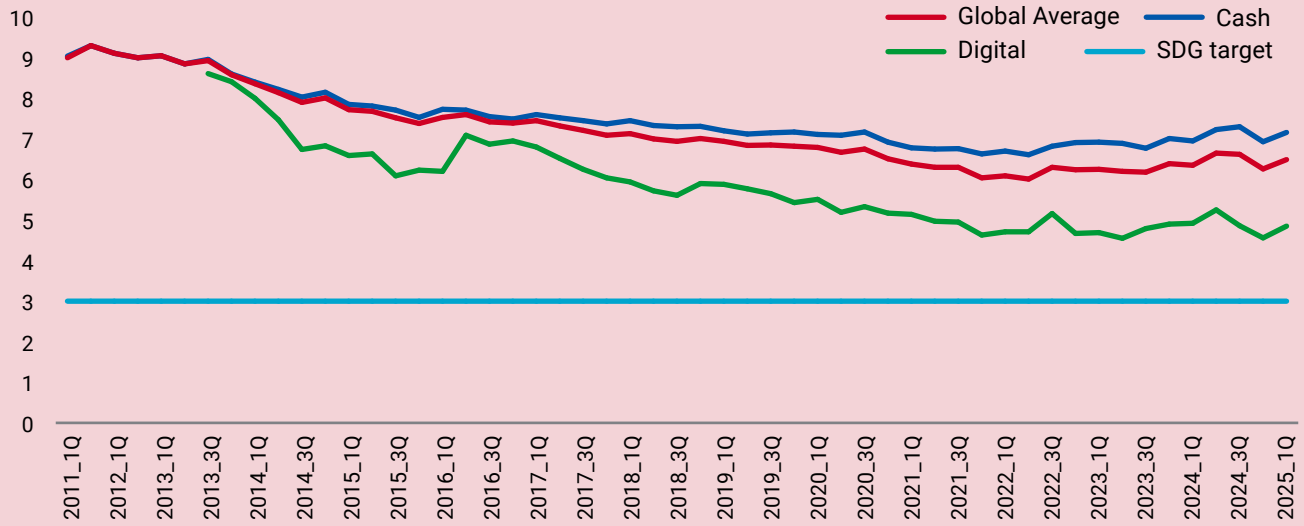


Source: UNCTAD, based on IMF for GDP and trade.
Note: GDP at current prices, trade is value of goods and services exports.

missing middle of companies that lack access to growth capital given their small size but that cannot access microfinance for being too large. Moreover, there are significant gaps between developed and developing countries, with only about 2.6 per cent of GDP loaned to SMEs in some least developed countries (LDCs), compared to 11.9 per cent in the richest countries. The Sevilla Commitment recognizes the urgent need to strengthen the MSME ecosystem, including local and community banks, and to address regulatory impediments, including the unintended consequences of regulation, that can penalize lending to MSMEs given their perceived higher risk profiles.

Efforts to reduce the high cost of transferring remittances continue to fall short. Currently, the average cost of sending remittances is 6.5 per cent of the amount sent and thus significantly higher than the target of 3 per cent enshrined in the Addis Ababa Action Agenda. Factors that continue to keep costs stubbornly high include a lack of competition, fee non-transparency and corridor-specific issues. Moreover, the global decline in correspondent banking relationships continues to threaten access to cross-border payments, trade finance and remittances. Beyond efficiency gains, reducing remittance costs is critical to strengthening the nexus between remittances and sustainable development.

Figure III.2.4
Average global costs of sending remittances
(Percentage)



Source: World Bank Group.

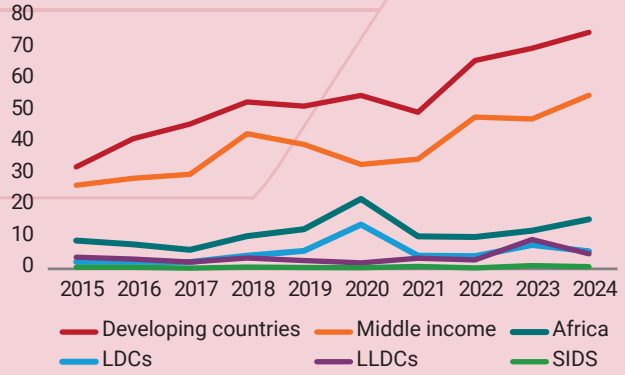
Para 33: Scaling up foreign direct investment and private capital mobilization for sustainable development and maximizing its development impact

In paragraph 33, the Sevilla Commitment calls for promoting FDI in developing countries in alignment with national sustainable development objectives; increasing capacity-building for infrastructure projects and investments in SDG-relevant sectors, particularly energy; and enhancing partnerships for more coordinated assistance and fair risk-sharing. It also calls for enhancing the effectiveness and replicability of different risk-sharing instruments for private capital mobilization, strengthening coordination among actors, and further improving risk and impact data.

Foreign direct investment

FDI has been severely affected by a slowing and fragmenting world economy and structural shifts that favour asset-light and less capital-intensive investments, particularly in response to the shift towards digital business models. FDI has now effectively decoupled from the expansion of GDP and trade, and data suggests a second straight year of contraction of FDI flows. At the same time, FDI to developing countries continues to be highly concentrated, with 10 major emerging markets accounting for approximately 75 per cent of total inflows.

Figure III.2.5
Amounts mobilized from the private sector by official development finance interventions
(Billions of US dollars)



Source: OECD (2026).

Looking ahead, international project finance data indicates a gloomy future. International project finance continued its downward trajectory in 2024, falling by 26 per cent following a steep drop in 2023. While there has been some resilience in ICT sectors, international investment in sectors relevant to the SDGs in developing countries fell by a quarter in 2024. LDCs have been hit particularly hard, experiencing a reduction in projected investment values in SDG-relevant sectors by about 86 per cent.

Private capital mobilization for sustainable development impact

Private capital mobilization has grown over the last decade but remains below expectations and concentrated in specific countries and sectors, largely bypassing countries in special situations. Since the Addis Ababa Action Agenda in 2015, much of the discourse around private capital mobilization has focused on the potential of blended finance. Largely driven by a focus on the volume of private finance mobilized, efforts have been concentrated in middle- income countries and economic infrastructure and services sectors, where the potential for financial returns is higher. Over the period from 2015 to 2024, the amounts of private capital mobilized via blended finance were four times higher in middle-income countries compared to LDCs, landlocked developing countries and small island developing States combined.

A shift in approach is needed, grounded in country ownership and focused on maximizing the development impact of every dollar invested as well as the volume of private finance mobilized. This will require adopting a more holistic approach to private capital mobilization and adapting it based on country circumstances, needs and priorities. The Sevilla Commitment includes actions in support of such a shift, including more effectively designing and using different risk-sharing and blended finance instruments and structures that share risks and rewards fairly; strengthening the catalysing capacity of key blended finance actors; increasing collaboration across the blended finance ecosystem; and improving regulation to fairly value the risk reduction stemming from the use of guarantees (see chapter IV.4, International financial architecture and systemic issues).

Delivering on this shift requires enhancing the availability, quality and accessibility of risk and impact data. Developing countries have often been seen as high risk because historical credit information is limited, leading investors to hold back capital. Recent evidence from the Global Emerging Markets Risk Database (GEMs) shows that actual credit risk in developing countries is lower than perceived when investing alongside multilateral development banks (MDBs) and development finance institutions. The expanded public release of disaggregated GEMs data in October 2025 informed revised credit risk assessments by Standard & Poor's, lowering capital requirements for MDB sovereign operations. Alongside risk data, decision-useful impact data remains a critical gap. Impact measurement frameworks are fragmented, burdensome and often focused on outputs rather than outcomes. Advancing harmonized, outcome-focused impact measurement and embedding it into core investment decisions is essential to mobilize greater institutional capital for blended finance.

Para 34: Aligning business and finance with sustainable development

Paragraph 34 of the Sevilla Commitment addresses the alignment of business and finance with sustainable development and the SDGs, emphasizing market-based approaches first, followed by regulatory measures.

Market alignment: financial incentives for sustainable development impact

In 2025, political and legal backlash, compounded by adverse macroeconomic conditions, weakened momentum behind the sustainable business and finance agenda in some major markets, while progress continued or even accelerated in other geographies. Environmental, social and governance (ESG) equity flows and funds declined in some markets, while sustainability-linked debt reached record levels and renewable energy deployment expanded, albeit largely in developed economies. Impact investing grew to nearly $1.6 trillion in assets under management in 2024—almost three times its 2019 level—but a contraction in new capital deployment is projected for 2025.

Corporate strategies adjusted to this more complex environment through more cautious public sustainability communications, often described as "greenhushing". This was reflected in a decline in explicit "ESG" references across S&P 100 disclosures in favour of broader sustainability language, as well as some companies stepping back from net-zero commitments and high-profile ESG alliances.

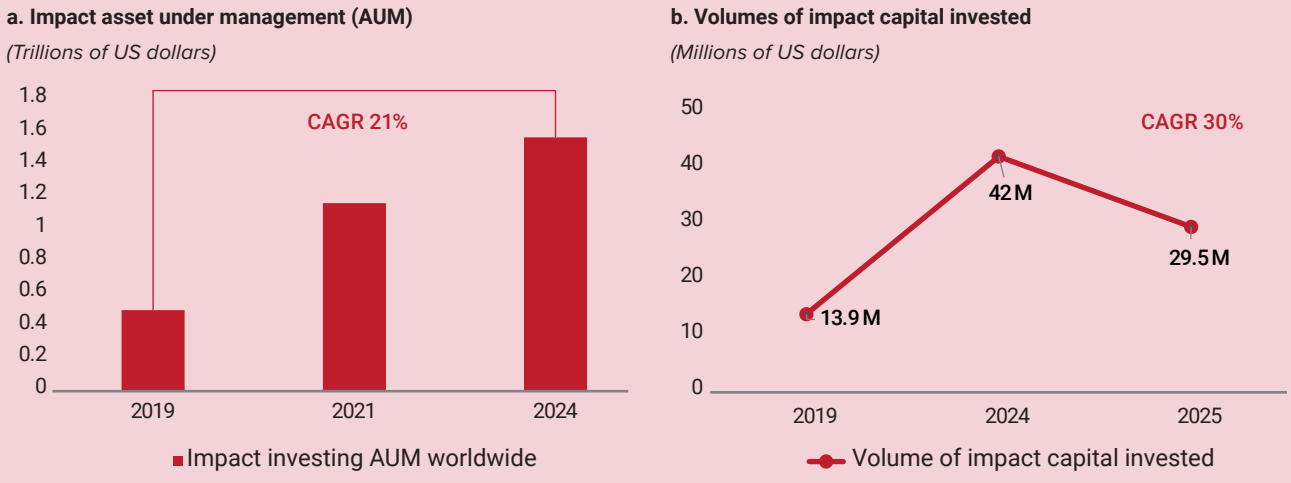
At the same time, this also pointed to a gradual market transition towards deeper operational integration, as firms moved away from public rhetoric and embedded sustainability more quietly into core business activities. Financial institutions and corporates are recentring sustainability around business fundamentals—risk, performance, resilience and long-term returns—supported by growing evidence of financial outperformance. Still, persistent measurement gaps and misaligned incentives continue to slow full alignment with business models, which shows the continued need for standards and market incentives.

Alignment through sustainable business and finance regulation

Sustainable business and finance policy and regulation in 2025 was marked by growing fragmentation—slowing regulatory momentum in some advanced economies—and continued policy activity, mostly in developing economies. Regulatory rollbacks and delays in Europe and the United States weakened policy certainty and diluted earlier ambition, contributing to uneven progress. In the European Union, ongoing recalibration efforts—most notably through the "Omnibus" package—have sought to address competitiveness and compliance burdens concerns but have also introduced additional uncertainty for market participants. Despite regulatory rollbacks, sustainable finance policy continued to advance globally, with momentum increasingly shifting toward Asia and the Pacific and Latin America. More than 300 sustainable business and finance policies have been adopted across 15 leading jurisdictions. As part of that, disclosure regimes and sustainable taxonomies continued to expand their reach across capital markets.

There is a growing emphasis on interoperability and market effectiveness. Evidence increasingly shows that clear and comparable rules—such as taxonomies and mandatory disclosure requirements—can help to mobilize capital, enhance market liquidity and

Figure III.2.6
Impact investing assets and volumes



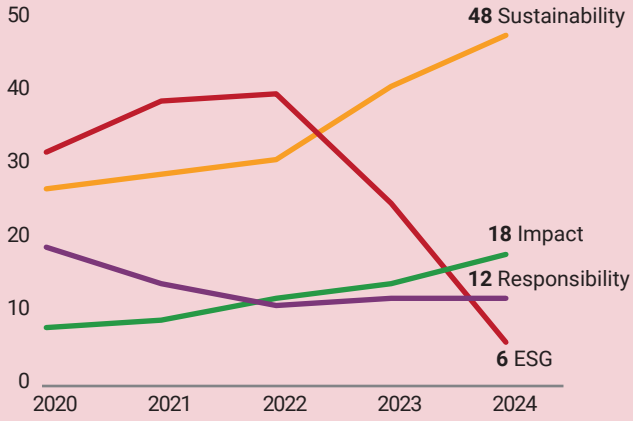
Source: Global Impact Investing Network.
Note: CAGR: compound annual growth rate.

support financial stability. However, their impact depends on policy coherence, implementation capacity and effective cross-jurisdiction interoperability, underscoring the need for balanced frameworks that align sustainability reporting with real-economy outcomes through a whole-of-economy approach.

Figure III.2.7

Frequency of use of sustainability terms in non-financial reports of the S&P 100

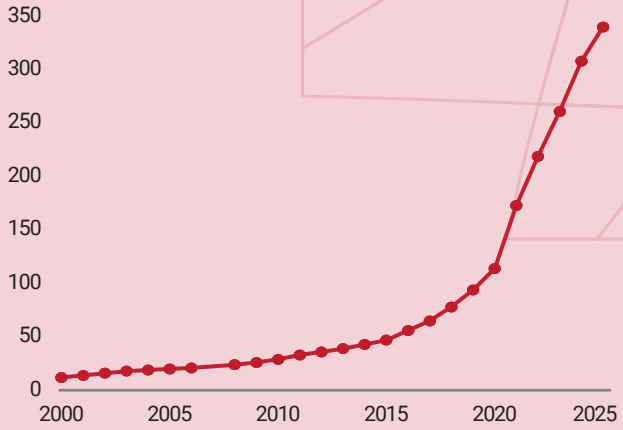
(Percentage)



Source: Les Echos, Fidelity (2025).

Figure III.2.8

Cumulative number of sustainable business and finance policies adopted in 15 major jurisdictions



Source: Principles for Responsible Investment (2026).
Note: The 15 selected jurisdictions are among the largest and most influential capital markets with key regional financial hubs and high-impact emerging economies. Regions and jurisdictions covered include the Americas (Brazil, Canada, Mexico, the United States), APAC (Australia, China, Hong Kong SAR (China), India, Japan, Singapore, Republic of Korea), EMEA (European Union, South Africa, Switzerland, United Kingdom).

International development cooperation and development effectiveness In Numbers

Para 36: Increasing volumes and enhancing allocation of international development cooperation.

The Sevilla Commitment highlights the importance of official development assistance (ODA) and outlines actions to reverse declining trends, fulfil long-standing commitments and increase allocations to developing countries. It also welcomes the efforts and contributions of developing countries and sets forth actions to further strengthen South-South and triangular cooperation.

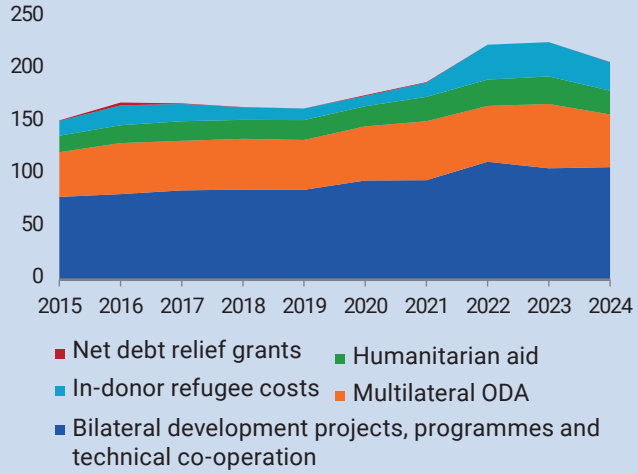
Official development assistance

Amid shifting political priorities, ODA fell by 6 per cent in 2024 to $214.6 billion and is expected to decline further in the near term. In 2024, ODA declined for 23 countries that are members of the Development Assistance Committee (DAC), compared to 2023 levels, against a backdrop of rising demands on ODA on the one hand, and changing political priorities and budgetary constraints across donor countries on the other. Core contributions from DAC countries to multilateral organizations fell by 18 per cent, and spending on humanitarian and in-donor refugee costs decreased by 14 and 17 per cent, respectively, compared to 2023 peak levels. ODA for key priorities for poverty eradication also fell. For example, ODA for food security and nutrition decreased from $67.8 billion in 2023 to $64.9 billion in 2024. ODA in the form of bilateral development projects, programmes and technical cooperation—which is a proxy for development assistance delivered at the country level—remained largely unchanged over 2023 levels.

Figure III.3.1

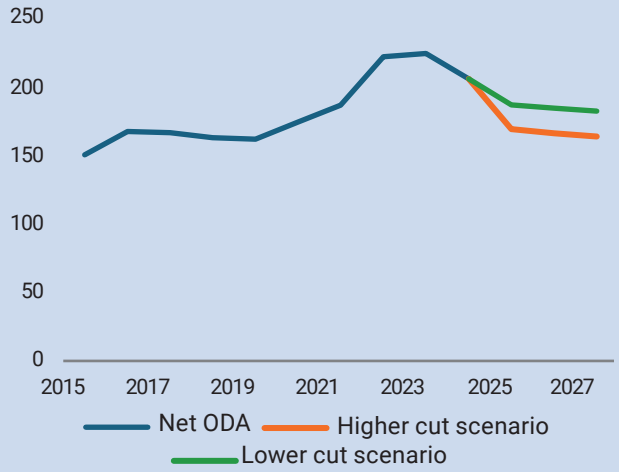
ODA (net flows) from DAC member countries, by component, 2015–2024

(Billions of US dollars, constant 2023 prices)



ODA (net flows) trends and projections, 2015–2027

(Billions of US dollars, constant 2023 prices)

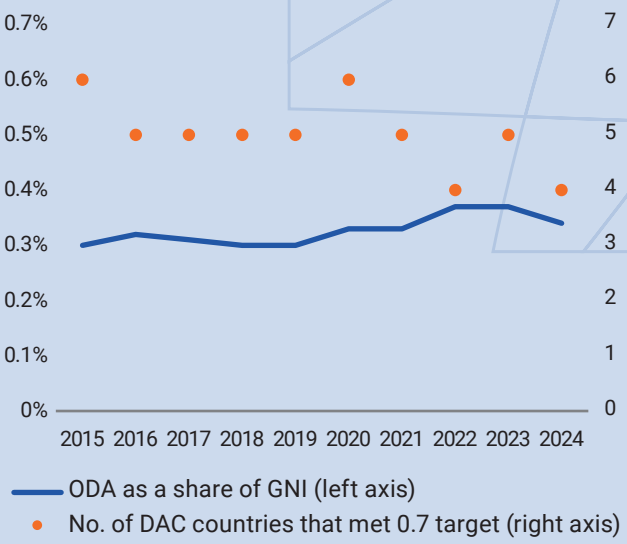


Source: OECD.

According to projections published in July 2025 by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), ODA from DAC countries is projected to decline by a further 10–18 per cent in 2025.[2] Least developed countries (LDCs) are likely to be disproportionately affected by cuts in 2025 as forecasts estimate that bilateral ODA to LDCs could drop by a further 13–25 per cent, following a 3 per cent decline in 2024. With bilateral ODA representing on average 15 per cent of their government revenue, the projected drop could significantly impact on LDC governments' ability to finance their sustainable development.

Only four DAC countries met the 0.7 per cent of gross national income (GNI) target for ODA in 2024, and four DAC countries met the 0.15–0.20 per cent target for ODA to LDCs. In 2024, ODA from DAC countries represented 0.34 per cent of their combined GNI, down from 0.37 per cent in 2023. ODA from DAC countries to LDCs represented 0.07 per cent of their combined GNI, well below the target of 0.15–0.20 per cent, and down from 0.09 per cent in 2023. The Sevilla Commitment calls on countries to fulfil their respective ODA commitments and set concrete and binding time frames to do so. However, with aid budgets increasingly constrained in many donor countries and political narratives shifting away from international cooperation and solidarity towards national interest and defence, progress in this area remains unlikely, at least in the short term.

Figure III.3.2
OECD DAC performance against 0.7 ODA target, 2015–2024
(Percentage of GNI)



Source: OECD.

South-South and triangular cooperation

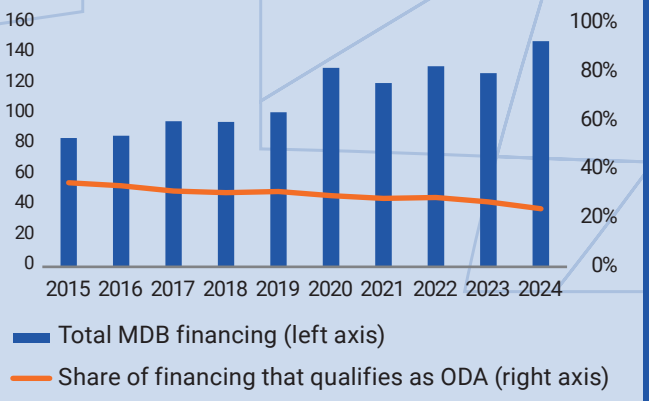
Better data on South-South and triangular cooperation is needed to strengthen their effectiveness, impact and recognition in the broader development cooperation landscape. Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) indicator 17.3.1 measures additional financial resources mobilized for developing countries from multiple sources, including South-South cooperation.[3] In 2025, the first data on South-South cooperation was reported using the voluntary UN Framework to Measure South-South Cooperation. The Framework, supported by United Nations Trade and Development (UNCTAD) under a mandate by the UN Statistical Commission, provides an instrument for the collection of South-South cooperation flows and their reporting to SDG 17.3.1. By capturing all forms of South-South cooperation (financial support, non-financial support that can be monetized, and non-monetized non-financial support), the Framework allows for new insights about gross receipts of official sustainable development grants provided as South-South cooperation between developing countries, and demonstrates the strong role of in-kind support (see chapter IV.5 on data, monitoring and follow-up). The International Forum on Total Official Support for Sustainable Development, which reports data on North-South flows to SDG 17.3.1, also collects data on all official resources flowing into developing countries for their sustainable development. In 2024, cross-border flows to developing countries totalled $364 billion. Of this, South-South cooperation from 16 reporting countries totalled $667 million and triangular cooperation from 25 providers amounted to $160 million.

