

LONDA 2025

DIGITAL RIGHTS & INCLUSION IN AFRICA REPORT

Ghana

Country Report



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Ghana

By Selassie Tay

Executive Summary

This report examines developments within Ghana's communication and mass media subsector in 2025. It focuses on themes that can be broadly classified under digital rights, human rights, and press freedom. Employing a multi-faceted approach, the report evaluates Ghana's performance in digital inclusion, internet access, freedom of expression, data protection and privacy, access to information, censorship and content moderation, and artificial intelligence and emerging technologies. It assesses Ghana's compliance with international standards by utilising The Score Index, a digital rights index developed

by Paradigm Initiative, which evaluates state adherence to key human rights principles as outlined in the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights' Declaration of Principles on Freedom of Expression and Access to Information in Africa. Effective laws and targeted initiatives have bolstered Ghana's ICT progress over the year, putting the country in good standing on various indices. Challenges, however, remain with press freedom, digital divide, data protection, and cybersecurity. Robust regulatory frameworks, along with strategic collaboration among government entities, civil society organisations, and the private sector, are essential for enhancing technology access and protecting digital rights.

Introduction

Liberalisation of Ghana's ICT sector in 1994 has been key in developing infrastructure and boosting the country's competitiveness among its regional peers. As of 2025, the industry was valued at about 1.5 billion Ghanaian cedis, approximately US\$136 million annually, with steady growth expectations.¹ The country now has six subsea cables² with a reported cumulative bandwidth capacity of about 7.16 terabytes, positioning Ghana as a potential ICT-enabled Services hub in West Africa.³ A clear set of laws, policies, and targeted projects focused on specific goals has helped the country achieve significant progress in its ICT sector. The Ghana Digital Acceleration Project, which secured US\$15.77 million

in disbursements in March 2024,⁴ is one of the key infrastructure projects currently ongoing to expand and improve both national and international connectivity. Another noteworthy initiative is the Next Gen InfraCo (NGIC) 5G Network, a public-private partnership launched in mid-2024 to develop Africa's first shared, neutral host 4G/5G mobile broadband infrastructure. This initiative aims for complete digital coverage by 2030, with plans to deploy 4,400 sites and serve 37 million customers by 2028.⁵ As of 2025, NGIC has deployed only 16 5G-ready sites and received full NCA approval for its core network infrastructure. These milestones reflect meaningful progress

1. Ghana - Information and Communications Technology (2025) <https://www.trade.gov/country-commercial-guides/ghana-information-and-communications-technology-ict> (Accessed on 30 November 2025).
2. Briefing By The Minister For Communications And Digitalisation To Parliament On Internet Disruption In Ghana As A Result Of The Damage To Submarine Cables (2024) <https://moc.gov.gh/wp-content/uploads/2023/03/Briefing-on-Submarine-Cable-Disruptions-2-1.pdf> (Accessed on 30 November 2025)
3. Ghana's Information Communication Technology Sector (2019) <https://www.ecexportsymposium.co.za/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/ICT-SECTOR-PROFILE-2019.pdf> (Accessed on 13 November 2024)
4. Ghana - Digital Acceleration Project (2025) <https://documents.worldbank.org/en/publication/documents-reports/documentdetail/938111649959522167/ghana-digital-acceleration-project>
5. Government Launches Next-Gen Infraco For 5g Deployment In Ghana (2024) <https://moc.gov.gh/2024/06/03/government-launches-next-gen-infraco-for-5g-deployment-in-ghana/> (Accessed on 30 November 2025)

following earlier delays in 2024.⁶ Ghana appears to be doing better amongst its regional peers, having scored 66.2 out of 100 on the 2024 ICT Development Index, surpassing Nigeria and the Ivory Coast, which scored 46.9 and 65.3, respectively.⁷ It also ranked fifth within Africa on the 2023 Network Readiness Index (NRI), outperforming its region in each of the four pillars of the index.⁸

The liberalisation of the ICT sector, following the constitutional changes with the enactment of the 1992 constitution, has also significantly influenced the growth of the mass media landscape. As of 2025, there were a total of 176 TV stations⁹ and 768 FM radio stations¹⁰

licensed to operate in Ghana. Before 1993, there were only one TV and one radio station in Ghana. This feat couldn't have been achieved without the combination of technological advancement and a favourable legal and policy environment. There appears to have been a symbiotic relationship between the gradual growth of Ghana's democratic ethos and the expansion of the Ghanaian media landscape, as may have been expected by the framers of the 1992 Constitution.¹¹ Article 12 of the Constitution guarantees press freedom and provides guidelines for responsible journalism by stipulating a right to rejoinders.¹² The Criminal Libel Law, which had restricted press

6. Q2 Sectorial Briefing By The Honourable Minister For Communication, Digital Technology & Innovation (2025) https://moc.gov.gh/wp-content/uploads/2023/03/Q2-Briefing-MoCDTI_2-July.pdf (Accessed on 09 December 2025)
7. Measuring digital development - The ICT Development Index (2024) https://www.itu.int/dms_pub/itu-d/opb/ind/d-ind-ict_mdd-2024-3-pdf-e.pdf (Accessed on 12 November 2024)
8. Network Readiness Index (2023) <https://download.networkreadinessindex.org/reports/countries/2023/ghana.pdf> (Accessed on 30 November 2025)
9. List of Authorised TV Broadcasting Stations as at Third Quarter (2025) <https://nca.org.gh/television/> (Accessed on 30 November 2025)
10. Authorised VHF-FM Radio Stations as at Third Quarter (2025) <https://nca.org.gh/authorised-radio/> (Accessed on 30 November 2025)
11. Changes in Ghana's media landscape over 30 years (2023) <https://ifex.org/changes-in-ghanas-media-landscape-over-30-years/> (Accessed on 30 November 2025)
12. Regulatory Framework of the Media in Ghana (2017) <https://philipatawura.wordpress.com/2017/05/02/regulatory-framework-of-the-media-in-ghana/> (Accessed on 14 November 2024)

freedom and criminalised free speech for over a century, has been repealed.¹³ Nonetheless, Section 208 of the Criminal Offences Act (Act 29) and the Electronic Communications Act (Act 775) are two laws that still impede press freedom.

