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Network Readiness Index 2024 – NRI

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SUBJECTS COVERED

SCIENCE & TECH

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ISSUING BODY	FREQUENCY	INDIA'S RANK	TOP PERFORMER
Portulans Institute	Annual	49 / 133 +11	United States

KEY FINDINGS

- India jumped 11 places from 60th (2023) to 49th (2024), entering the top 50
- India's NRI score improved from 49.93 (2023) to 53.63 (2024)
- USA topped the index for the third consecutive year
- India ranked 1st globally in AI scientific publications, AI talent concentration, and ICT services exports
- India ranked 2nd in FTTH/Building Internet subscriptions and mobile broadband traffic
- 133 economies assessed across four pillars: Technology, People, Governance, Impact

ABOUT THE INDEX

The Network Readiness Index (NRI) is published by the **Portulans Institute**, an independent non-profit research and educational institute based in Washington, D.C. The NRI maps the network-based readiness landscape of economies, measuring how well countries leverage information and communication technology (ICT) for economic and social development.

The NRI 2024 assesses **133 economies** across **four pillars** and **54 variables**:

- **Technology** — access, content, and future technologies (AI, IoT, cloud computing)
- **People** — individuals, businesses, and governments as users and adopters of technology
- **Governance** — trust, regulation, and enabling environment for digital transformation
- **Impact** — economic, social, and quality of life outcomes from network readiness

Each pillar is further divided into sub-pillars, and the overall NRI score is calculated as the average of the four pillar scores on a scale of 0 to 100.

INDIA'S PERFORMANCE

India achieved a landmark improvement, jumping **11 places from 60th to 49th**, entering the **top 50** for the first time. India's NRI score improved from 49.93 to **53.63**.

India secured **1st rank** globally in three critical sub-indicators:

- **AI scientific publications** — reflecting India's growing research output in artificial intelligence
- **AI talent concentration** — density of AI-skilled professionals
- **ICT services exports** — India's dominance in IT services (Infosys, TCS, Wipro, HCL)

India also ranked **2nd** in:

- **FTTH/Building Internet subscriptions** — driven by Jio fibre expansion
- **Mobile broadband internet traffic within the country**

India is ranked **2nd among lower-middle-income countries** on the NRI.

Regional / BRICS Comparison

COUNTRY	NRI RANK	NRI SCORE
China	23rd	64.2
Russia	42nd	56.0
India	49th	53.6
Brazil	53rd	51.7
South Africa	72nd	44.8

Top 5 Countries (NRI 2024)

RANK	COUNTRY	SCORE
1	United States	80.3
2	Singapore	79.5
3	Netherlands	78.5
4	Denmark	78.1
5	Finland	77.8

KEY HIGHLIGHTS OF LATEST EDITION

- The United States topped the NRI for the third consecutive year, with a score of 80.3
- Nordic and Western European countries dominate the top 10 alongside the USA and Singapore
- India showed the largest rank improvement (+11 places) among major economies
- The AI sub-pillar was introduced with greater granularity in the 2024 edition, reflecting AI's growing importance
- The digital divide between high-income and low-income countries remains significant — the top 10 average 78.5 while the bottom 10 average 21.3
- Government digitisation and e-governance were identified as key differentiators for middle-income country performance

UPSC RELEVANCE

*NRI publisher (Portulans Institute), India's rank (49th) and score (53.63), four pillars, top country (USA), total economies (133), India's 1st-rank sub-indicators **Mains GS-3**: Digital India Mission, IT sector growth, AI ecosystem development, ICT infrastructure, digital divide, e-governance, broadband penetration*

Interview: "India leads the world in AI publications and ICT exports but ranks 49th overall on network readiness. What explains this paradox?"

RELATED TERMS

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