Para 37: Increasing and optimizing lending by MDBs, ensuring their effectiveness and efficiency, and strengthening the system of public development banks.

The Sevilla Commitment encourages multilateral development banks (MDBs) to further increase and optimize their annual lending capacity with the view to potentially tripling it. It also calls for improved quality of lending and strengthening the ability of MDBs and other public development banks to work better as a system in accordance with country-led development priorities and strategies.

Ongoing reform efforts across MDBs are unlocking additional financing capacity, but there is scope to further enhance and optimize lending terms. Disbursements by MDBs almost doubled in the last decade, reaching $148 billion in 2024 as institutions expanded long-term financing to developing countries and provided essential countercyclical support in response to successive global shocks. Building on the Group of Twenty (G20) Capital Adequacy Framework Review and the G20 Roadmap towards better, bigger and more effective MDBs, MDBs are increasingly working as a system under the leadership of the Heads of MDBs Group and have advanced a broad reform agenda under their own institutional mandates. In 2025, MDBs reported that the full implementation of agreed reform measures could generate more than $600 billion in new lending capacity. These reforms aim to catalyse financing at scale, streamline operations to deliver faster, more impactful results and deepen collaboration across the multilateral system in support of countries' development efforts. While overall volumes are on the rise, the share of MDB financing that qualifies as ODA has declined, from 34 per cent in 2015 to 23 per cent in 2024, reflecting a growing use of less concessional and blended instruments. As part of ongoing reforms, there has also been progress in strengthening collaboration across MDBs and other public development banks to work better as a system, including through mutual reliance agreements that aim to streamline project preparation and processing, and in aligning with developing countries' priorities through participation in country platforms and regional initiatives.[4]

Figure III.3.3
Trends in MDB financing, 2015–2024
(Billions of US dollars, constant 2023 prices)



Source: OECD.
Note: Official financing flows (OFF) for the following MBDs: African Development Bank, Asian Development Bank, Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank, Council of Europe Development Bank, Development Bank of Latin America and the Caribbean, European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, European Investment Bank, Inter-American Development Bank, Islamic Development Bank, World Bank Group.

Para 38: Improving development cooperation and access to development finance, including concessional finance.

The Sevilla Commitment reiterates the need to improve access to concessional finance for developing countries, and to consider complementary measures of progress beyond GDP to inform development cooperation policies and practices. It also commits Member States to support graduating countries to avoid disruptions in development trajectories.

While allocation frameworks increasingly consider factors beyond income, access to concessional finance remains uneven across different country groupings. For most developing countries, particularly LDCs and those in conflict and post-conflict situations, concessional resources remain the primary channel for affordable long-term finance, with grants or highly concessional loans typically reserved for countries assessed to be in, or at high risk of, debt distress. Access to such concessional finance from MDBs is broadly governed by a common set of principles, centred on income levels, creditworthiness and debt sustainability, but applied with varying emphasis across institutions.[5] While MDBs increasingly incorporate vulnerability factors, differences in eligibility thresholds and allocation methodologies across development partners can lead to uneven access across countries and regions. In this regard, and in line with calls in the Sevilla Commitment, two initiatives were launched under the Sevilla Platform for Action: one to better integrate multidimensional vulnerability in the global financial architecture (led by the 4P Coalition), and another to review ODA eligibility criteria and strengthen the process for graduation from the DAC list of ODA recipients by aligning timelines with economic preparedness and building long-term development finance pathways (led by OECD).

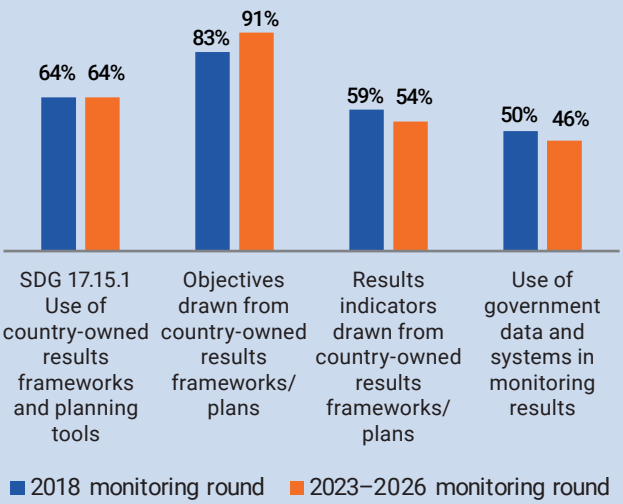
Para 39: Strengthening the effectiveness of development cooperation in all its forms, including reducing fragmentation and enhancing impact.

The Sevilla Commitment elevates country ownership and leadership by developing countries and policy coherence by development partners, as core principles of effective development cooperation. It also outlines specific actions to translate these principles into practice and reduce fragmentation.

There is scope to strengthen development partners' alignment with country plans and results frameworks, increase the use of national systems, and improve the timeliness and predictability of development cooperation information. In support of country ownership and leadership, the Sevilla Commitment calls upon development partners to respond to country plans and strategies, provide stable and predictable funding and strengthen existing national systems. The latest data on SDG 17.15.1 shows that development partners use country-owned results frameworks and planning tools in fewer than two out of three interventions.[6] The use of developing countries' government data and monitoring systems by development partners remains particularly low.[7] According to the 2025 Development Cooperation Forum Survey, of the 75 participating developing countries, 78 per cent operate a development cooperation information system, but persistent information gaps undermine effective alignment. Forty-two per cent of respondent countries reported receiving partially complete information from development partners or none at all, and 30 per cent reported that development partners sometimes or never provide timely information. Analysis of data published to the International Aid Transparency Initiative indicates that forward-looking predictability of development cooperation remains limited, particularly over the medium term, with only 15 per cent of development partners publishing budget information extending three years ahead (covering the period from 2026 to 2028). Improving the availability of real-time data, scenarios and forecasting on development cooperation is one of the topics that DAC is tackling as part of the comprehensive review process announced in Sevilla.

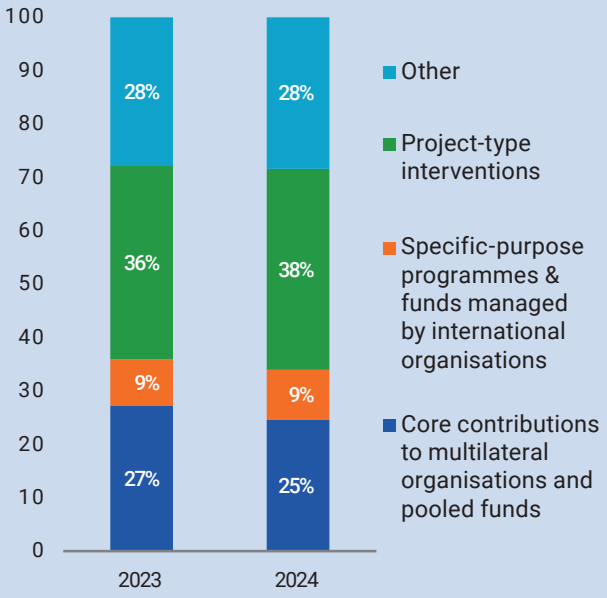
Amid growing fragmentation in the development cooperation ecosystem, the share of bilateral ODA to core contributions to multilateral organizations and pooled funds declined in 2024. Over the past two decades, the number of donor agencies more than doubled, increasing from 226 in 2000 to 608 in 2023, reflecting the emergence of new donors

Figure III.3.4
Use of country-owned results frameworks and planning tools by providers of development cooperation
(Percentage of development partners' interventions)



Source: OECD and UNDP 2026 (forthcoming).

Figure III.3.5
Core contributions to multilaterals and pooled funds in total ODA from DAC countries, 2023–2024
(Percentage of bilateral ODA)

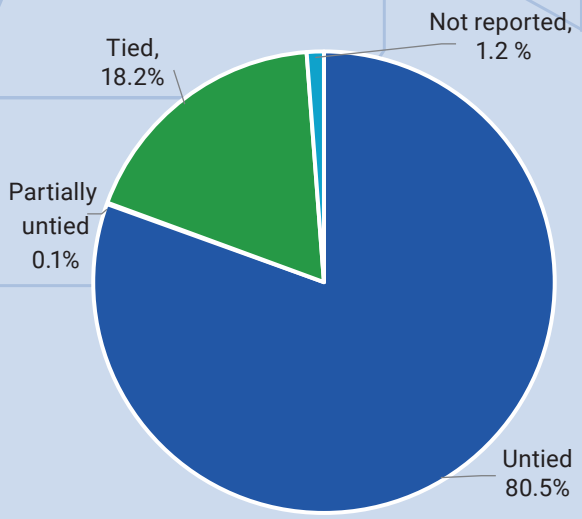


Source: OECD.
Note: "Other" includes budget support, experts and other technical assistance, other debt relief, in-donor expenditures, administrative costs.

Figure III.3.6

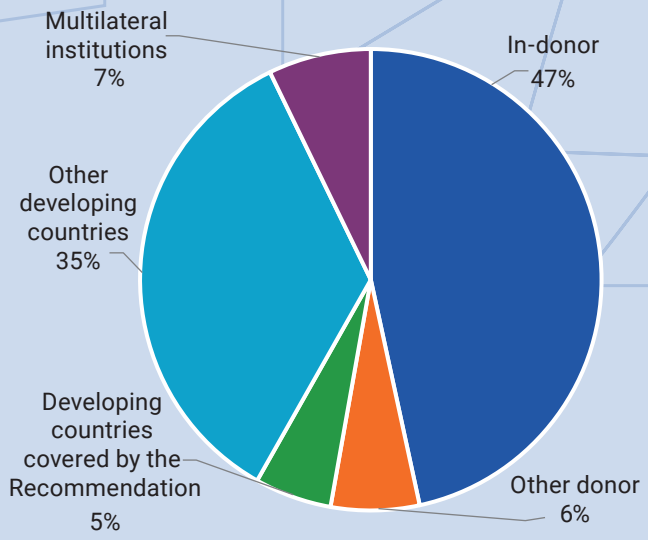
Tying status of bilateral ODA, 2024

(Percentage of bilateral ODA)



Supplier origin of untied ODA contracts, 2023

(Percentage of untied contracts' value)



Source: OECD.

and the creation of new multilateral institutions and funds. The rising number of vertical funds in particular has increased financial flows to specific sectors and thematic areas but has also contributed to growing fragmentation and practical coordination challenges at the country level, including increased transaction costs for accessing financing.[8] In this context, the Sevilla Commitment calls for prioritizing core contributions to multilateral institutions and pooled funds. In 2024, the share of DAC countries' ODA going to specific projects and specific-purpose programmes and funds was almost double the share of ODA provided as core contributions to multilateral organizations and pooled funds (figure III.3.5). The final G20 Leaders' Declaration in South Africa in November 2025 also shows commitment to ensure coordination among stakeholders to foster interoperability among MDBs, vertical funds and national development banks.

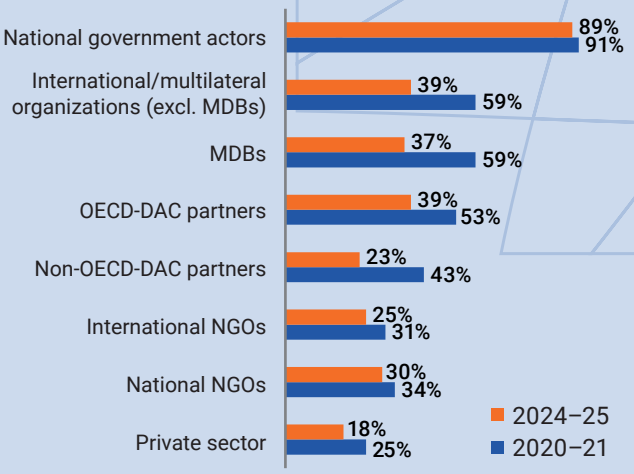
Progress on policy coherence, including untying aid, is mixed. Based on the available data reported to SDG 17.14.1—which measures policy coherence for sustainable development—development partners often do not have all the required mechanisms in place to enhance policy coherence.[9] For example, out of 13 DAC countries for which data is reported under the SDG indicator, most scored above 75 per cent, but only 3 scored above 90 per cent—demonstrating scope for further improvement. Tied aid, which can undermine the coherence of development policies, has decreased as a share of total bilateral ODA from DAC members from 20 per cent in 2023 to 18.2 per cent in 2024.[10] While the majority of ODA remains untied, in practice, almost half of the total value of untied contracts funded by DAC members was awarded to suppliers from their countries, and only 40 per cent to suppliers from developing countries (figure III.3.6). In January 2026, following a comprehensive review, DAC updated its Recommendation on Untying ODA to better reflect current realities and respond to developing countries' needs. The revision introduces several enhancements, including the integration of sustainable procurement principles, a stronger emphasis on locally led development, and more transparent and comprehensive reporting practices.

Para 40: Strengthening development cooperation architectures at both national and global levels.

At the national level, the Sevilla Commitment emphasizes country-led and nationally owned sustainable development strategies as a basis for engaging with all development partners, and inclusive, country-led national coordination platforms for an efficient and effective division of labour among relevant actors. At the global level, it supports the United Nations in playing a central and coordinating role in international development cooperation and calls for a revitalized Development Cooperation Forum.

Developing countries are putting in place development plans and strategies, but there remains scope to strengthen the participation of development partners in country-led coordination platforms. Since 2015, developing countries have been advancing efforts to put in place strategies for national development and related financing frameworks, including through integrated national financing frameworks. Most national development plans include development priorities, targets and results indicators, with sector and subnational strategies closely aligned with these overarching plans. About two thirds of these plans include information on public expenditure decisions or a budget.[11] According to the 2025 Development Cooperation Forum Survey, of the 75 participating developing countries, around two thirds currently have a national policy guiding development cooperation, and 63 per cent have centralized, country-led platforms in place to engage development partners and other stakeholders. However, there is scope to strengthen the involvement of different actors in such coordination platforms, as levels of participation have been decreasing among respondent countries.[12]

Figure III.3.7
Participation of different actors in country coordination platforms/ forums
(Percentage of respondent countries)



Source: Development Cooperation Survey Study 2025.

The Sevilla Commitment strengthens the mandate of the Development Cooperation Forum to foster synergies, deepen dialogue and enhance the impact of development cooperation. The Sevilla Commitment calls for fostering synergies across development cooperation platforms and forums, including through a revitalized Development Cooperation Forum that deepens exchanges among all relevant actors, enhances the coherence, effectiveness, accountability and impact of development cooperation, and gives policy guidance and recommendations based on country experiences. The revitalized Development Cooperation Forum will take into account the work of other existing relevant platforms, including the Global Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation; OECD DAC, especially in relation to the ongoing review process referenced in the Sevilla Commitment; the International Forum on Total Official Support for Sustainable Development; and the International Aid Transparency Initiative. In addition, the Development Cooperation Forum could provide a space for updates and exchanges on the several initiatives that have emerged over the course of 2025 aimed at reimagining development cooperation—some of which were launched under the Sevilla Platform for Action.[13] Preparations for the 2027 Development Cooperation Forum will focus on strengthening it as a platform that: advances the effectiveness and impact of development cooperation from a developing country perspective; enhances accountability for quality and alignment with national priorities; amplifies South-South and triangular approaches and learning; and addresses systemic issues, such as allocation criteria, conditionality and transaction costs.

Para 41: Protecting and preserving ecosystems.

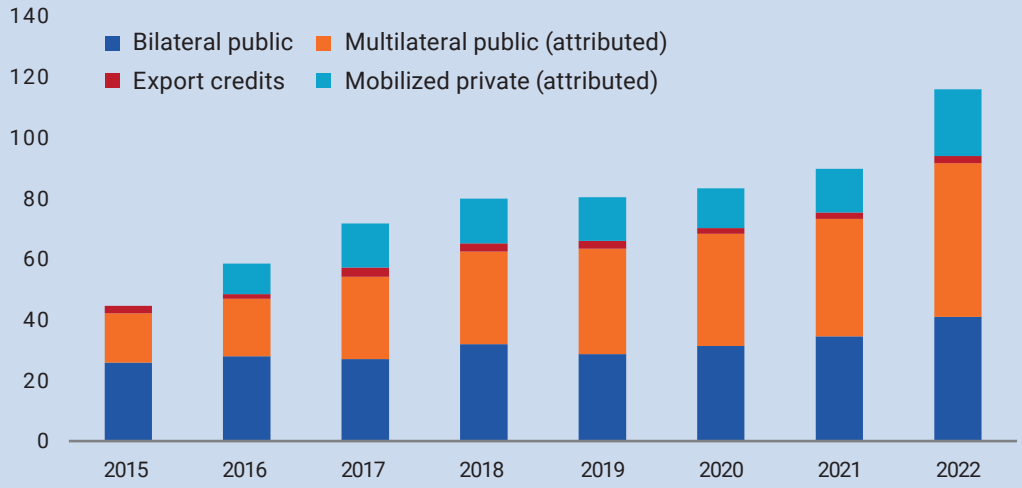
The Sevilla Commitment calls for financing for climate, biodiversity, combating desertification and accelerating ocean action, in line with respective conventions and frameworks.

There is a need to significantly scale up climate finance to meet internationally agreed goals and strengthen climate finance data to ensure adequate tracking of progress towards the goals. Climate finance provided and mobilized by developed countries for developing countries reached $115.9 billion in 2022, exceeding for the first time the $100 billion target agreed at COP21 (in 2015), two years later than the original 2020 target. The amount was driven by large increases in multilateral public finance (of 31 per cent) and in private finance mobilized (of 52 per cent) from 2021 to 2022 (figure III.3.8). At COP29 (in 2024), Parties agreed on the New Collective Quantified Goal on climate finance. This includes a call on all actors to work together to enable the scaling up of financing to developing countries to at least $1.3 trillion per year by 2035, and sets a new goal, with developed countries taking the lead in providing and mobilizing at least $300 billion per year for developing countries by 2035. Meeting these goals will require accelerated action in the provision and mobilization of climate finance and

stronger data foundations—including on adaptation finance, nature-related finance and the integration of climate spending in national budgets—to monitor broader flows and ensure adequate tracking of progress.[14] The Baku to Belém Roadmap published in advance of COP30 charted a pathway to scale up climate finance and deliver on the decision adopted at COP29 through a series of dedicated actions by all actors working together in the short and medium term to strengthen leadership and accountability.[15]

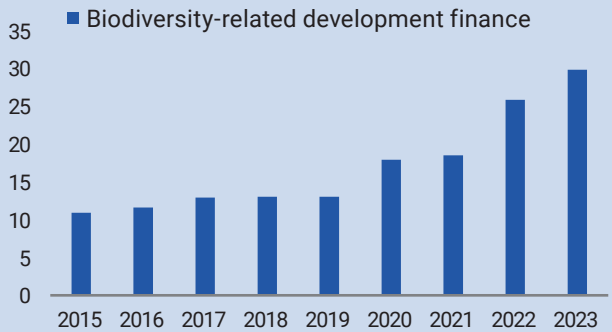
Development finance for preserving biodiversity, for combating desertification, land degradation and drought, and for the sustainable ocean economy is not keeping pace with needs. The Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework adopted in 2022 includes a target (target 19a) of at least $200 billion per year from all sources by 2030, including at least $20 billion from international public resources by 2025 and $30 billion by 2030. Overall biodiversity-related development finance from DAC members, South-South providers, multilateral institutions, private philanthropy and private finance mobilized by official development interventions reached $29.8 billion in 2023 (figure III.3.9). DAC members and multilateral institutions were the largest providers, contributing $13.9 billion and $13.6 billion, respectively.[16] ODA spent on combating desertification, land degradation and drought, and on the sustainable ocean economy totalled $3.9 billion and $4.29 billion, respectively, in 2023, with ODA for the sustainable ocean economy more than quadrupling from 2015 to 2023 (figure III.3.9).

Figure III.3.8
Climate finance provided and mobilized by developed countries for developing countries, 2015–2022
(Billions of US dollars)

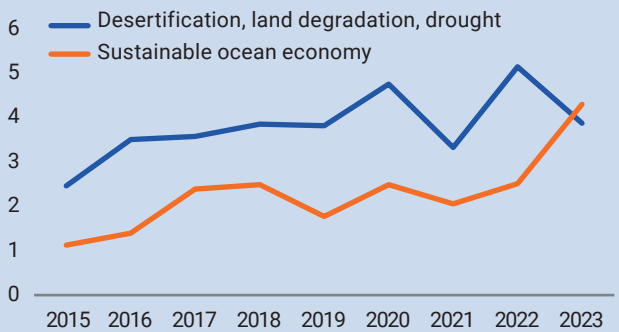


Source: OECD.

Figure III.3.9
Development finance for biodiversity from all sources, 2015–2023
(Billions of US dollars)



ODA for combating desertification, land degradation and drought, and for sustainable ocean economy, 2015–2023
(Billions of US dollars, constant 2023 prices)



Source: OECD.
Note: ODA flows for biodiversity, combating desertification, land degradation and drought and for the sustainable ocean economy might overlap.

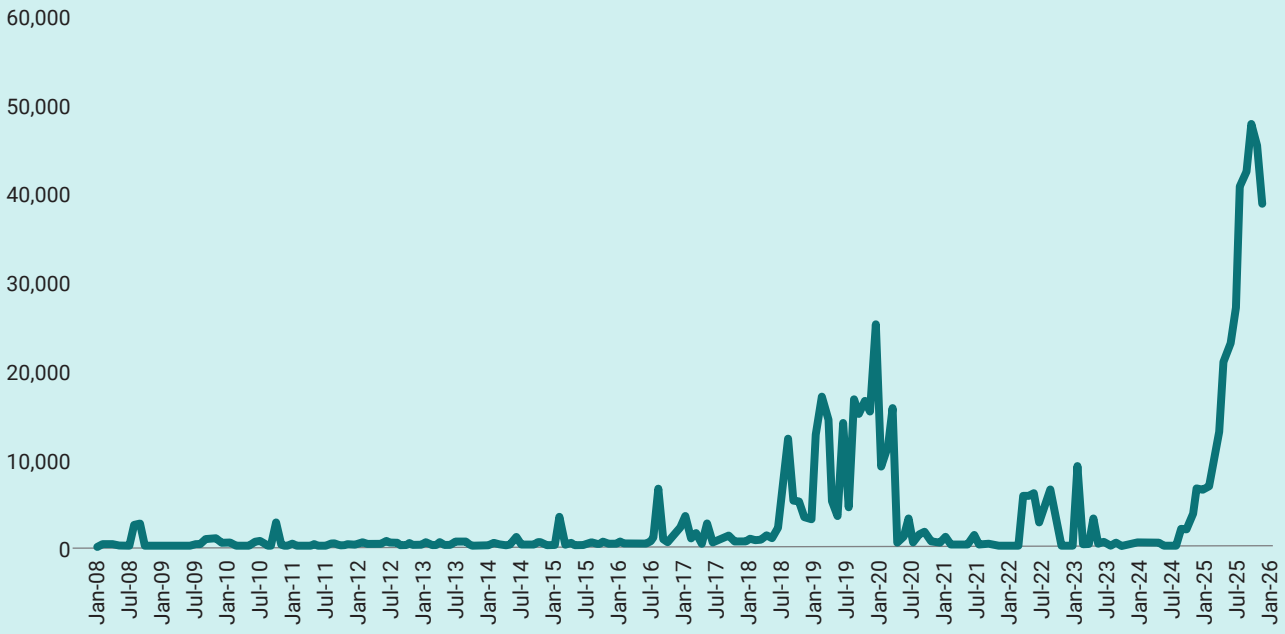
International trade as an engine for development **In Numbers**

Paragraph 43: Preserve the multilateral trading system as a key driver of economic growth and sustainable development

In paragraph 43, the Sevilla Commitment calls for the preservation of the multilateral trading system as a key driver of economic growth and sustainable development with the World Trade Organization (WTO) at its core. It also calls for actions on regional trade agreements, policy space, investment agreements and measures which restrict or distort trade.