Despite the good rankings in related global indices, Ghana still faces some challenges in the ICT and mass media landscape. In the Londa 2024 report on Ghana, press freedom and online expression were reported as declining. An existing digital divide, shown by differences in service quality, access to digital technologies, and digital skills among various population groups, was also reported. Data protection, privacy, and cybersecurity concerns were noted as needing careful consideration and proactive solutions to keep up with the changing technology landscape.

Internet Access

As of 2025, Ghana had a total of 38.3 million active cellular connections, representing a mobile phone penetration rate of 120%. On average, individuals possess more than one cellular connection, reflecting the growing reliance on mobile technology in daily life. Among connected devices, smartphones accounted for 58%, feature phones for 26%, and basic phones for 16%.¹⁴ Mobile internet penetration reached approximately 70%, with around 24.3 million internet users, predominantly in urban areas, making Ghana the ninth country with the most internet users in Africa. This represents an increase of approximately 9% from 2024. Most new internet users are mobile-first, as many have never used a desktop or laptop computer.¹⁵

13. The Ghanaian Media Landscape: How unethical practices of journalists undermine progress (2012) https://ghana.mom-gmr.org/uploads/tx_lfrogmom/documents/18-476_import.pdf (Accessed on 14 November 2024)

14. Quarterly Statistical Bulletin On Bulletin On Communications In Ghana Communications In Ghana (2025) [https://nca.org.gh/wp-content/uploads/2025/07/Q1-2025-Statistical-BultheUS\\$1.17letin.pdf](https://nca.org.gh/wp-content/uploads/2025/07/Q1-2025-Statistical-BultheUS$1.17letin.pdf) (Accessed on 02 December 2025)

15. Internet Users in Ghana Accelerates to 26 Million — But Millions Still Remain Offline (2025) <https://labarijournal.com/internet-users-in-ghana-accelerates-to-26-million-but-millions-still-remain-offline/> (Accessed on 03 December 2025)

There are 7.95 million social media users, representing 23% of the total population.¹⁶ This group spends an average of three hours and 23 minutes on social media daily, making Ghana the sixth country globally with the highest social media usage and third in Africa.¹⁷ Facebook and YouTube have the most users.¹⁸

There are three mobile network operators, three fixed network operators, and one broadband wireless access provider. MTN Ghana and Telecel hold the largest market shares, exceeding 70% combined.¹⁹ Market competitiveness for internet customers and end users is very poor.²⁰ Ghana ranked number one

on the list of countries in Africa with the most expensive internet, at \$2.58 per Mbps.²¹ A few providers control most of the country's fibre backbone, leading to high wholesale rates that smaller Internet Service Providers (ISPs) must pass on to consumers.²² Nonetheless, mobile internet data is relatively cheaper. Recently, the sector Minister announced a 10% minimum increase in data volumes included in mobile internet plans, without any further increase in prices. This, he stated, is part of the government's efforts to accelerate Ghana's digital transformation by facilitating greater access to the Internet via mobile phones.²³ The introduction of 5G

16. Digital 2025: Ghana (2025) <https://datareportal.com/reports/digital-2025-ghana> (Accessed on 02 December 2025)

17. Internet Usage in Ghana (2024) <https://genderanddigital.org/internet-social-media-usage/> (Accessed on 17 November 2024)

18. YouTube and Facebook Have The Most Users in Ghana in 2025 (2025) <https://techlabari.com/youtube-and-facebook-have-the-most-users-in-ghana-in-2025/> (Accessed on 03 December 2025)

19. Global Perspectives on Ghana Telecom Market Growth: 2025-2033 Insights (2025) <https://www.marketreportanalytics.com/reports/ghana-telecom-market-90137#summary> (Accessed on 02 December 2025)

20. Ghana report (2025) <https://pulse.internetsociety.org/en/reports/GH/> (Accessed on 02 December 2025)

21. African countries with the most expensive internet in 2025 (2025) <https://africa.businessinsider.com/local/lifestyle/african-countries-with-the-most-expensive-internet-in-2025/j7w09dx> (Accessed on 02 December 2025)

22. Why Is Ghana's Internet Still So Expensive in 2025? (2025) <https://thehighstreetjournal.com/why-is-ghanas-internet-still-so-expensive-in-2025/> (Accessed on 02 December 2025)

23. Ghana announces increased internet volumes from July 1 (2025) <https://extensia.tech/ghana-announces-increased-internet-volumes-from-july-1/> (Accessed on 01 December 2025)

technology is also expected to enhance the quality and speed of data services, thereby further increasing internet penetration. To this end, MTN Ghana has announced plans to gradually phase out its 2G and 3G networks, allowing customers ample time to transition to modern technology.²⁴

Smartphones are essential for driving internet penetration. Hence, the government must work to make them more affordable. As of 2025, import tax on smartphones is still in place. In 2022, according to the Alliance for Affordable Internet, the cost of a smartphone as a percentage of people's average monthly income in Sub-Saharan Africa

is 39%.²⁵ A low-end smartphone in Ghana costs US\$49.90, while higher-end phones can cost over US\$325.73. As of 2025, the daily minimum wage in Ghana was US\$1.28, up from US\$1.17 in the previous year.²⁶ With the average monthly wage income estimated to be GH¢2,922,²⁷ approximately US\$ 267, a low-end smartphone could take 27% of the average monthly wage income of the vast majority of people who earn wage income in Ghana. It would also cost them US\$0.40 per gigabyte to purchase mobile internet data.²⁸ Ghana is the second and third cheapest country for mobile internet data in West Africa and Africa, respectively.²⁹ The government is dedicated to enhancing digital literacy

24. MTN Ghana outlines plan to shut down 2G and 3G services (2025) <https://www.gbcghanaonline.com/technology/mtn-ghana-outlines-plan/2025/> (Accessed on 03 December 2025)

25. The cost of smartphones falls, but they remain unaffordable for billions, around the world (2022) <https://a4ai.org/news/the-cost-of-smartphones-falls-but-they-remain-unaffordable-for-billions-around-the-world> (Accessed on 17 November 2024)

26. Ghana's National Daily Minimum Wage increased by 10% for 2025 (2025) <https://www.graphic.com.gh/business/business-news/ghanas-national-daily-minimum-wage-increased-by-10-for-2025.html> (Accessed on 03 December 2025)

27. Navigating Inflation: Impacts of the Cost-of-Living Crisis on Workers in Informal Employment in Accra, Ghana (2024) <https://www.wiego.org/resources/navigating-inflation-impacts-cost-living-crisis-workers-informal-employment-accra-ghana> (Accessed on 17 November 2024)

28. Top 20 Countries With The Cheapest Mobile Data Prices in Africa (2025) <https://talkafricana.com/african-countries-with-the-cheapest-mobile-data-prices/> (Accessed on 03 December 2025)

29. Mobile data price in Ghana third cheapest in Africa, second in West Africa (2024) <https://www.modernghana.com/news/1328926/mobile-data-price-in-ghana-third-cheapest-in-afric.html> (Accessed on 17 November 2024)

and digital inclusion by providing affordable mobile data for all. A report by GSMA projects this could result in the expansion of mobile internet adoption to 20.6 million unique users by 2029.³⁰

Internet shutdowns and outages are uncommon in Ghana. There are currently no government restrictions on internet access and no reported cases of governmental censorship and monitoring of emails or internet chat rooms without judicial oversight. This can be attributed to several factors, including available laws, political will, and efforts by civil society organisations. No internet shutdown was recorded in 2025, although the sector Minister is said to have contemplated a temporary nationwide internet shutdown to halt the circulation of disturbing videos following the August 6 helicopter crash involving key government officials.³¹

According to the 2025 Freedom on the Net Index published by Freedom House, Ghana's internet freedom is classified as "partly free," receiving a score of 64 out of 100,³² having dropped one point from the previous year. This indicates a moderate level of digital rights and online accessibility, reflecting the positive aspects and challenges in the country's digital landscape. Quality of service is a concern for the segment of the population with access to the Internet.

As of the third quarter of 2025, MTN provided the fastest mobile internet in Ghana with an average download speed of 21,3 Mbs. The highest data upload speed was recorded with MTN at 13,5 Mbs. The lowest ping was observed with Telecel at 134 milliseconds. During the same period, the fastest broadband internet in Ghana was provided by Starlink with an average download

30. Digital Reforms Could Add US\$3.4 Billion to Ghana's Economy by 2030 (2025) <https://www.newsghana.com.gh/digital-reforms-could-add-us3-4-billion-to-ghanas-economy-by-2030/> (Accessed on 08 December 2025)

31. Minister weighed temporary internet blackout to curb spread of horrific helicopter crash videos (2025) <https://www.myjoyonline.com/minister-weighed-temporary-internet-blackout-to-curb-spread-of-horrific-helicopter-crash-videos/> (Accessed on 03 December 2025)

32. Freedom on the Net (2025) <https://freedomhouse.org/country/ghana/freedom-net/2025> (Accessed on 03 December 2025)

speed of 81.2 Mbs. Ghana ranked 130th globally and 19th in Sub-Saharan Africa on the 2025 (3rd quarter) Global Network Excellence Index.³³

MTN continues to be a significant market player among mobile network operators in Ghana, with a 75% market share. Telecel is a significant market player for fixed network operators, with a 73% market share.³⁴ This has raised concerns about preserving fair competition, encouraging innovation, and protecting consumer rights. Although the government introduced a technology neutrality policy as a step towards addressing the market imbalances and enhancing consumer choice in the telecommunications sector,³⁵ the impact of this on the market

is yet to be assessed.

Schedule 2 of the National Communications (Quality of Service) Regulations, 2016 establishes the benchmark parameters that every cellular mobile service provider must meet.³⁶ In cases of non-compliance with the set service quality indicators, the regulator penalises the industry player in breach. There were no reported cases of penalties against any of the telecommunication companies for the under review. That notwithstanding, the government has issued a strong warning of fines and sanctions if they fail to improve service quality by the end of the year.³⁷ To strengthen the regulator and modernise the regulatory and institutional framework for Ghana's

33. Global Network Excellence Index - Q3 2025 update (2025) <https://insights.opensignal.com/2025/10/21/global-network-excellence-index-q3-2025-update/dt> (Accessed on 08 December 2025)

34. Industry Market Statistics (2023) <https://nca.org.gh/wp-content/uploads/2023/04/Mobile-Data-Year-ended-2022-Jan-2023.pdf> (Accessed on 20 November 2024)

35. NCA Introduces Technology Neutrality in Ghana (2023) <https://nca.org.gh/2023/07/18/nca-introduces-technology-neutrality-in-ghana/> (Accessed on 20 November 2024)

36. The National Communications (Quality Of Service) Regulations, (2016) <https://nca.org.gh/wp-content/uploads/2021/11/Draft-QoS-Regulations-April-2016.pdf> (Accessed on 17 November 2024)

37. Improve service quality by December or face heavy fines – Sam George warns Telcos (2025) <https://citinewsroom.com/2025/05/improve-service-quality-by-december-or-face-heavy-fines-sam-george-warns-telcos> (Accessed on 03 December 2025)

communications sector, the government has begun the process of amending the National Communications Authority Act (Act 769, 2008).³⁸

Freedom Of

Expression

Ghana's Constitution guarantees freedom of speech and the freedom and independence of the media, as outlined in Chapters 5 and 12. Nonetheless, there are still laws being used to harass, arrest, and incarcerate journalists in Ghana. These are Section 208 of the amended Criminal and Offences Act (Act 29) and the Electronic Communications

Act (Act 775).³⁹ These two laws cover the dissemination of misinformation and disinformation, respectively. They are vague and can be used to criminalise nearly any speech that may be interpreted as inducing fear or alarm.⁴⁰ Arguments have also been made about the draconian nature and outdatedness of these laws, as they violate international and national human rights laws concerning freedom of speech.⁴¹ The Government has initiated the process of amending the Electronic Communications Act (Act 775) and promulgating new legislation to address misinformation, disinformation, hate speech, and the publication of other information in the digital space. The general public has been invited to make inputs into these