A rise in geopolitical tensions and new trade-restrictive measures threaten the potential of trade to act as an enabler of sustainable development. Trade restrictions fuelled by geopolitical fragmentation have sharply increased in the last few years. The uncertainty created by new trade measures undermines the rules-based multilateral trade system built with the WTO at its core.[17] Developing countries that already have limited trading capacities are the most vulnerable in trade wars and rising protectionism. The multilateral system also protects smaller economies from power asymmetries. The WTO remains the only forum where countries are able to negotiate trade matters on an equal footing regardless of their size.

Figure III.4.1
World Trade Uncertainty Index, 2008–2026
(Index, GDP weighted average)

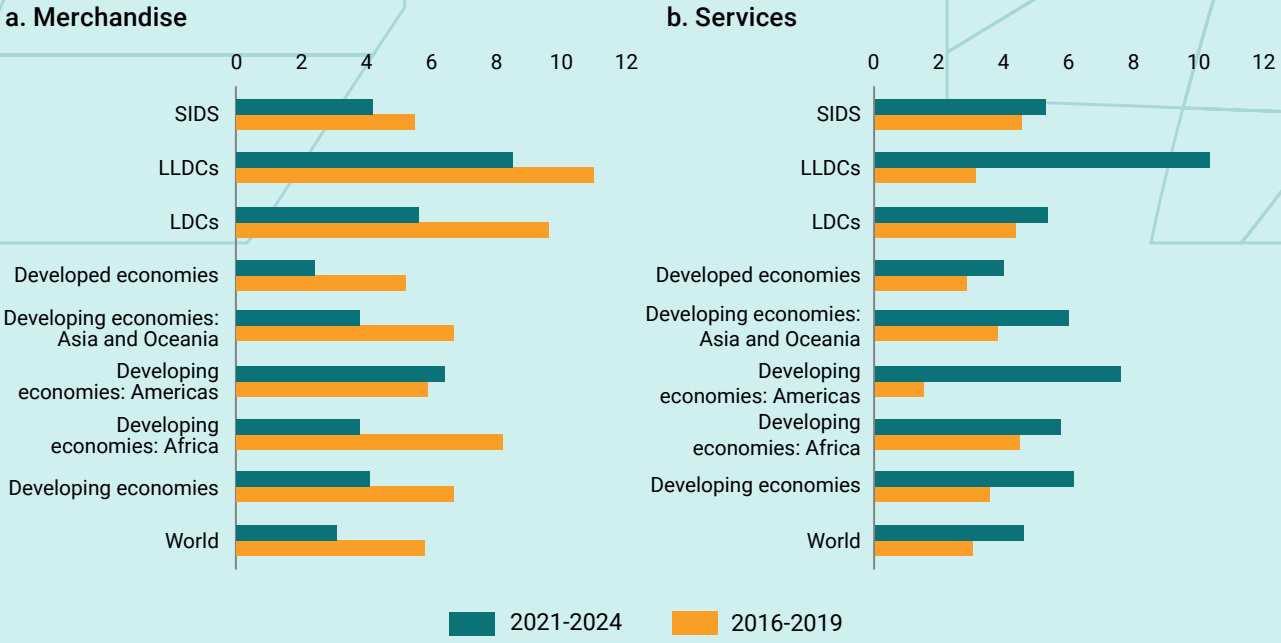


Source: World Uncertainty Index.

Figure III.4.2

Average export growth rate before and after the COVID-19 pandemic, by development status, merchandise and services

(Percentage)

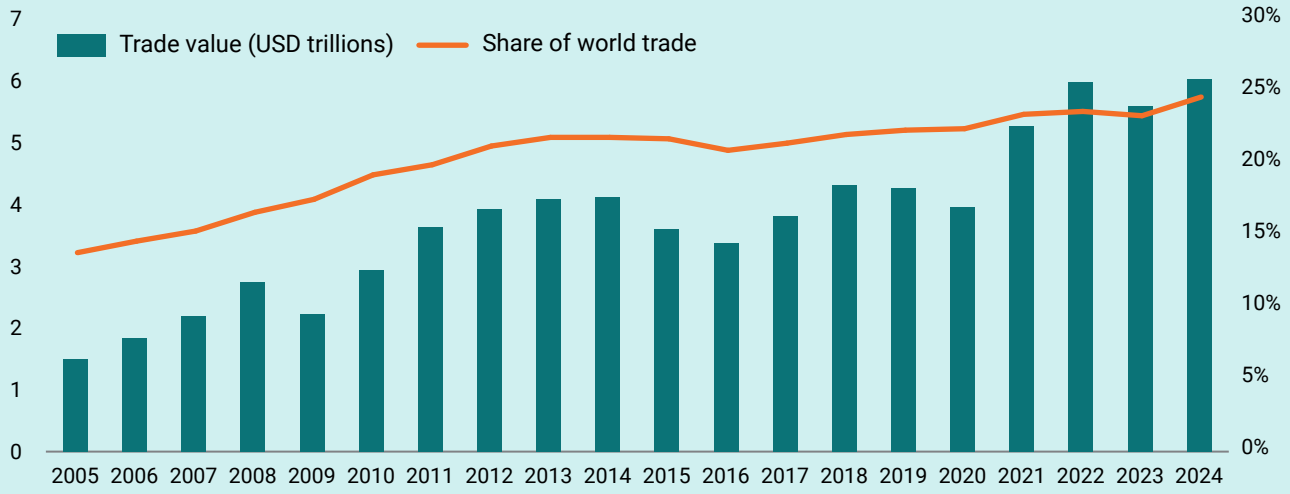


Source: UNCTAD calculations based on UNCTADStat.

Figure III.4.3

South-South Merchandise Trade, 2005–2024

(Trillion of US dollars, percentage)



Source: UNCTAD calculations based on UNCTADStat.

While trade has played an important role as an engine for development for decades, merchandise trade dynamism slowed in most regions even prior to the most recent crises. Moreover, many developing countries, particularly least developed countries (LDCs), have been constrained by limited capacities to trade and LDCs' integration into global value chains has remained weak. LDCs are also the least prepared to benefit from the opportunities offered by the rapid rise in South-South trade and the ongoing digital transformation, which are profoundly reshaping global trading and production patterns, offering new opportunities in areas such as trade in services.

The rise in South-South trade reflects the shift in trading patterns. The value of South-South trade increased more than fourfold from 2005 to 2024.

South-South trade exhibits a high technology intensity, with high- and medium-technology manufactured products together accounting for 50 per cent of South-South trade, suggesting its potential to foster economic diversification. As a result, developing country markets now account for a much larger share of developing country exports—almost 60 per cent in 2024.[18] This increase coincides with a growing number of regional and interregional trade agreements, although once again with large disparities between regions. In this regard, the operationalization of the Agreement Establishing the African Continental Free Trade Area, currently ratified by 49 countries, will be instrumental in accelerating the free movement of goods on the African continent and increasing African regional economic integration.

Paragraph 44: Strengthen trade capacities of developing countries

In paragraph 44, the Sevilla Commitment calls for efforts to strengthen the trade capacities of developing countries and their ability to integrate into regional and global value chains in a very challenging global context, including through aid for trade and support for trade-related infrastructure and digitalization.

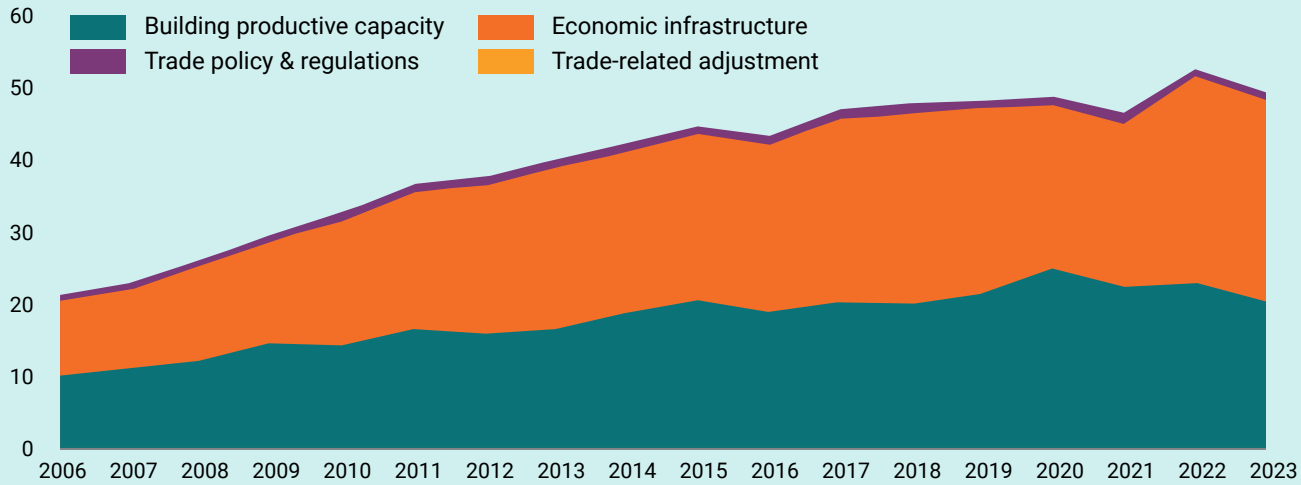
Additional support for trade-related infrastructure and trade facilitation and connectivity is critical, but aid for trade has stagnated in recent years. Investing in corridor infrastructure and services, underpinned by hard infrastructure such as roads, railways, ports and an enabling policy environment, is critical to trade integration, particularly for landlocked developing countries (LLDCs) and small island developing States (SIDS). Transit transport corridors are crucially important for LLDCs that lack direct access to seaports, and can lay the foundations for deeper economic integration. Similarly, investment in and coordination of monitoring, reporting and verifying compliance to meet the growing demand for transparency is needed. Nevertheless, while Aid for Trade annual disbursements almost doubled between 2006 and 2023, levels have stagnated in recent years and even registered a decline in volumes and as a share of total official development assistance (ODA) between 2022 and 2023.[19]

Digital transformation is having a profound effect on international trade, with services delivery becoming increasingly digitalized. Between 2014 and 2024, global exports of digitally deliverable services (DDS) grew at 6.8 per cent annually, faster than total services exports. The value of global DDS exports reached its highest level at US$4.9 trillion in 2024, representing 56 per cent of global services exports.[20] However, trade in DDS is marked by strong asymmetries across countries. In 2024, developed economies and developing economies in Asia accounted for

Figure III.4.4

Aid for Trade data on ODA for Trade Infrastructure and Productive Capacity Building, 2006–2023

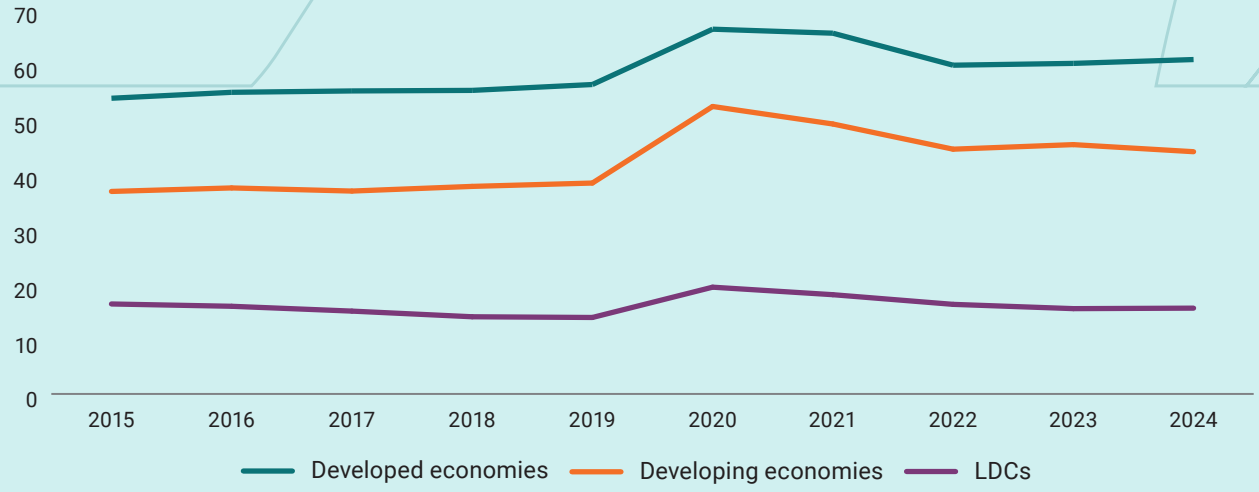
(Billion of US dollars, 2023 constant prices)



Source: OECD and WTO.

97 per cent of global exports of DDS. In the same year, the share of LDCs in exports of global DDS was 0.16 per cent. In 2024, DDS represented 61 per cent of services exports in developed economies but only 16 per cent of those in LDCs, underscoring the huge digital divide.[21]

Figure III.4.5
Digitally deliverable services as share of services exports, by development grouping, 2015–2024
(Percentage)



Source: UNCTAD calculations based on UNCTADStat.

Paragraph 45: Boost trade in least developed countries

In paragraph 45, the Sevilla Commitment calls for actions to boost trade in LDCs, many of which remain marginalized and dependent on natural resources and primary commodity exports. Actions called for include strengthening preferential market access for LDCs, supporting LDCs to industrialize, diversify exports and develop service exports, and enhancing capacity-building.

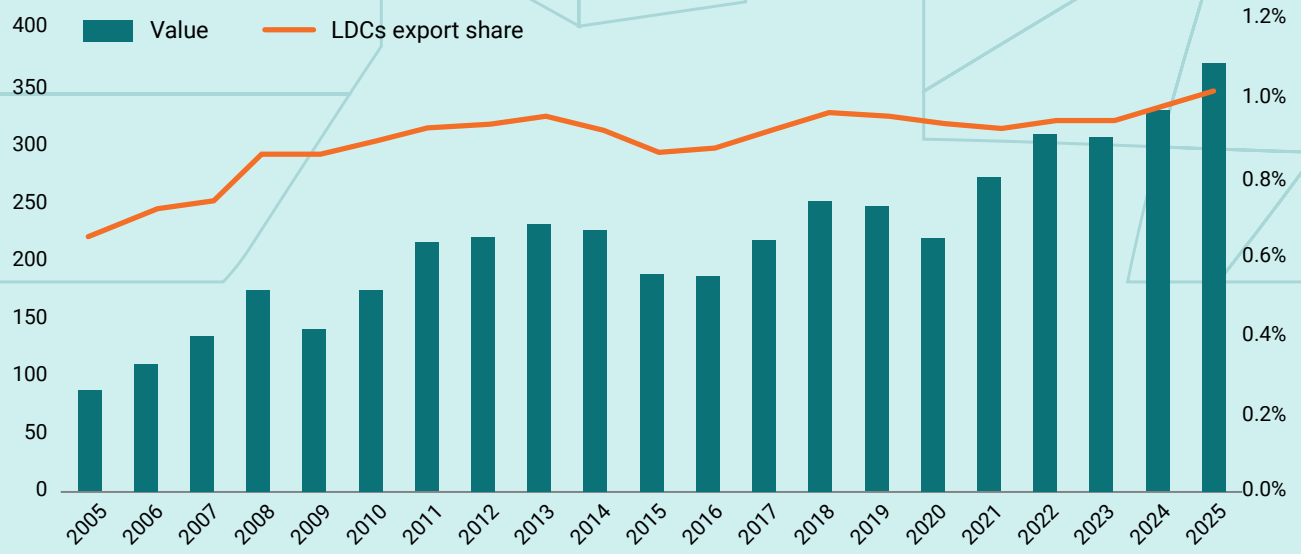
The share of LDCs in world exports of goods and services remains at less than 1 per cent.[22] Export structures are highly concentrated and dominated by primary commodities. For many LDCs, export structures are dominated by primary commodities such as minerals, agricultural raw materials and low value added natural resource products, leaving them exposed to price volatility and external shocks. Limited diversification, constrained productive capacity and high trade costs continue to hinder their ability to move into higher value added segments of global markets. This underscores the importance of targeted support to build resilience and stimulate structural transformation.

Weak productive capacities in LDCs can be seen as the causes and consequences of limited export diversification and structural transformation. While primary products still accounted for more than half of LDCs' total merchandise exports in 2024, exports of manufactures increased in value and their share in world manufactured exports rose modestly, from 0.61 per cent in 2019 to 0.65 per cent in 2024. This suggests that, while preferences and other policy measures have helped some LDCs move into labour-intensive manufactures, broader improvements in productive capacities and the business environment are needed to achieve more widespread and sustained export diversification across the LDC group. The Sevilla Commitment includes actions to support LDCs to industrialize and diversify exports, including in services. Data from the UNCTAD Productive Capacities Index (PCI) shows wide gaps in indices of product concentration and diversification in countries across different development status. Between 2000 and 2024, the disparities across groups remained large and persistent. In 2024, the median value of PCI for developed countries stood at 60.9 and for

Figure III.4.6

LDCs Share in Global Trade, goods and services, 2005–2025

(Billions of US dollars, percentage)

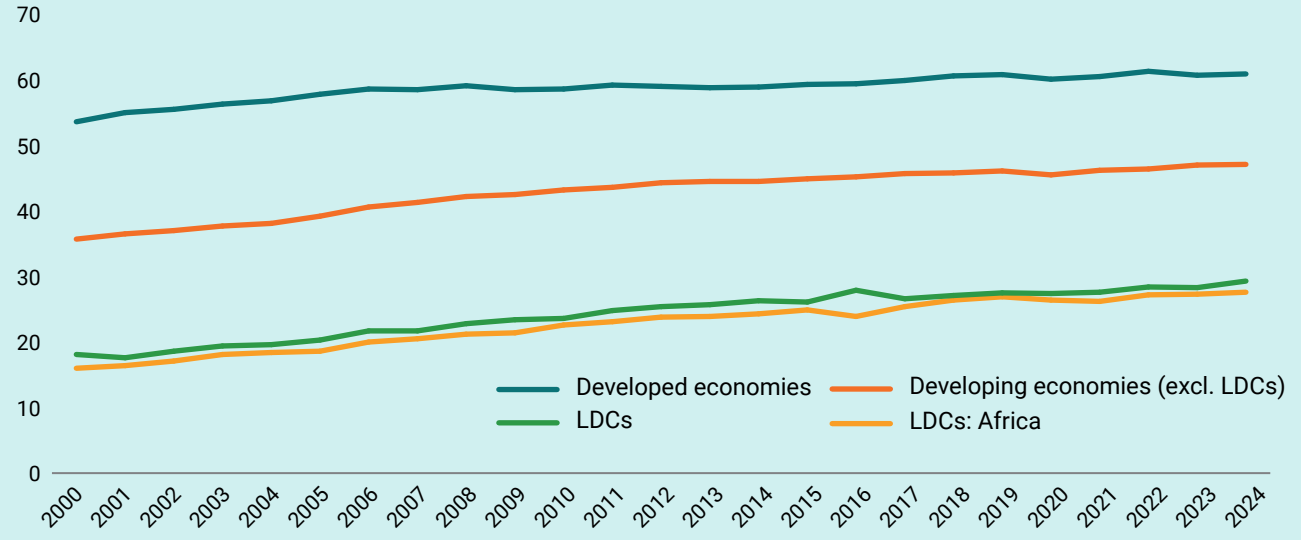


Source: UNCTAD calculations based on UNCTADStat.

Figure III.4.7

Productivity Capacity Index, by country grouping

(Overall Index)



Source: UNCTAD calculations based on UNCTADStat.

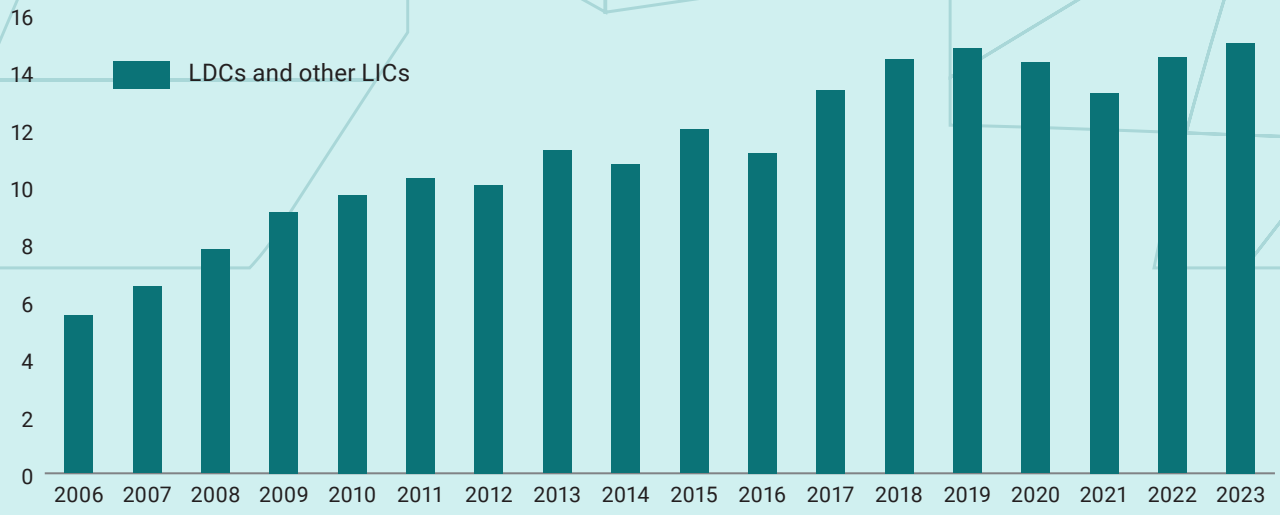
developing countries (excluding LDCs) 47.1 whereas the corresponding figure for LDCs was 29.3 and for African LDCs 27.6.[23]

Despite growing needs to increase their trading capacity, Aid for Trade disbursements to LDCs have stagnated since 2018. The Sevilla Commitment recalls the commitment of the Doha Programme of Action to double Aid for Trade for LDCs by 2031 from 2018 levels and to continue to allocate at least 50 per cent to trade-related infrastructure.[24] This will require significant efforts from donors as Aid for Trade to LDCs has stagnated since 2018 to around $14 billion.