38. Invitation for Comments – National Communications Authority Bill (2025) <https://nca.org.gh/2025/10/16/invitation-for-comments-national-communications-authority-bill/> (Accessed on 03 December 2025)

39. The two laws surviving the repealed criminal libel law in Ghana (2022) <https://mfwa.org/issues-in-focus/the-two-laws-surviving-the-repealed-criminal-libel-law-in-ghana> (Accessed on 19 November 2024)

40. Ghana's law on publication of false news is vague and easily abused (2022) <https://blogs.lse.ac.uk/africaatlse/2022/02/25/ghana-law-publication-of-fake-news-vague-easily-abused-free-speech> (Accessed on 19 November 2024)

41. Ghana's law on publication of false news is vague and easily abused – it should go (2022) <https://theconversation.com/ghanas-law-on-publication-of-false-news-is-vague-and-easily-abused-it-should-go-177470> (Accessed on 19 November 2024)

laws.⁴² The legislation is expected to establish a clear framework for defining freedom of speech, aimed at preventing the arbitrary arrest, harassment, and assault of journalists. Ghana currently falls into the moderate risk category for disinformation. This is based on its levels of governance, media freedom, and digital penetration. The country received a score of 57% on the 2025 Disinformation Index Report, indicating a relatively strong resilience against disinformation, with a detection rate of 96%. Although detection is high, only 31.2% take the extra step to verify content.⁴³ Political party propaganda,

the legacy media's sacrifice of news accuracy for speed, and the Ghana government's regulatory challenges are the main drivers of the problem of misinformation and disinformation.⁴⁴

There were three reported cases of arrest and interrogation of journalists by law enforcement agencies in 2025. This involved Oheneba Nana Asiedu, a journalist at Wontumi TV;⁴⁵ Prosper Agbenyegah, an Editor at Current Issues⁴⁶ and Samuel Amadotor, a journalist at Dklassgh.net.⁴⁷ Harassment and attacks on journalists by citizens are also prevalent. There were two reported

42. Ghana extends time for feedback on new laws to regulate tech evolutions and emerging digital areas (2025) <https://www.africa-legal.com/news/ghana-extends-time-for-feedback-on-new-laws-to-regulate-tech-evolutions-and-emerging-digital-areas/123829#> (Accessed on 03 December 2025)
43. Disinformation Index Report for West Africa (2025) <https://penplusbytes.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/10/1st-October-2025-PenPlusBytes-Disinformation-Index-Report-2025.pdf> (Accessed on 04 December 2025)
44. Stakeholders identify three main drivers of mis/disinformation in Ghana (2023) <https://mfwa.org/issues-in-focus/stakeholders-urge-tech-giants-govt-to-attend-to-mis-disinformation-situation-in-ghana/> (Accessed on 04 December 2025)
45. Ghana: Journalist detained, questioned to disclose source of information (2025) <https://mfwa.org/country-highlights/ghana-journalist-detained-questioned-source-disclosure/> (Accessed on 03 December 2025)
46. Ghana's National Security Secretariat interrogates newspaper editor over "leaked" document story (2025) <https://mfwa.org/country-highlights/ghana-journalist-interrogated-over-publication/> (Accessed on 03 December 2025)
47. Police under fire over arrest and continued detention of journalist (2025) <https://www.ghanaweb.com/Ghana-HomePage/NewsArchive/Police-under-fire-over-arrest-and-continued-detention-of-journalist-2010381> (Accessed on 03 December 2025)

cases of citizen assault on journalists. This involved Carlos Lorlornyo Atsu Calony⁴⁸ and Latif Iddrisu,⁴⁹ both journalists at JoyNews. During this year, Daniel Owuusu Karanteng, a suspect in the murder of Ahmed Suale, was identified, arrested, and arranged before court⁵⁰ From 2019 to 2025, at least 36 Ghanaian journalists and media workers have faced arrests, assault, and threats in connection with their work. In 2025 alone, at least 18 journalists have been physically or verbally assaulted⁵¹ As of the time of this report, no outcomes have been reported regarding the judicial prosecution of the perpetrators of these

assaults against journalists. Without proper safety measures, the neutrality of news is jeopardised. Ghana's position on the Global Press Freedom Index has been steadily declining over the years, from 23rd in 2018, to 60th in 2022, 62nd in 2023, and finally 50th in 2024.⁵² As of 2025, Ghana ranked 52nd on the Global Press Freedom Index.⁵³ On the 2025 Freedom in the World Index, it scored 80 out of 100⁵⁴ This shows that Ghana is a relatively open society where everyone is free to express their opinions and beliefs or non-beliefs.

48. Press group urges Ghana to act following assault against journalists (2025) <https://www.jurist.org/news/2025/08/press-group-urges-ghana-to-act-following-assault-against-journalists/> (Accessed on 03 December 2025)

49. Ghana: Police arrest suspect involved in assault on journalist (2025) <https://mfwa.org/country-highlights/ghana-police-arrest-suspect-assault-joynews-journalist/> (Accessed on 03 December 2025)

50. Ghana: Police arrest a suspect in the murder of journalist Ahmed Suale (2025) <https://www.ifj.org/media-centre/news/detail/category/africa/article/ghana-police-arrest-a-suspect-in-the-murder-of-journalist-ahmed-suale> (Accessed on 03 December 2025)

51. Investigative Report: 18 Ghanaian journalists attacked between January and July 2025 (2025) <https://ghana.duba-wa.org/investigative-report-18-ghanaian-journalists-attacked-between-january-and-july-2025/> (Accessed on 05 December 2025)

52. MFWA blames rising violations for Ghana's declining press freedom ranking (2025) <https://citinews-room.com/2025/11/mfwa-blames-rising-violations-for-ghanas-declining-press-freedom-ranking/> (Accessed on 03 December 2025)

53. Ghana: World Press Freedom Index (2025) <https://rsf.org/en/country/ghana> (Accessed on 03 December 2025)

54. Freedom in the World 2025 (2025) <https://freedomhouse.org/country/ghana/freedom-world/2025> (Accessed on 05 December 2025)

Data Protection and Privacy

As the Internet and technology continue to become more accessible to Ghanaians, the importance of data protection and privacy cannot be overstated. The Data Protection and Privacy Act, 2012 (Act 843), provides the necessary guardrails as Ghana's primary legislation governing privacy and data protection. There are other legal instruments with privacy and data protection provisions.⁵⁵ The Constitution, the Electronic Communications Act 2008 (Act 775), and the Cybersecurity Act (2020) (Act 1038). Article 18(2) of the 1992 Constitution enshrines citizens' fundamental privacy rights. Clauses 8 (1) and 8 (2) of the Electronic Communications Act, 2008 (Act 775) preserve the data privacy of

the service users. While these laws safeguard citizens' data and privacy, there are exceptions. The right to privacy may be restricted by the law when necessary for the safety and economic well-being of the country, the protection of health or morals, the prevention of disorder or crime, or the protection of the rights and freedoms of others. The judiciary ensures strict and impartial adherence to these legal instruments. In a landmark case in 2024, the court ruled that Executive Instrument (E.I) 63 was illegal and instructed the government to delete all data collected using this instrument.⁵⁶

Data breaches are a significant issue in Ghana. As of the third quarter of 2025, the country recorded an average of 15 data breaches for every 100 Ghanaians, ranking Ghana ninety-third globally, with over 5.3 million breached accounts since 2004 to date.⁵⁷ This year, MTN

55. Data Protection Laws of the World: Ghana 2024) (<https://www.dlapiperdataprotection.com/index.html?t=law&c=GH>) (Accessed on November 2024)

56. Ghana: MFWA welcomes high court ruling ordering government to stop collecting personal data (2021) <https://mfwa.org/ghana-mfwas-welcome-high-court-ruling-ordering-government-to-stop-collecting-personal-data/> (Accessed on 22 November 2024)

57. Global data breach statistics - Ghana (2025) <https://surfshark.com/research/data-breach-monitoring> (Accessed on 23 November 2024)

Ghana suffered a major data breach that impacted 5,700 customers, raising concerns about whether regulators are effectively enforcing data protection regulations.⁵⁸ Following this, the Ghana Data Protection Commission launched its ‘Privacy Awareness’ campaign to educate data subjects and data controllers about their rights and obligations under the Data Protection Act 2012⁵⁹ There has been no public reporting of the outcome, if any, of the probe launched into the MTN data breach incident by the sector ministry and regulators.⁶⁰ It reported that data from 35 institutions in Ghana—including ministries, regulatory agencies, banks, hospitals, and universities—were found

circulating on the dark web, posing risks of privacy breaches and potential national-level compromises.⁶¹

Recent data breaches may indicate a lack of effective cybersecurity measures. Ghana has seen a significant increase in cybercrime, resulting in approximately US\$1.8 million loss in the first nine months of 2025. This represents a 17% rise compared to the same period in 2024.⁶² Reported cybercrime incidents increased from 1,317 in early 2024 to 2,008 in 2025, with online fraud, cyberbullying, and blackmail accounting for the majority of cases.⁶³ By way of distribution, online fraud constituted 36%, while

58. MTN Ghana Data Breach: A Wake-Up Call for Privacy Rights and Corporate Accountability (2025) <https://www.modernghana.com/news/1396072/mtn-ghana-data-breach-a-wake-up-call-for-privacy.html> (Accessed on 04 December 2025)

59. The Data Protection Commission Launches Public Awareness Campaign (2025) <https://dataprotection.org.gh/the-data-protection-commission-launches-public-awareness-campaign/> (Accessed on 04 December 2025)

60. Communication Ministry probes cybersecurity breach affecting 5,700 MTN users (2025) <https://www.gbcghana-online.com/general-news/communication-ministry-probes-cybersecurity-breach-affecting-5700-mtn-users/2025/> (Accessed on 04 December 2025)

61. GH¢15m lost to cyberfraud in first-half 2025 (2025) <https://thebftonline.com/2025/09/09/gh%E2%82%B515m-lost-to-cyberfraud-in-first-half-2025/> (Accessed on 04 December 2025)

62. Ghana faces rising cybercrime costs and incidents in 2025 (2025) <https://www.africanwirelesscomms.com/news-details?itemid=9710&post=ghana-faces-rising-cybercrime-costs-and-incidents-in-2025-397234> (Accessed on 05 December 2025)

63. Cybercrime: Ghana’s Growing Digital Weak Spot (2025) <https://imaniafrica.org/2025/09/cyber-crime-ghanas-growing-digital-weak-spot/> (Accessed on 05 December 2025)

cyberbullying constituted 25%. The percentages for the remaining categories are as follows: blackmail at 14%, unauthorised access at 12%, and information disclosure at 9%.⁶⁴ Cyberbullying has become increasingly common, especially on social media platforms. The anonymity of online interactions largely contributes to this trend. By integrating the Cybersecurity Act of 2020 (Act 1038) with the Data Protection Act of 2012 (Act 843), the Cyber Security Authority is establishing a framework that includes awareness campaigns, educational programs, and guidelines for responsible online behaviour.⁶⁵

The Cybersecurity Authority runs awareness campaigns every year to educate citizens. This year's campaign,

themed "Building a Safe, Informed, and Accountable Digital Space," aims to counter misinformation and deepfake manipulation while promoting responsibility among citizens and institutions.⁶⁶ Law enforcement agencies have not been left out in the fight against cybercrimes. A Joint Cyber Security Committee, working closely with international security agencies, exists to protect Ghana's digital economy. This year, a major INTERPOL operation across 14 African countries has resulted in the arrest of 260 suspected scammers, with Ghanaian authorities arresting 68 individuals and seizing significant evidence.⁶⁷ The Cybersecurity Act is being reviewed to greatly expand the powers of the Cybersecurity Authority to effectively combat cybercrimes.