Figure III.4.8

Aid for Trade data for LDCs, 2006–2023

(Billions of US dollars)



Source: OECD and WTO.

Paragraph 46: Increase local value addition and beneficiation of critical minerals and commodities in developing countries

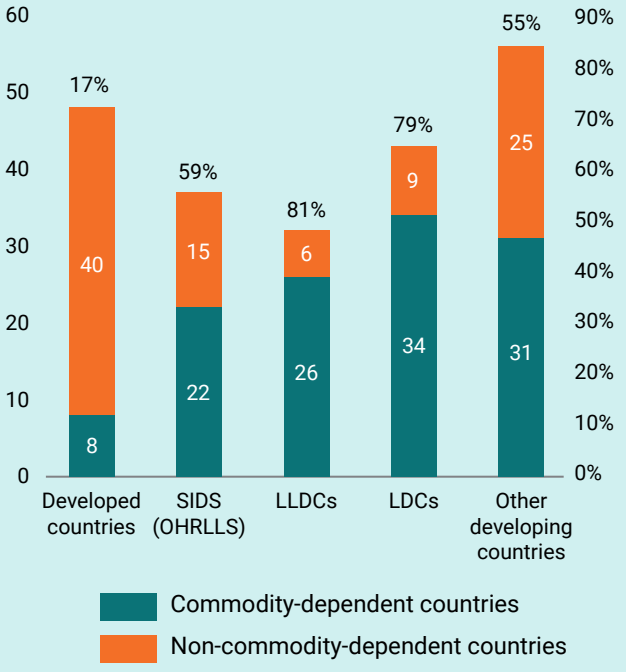
In paragraph 46, the Sevilla Commitment calls for actions to increase local value addition and beneficiation of critical minerals and commodities for economic diversification in developing countries, including through efforts that can enhance traceability, transparency and accountability along the value chain. Actions also include support to developing countries to negotiate commodity contracts and encouraging global commodity partnerships.

Commodity-dependent countries can leverage commodity processing and value addition as a first step towards structural transformation. Many commodity-dependent countries present an economic configuration characterized by narrow productive bases, low complexity, and chronic exposure to price volatility. Global price volatility compounds these difficulties by destabilizing government revenues, encouraging procyclical fiscal policies and constraining long-term investment in infrastructure, skills and innovation. The Sevilla Commitment recognizes these risks and calls for stronger international support to help commodity-dependent countries diversify, add value to their natural resources and build productive capacities.[25]

Figure III.4.9

Commodity dependence by development group, 2021–2023

(Number of countries in each group, percent share by development level)



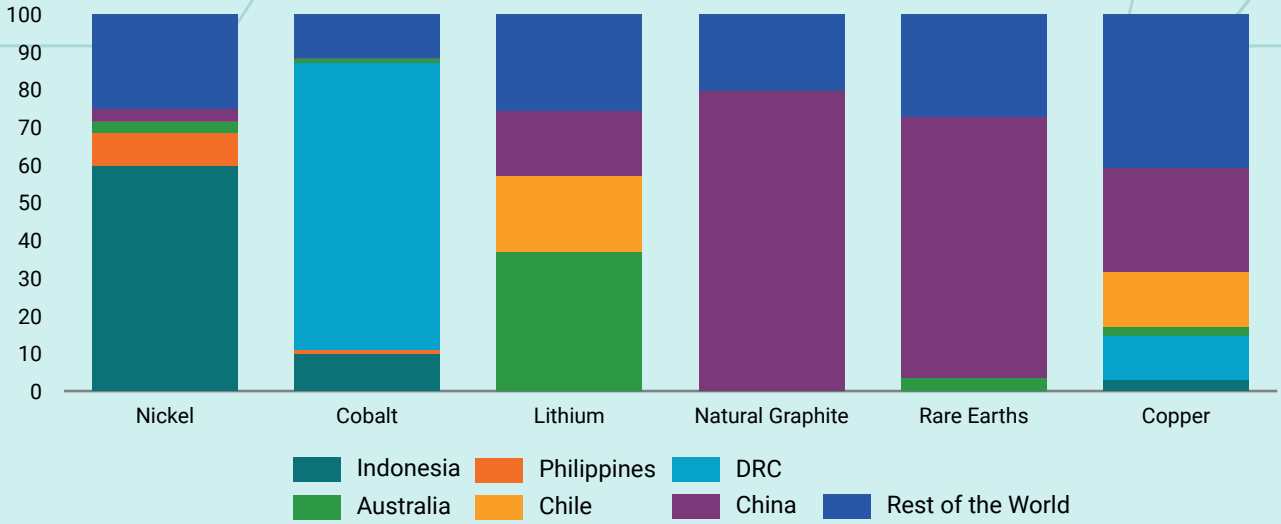
Source: UNCTAD, State of Commodity Dependence 2025.

Production of critical minerals is concentrated in a handful of countries. Value addition emerges as both a development imperative and a strategic opportunity. The Sevilla Commitment contains actions to encourage development partners and international financial institutions to engage in global commodity partnerships to support production, refining and processing of critical minerals and commodities in developing countries.

Figure III.4.10

Geographic distribution of the production of selected critical minerals

(Percentage)



Source: UNCTAD based on U.S. Geological Survey, Mineral Commodity Summaries, 2025.

Debt and debt sustainability In Numbers

Overview of public debt trends

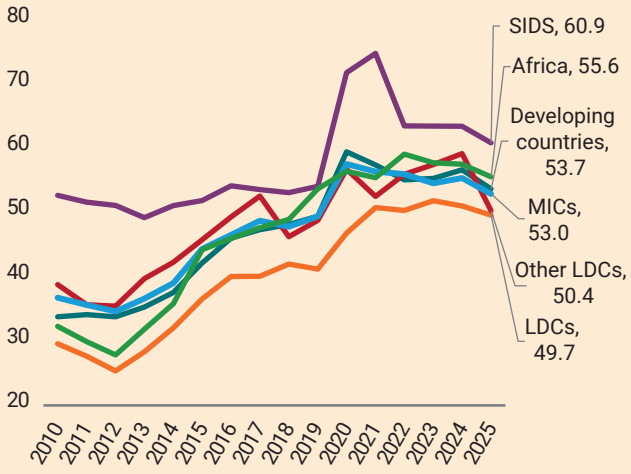
Public debt levels in many developing countries have stabilized in recent years after a sharp rise in 2020–2021 but remain at much higher levels than the pre-pandemic peaks. Along with high interest rates, this is translating into high debt service burdens and liquidity risks, albeit with variation across regions. While fiscal deficits have narrowed in many developing countries, debt service obligations have grown, squeezing fiscal space and limiting resources for social spending and investment in sustainable development.

Liquidity risks have become more prominent. For low-income countries (LICs), gross financing needs have nearly doubled over the past decade. While this partly reflects the increase in spending needs and the response to overlapping crises, the trend has been mainly driven by elevated interest costs and a marked shift towards domestic debt that has contributed to a significant increase in external and domestic debt service burdens, heightening rollover risks.

Figure III.5.1

General government debt evolution, median, by country group, 2010–2025

(Percentage of GDP)



Source: UN DESA calculations, based on IMF World Economic Outlook database (October 2025).

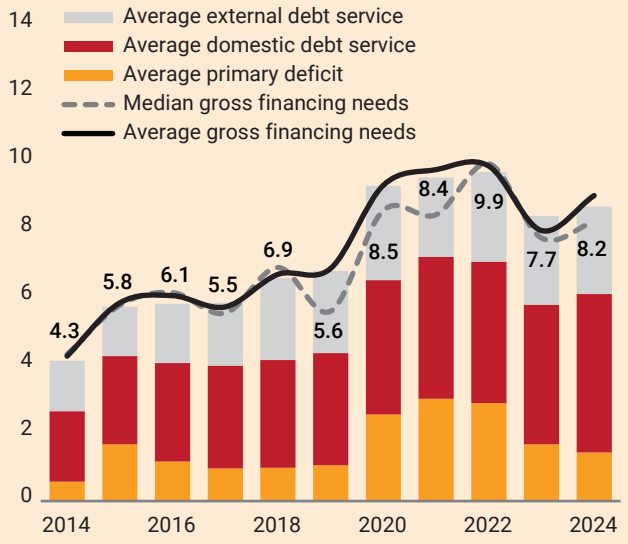
External public debt service relative to government revenue continues to climb in developing countries, returning to early-2000s levels. In 2024, among developing countries, median debt service on external public and publicly guaranteed (PPG) debt reached 9.9 per cent as a share of government revenue—the highest since 2004, as shown in figure III.5.3. For Africa, LICs and small island developing States (SIDS), the median debt service also reached levels last seen in the early 2000s. Fourteen developing countries had a public debt service-to-revenue ratio exceeding 20 per cent.

Shifts in creditor composition are reshaping sovereign risk profiles. Figure III.5.4 shows that, at end-2024, the share of private creditors in developing countries' total external PPG debt stock was 59 per cent, broadly unchanged from its pre-pandemic level, following a decade-long rise from 2010 onwards.

Figure III.5.2

Evolution of gross financing needs in low-income countries, by components, 2014–2024

(Percentage of GDP)



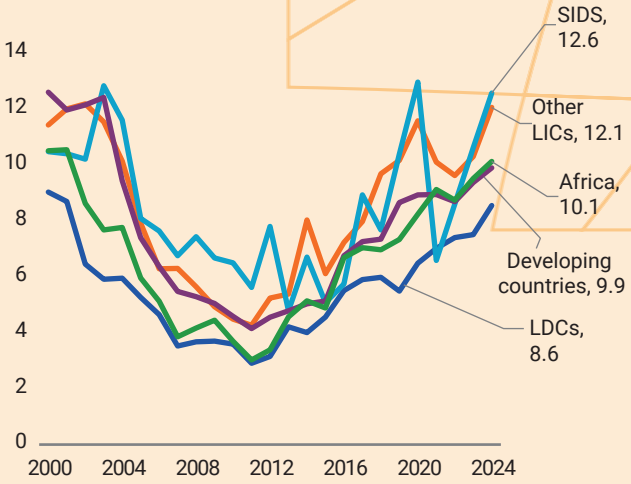
Source: IMF-World Bank Debt Sustainability Framework for LICs (LIC-DSF) database as of end-June 2025.

Least developed countries (LDCs) and other LICs also experienced a rise in commercial debt, though at lower levels. Following the pandemic, multilateral lenders increased their loans to LICs, which helped to counteract the drop in lending from bilateral creditors.

At the same time, domestic debt has assumed a more prominent role in public financing, particularly in LICs. Domestic debt exceeded 17 per cent of GDP in LICs in 2024—more than double its share a decade earlier—with over one fifth of LICs now holding more domestic than external debt, as shown in figure III.5.5. Greater reliance on domestic markets has helped to mobilize resources and mitigate exchange rate risk, but it has also heightened rollover and interest rate risks, especially in countries with shallow financial systems and low tax revenues. These vulnerabilities have intensified as new issuance has shifted towards shorter maturities—41 per cent of domestic debt newly issued by LICs in 2025 was short term. In many LICs, limited investor depth and weak legal frameworks compound these vulnerabilities, increasing the risk of fiscal dominance and crowding out credit to the private sector. It has also deepened the bank-sovereign nexus, heightening the risk of a broader financial crisis.

While the risk of a systemic debt crisis remains broadly contained, about half of LICs are still assessed at high risk of, or already in, debt distress, as shown in figure III.5.7. The outlook is clouded by global uncertainty, still tight financial conditions and persistent gaps in debt transparency. In 2024–2025,

Figure III.5.3
Debt service on external PPG debt, median, by country group, 2000–2024
(Percentage of general government revenue)



Source: UN DESA calculations, based on World Bank International Debt Statistics (December 2025).

43 per cent of high-risk ratings under the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and World Bank Group Debt Sustainability Framework for LICs (LIC-DSF) were triggered by breaches of liquidity indicators only, significantly higher than in previous periods.[26] This underscores the need for continuous monitoring of liquidity constraints, including to ensure that liquidity stress does not translate into solvency risks.

Paragraph 48: Debt crisis prevention

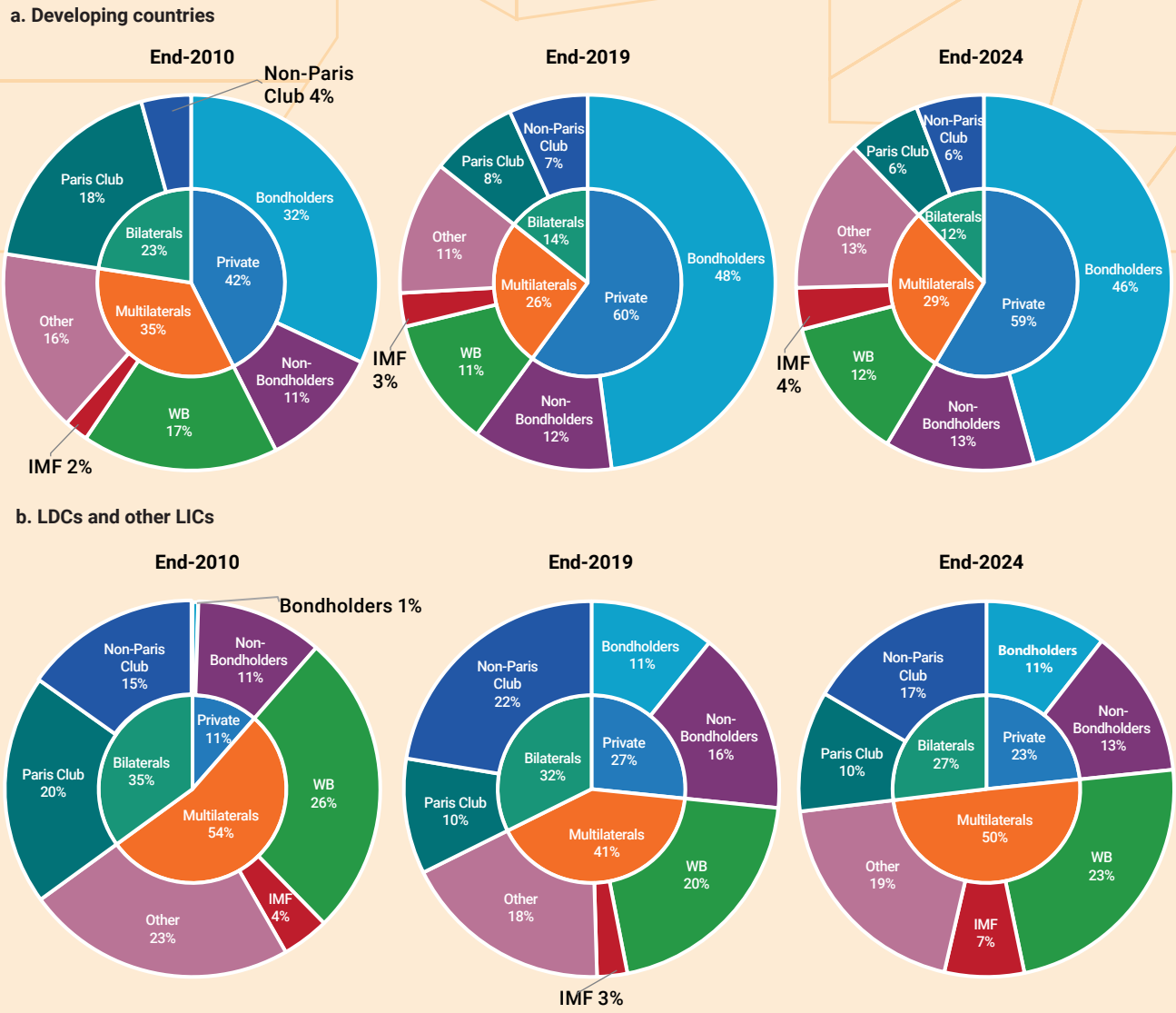
The Sevilla Commitment lays out concrete actions to improve debt management and transparency and promote responsible borrowing and lending. It calls for increasing transparency at the national level and harmonizing and strengthening debt data reporting at the global level. To enhance the resilience of sovereign borrowers in the aftermath of shocks, the Sevilla Commitment promotes the use of debt pause clauses in sovereign lending.

Debt management and transparency

There has been recent progress in debt management and transparency among LICs, but the risk of hidden debts remains. By 2024, fewer than 25 per cent of LICs—mainly fragile and conflict-affected States—had not published debt data in the previous two years, a significant improvement from over 40 per cent in 2020. However, fewer than one in four LICs reported loan-level information on new debt in 2025, as shown in figure III.5.6, and comprehensive coverage of subnational, state-owned enterprise and contingent liabilities remains rare. The risk of hidden debts remains significant. Against this backdrop, there is a growing case for advancing domestic debt transparency in line with external debt standards, given the increasing role of domestic debt in shaping liquidity risks.

There are ongoing efforts to strengthen debt reporting at the global and regional levels. The World Bank Group aims to expand its Debtor Reporting System (DRS) beyond external debt to include domestic liabilities, guarantees and collateral, as discussed in more detail in box IV.5.1 in chapter IV.5 on data, monitoring and follow- up. The World Bank Group has also leveraged automation tools such as the Loan Clearing Module to facilitate real-time reconciliation of loan-level data between borrowers and creditors, starting with a pilot in Indonesia. Scaling this initiative will require borrowers to adopt

Figure III.5.4
External PPG debt composition
(Percentage of total external PPG debt stock)



Source: UN DESA calculations, based on World Bank International Debt Statistics (December, 2025).

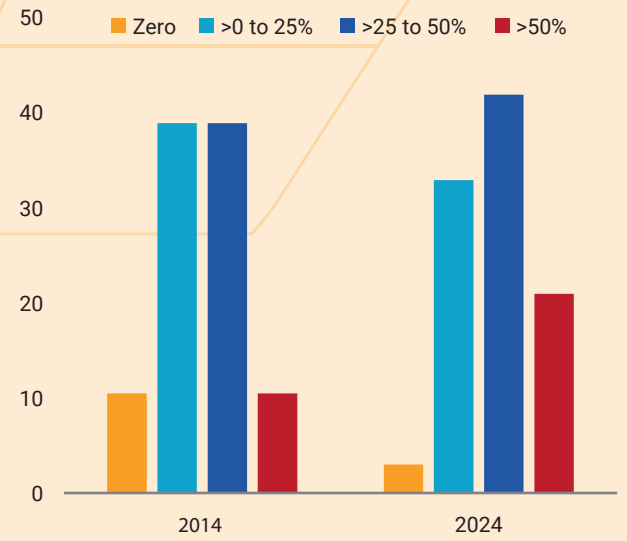
legal reforms enabling publication of loan-level data and active participation of creditors in reconciliation efforts. These debt reconciliation efforts and DRS reforms, in collaboration with other relevant stakeholders, are a step towards meeting the call in the Sevilla Commitment to streamline existing debt databases into a single, global central data registry.[27]

In parallel, IMF, the World Bank Group, the United Nations Trade and Development (UNCTAD) and United Nations regional commissions continue to support countries to strengthen debt recording and reporting, expand data coverage, enhance legal frameworks, and improve coordination across institutions. IMF and World Bank Group capacity-building support complements recent gains in transparency and helps to address remaining gaps, including limited reporting on subnational, state-owned enterprise and contingent liabilities. The latest release of the UNCTAD Debt Management and Financial Analysis System software (DMFAS 7) helps to improve alignment of national debt management systems with DRS and other global reporting frameworks. The Arab Debt Management Group, established by the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA), in collaboration with UNCTAD, brings together the region's public debt managers to exchange experiences and strengthen capacity in debt data management, cost and risk analysis, and debt optimization strategies, including through the ESCWA Debt Optimization Platform.

Figure III.5.5

Distribution of LICs by domestic debt's share in total public debt, 2014 versus 2024

(Percentage of LICs)

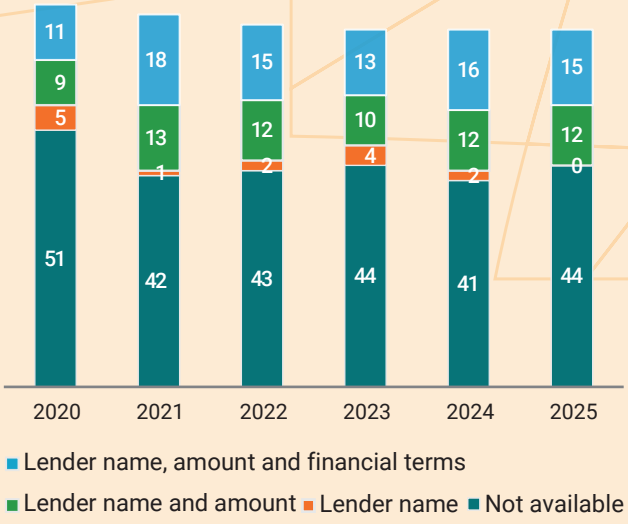


Source: IMF-World Bank LIC-DSF database as of June 2025.
Note: Each bar denotes the percentage of LICs that fall within a given range of domestic debt's share in total public debt, as indicated in the legend.

Figure III.5.6

Loan-level data published by LICs, 2020–2025

(Number of low-income countries)

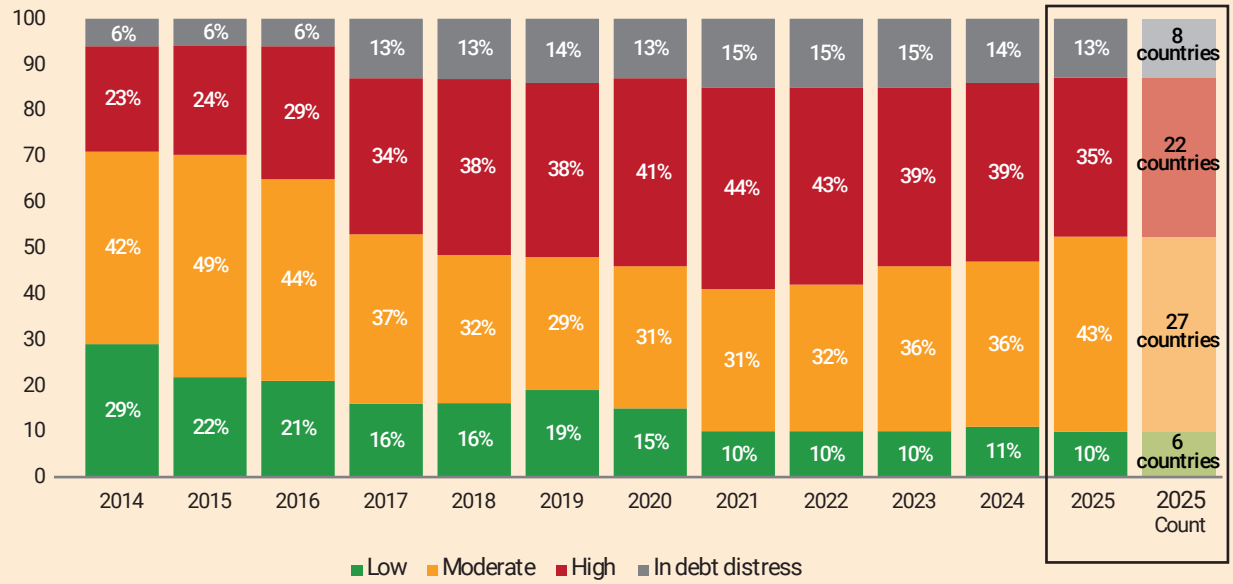


Source: World Bank Debt Reporting Heat Map, accessed in March 2026.

Figure III.5.7

LDCs and other LICs: External debt distress ratings, 2014–2025

(Percentage of LICs, number of LICs)



Source: LIC Debt Sustainability Assessment (DSA) database, as of 31 December 2025.
Note: In 2025, the methodology changed to exclude: Guyana (not Poverty Reduction and Growth Trust-eligible), St. Lucia (using Sovereign Risk and Debt Sustainability Framework), and Afghanistan, Myanmar, and Sudan (DSAs older than three years).

Uptake of debt pause clauses in sovereign debt contracts

Debt pause clauses are gaining traction in official lending but stronger efforts are required for their adoption in private lending. Multilateral Development Banks (MDBs) and bilateral creditors are increasingly incorporating debt pause clauses in their lending. A recent Group of Twenty (G20) survey on the incorporation of climate resilient debt clauses (CRDCs) by official lenders found that half (7 of 14) of the bilateral creditor countries and five of seven international financial institutions surveyed offer CRDCs in their lending instruments. While 69 per cent of borrower countries surveyed in sub-Saharan Africa have not included CRDCs in their debt contracts, most indicated willingness to incorporate these clauses in both their existing debt stocks and new debt.[28] While the majority of international financial institutions require the borrower to request for these clauses to be included, bilateral creditors are increasingly including them automatically in new lending.

The uptake of debt pause clauses by commercial creditors remains low to date. The Debt Pause Clause Alliance, a Spain-led coalition of countries and MDBs launched as part of the Sevilla Platform for Action, is working on a design of standardized debt pause clauses and will promote their adoption by all creditors, including the private sector. The Bondholder Working Group of the London Coalition on Sustainable Sovereign Debt has published a proposal on debt pause clauses for bonds issued in developing countries.[29] Efforts are also required to support borrower countries to better understand the use and benefits and assess the suitability of incorporating debt pause clauses in debt contracts.[30]

Working group on responsible borrowing and lending principles and the Borrowers' Platform

Work to operationalize the working group on responsible borrowing and lending principles is under way. The Sevilla Commitment requests the United Nations Secretary-General, together with IMF and the World Bank Group, to convene a working group tasked with proposing a consolidated set of voluntary guiding principles on responsible borrowing and lending and proposals for implementation. The working group is initiating its work in the first quarter of 2026 and will present an update to Member States at the United Nations Economic and Social Council Financing for Development (FFD) Forum in April 2026.

The Sevilla Commitment mandates the establishment of a platform for borrower countries. A working group, comprising a geographically representative group of seven developing Member States and supported by UNCTAD, was established in October 2025 to lead the process towards the formal establishment of the Borrowers' Platform. It was tasked with developing

Figure III.5.8
Official creditors that offer CRDCs in their lending instruments, 2025
(Percentage)

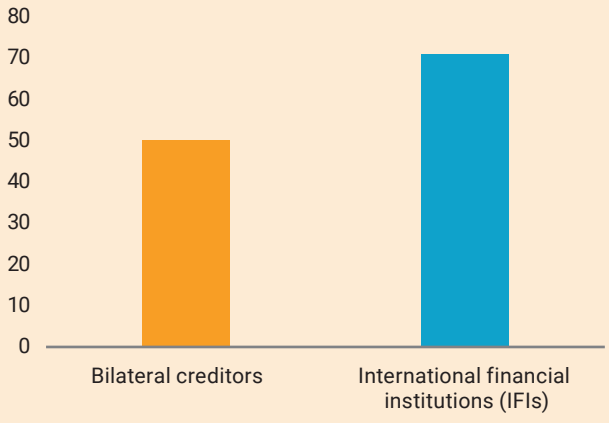
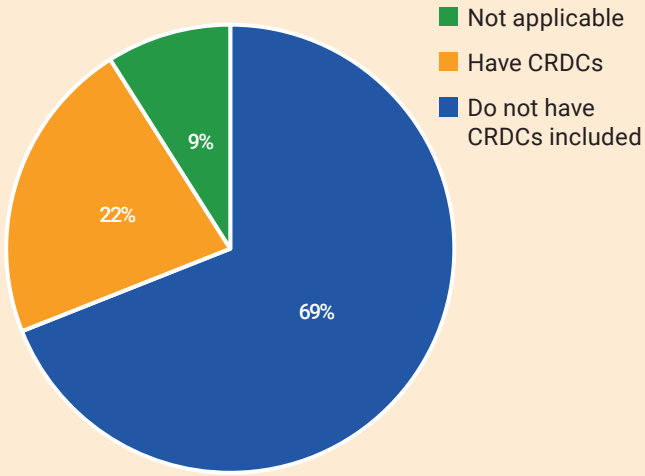


Figure III.5.9
Inclusion of CRDCs in existing debt contracts by borrowing countries in sub-Saharan Africa, 2025
(Percentage)



Source: G20 Presidency Note on Climate Resilient Debt Clauses: Mapping Exercise Results, October 2025.
Note: The bilateral creditors surveyed include Canada, France, Japan, Saudi Arabia, South Africa, Spain and the United Kingdom. Australia and Brazil indicated that they intend to include CRDCs in their lending. International financial institutions surveyed include the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB), European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD), European Investment Bank (EIB), Inter-American Development Bank (IDB), IDB Invest and World Bank.

the core foundational elements, including its modalities, objectives, scope, governance structure and operational arrangements. Draft modalities such as membership eligibility criteria have been agreed and will be distributed to over 100 eligible Member States, together with invitations for them to become members of the Platform and attend its launch—planned to coincide with the IMF and World Bank Group Spring meetings in April 2026. Regional borrower networks such as the Arab Debt Management Group can contribute regional perspectives to the upcoming discussions under the Borrowers' Platform.

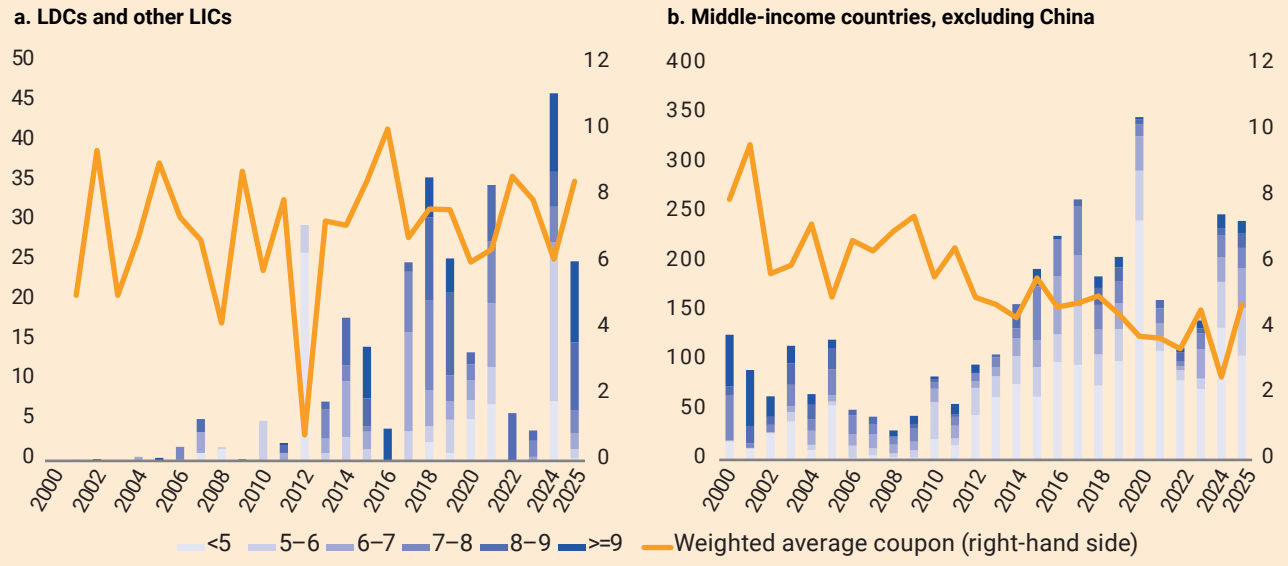
Para 49: Lowering the high cost of borrowing and debt service burden

The Sevilla Commitment calls for significantly lowering the cost of borrowing and providing more comprehensive and systematic support for developing countries that, while solvent, face high debt servicing costs. This section covers trends in borrowing costs and debt service burdens, and recent efforts to lower them, including debt-for-development swaps.

Borrowing costs and debt service burdens

Many developing countries continue to face elevated borrowing costs even as global financial conditions have eased. Despite some easing in sovereign spreads, global benchmark rates have kept market borrowing costs elevated for many developing countries. In 2025, the average coupon rate of hard currency bonds issued by LDCs and other LICs—weighted by issuance amount—increased to 8.4 per cent, up from 6.1 per cent in 2024, as shown in figure III.5.10. Bond market access, however, remains limited for many in this group, who continue to rely primarily on loans for external financing. Middle-income countries, excluding China, also experienced rising borrowing costs, with the weighted-average coupon rate on hard currency bonds increasing from 2.5 per cent in 2024 to 4.7 per cent in 2025. These higher borrowing costs emerged even as bondholder inflows to developing countries improved in 2024, contributing to a rebound in total net external public sector debt inflows. In this context, targeted guarantees could help to crowd in private finance from the external sector at lower cost, by lowering credit risk. On the domestic side, the nominal interest rates on public domestic debt are high—reaching up to 25 per cent in

Figure III.5.10
Sovereign bond issuance in hard currencies, by coupon rate, 2000–2025
(Billions of US dollars, Per cent)



Source: UN DESA calculation, based on LSEG data.
Note: Data includes sovereign bond issuance in pounds sterling, euros, Japanese yen, United States dollars, and Chinese renminbi. In both panels, the weighted average coupon rate was calculated using issuance amount in US dollars as the weight.

some LICs—with the median at about 5 per cent and average about 7 per cent in 2024, reflecting shallow markets and inflation volatility.

Rising debt service burdens in developing countries further constrain essential social spending and crowd out investment in sustainable development, including on education, health and infrastructure. Between 2018 and 2024, 73 per cent of developing countries with data available saw an increase in interest payments, as shown in figure III.5.11. In sub-Saharan Africa and commodity-exporting LICs, interest payments on total public debt have more than doubled over the past decade, from around $13 billion in 2014 to $35 billion in 2024. During 2021 to 2023, 45 developing countries spent more on debt interest payments than on health, up from 34 countries a decade ago, while the number of developing countries who spent more on debt interest than on education increased from 12 to 22 during the same period.

The joint World Bank-IMF Three-Pillar Approach can also be understood as a framework supporting solvent countries facing elevated liquidity pressures and high debt servicing costs. By jointly addressing domestic resource mobilization, strengthening international support, and introducing innovative instruments to reduce debt service burden, the Approach aims to mitigate near-term financing strains and reduce the risk that such pressures evolve into longer-term debt sustainability challenges.

The Sevilla Commitment calls for the operationalization of the Global Small Island Developing States Debt Sustainability Support Service (DSSS), which was previously launched at the Fourth International Conference on SIDS as part of the SIDS Centre of Excellence. DSSS is currently in the early stages of operationalization and aims to provide voluntary, needs-based support to SIDS on debt sustainability strategies, resilience investment, insurance-based protection against future debt distress, capacity-building, and legal and commercial negotiation.

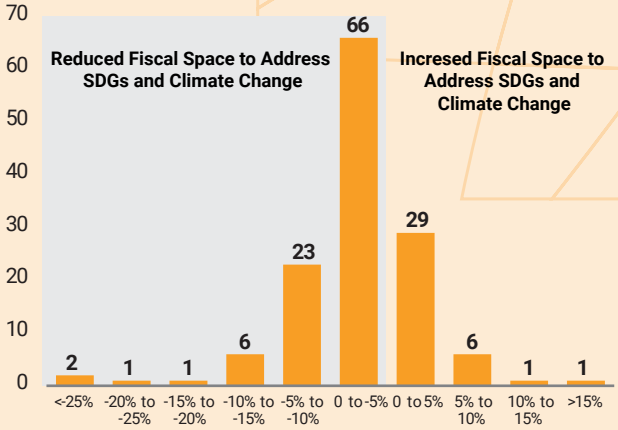
Debt-for-development swaps

Debt-for-development swaps are increasing in deal size. There has been a total of 277 debt-for-development swaps since their emergence in 1987 up to November 2025. While activity over the last decade was modest, debt-for-development swap deals have become significantly larger, as shown in figure III.5.12. In 2024, the total swap value reached a historic high, led by the large multiparty debt-for-nature swaps of Ecuador (US$1.5 billion) and El Salvador (US$1 billion). Debt-for-nature swaps dominated in terms of both swap activity and value.

Figure III.5.11

Impact of change in interest payments on fiscal space between 2018 and 2024, developing countries

(Number of developing countries)



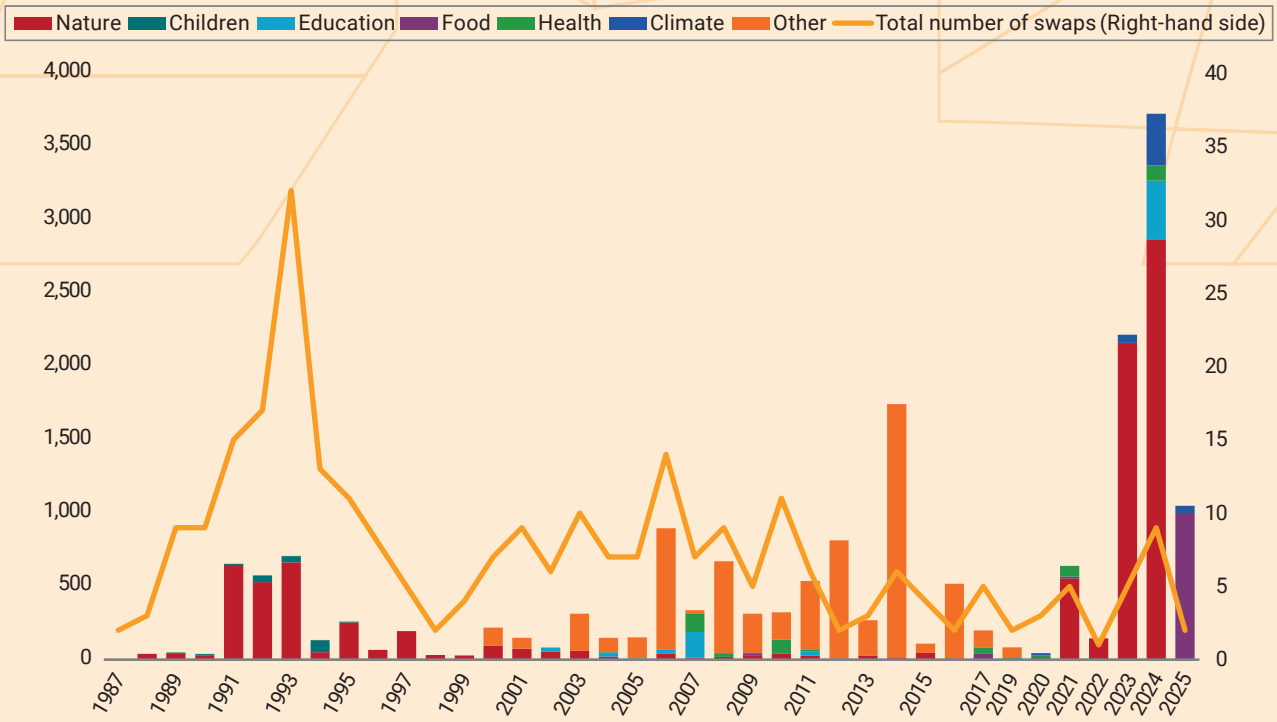
Source: UNCTAD calculations, based on IMF Fiscal Monitor and Government Finance databases.

Lessons from recent debt swap operations, such as the Côte d'Ivoire debt-for-education swap, highlight their potential. The transaction refinanced €400 million of commercial debt using a World Bank guarantee, freeing up €330 million for education projects and generating lifetime savings of €60 million in net present value terms. Nonetheless, more widespread uptake remains constrained by high transaction costs, technical capacity constraints and underdeveloped local markets. The launch of the joint World Bank-IMF framework for debt-for-development swaps could help to optimize the decision-making of stakeholders around such swaps, stressing rigorous net-benefit assessments, rating considerations and transparency. The Global Hub on Debt for Development Swaps launched by Spain and the World Bank Group under the Sevilla Platform for Action also aims to support further growth in swap operations, by facilitating the exchange of learning and peer experiences and providing technical assistance.[31] Regional efforts such as the ESCWA Climate/SDGs Debt Swap-Donor Nexus Initiative have also supported countries in operationalizing innovative debt swaps.

Figure III.5.12

Value and number of sovereign debt-for-development swap, by purpose, 1987–2025

(Total face value of swaps, millions of US dollars; Total number of swaps)



Source: UNCTAD Sovereign Debt Swap Database.
Note: Each coloured block within a column represents the total value of swaps for a given purpose in that year.

Para 50: Reform the debt architecture

The Sevilla Commitment calls for continuing to work towards debt restructurings that are timely, orderly, effective, fair, negotiated in good faith, predictable and coordinated. This section covers trends and recent developments in efforts to improve debt restructuring processes.

Post-pandemic debt restructurings remain lengthy but have shortened in the most recent cases. Under the G20 Common Framework, which provides a single-entry point among G20 and Paris Club creditors, efforts have been made to clarify and accelerate the restructuring process, including with the launch of the Global Sovereign Debt Roundtable (GSDR) Restructuring Playbook (April 2025) that provides clarity on key steps, concepts and processes. There is some evidence that coordination of official creditors has improved under the Common Framework, with Ghana—the most recent case to conclude a significant portion of debt restructuring with private creditors—completing its bond restructuring in 1.9 years, less than the 4.1 years in the earlier case of Zambia. Outside of the Common Framework, Sri Lanka's restructuring was shorter than the preceding case of Suriname. Across post-pandemic debt restructurings that involve private creditors as shown in figure III.5.13, creditor losses amount to 36.9 per cent on average in net present value terms.

Despite the progress, the overall restructuring process remains lengthy and extends beyond the typical time frame observed in the past.[32] For restructurings involving private creditors, since 2020, the timeline from the announcement of a restructuring or default to the completion of a debt exchange has varied widely but was protracted in many cases. Overall, average duration of external debt restructurings in 2020–2024 as included in figure III.5.13 was 2.5 years, significantly longer than the 1.1-year average in 2014–2020.[33]

Further improvements in restructuring processes are needed to deliver efficient and timely debt restructuring for countries where debt is not sustainable. Protracted debt restructurings underscore the importance of ongoing reforms to the international debt architecture, including clearer procedures, enhanced transparency and stronger engagement among all stakeholders, to ensure that debt restructurings are not only comprehensive but also sufficiently rapid to restore debt sustainability and support economic recovery.

The 5th GSDR cochairs' progress report in October 2025 highlighted several issues that require further progress. These include: (i) improve coordination between official and private creditors, which includes incentivizing parallel, rather than sequential, negotiations when it fits the debtor country's strategy; (ii) acceleration of the restructuring of non-bonded commercial debt; and (iii) early post-restructuring credit rating upgrade. On comparability of treatment, GSDR discussions underscored the growing support for, but not yet consensus on: (i) earlier and more comprehensive publication of the key terms of the agreement in principle between the debtor country and the official creditor committee; and (ii) refinement of comparability of treatment implementation for non-bonded private creditors.

In line with the Sevilla Commitment, further discussion can also include expansion of coordinated debt treatment to middle-income countries not covered by current initiatives. The range and complexity of outstanding issues highlight the importance of an inclusive dialogue on debt that brings together all relevant stakeholders, as envisaged in the Sevilla Commitment.

There is significant progress in the uptake and use of collective action clauses for bonded debt, but coordination challenges persist among non-bonded creditors. An IMF review of restructurings of private debt between 2020 and 2025 found that 79 per cent of international sovereign bonds have collective action clauses as of end-June 2025, up from 50 per cent as of end-June 2020. In contrast, uptake of majority voting provisions in loan contracts remains low and falls short in addressing coordination issues among non-bonded creditors. Recent restructurings have also featured other contractual clauses to ensure fair burden sharing among creditors, address uncertainties regarding the future fiscal position of the debtor country and promote transparency, including most favoured creditor clauses, value recovery instruments, loss reinstatement clauses and information provision clauses.

Paragraph 51: Improve debt sustainability and credit assessments

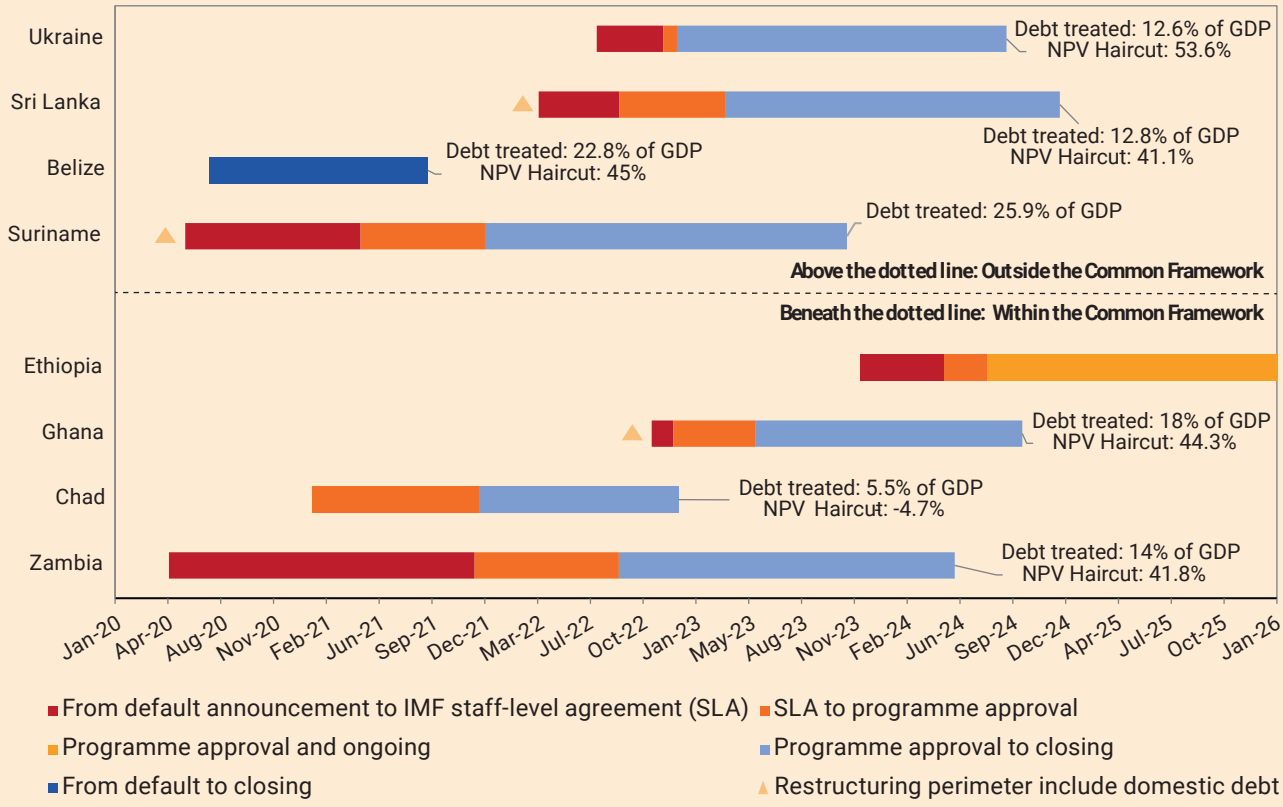
The Sevilla Commitment urges reform of debt sustainability analyses and sovereign credit ratings to better account for sustainable development spending needs and investments, considering their impact on long-term growth. This section discusses the ongoing reform of LIC DSF by the World Bank Group and IMF, the rating of innovative financing instruments by credit rating agencies and post-restructuring credit upgrades.