64. Ghana's cybercrime losses in first half of 2025 revealed (2025) <https://www.ghanaweb.com/GhanaHomePage/business/Ghana-s-cybercrime-losses-in-first-half-of-2025-revealed-1999119> (Accessed on 05 December 2025)

65. Ghana: Cybersecurity Authority develops a framework to combat cyberbullying among students (2024) <https://publicsectormag.net/2024/06/10/ghana-cybersecurity-authority-develops-framework-to-combat-cyberbullying-among-students/> (Accessed on 23 November 2024)

66. Minister Launches 2025 National Cyber Security Awareness Month and Calls for Safer, More Accountable Digital Space (2025) <https://moc.gov.gh/2025/09/03/minister-launches-2025-national-cyber-security-awareness-month-and-calls-for-safer-more-accountable-digital-space/> (Accessed on 05 December 2025)

67. 68 scammers arrested in Ghana as INTERPOL dismantles \$2.8m African cybercrime ring (2025) <https://www.gbcghanaonline.com/general/ghana-interpol-scammers/2025/> (Accessed on 05 December 2025)

There is currently no legislation in place for data localisation. However, there are indications that the government is working on a framework to ensure local hosting of all data hosted externally.⁶⁸ Even though the Data Protection Act does not prescribe specific conditions for cross-border data transfers, data controllers that outsource processing to foreign processors are required to comply with Ghanaian laws, disclose data transfer destinations, and obtain consent from data subjects during registration.⁶⁹ As of 2025, Ghana has eight data centres, ranking eighth on the table of African countries with data centres.⁷⁰ The drive for the growth of the data centre sector is guided by the Ghana ICT for Accelerated Development Policy and the Ghana Digital Acceleration Project (GDAP), which focuses on infrastructure development. Other key

policies include the Enabling Physical Infrastructure (EPI) policy for broadband and the National Information Technology Act 2008, which empowers the National Information Technology Agency (NITA) to regulate the sector. In 2024, the Agency held a public consultation to develop a regulatory framework for data centre services.⁷¹

Ghana uses mass surveillance technologies. The known contracts with various overseas companies for these technologies total approximately US\$184 million. Most of this amount has been allocated to a “Safe City” project that includes a CCTV system powered by facial recognition AI from the Chinese company Huawei. Additionally, several new biometric identification systems require citizens to submit either facial recognition data or fingerprint

68. Government Working To Host All Data Centres Locally (2024) <https://moc.gov.gh/2024/06/26/government-working-to-host-all-data-centres-locally/> (Accessed on 04 December 2025)

69. DPA Digital Digest: Ghana (2025) <https://digitalpolicyalert.org/digest/dpa-digital-digest-ghana> (Accessed on 04 December 2025)

70. Top 10 African Countries by Number of Data Centres (2025) <https://www.africanexponent.com/top-10-african-countries-by-number-of-data-centres-2025/> (Accessed on 04 December 2025)

71. Public Consultation on: Regulatory Framework for Data Centre Services (2024) <https://www.brr.gov.gh/consultation?cd=MjM=> (Accessed on 04 December 2025)

biometrics.⁷² The demand for these technologies has come as a result of the country's rapid technological development and its focus on national security.⁷³ The total expenditure on national security for 2025 is not publicly available. Nonetheless, historical data show that the total budget allocation for the Ministry of National Security in 2024 was GH¢ 1.6 billion, approximately US\$ 106 million.⁷⁴ Government spending on national security accounts for 0.71% of the total budget expenditure for last year. Ghanaians have been encouraged to utilise the Right to Information law to obtain details about the spyware

acquired by the government over time.⁷⁵ Monitoring and surveillance of journalists is pervasive across West Africa.⁷⁶ Ghana is not an exception. Journalists, activists, and ordinary citizens have been tracked, arrested, and detained simply for posting critical messages on social media. Under the guise of national security, governments have exceeded their legal surveillance powers.⁷⁷ The amendment to Ghana's Cybersecurity Act (Act 1038) has sparked considerable debate, with critics warning that it may infringe on fundamental rights by enabling extensive monitoring, which could adversely

72. Ghana's democracy at risk due to use of surveillance technology, warns new report (2023) <https://www.ids.ac.uk/press-releases/ghanas-democracy-at-risk-due-to-use-of-surveillance-technology-warns-new-report/> (Accessed on 05 December 2025)
73. Surveillance devices in Ghana: Analysing the growing trend and its implications (2025) <https://malawifreedom-network.com/2025/02/03/surveillance-devices-in-ghana-analyzing-the-growing-trend-and-its-implications/> (Accessed on 05 December 2025)
74. Programme Based Budget Estimates (2024) https://mofep.gov.gh/sites/default/files/pbb-estimates/2024/2024-PBB-MNS_.pdf (Accessed on 23 November 2024)
75. Ghanaians urged to use RTI law to ask government to disclose information on spyware (2025) <https://www.ghanabusinessnews.com/2025/06/02/ghanaians-urged-to-use-rti-law-to-ask-government-to-disclose-information-on-spyware/> (Accessed on 05 December 2025)
76. How Digital Surveillance Threatens Press Freedom In West Africa (2023) <https://humanglemedia.com/how-digital-surveillance-threatens-press-freedom-in-west-africa/> (Accessed on 22 November 2024)
77. African Governments Spend Too Much On Surveillance Tech for the Wrong Reasons (2023) <https://www.africanliberty.org/2023/11/07/african-governments-spend-so-much-on-surveillance-tech-for-the-wrong-reasons/> (Accessed on 22 November 2024)

affect activists and whistleblowers.⁷⁸

Censorship and content moderation

The media and internet users in Ghana enjoy an information space free from technical censorship. Nonetheless, individuals risk arrest for posts with national security implications, and online journalists face threats of harassment and assaults for their critical reporting. Although the Constitution guarantees free speech and an independent press under Chapter 12, it also provides the basis for derogation from these rights, which enables content moderation. Article 164 permits restrictions on free speech in the interests of public order, morality, or national security.⁷⁹ The Electronic Communications Act, 2008 (Act 775), is a key statute that

governs content moderation in Ghana. It establishes the legal framework for electronic communications and online platforms. False signalling and False communication are captured respectively as offences under Sections 75 and 76 of the Law.

The rising prevalence of fake news has become a major concern for the government, especially in its efforts to maintain social cohesion among citizens. Some political actors disseminate misinformation using automated tools and paid social media commentators. False information, content manipulation, and plain lies are becoming more prevalent.⁸⁰ This issue undermines public trust and the integrity of information, which can lead to social division and the spread of misinformation. A 2024 study revealed that about 64.4% of Ghanaians “ignore” and do nothing to protest or caution others when they see fake news or

78. Ghanaian journalists warn proposed cybersecurity amendments could affect press freedom (2025) <https://cadeproject.org/updates/ghanaian-journalists-warn-proposed-cybersecurity-amendments-could-affect-press-freedom/> (Accessed on 05 December 2025)

79. Constitution of Ghana (1992) <https://www.ghanalegal.com> (Accessed on 23 November 2024)

80. Election Disinformation Trends in Ghana: Tips for Combating Them (2024) <https://en.hive-mind.community/blog/1013,election-disinformation-trends-in-ghana-tips-for-combating-them> (Accessed on 23 November 2024)

false information in the media.⁸¹To address this the government is working to introduce the Misinformation, Disinformation and Hate Speech and Publication of Other Information Act. Currently at the draft stage, the bill, when passed, will promote responsible communication, safeguard national cohesion, and protect citizens from the dangers of disinformation.⁸² However, some provisions in their current form pose significant threats to constitutional rights, particularly freedom of expression, media independence, privacy, and due process.⁸³ These provisions include Sections 68 (4) and 84 (3), Section 30(6) and 31(8), Sections 9, 10, 11 & 12, and Sections 69, 78, & 80 (1). These provisions introduce an unconstitutional licensing

regime, broaden the definitions and criminalisation of speech, reverse the burden of proof, enable executive control over enforcement, and foster unaccountability of big tech and digital platforms.

The large number of media outlets in Ghana does not necessarily indicate a pluralistic media landscape, as most media outlets are owned by or affiliated to politicians. Approximately 70% of Ghanaian media houses are owned by politicians.⁸⁴ This significantly influences editorial decisions, with journalists working in politically affiliated media feeling pressured to align their reporting with the owner's interests.⁸⁵ Although there is no state

81. About 64.4% of Ghanaians encourage spreading of fake news – Study (2024) <https://www.myjoyonline.com/about-64-4-of-ghanaians-encourage-spreewithhousesding-of-fake-news-study/> (Accessed on 23 November 2024with)

82. Ghana Drafts Bill To Tackle Misinformation And Hate Speech (2025) <https://wadr.org/ghana-drafts-bill-to-tackle-misinformation-and-hate-speech/> (Accessed on 05 December 2025)

83. Ghana's New Bills on Mis/Disinformation, Cybersecurity & Hate Speech: MFWA Raises Concerns (2025) <https://mfwa.org/issues-in-focus/ghanas-new-bills-on-mis-disinformation-cybersecurity-hate-speech-mfwa-raises-concerns/> (Accessed on 05 December 2025)

84. 60%-70% of Ghana's media ownership are politicians – GJA President (of been,been,2025) <https://citinewsroom.com/2024/05/60-70-of-ghanas-media-ownership-are-politicians-gja-president/> (Accessed on 05 December 2025)

85. Media and politics: investigating government interests, ownership influence and media independence in combating corruption in Ghana (2025) <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/23311886.2025.2483391#abstract> (Accessed on 05 December 2025)

editorial censorship, there is a significant amount of self-censorship amongst journalists due to safety concerns and fear of legal repercussions. Ghana ranked 41 out of 180 countries on the legal context component of the 2025 World Press Freedom Index. It had previously ranked 38 out of 180 in 2024.⁸⁶ This highlights a major limitation on journalistic practices, which restricts journalists' ability to deliver accurate and comprehensive coverage of significant events, ultimately impacting the quality of information available to the public.

The National Communication Authority, in the exercise of its mandate, shuts down or suspends media houses that violate Regulation 54 and 56 of the Electronic Communications Regulations, 2011, L.I. 1991 and Section 2 (4) of the Electronic Communications Act, 2008 (Act 775). In 2025, 62 radio stations were suspended. These stations did not hold valid broadcasting

authorisations or did not have a Certificate of Compliance to commence operations.⁸⁷ In the past, this exercise has been perceived as censorship of radio stations critical of the government through the National Communication Authority.⁸⁸ Censorship and content moderation in Ghana are nuanced. As digital platforms continue to grow, the Ghanaian government and various stakeholders face the difficult task of creating regulations that safeguard individuals from harmful content—such as hate speech, misinformation, and online harassment—while upholding the fundamental right to free speech. This delicate tension reflects broader global discussions about the government's role in regulating digital spaces, the consequences of unchecked expressions, and the need for a framework that promotes open dialogue and ensures the safety and well-being of all citizens.

86. World Press Freedom Index: Ghana (2025) <https://rsf.org/en/country/ghana> (Accessed on 05 December 2025)

87. NCA Orders Defaulting FM Broadcasting Stations to Suspend Operations (2025) <https://nca.org.gh/2025/06/12/nca-orders-defaulting-fm-broadcasting-stations-to-suspend-operations/> (Accessed on December 2025)

88. Ghana 2024 Elections: A Risk Assessment of the Online Information Space (2024) <https://www.iri.org/resources/ghana-2024-elections-a-risk-assessment-of-the-online-information-space/> (Accessed on 23 November 2024)

Access to information

Ghana has the Right to Information Act (RTI) in place to protect citizens' right to access information and facilitate an open, inclusive environment that promotes greater accountability and public debate. Citizens can request and obtain information from public and select private institutions. It is based on Article 21(1)(f) of the 1992 Constitution, which states that all persons have the right to information, subject to necessary qualifications in a democratic society. All public institutions are required to submit annual reports capturing details stipulated under Section 77(2) of the Act.