The review of LIC DSF by the World Bank Group and IMF is still ongoing. The review of LIC DSF aims to better capture the evolving debt landscape, including the increasing complexity of debt instruments, the growing role of domestic debt and the heightened exposure to shocks. Key enhancements include improved methodologies for assessing debt-carrying capacity, more granular treatment of contingent liabilities, and greater integration of macroeconomic and fiscal risks, including long-term vulnerabilities. The updated LIC DSF will also place a stronger emphasis on transparency and risk assessments at different time horizons, supporting both borrowers and creditors in making informed decisions, and clear identification of potential vulnerabilities. One of the focus areas includes developing a long-term climate change module to deepen the coverage of climate risks and the economic benefits of climate investment and policies, in line with the call in the Sevilla Commitment.

Credit rating agencies continue to scrutinize the use of innovative financing instruments, such as state-contingent debt instruments and liability management operations (including debt swaps and buybacks), and their impact on debt sustainability and creditworthiness. There have been discussions at GSDR with credit rating agencies about their approaches to assessing these instruments, including the conditions under which they would assign ratings.[34] The need for more frequent and structured interaction among credit rating agencies, governments, investors and other market actors—particularly around data availability, policy commitments and reform trajectories—is discussed in chapter IV.4 on international financial architecture and systemic issues.

Non-bonded commercial debt complicates post-restructuring credit upgrades. The trajectory of sovereign credit ratings after restructurings remains a critical concern, particularly for countries with significant amounts of unrestructured commercial debt. While successful restructurings can pave the way for credit upgrades, the presence of non-bonded commercial claims complicates and delays the process as upgrades require the resolution of sufficient commercial debt, as illustrated by Zambia's experience. What credit rating agencies deem sufficient for a credit upgrade is assessed on a case-by-case basis rather than a specific numerical threshold.[35] Stronger efforts are required to develop a coordination mechanism for non-bonded commercial creditors to better support countries undergoing restructuring.

Figure III.5.13
Timeline of select external debt restructurings that involve private creditors since 2020



Source: UN DESA compilation, from GSDR cochairs' fifth progress report, October 2025; T. Asonuma, and C. Trebesch, Sovereign Restructuring Database, 2025; and IMF staff report, A Stocktaking of the Current International Architecture for Resolving Sovereign Debt Involving Private Sector Creditors, October 2025.
Note 1: Series with a triangle at the beginning indicate that both domestic and external debt were treated.
Note 2: "Closing" means "closing of bond exchange", except for the case of Chad, which only involved external loan.
Note 3: All these cases had residual debt to be restructured of less than 6 per cent of the total restructuring perimeter, except Ethiopia, as of October 2025.
Note 4: Belize had no IMF programme during its debt restructuring.
Note 5: For Ethiopia, there was no formal announcement of the staff-level agreement (SLA). The chart shows the date when agreement was made between IMF staff and the Ethiopian authorities on policies.
Note 6: Chad requested debt restructuring under the Common Framework in January 2021 and reached SLA with IMF in the same month. Debt treatment from official bilateral creditors for Chad was contingent on oil price developments. Higher-than-expected oil prices led to accelerated repayments, resulting in negative haircuts.
Note 7: Debt restructurings on external loans for Ghana, Sri Lanka and Zambia are ongoing and have not yet completed as of December 2025.
Note 8: Net present value (NPV) haircut correspond to 1- (present value of new bonds/present value of old bonds).
Note 9: NPV haircut for Suriname is not reported, as the figure is not directly comparable. This is due to the structure of the value recovery instrument used in its restructuring being different from those in recent cases.

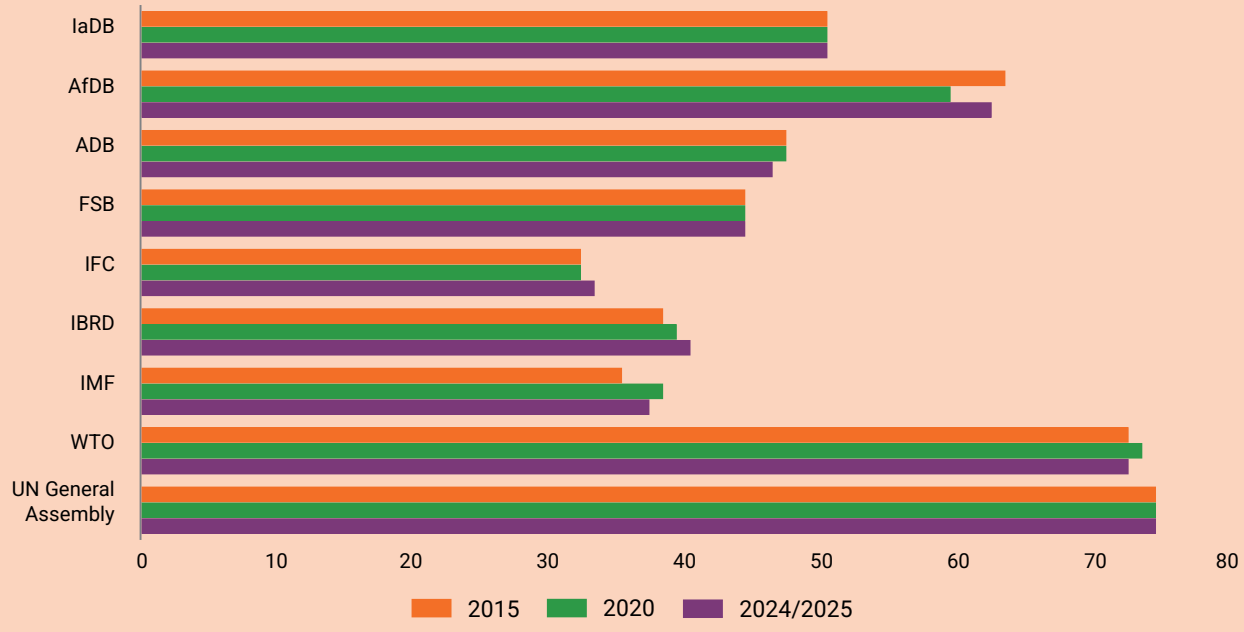
International financial architecture and systemic issues **In Numbers**

Para 53: Further strengthening global economic governance

The Sevilla Commitment calls for efforts to strengthen global economic governance by enhancing the voice and representation of developing countries in international economic and financial institutions; promoting transparent, merit-based and gender-balanced leadership and governance structures; and strengthening transparency, accountability and diversity in decision-making.

There have been only marginal changes in the voting rights of developing countries at international economic and financial institutions in the last decade. Members of international economic and financial institutions have experienced challenges in agreeing to formal reforms. Developing country voting rights vary widely across these institutions. Voting power has not changed significantly since 2015. No institutions have changed the size of their executive boards since the International Monetary Fund (IMF) Executive Board increase to 25 seats in October 2024. Three institutions have boards that produce separate diversity reports.

Figure III.6.1
Developing countries' representation in international economic and financial institutions
(Percentage)



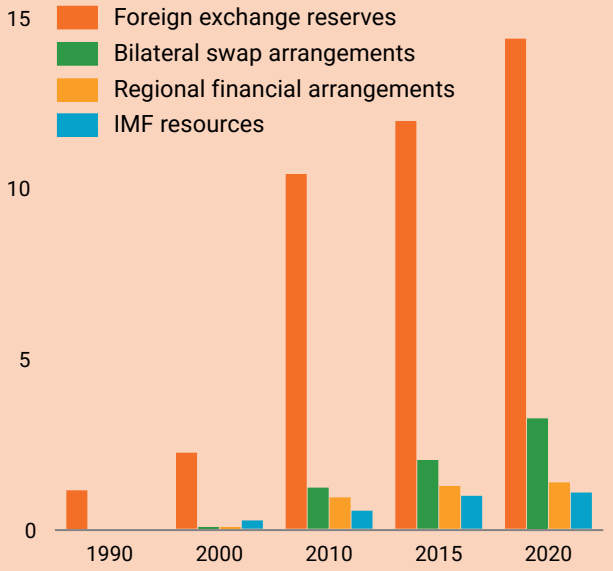
Source: UN DESA calculations.

Para 54: Further strengthening the global financial safety net amid increasing systemic risks and the growing frequency and intensity of crises

The Sevilla Commitment calls for strengthening the global financial safety net, with a strong IMF at its centre. It encourages improved access to crisis, precautionary and concessional IMF lending; strengthened regional financial arrangements; and protection of social spending during shocks. It further recognizes the role of special drawing rights (SDRs) and invites the development of an SDR playbook.

While the layers of the global financial safety net have grown substantially, access and coverage are uneven. International reserves reached about $14 trillion in 2023, but least developed countries hold less than 1 per cent of these in the aggregate. Regional arrangements had a lending capacity of about $1.3 trillion in mid-2025. Bilateral swap arrangements aimed at easing market pressures in systemically important developed countries that issue reserve currencies have become important in containing crises. While many of the five central banks issuing currencies in the SDR basket have arranged unlimited swaps with each other, at least one of them has an unlimited swap line with two other countries, one in Europe and one in the Americas. Three smaller European countries have a network of unlimited swaps among each other, and there is one non-reserve currency issuing central bank in the Americas that has unlimited swap lines with one non-reserve currency issuing central bank in Europe and one in Asia. No countries in Latin America, Africa or Oceania have access to unlimited swaps. The number of countries with access to any liquidity lines in Asia (47 per cent of all countries in the region), is much greater than for European (non-euro area) countries (28 per cent), Latin America and the Caribbean (17 per cent), Oceania (14 per cent), and Africa (9 per cent).

Figure III.6.2
Global financial safety net resources
(Trillions of US dollars)



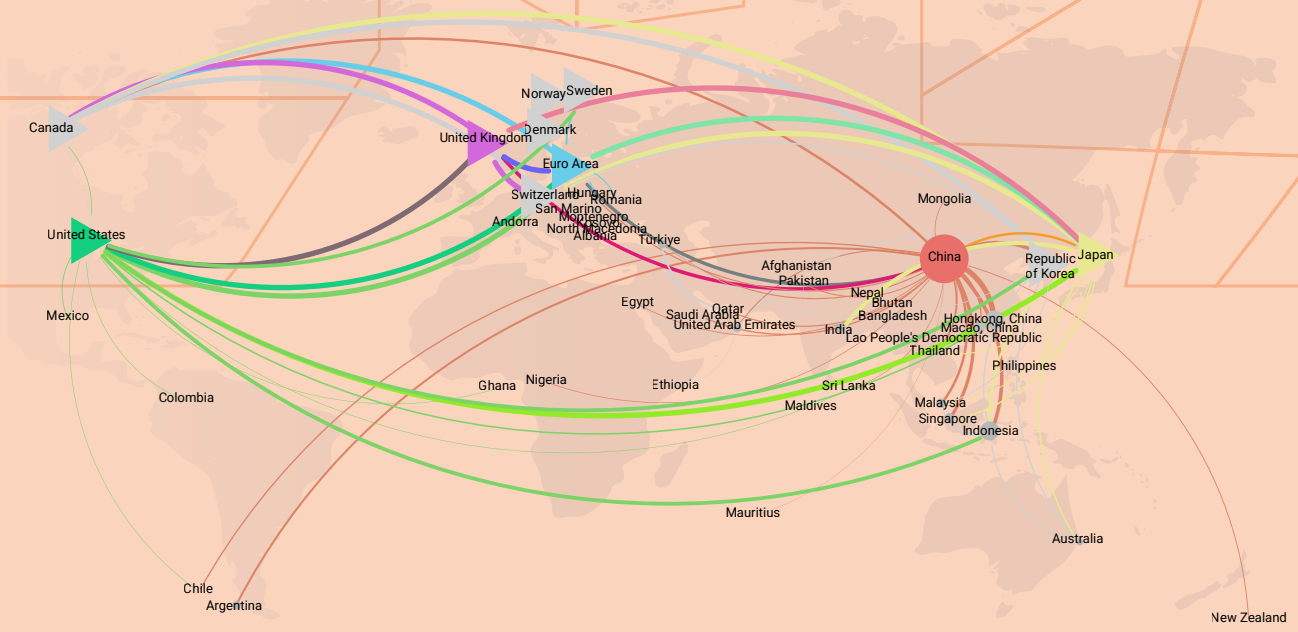
Source: IMF.

Para 55: Ensuring that the financial system supports accurate, objective and long-term-oriented credit ratings

The Sevilla Commitment establishes a recurring high-level meeting on credit ratings under the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), and promotes greater transparency, improved regulation and accountability of rating agencies. It also calls for reduced overreliance on ratings and enhanced data availability.

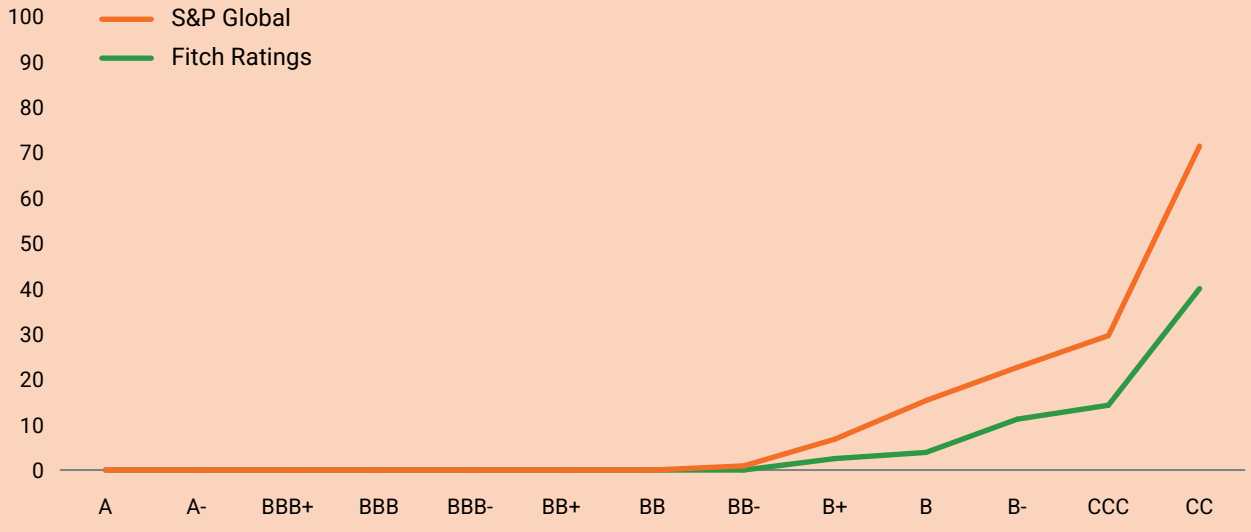
Credit ratings and assessments broadly track default rates. Since 2008, regulations and rules have significantly changed to better monitor and supervise the conduct of credit rating agencies. Still, the three major credit rating agencies hold almost 92 per cent of the market share for credit rating services in Europe. There is no consensus on the existence or magnitude of biases against developing countries. African countries are moving ahead on the establishment of a new African Credit Rating Agency.

Figure III.6.3
Current bilateral liquidity lines



Source: IMF, UN DESA calculations.
Note: Scaled by volume. See figure IV.4.4 for a full explanation.

Figure III.6.4
3-year forward sovereign default rate, 2015–2024
(Percentage)

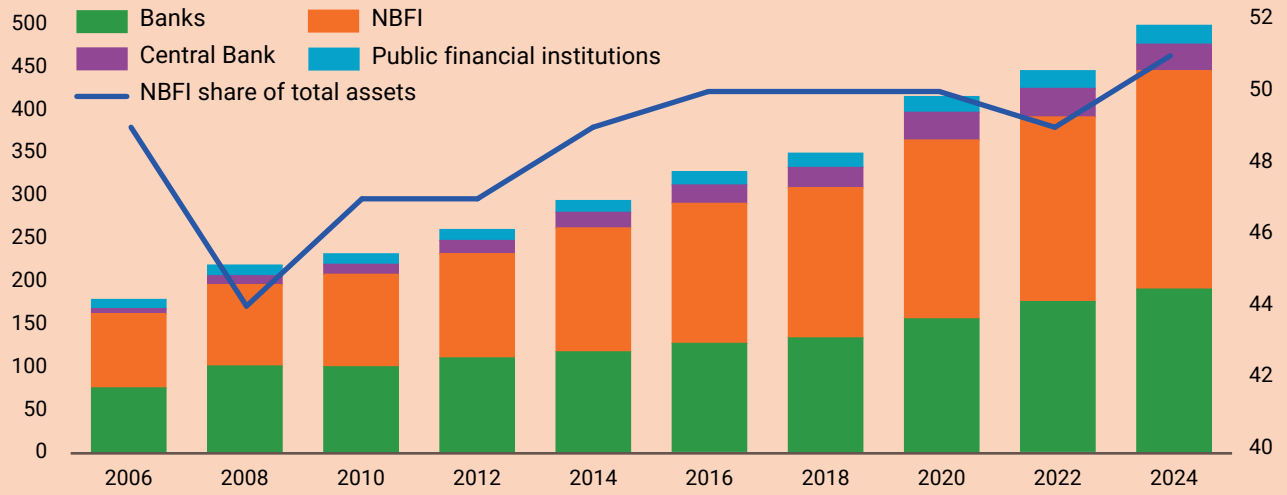


Source: UN DESA calculations.

Para 56: Continuing to enhance financial regulation to promote stability and sustainability

The Sevilla Commitment recognizes efforts to safeguard financial stability through robust, risk-based financial standards. It calls for further analysis of risk weightings, continued monitoring of risks from non-bank financial intermediation, and consideration of incorporating transition plans and climate stress testing in national financial regulation and supervision.QQQQ

Figure III.6.5
Global financial assets
(Trillions of US dollars, percentage)



Source: UN DESA calculations.

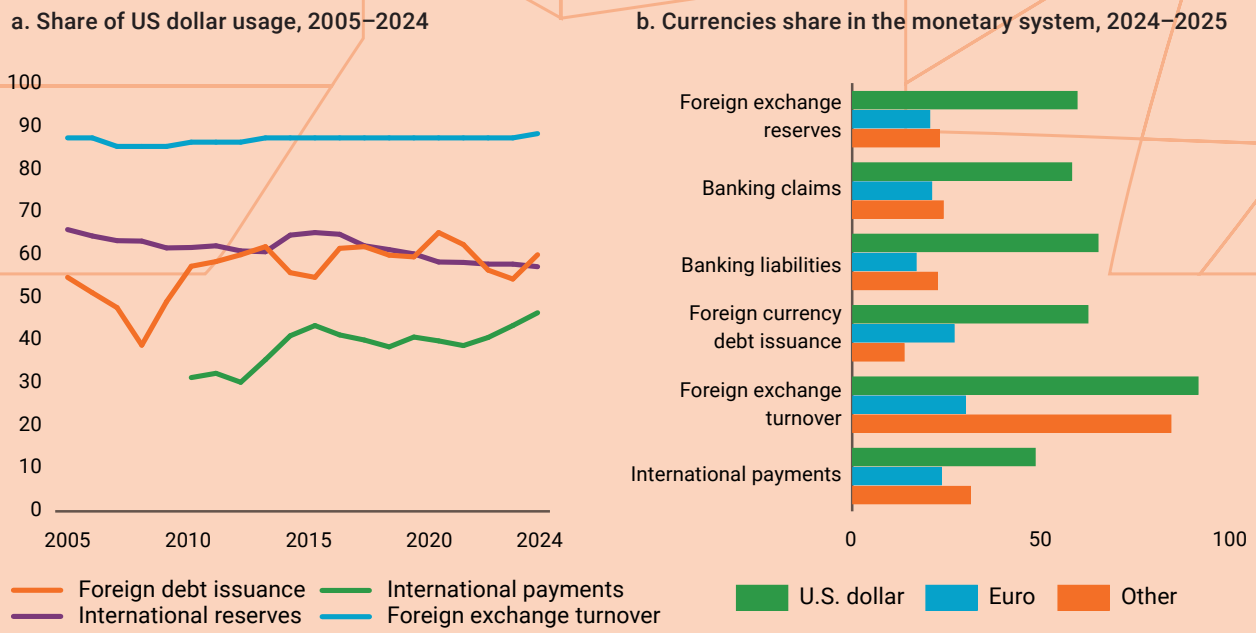
Implementation of post-2008 financial crisis regulatory reforms remains a work in progress. Updated international standards—such as the Basel III regulations for banks—have contributed to the 146 per cent increase in the core capital of the largest international banks, from €1.4 trillion in 2011 to €3.3 trillion at the end of 2024. Research is ongoing on the impacts of regulations and capital charges on financing for developing countries. Regulatory cooperation is critical to enhance the resilience of the financial system to emerging global challenges such as risks posed by climate change, artificial intelligence and digitalization of finance.

Non-bank financial intermediaries (NBFIs) have grown in size and deepened their ties with banks. NBFIs, representing almost $255 trillion in assets in 2024, increased their share of global credit and finance from 43 per cent during the 2008 world financial and economic crisis to 51 per cent by 2024. In 2024, the NBFI sector growth rate of 9.4 per cent was double the rate of asset growth at banks. This is the second highest percentage share recorded, similar to pre-pandemic levels. Banks, which tend to face tighter prudential regulation, are also exposed to risks in the NBFI sector.

Para 57: Benefits and risks of digital currencies and settlement systems

The Sevilla Commitment encourages implementation of the Group of Twenty (G20) Roadmap for Enhancing Cross-border Payments and highlights the potential of digital technologies and infrastructure—including central bank digital currencies (CBDCs) and fast payment systems—to enhance efficiency and interoperability of cross-border payments.

Figure III.6.6
Currency share in international monetary system
(Percentage)

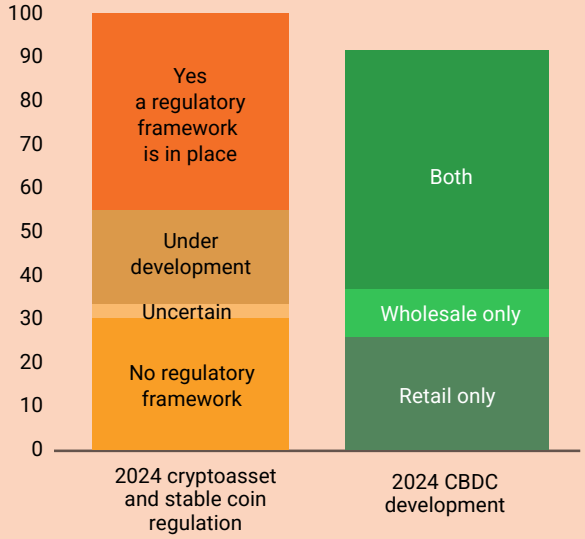


Source: BIS and Bertaut, von Beschwitz, and Curcuru, "The International Role of the U.S. Dollar", FEDS Notes (2025).
Note: Data for FX Turnover is 2025, others are 2024. Since transactions in foreign exchange markets always involve two currencies, foreign exchange turnover shares add up to 200%.

Heightened geopolitical tensions and the shifting payment landscape have the potential to fragment the international monetary system. The United States dollar remains the dominant currency in the international monetary system. SDRs represent around 6 per cent of gross international reserves and play a limited role in the monetary system. Since the 2021 SDR allocation, SDR channelling through the IMF Poverty Reduction and the Growth Trust and Resilience and Sustainability Trust has mobilized resources from 30 and 23 contributing countries respectively, amounting to around $60 billion and $49 billion. No Member States have yet agreed to channel their SDRs through multilateral development banks.

The cross-border payments system includes elements that make some payments slow, expensive and opaque. The value of cross-border retail payments is difficult to precisely measure but is estimated at $39.9 trillion in 2024. Inefficiencies in cross-border payments are reflected in the average cost of international retail payments that remain high, with 18.3 per cent of corridors with costs higher than the 3 per cent target contained in the G20 Roadmap. Advances in digital technology and changes in regulatory environments have enabled

Figure III.6.7
CDBC initiatives, digital asset regulation, 2024
(Percentage)



Source: BIS central bank survey (2025).

alternative means of payments that are growing in volume and need not respect borders. Digital assets, like other financial instruments, create risks that should be addressed. The market capitalization of cryptoassets rose to $4.2 trillion over the third quarter of 2025. Stablecoins are growing, with a market capitalization of almost $300 billion at the end of September 2025. Approximately 80 per cent of stablecoin transactions are conducted by bots and automated systems for arbitrage and rebalancing. Over 65 per cent of countries are moving ahead with stronger regulatory frameworks on cryptoassets and stablecoins.

CBDCs are a digital form of central bank money that could offer many of the benefits of private digital innovations while retaining many of the advantages of existing monetary and payment systems. Interoperability is key to ensure that the adoption of domestic CBDCs facilitates cross-border payments rather than the emergence of multiple digital currency ecosystems. Over 90 per cent of central banks responding to a survey indicated that they are actively working on some form of CBDC. In the short and medium term, the G20 Roadmap for Enhancing Cross-border Payments promotes the interlinking of fast payment systems for the retail market, which could be a significant milestone in improving cross-border retail payments.

Science, technology, innovation and capacity-building **In Numbers**

Paragraph 59: Realize the full potential of science, technology and innovation

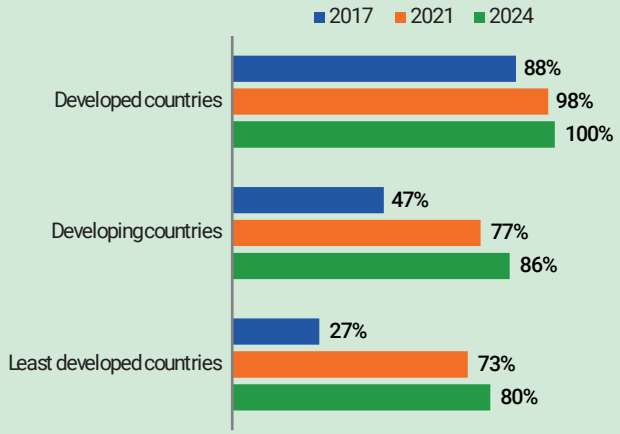
The Sevilla Commitment calls for actions to realize the full potential of science, technology and innovation (STI). This section covers trends regarding national innovation and digital policies, innovation activities and knowledge diffusion, artificial intelligence (AI), and international cooperation on STI.

National innovation systems

More developing countries have adopted national digital strategies in the past decade, but many of these still lack alignment with industrial and environmental policies and regional strategies. By 2024, 86 per cent of developing countries and 80 per cent of least developed countries (LDCs) had adopted national digital strategies, up from fewer than half of developing countries and around a quarter of LDCs in 2017. Newer digital strategies tend to be more comprehensive, often including clearer objectives and investment initiatives. However, many remain weakly aligned with regional strategies, industrial policies and environmental objectives,[36] with some developing countries lacking sufficient resources for implementation.

Implementation of mission-oriented innovation policies is on the rise, reflecting a growing focus by policymakers on steering innovation towards societal goals. In 2025, the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) identified 241 active missions under such policy initiatives, compared with almost none a decade earlier.[37] STI for SDGs roadmaps have emerged as an important tool to operationalize such approaches, linking innovation priorities to national development objectives through a systemic, challenge-led framework. The United Nations system supports countries in developing and implementing these roadmaps, with a particular focus on building partnerships and STI capacity in developing countries. Between 2019 and 2025, the UN STI4SDGs programme, led by the United Nations Inter-Agency Task Team on Science, Technology, and Innovation for the SDGs, supported 15 countries in developing STI for SDGs roadmaps, each complemented by a dedicated monitoring, evaluation and learning framework. In parallel, the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) supported the development of national intellectual property (IP) and innovation strategies, initiating 15 and finalizing 24 for adoption between 2022 and 2024, complemented by its efforts to expand IP integration training within science, technology, engineering and mathematics disciplines through its WIPO Academy.

Figure III.7.1
Share of countries that have adopted a digital strategy, by country group, select years
(Percentage of countries)



Source: UNCTAD World Investment Report 2025.

Technology transfer, knowledge-sharing, capacity-building and financing for STI

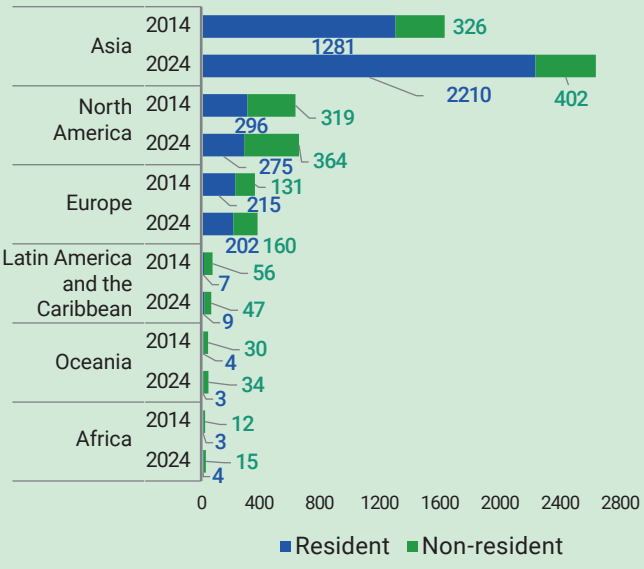
Global innovation activity is expanding but remains geographically concentrated. Global patent applications increased by 4.9 per cent in 2024, marking a fifth consecutive annual increase.[38] Asia accounted for around 70 per cent of total patent application filings, driven primarily by China. Filings remained low in developing regions, with Africa at 0.5 per cent of global applications and Latin America and the Caribbean at 1.5 per cent, reflecting differences in domestic innovation capacity and market size. Globally, resident applicants represented about 72.6 per cent of filings. However, in many developing jurisdictions, non-resident activity continued to constitute the majority of applications.

The geographic disparity in innovation capacity is also reflected in the distribution of innovation assets, with the patent offices in China, the United States, Japan and the Republic of Korea representing about 65 per cent of all patents in force globally in 2024. In several developing regions, more than 80 per cent of patents in force were owned by non-resident applicants. Women accounted for only 18 per cent of inventors listed in international patent applications in 2024. To address structural participation gaps in the global IP system, WIPO has developed targeted projects—including IP Management Clinics for Women-led Small- and Medium-sized Enterprises—to strengthen innovation readiness and IP commercialization capacity in underrepresented regions.

Figure III.7.2

Patent applications, by region and residency, 2014 versus 2024

(Thousands of patent applications)

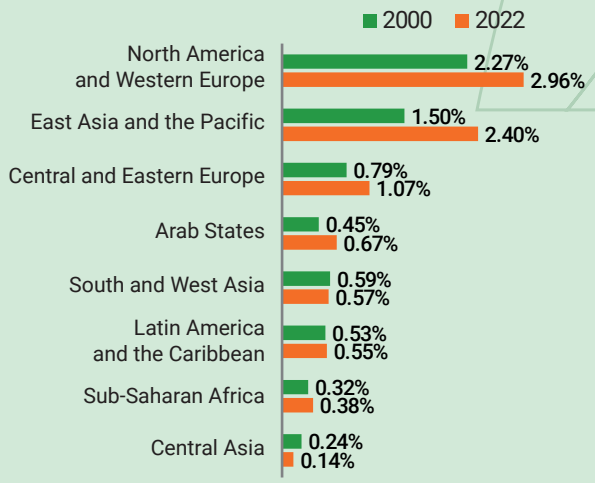


Source: UN DESA elaboration, based on WIPO Statistics Database, September 2025.

Figure III.7.3

Gross domestic expenditure in R&D as a share of GDP, 2000 versus 2022

(Percentage of GDP)

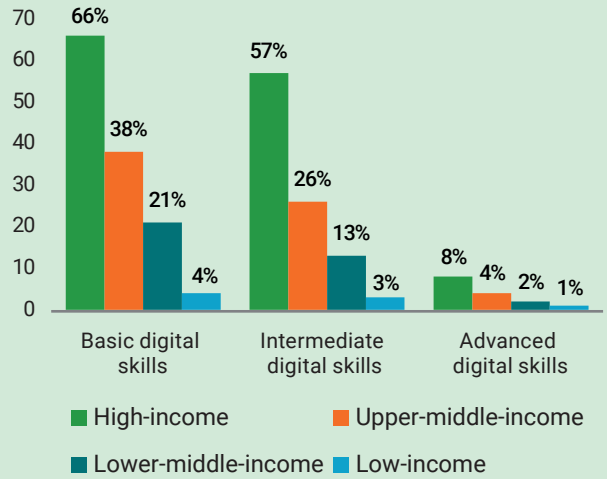


Source: UNESCO Institute for Statistics.

Figure III.7.4

Population with digital skills, by skill type and country group, 2023

(Percentage of population)



Source: Digital Progress and Trends Report 2025, World Bank.
Note: Basic skills cover computer-friendly operations such as copying or moving files, sending emails, transferring files, and copying or pasting within documents. Intermediate skills encompass job-related tool use, including creating presentations, changing privacy settings, connecting or installing devices, installing software, setting security measures, using formulas in spreadsheets, and verifying information. Advanced skills capture programming ability. If 2023 data is unavailable, values from the previous years are used.

Global research and development (R&D) expenditure tripled between 2000 and 2022, but many developing countries invested less than 1 per cent of GDP in R&D. Global R&D expenditure nearly tripled from $1 trillion to $2.68 trillion between 2000 and 2022.[39] Yet stark disparities remain. In 2022, 55 per cent of countries—most of them in the developing world—invested less than 1 per cent of GDP in R&D. East Asia and the Pacific experienced a 60 per cent increase in their R&D expenditure as a share of GDP, outpacing that of North America and Western Europe, which expanded by 31 per cent.[40] The Group of Twenty countries account for over 90 per cent of global research expenditure and outputs,[41] underscoring the need to address the significant gap in STI investment.

Significant between-country digital skills gaps persist across all proficiency levels. In 2023, only 4 per cent of the population in low-income countries possessed basic digital skills, compared to 66 per cent in high-income countries.[42] While the gap was somewhat narrower at the intermediate level, it remained substantial. Advanced digital skills were scarce globally: even in high-income countries, only 8 per cent of the population possessed such competencies.

Gender gaps widen as skills requirements increase. In lower-middle-income countries, the median gender gap rose from 1.21 percentage points for basic skills to 1.52 percentage points for advanced skills. A similar pattern was observed in upper-middle-income countries, where the gap increased from 1.05 percentage points to 1.47 percentage points. The widening was most pronounced in high-income countries, where the gender gap expanded from around 1 percentage point for basic digital skills to nearly 2.5 percentage points for advanced skills. Urban-rural disparities were even larger. For example, in low-income countries, the share of the population with advanced digital skills was five times higher in urban areas than in rural areas.

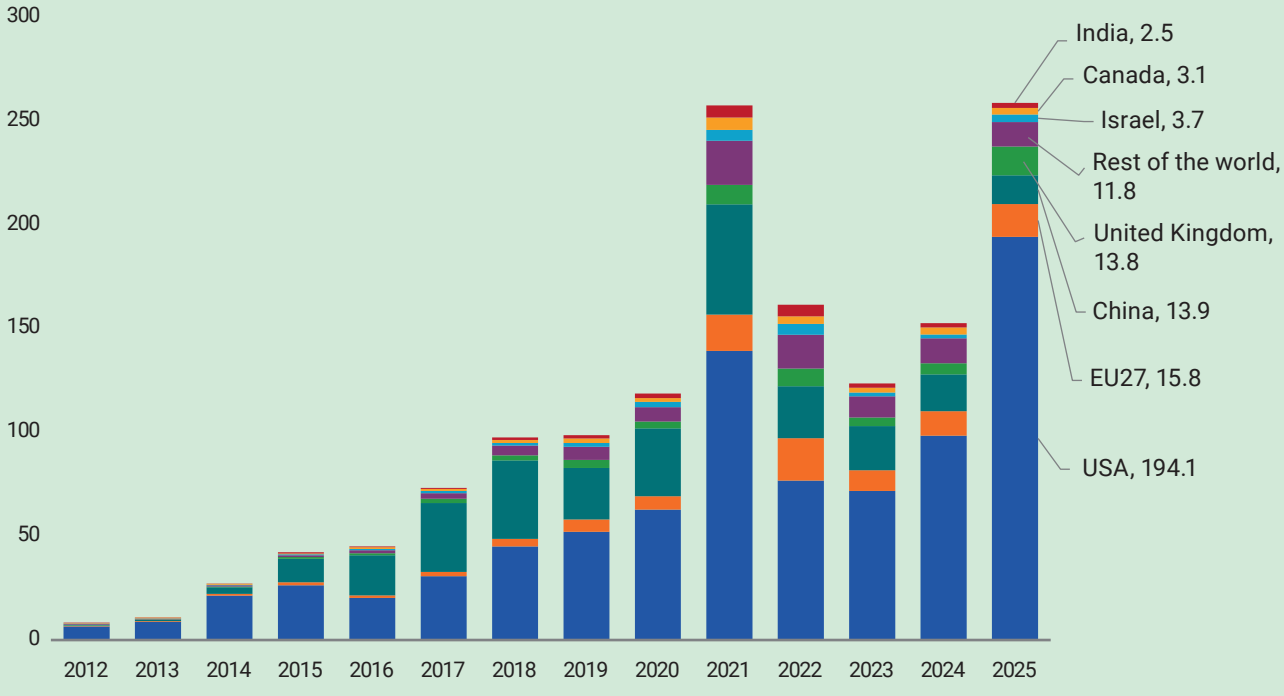
AI innovation and investment have accelerated dramatically but are highly concentrated geographically. Since 2014, innovators and researchers have filed patents for over 54,000 generative AI-related inventions and published over 75,000 scientific publications globally, across a diverse range of applications areas, with an acceleration in recent years.[43] The vast majority of the global AI patents granted in 2023 were from two countries—China (69.7 per cent) and the United States (14.2 per cent).[44]

The surge of AI innovation has been accompanied by a dramatic rise in global venture capital investment, from about $8.4 billion in 2012 to $258.7 billion in 2025, with the United States accounting for three quarters of the total in the latest year. As at October 2025, AI firms had attracted 56 per cent

Figure III.7.5

Global venture capital investment in AI firms, by country, 2012–2025

(Billions of US dollars)



Source: OECD.AI (2025), data from Preqin, last updated 5 January 2026, accessed on 30 January 2026, https://oecd.ai/.

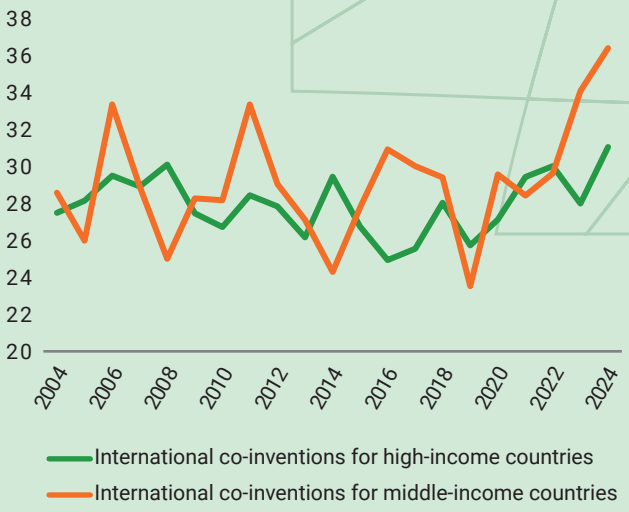
of all venture capital spending, doubling their 2022 share.[45] The high concentration of AI innovation and investment creates a structural barrier that risks further reinforcing the AI divide, with significant development implications as AI is increasingly being applied to different development-relevant sectors, including agrifood, education and health.

With the rapid development of AI technologies, efforts have also increased to increase public policy readiness. The decision of the United Nations General Assembly in August 2025 to establish the United Nations Independent International Scientific Panel on AI and the Global Dialogue on AI Governance marked a significant step forward in global efforts to harness its benefits and address risks. The Global Dialogue on AI Governance will provide an inclusive platform within the United Nations for Member States and stakeholders to discuss the critical issues concerning AI that humanity faces, while the Scientific Panel on AI will serve as a crucial bridge between cutting-edge AI research and policymaking. At the national level, by 2025, 110 countries had either developed AI Readiness Assessment Matrices related to the 2021 UNESCO (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization) Recommendation on the Ethics of AI or submitted a related implementation report. Implementing the Recommendation and the Readiness Assessment helps the sustainable mobilization of financial support for AI.

International cooperation on STI

While international scientific collaboration remains high, it has lost some momentum in recent years. International collaboration in scientific publications has grown steadily, increasing from about 31 per cent in 2009 to 44 per cent in 2023 in high-income countries, while remaining consistently high in middle-income countries at 41 per cent or above.[46] The internationalization of business R&D and innovation activities has also deepened over the past two decades: In 2024, the median share of inventions made in high-income countries that involved international co-operation was over 30 per cent, whereas the corresponding figure for middle-income countries surpassed 35 per cent, as shown in figure III.7.6.[47] At the same time, science policies have increasingly sought to "securitize" research collaboration to ensure mutual benefit and mitigate risks such as data and intellectual property theft.[48] More recent data suggests that the long-standing trend towards increasing international scientific collaboration has lost momentum, partly driven by a sharp decline in collaboration between China and the United States starting from 2019.[49]

Figure III.7.6
International collaboration in inventions, median, by country group, 2004–2024
(Percentage of patents)



Source: OECD, STI Micro-data Lab: Intellectual Property Database, http://oe.cd/ipstats, December 2025.
Note: Data refers to patent applications filed under the Patent Co-operation Treaty, according to inventor location. Median is compiled on countries featuring at least 10 patent filings in a given year.

Since the adoption in 2021 of the UNESCO Recommendation on Open Science, open science practices have expanded worldwide, but implementation remains uneven across regions and disciplines. Only one third of all scientific literature published between 2000 and 2021 was made available through open access, although the trend is accelerating as around 50 per cent of articles published in 2021 are available in some form of open access.[50]

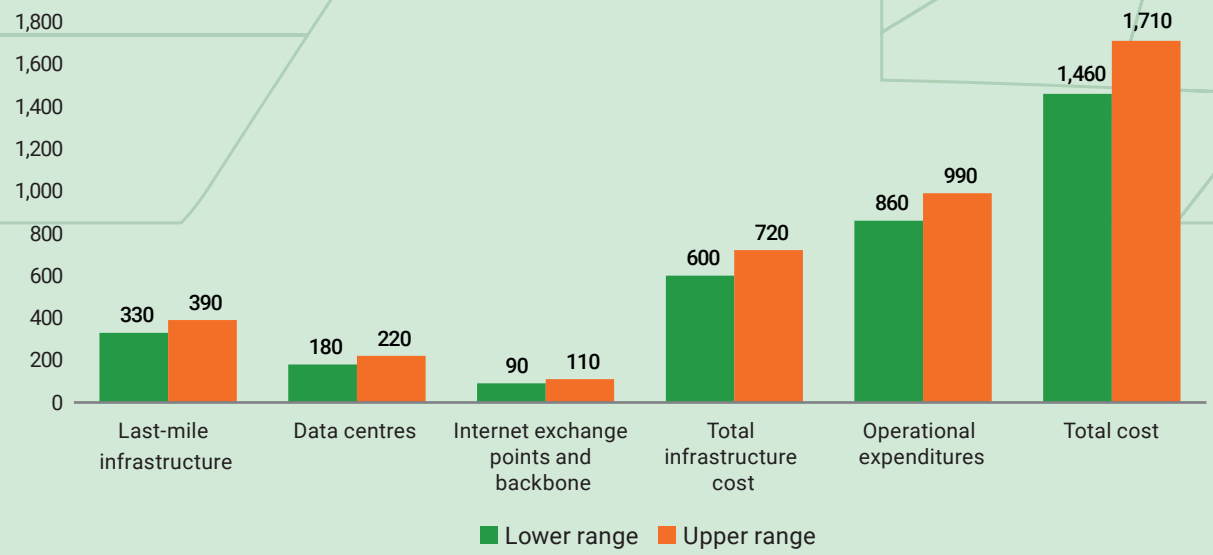
Paragraph 60: Increase investment in digital connectivity and close the digital divides

The Sevilla Commitment calls for increasing investment to achieve universal, meaningful and affordable digital connectivity and close the digital divides. This section examines trends in internet penetration and affordability, the digital infrastructure financing gap and investment in digital sectors.

Figure III.7.7

Global digital infrastructure financing gap for achieving universal connectivity through 2030, by infrastructure type

(Billions of US dollars)



Source: International Telecommunication Union (ITU), *Connecting Humanity Action Blueprint—Advancing Sustainable, Affordable and Innovative Solutions,* September 2025.

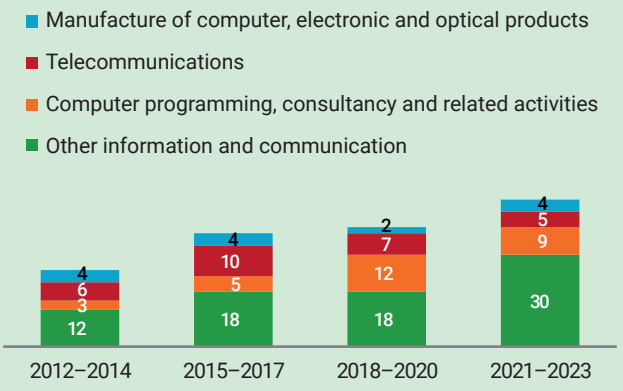
Global internet use continues to rise, albeit with significant regional and gender disparities, as affordability remains a major obstacle. In 2025, 74 per cent of the world's population were online, up from 71 per cent in 2024.[51] While high-income countries had near universal internet penetration at 94 per cent, lower-middle-income and low-income countries were at 63 per cent and 23 per cent respectively. Among regions, Africa had the lowest internet penetration at 36 per cent. Data also shows that there has been a lack of progress in closing the global gender gap in internet use. Globally, 280 million more men than women used the internet in 2025. Moreover, it is estimated that women in low- and middle-income countries are 14 per cent less likely than men to access mobile internet, which translates into approximately 235 million fewer women than men in these countries in 2024.[52]

Mobile broadband and fixed broadband have become more affordable in almost all regions and across all income groups. Globally, the median price of the data-only mobile broadband basket fell to 1.4 per cent of gross national income per capita in 2025, from 1.5 per cent in 2024, while the fixed broadband basket remained stable at 2.5 per cent. Despite the improvement, affordability continues to be a major barrier to internet access, especially in low-income countries where mobile broadband and fixed broadband cost 12.3 per cent and 29.5 per cent of gross national income per capita respectively.

Figure III.7.8

Inflows to developing countries in core sectors of the digital economy, 2012–2023

(Billions of US dollars)



Source: UNCTAD World Investment Report 2025.
Note: "Other information and communication" includes unspecified information and communication; information service activities; motion picture, video and sound recordings; programming and broadcasting activities; and publishing activities.

The global digital infrastructure financing gap for achieving universal, meaningful connectivity through 2030 is estimated to be $1.5 trillion to $1.7 trillion.[53] High operating costs—especially in rural areas—account for almost 60 per cent of

this gap, whereas the cost of deploying last-mile infrastructure, data centres, backbone and internet exchange points account for the rest. South Asia faces the largest last-mile infrastructure capital expenditure gap of $179 billion, followed by $101 billion in Africa and $53 billion in East Asia and the Pacific. To help close this gap, ITU and the United Nations Trade and Development (UNCTAD), together with eight multilateral development banks, have built on the Digital Infrastructure Investment Initiative and launched the Digital Infrastructure Investment Catalyser as part of the Sevilla Platform for Action.[54] The Catalyser aims to strengthen coordination on data and tools, capacity-building and financing to accelerate investment in sustainable, bankable digital infrastructure investments.

Global investment in digital sectors is rising, with telecommunications a notable exception. Inflows to developing countries in the core sectors of the digital economy in 2021 to 2023 nearly doubled from the levels in 2012 to 2014. The core digital economy in developing economies has diversified, driven by the diversification of digital services, greater demand for software solutions, and the growth of tech talent and start-up ecosystems in various developing countries. After seeing strong inflows in the early- and mid-2010s, investment in the telecommunication sector has stabilized. This partly reflects the economic recessions resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic and later the unfavourable financing conditions.[55] High interest rates and tighter credit markets have deterred investors from funding large-scale telecommunication projects in developing countries.

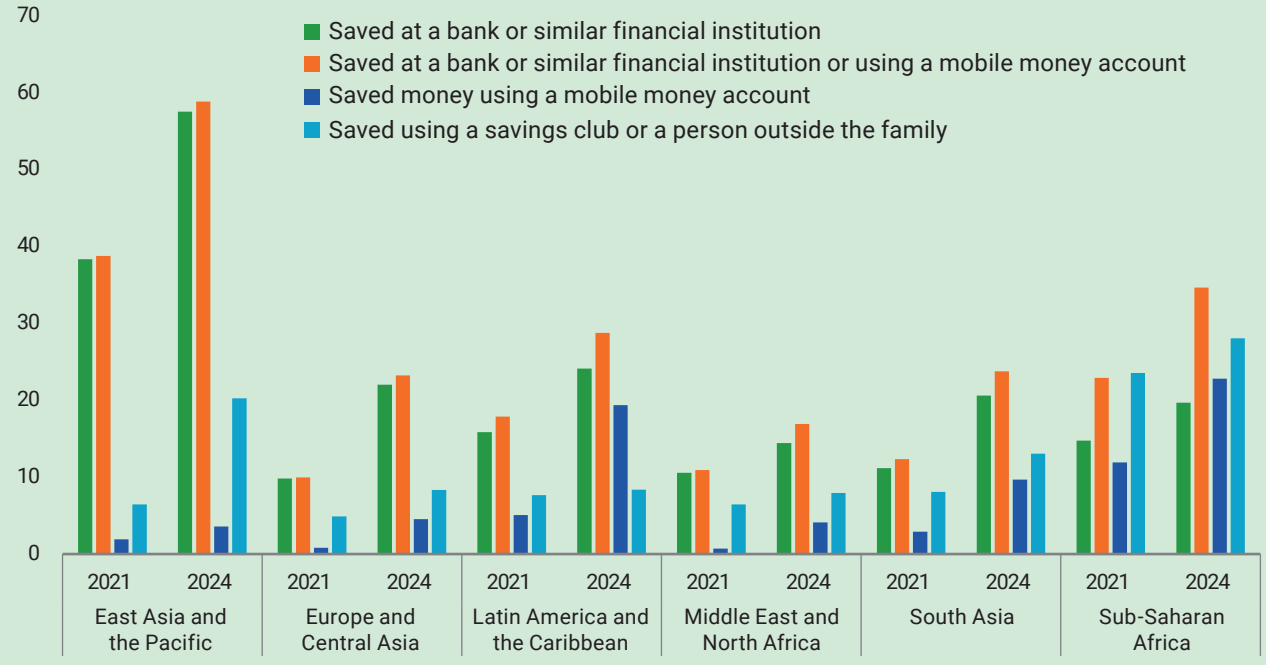
Paragraph 61: Fully realize the potential of digital financial services

The Sevilla Commitment calls for full realization of the potential of digital financial services. This section covers digital technology's impact on financial inclusion, financial technology (fintech) investment, and the regulatory environment.

Figure III.7.9

Adults saving any money in the past year, 2021 versus 2024

(Percentage of adults)



Source: Global Findex Database 2025, World Bank.

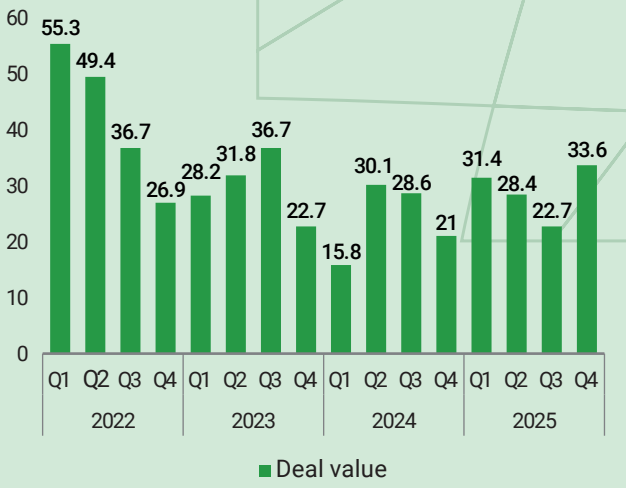
Digital technology is driving growth in account ownership, formal savings and digital payments. Among developing countries, 32 per cent of adults reported personally using a mobile money service in 2024, a sharp increase from just 3 per cent a decade ago.[56] The increase in mobile money account ownership contributes to a rise in formal savings, as large retail networks of mobile money service providers allow savers with mobile money accounts to make frequent, small cash deposits locally without occurring high transaction costs.

The share of adults who have saved formally using a mobile money account is much larger in some regions and economies. Sub-Saharan Africa has the largest share of adults who did so: 23 per cent of adults in 2024, twice the share in 2021. In Latin America and the Caribbean, 19 per cent of adults saved formally using a mobile money account, four times the share of adults in these economies who saved this way in 2021.

Global fintech investment reached $116 billion in 2025, rebounding from a seven-year low of $95.5 billion in 2024, as the market weathers macroeconomic challenges and geopolitical tensions.[57] Digital assets and currencies, which include crypto, saw total investment nearly doubling from 2024, reaching $19.1 billion in 2025. This reflects the adjustment of digital asset regulatory frameworks in key jurisdictions, which provides better clarity on permissible and prohibited activities, and growing participation in this sector by traditional firms. Investment in payment sectors declined in 2025 as investors became more selective, favouring large, scaling firms with established fundamentals over early-stage firms with higher risks.

Fintech can support growth and inclusion under sound regulations, but growing spillovers to traditional financial markets pose financial stability risks. Recent evidence suggests that the continued growth of stablecoins—with the potential to reach $2 trillion by 2028—could disrupt financial markets and weaken monetary policy effectiveness.[58] Data from 2021 to 2025 shows that stablecoin issuers have become large investors in short-term United States securities and have noticeable impact on traditional financial markets.[59] This impact can become more disruptive as the stablecoin sector continues to grow and reaches a level that is large enough to suppress short-term yields and have an influence on the transmission of the United States Federal Reserve's policy to market rates.

Figure III.7.10
Global funding activity in fintech, 2022Q1–2025Q4
(Billions of US dollars)



Source: Pulse of Fintech H2 2025, KPMG.

Addressing these risks without stifling innovation requires regulatory frameworks that are both enabling and proportionate. Such frameworks should be based on the principle of "same activity, same risk, same regulation" and ensure that stablecoins and other fintech innovations are subject to consistent and comprehensive regulations that are commensurate to the risks that they pose (see chapter IV.4 on the international financial architecture and systemic issues for more discussion on cryptoassets and stablecoins and related regulatory issues). Findings from a global industry survey indicate that fintech firms across regions identify capacity and coordination of financial authorities and efficiencies in licensing and registration processes as key constraints.[60]Among developing regions, fintech firms' perceptions of the regulatory environment are most positive in Asia-Pacific and weakest in Latin America and the Caribbean. Regarding open banking/open finance frameworks, 29 per cent of fintech firms globally deem them effective in supporting fintech business where they exist, while 24 per cent view them as ineffective.

Data, monitoring and follow-up **In Numbers**

Para 63: Investment in national data statistical systems

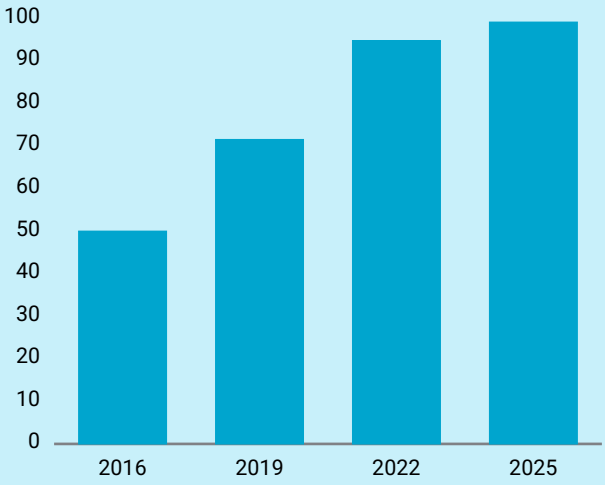
The Sevilla Commitment underscores the importance of high-quality and disaggregated data and statistics which requires predictable, multi-year financing for national statistical systems to enable monitoring and ensure that development progress remains on track.

There has been significant improvement in the availability and quality of data for monitoring the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). In early 2026, almost 70 per cent of SDG indicators have good coverage, and all 234 unique indicators have well-established methodologies to date. As of 20 October 2025, the Global Sustainable Development Goal Indicators Database included data for 232 of the 234 unique indicators and 3.3 million data records, an increase from data for 200 of the 231 unique indicators and approximately 1.4 million data records in 2020.

Despite these gains, challenges and gaps remain. Between 2019 and 2025, data availability improved across the SDGs with notable trend data coverage in health (Goal 3), clean water (Goal 6), clean energy (Goal 7), and partnerships (Goal 17). Goal 7 stands out with over 90 per cent trend data coverage. However, areas such as gender equality (Goal 5), sustainable cities (Goal 11), climate action (Goal 13), and peace and justice (Goal 16) continue to lag, with less than 35 per cent coverage.

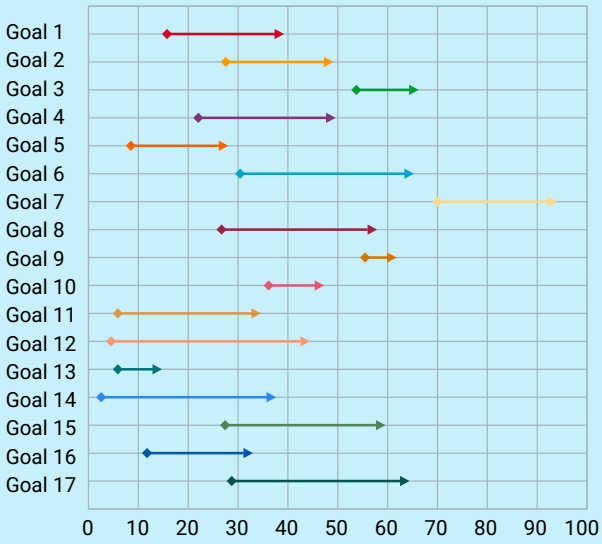
Disaggregated data remains insufficient, especially across cross-cutting dimensions such as disability, income and gender. In 2021, among reporting countries, 39 per cent had difficulties adequately collecting data on migrants, 27 per cent had difficulties collecting data on older persons, and 27 per cent had difficulties with data on persons with disabilities. In the Global SDG Indicators Database,

Figure III.8.1
SDG indicators with data
(Percentage)



Source: UN DESA.

Figure III.8.2
Member States with trend data for SDG indicators, by goal, 2019–2025
(Percentage)



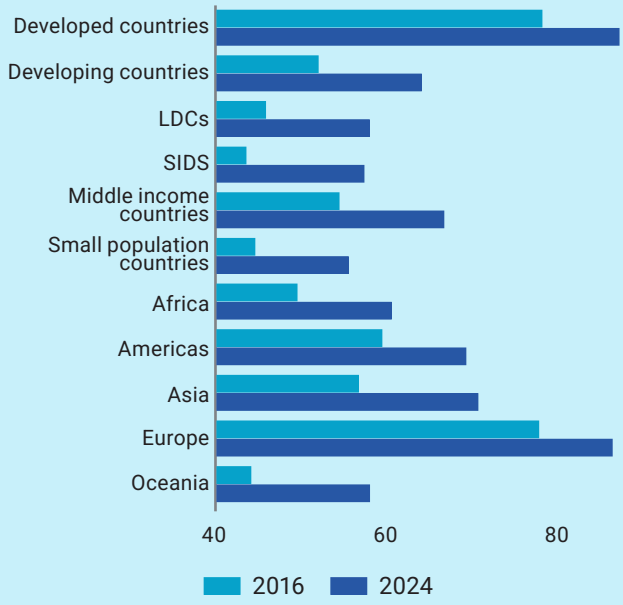
Source: UN DESA.
Note: Data for at least two years since 2015, weighted average across indicators. Diamond shows December 2019, arrowhead shows December 2025.

data disaggregated by disability status and income (quantiles/quintiles) is available for only 8 and 10 SDG indicators respectively. In 2025, 57 out of 251 SDG indicators had sex disaggregated data for some of the countries with data, compared to 54 out of 248 in 2023. Only 26 out of the 251 SDG indicators had sex disaggregated data for more than 95 per cent of countries with data in 2025.

Statistical capacities

Steady but slowing progress has been made in improving statistical performance at country level. The most significant improvements in Statistical Performance Indicators (SPI) overall scores occurred in countries that ranked in the bottom two deciles in 2016. The global average for the overall index crossed 71 in 2024, based on rapid improvements in data infrastructure (global average above 67 in 2024 from 50 in 2016) and data sources (global average at almost 60 in 2024 from below 50 in 2017). Countries with smaller population sizes face specific challenges, as even high-income countries with populations of less than 500,000 have lower average scores. Countries in special situations such as small island developing States (SIDS) and least developed countries (LDCs) have some of the lowest average scores, reflecting the need for greater investment in capacities in these countries.

Figure III.8.3
Average statistical perfomance scores, 2016–2024
(Statistical performance index)



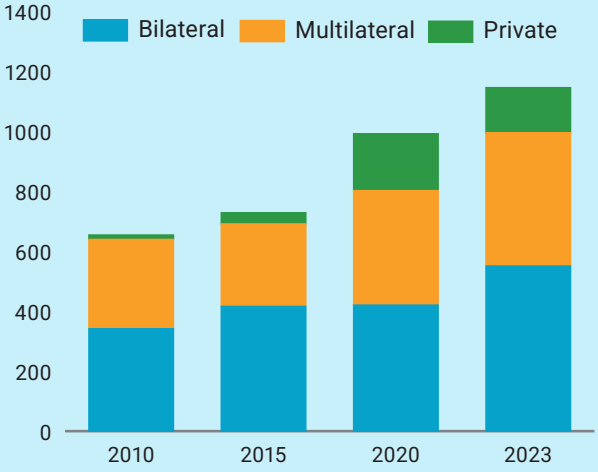
Source: Zander Prinsloo and others, "2025 Update of the Statistical Performance Indicators", World Bank.

Financial support and investment in data collection and capacity

External funding for data and statistics increased in 2023, driven largely by renewed donor commitments. However, this upward trajectory is now under threat. There was a historic rebound in 2023, with funding for data and statistics reaching an all-time high of $1.14 billion, an increase of 8 per cent over 2022, driven largely by Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) Development Assistance Committee (DAC) donors. However, declines are projected for 2024 and 2025. In 2024, official development assistance from DAC donors fell by 6 per cent in real terms compared to 2023. Projections for 2025 suggest another 9–17 per cent cut in the disbursements for data and statistics on top of the 2024 decreases.

The impacts of the decline in funding are already being felt in countries, undermining statistical activities. A rapid assessment conducted in 2025 showed that 69 per cent of the responding national statistical offices in low- and middle-income countries reported reduced funding since January 2025. SDG monitoring and gender statistics are expected to experience the greatest negative impact, while price statistics, poverty statistics, and labour and employment statistics are expected to see the least impact from the funding cuts. Gender data financing continued its decline from the 2021 peak of $194 million, with $165 million disbursed in 2022 and only $154 million in 2023. Suspension of a significant proportion of the 40-year-old Demographic and Health Surveys (DHS) programme has a detrimental

Figure III.8.4
External funding for data and statistics
(Millions of US dollars)



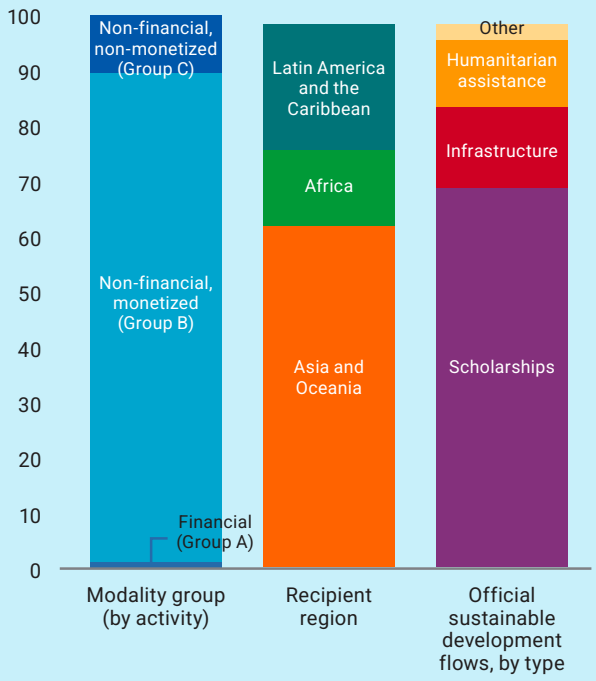
Source: PRESS 2025, Paris21.

impact on health and gender data infrastructure in developing countries. As of May 2025, 39 SDG indicators—nearly one in six—depended to varying degrees on DHS for essential data, and several core health and gender indicators derive 50–70 per cent of their data from DHS.

Para 64: Strengthen interoperability of data and statistical frameworks

The Sevilla Commitment promotes open, interoperable data platforms and standards. It calls for broader reporting by South-South cooperation providers, and supports coordination among the international community on data and statistics and leveraging non-traditional data sources.

Figure III.8.5
South-South Cooperation, by modality group, region and type, 2020–2025
(Percentage)



Source: UNCTAD, United Nations Framework to Measure South-South cooperation.
Note: Based on data from nine South-South cooperation providers in Latin America and the Caribbean between 2020 and 2025. Modality group is based on activity numbers. Official sustainable development flows comprise financial support and non-financial support that can be monetized (modality groups A and B respectively).

In 2025, the first ever South-South cooperation data was reported—under the United Nations Framework to Measure South-South Cooperation—to SDG indicator 17.3.1. To date, nine countries from Latin America and the Caribbean have shared initial data based on pilot efforts. Only 31 out of 4,368 South-South cooperation activities (1 per cent) were delivered through financial means. Of the remaining non-financial activities, 401 remained non-monetized. Around 70 per cent of official sustainable development flows from the reporting countries were provided in the form of scholarships, 15 per cent as monetary contributions to infrastructure projects, and 13 per cent as humanitarian assistance. Almost two thirds (63 per cent) of official sustainable development grants were provided to developing countries in Asia and Oceania. African countries received 13 per cent, while around one quarter (24 per cent) were provided to other Latin American and Caribbean countries. Support for LDCs accounted for around 7 per cent of the total support.

Para 65: FFD4 monitoring and follow-up

The Sevilla Commitment strengthened the follow-up process on financing for development to enhance monitoring and global policy coherence and bolster links to efforts at the regional and national levels.

Member States are nominating focal points for financing for development, in line with their agreement in the Sevilla Commitment. The agreed follow-up to the Sevilla Commitment at the national level is anchored through the appointment of national focal points for financing for development in finance and other relevant ministries. As of end February 2026, 69 Member States have nominated a total of 127 national focal points for financing for development, including from 63 ministries of finance or the economy.

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