Records in 2023 showed that 1,000 requests had been made under the RTI Act. Of these requests, 838 have been

granted, 47 have been rejected, and 45 have been transferred.⁸⁹ During that period, 14 public institutions have been fined GH¢1,310,000, approximately US\$ 109,258 for failing to comply with the Right to Information Commission's orders to provide applicants with the requested information.⁹⁰ Report suggests that the public requests for information increased by 47% in 2024, reflecting growing citizen engagement and trust in the right to information system.⁹¹ There is no published data yet on the number of requests made in 2025. The government has created a centralised digital platform to offer citizens a secure way for submitting RTI requests, allowing for tracking, timely responses from public institutions, and data generation for compliance monitoring.⁹²

89. Over 1000 Requests Made Since Passage of RTI Law – Oppong Nkrumah (2023) <https://moi.gov.gh/news-room/2023/05/over-1000-requests-made-since-passage-of-rti-law-oppo-pong-nkrumah/> (Accessed on 28 November 2024)

90. 14 Institutions fined GH¢1.3m for non-compliance with RTI Law (2023) <https://www.graphic.com.gh/news/general-news/14-institutions-fined-gh-1-3m-for-non-compliance-with-rti-law.html> (Accessed on 28 November 2024)

91. Request for information through RTI surges - Commission now prioritising digital access (2025) <https://www.graphic.com.gh/news/general-news/ghana-news-request-for-information-through-rti-surges-commission-now-prioritising-digital-access.html> ...

92. Launch an Online Platform for Right to Information Requests (2025) [https://www.opengovpartnership.org/the-open-gov-challenge/ghana-launch-an-online-platform-for-right-to-information-requests/..](https://www.opengovpartnership.org/the-open-gov-challenge/ghana-launch-an-online-platform-for-right-to-information-requests/)

Civil society organisations play a significant role in educating the public about this law. For example, the Media Foundation for West Africa implemented workshops educating citizens about the Right To Information law to enable them to request information independently.⁹³

Despite the constitutional and legal guarantees and the digital measures implemented by the government and civil society actors, there are still significant barriers to access to information. These barriers include an uneven digital divide, gender inequality, infrastructural gaps, and the cost of accessing information. Substantial work is needed to enhance the proactive disclosure of information on government websites. This involves making relevant documents, datasets, and reports available and ensuring they are easily accessible and understandable to the

public. Furthermore, the information should be updated regularly and organised in a user-friendly manner to promote transparency and encourage citizen engagement with government activities. A draft legislative instrument that addresses some of these issues has been submitted to the Subsidiary Legislative Committee of Parliament for review as of 2024. Although the Committee met to discuss the draft, it had yet to submit its report to the plenary for passage.⁹⁴

AI and Emerging Technologies

The government launched the National AI strategy (2023 - 2033) in 2025 to drive innovation.⁹⁵ A Responsible AI

93. MFWA enhances capacities of more than 600 citizens on Ghana's Right to Information Law (2023) <https://mfwa.org/issues-in-focus/mfwa-enhance-capacities-of-more-than-400-citizens-on-ghanas-right-to-information-law/> (Accessed on 28 November 2024)

94. 5 Years of empowering transparency: Celebrating Right to Information Commission's journey (2) (2025) <https://theghanareport.com/5-years-of-empowering-transparency-celebrating-right-to-information-commissions-journey-2/> (Accessed on 07 December 2025)

95. Embracing the Future: Ghana Launches National AI Strategy to Drive Innovation (2025) <https://moc.gov.gh/2025/05/02/embracing-the-future-ghana-launches-national-ai-strategy-to-drive-innovation-2/> (Accessed on 07 December 2025)

(RAI) Office is set to be established to oversee the implementation of the strategy, ensuring alignment with ethical standards and national goals, while coordinating efforts, monitoring progress, and facilitating stakeholder engagement.⁹⁶ The National Communications Authority also launched a 5-year strategic plan (2024 – 2028) that will position the Regulator to stay ahead of industry demands, creating an enabling and well-protected digital ecosystem. As advanced technology becomes more prevalent in data management, prioritising data governance is essential for the success of Ghana’s digitisation efforts.⁹⁷ The

government is working on a national data strategy.

At the centre of Ghana’s AI discourse are the regulatory gaps, ethical concerns, infrastructural challenges, and digital literacy and skills. Some lawmakers have raised concerns about the potential misuse of AI and have called for legislation to regulate it in the country.⁹⁸ Others have also called for AI regulation to be balanced as it is essential to foster innovation and creativity.⁹⁹ To this end, a new draft law - the Emerging Technologies Bill, 2025 is being worked on. It is currently under ongoing public consultation,¹⁰⁰ and pending review by Parliament in 2026.¹⁰¹ At its core is

96. Ghana’s National Artificial Intelligence Strategy (2023–2033) (2025) <https://dig.watch/resource/ghanas-national-artificial-intelligence-strategy-2023-2033> (Accessed on 07 December 2025)

97. Ghana develops its national data strategy in collaboration with Smart Africa and Team Europe (2024) <https://smartafrica.org/ghana-develops-its-national-data-strategy-in-collaboration-with-smart-africa-and-team-europe/> (Accessed on 8 December 2024)

98. MPs propose legislation to regulate Artificial Intelligence (2023) <https://citinewsroom.com/2023/06/mps-propose-legislation-to-regulate-artificial-intelligence/> (Accessed 9 December 2024)

99. Balanced AI regulation essential to foster innovation and creativity (2024) <https://www.ghanaweb.com/GhanaHomePage/business/Balanced-AI-regulation-essential-to-foster-innovation-and-creativity-Valentine-Obi-1930934> (Accessed on 9 December 2024)

100. Public Consultation on: Emerging Technologies Bill, 2025 (2025) <https://www.brr.gov.gh/consultation?cd=NDU=> (Accessed on 07 December 2025)

101. Gov’t to lay Emerging Technologies Bill before Parliament in 2026 (2025) <https://citinewsroom.com/2025/11/govt-to-lay-emerging-technologies-bill-before-parliament-in-2026/> (Accessed on 07 December 2025)

responsible technology governance.¹⁰² Policy experts have questioned how this law will interact with the amended Cybersecurity and Data Protection Act when passed because there could be a potential overlapping of mandates and duplication of regulatory authority.¹⁰³

Ghana's startup ecosystem is driving the adoption of AI and emerging technologies through product and service innovation. The country ranked 101st and 8th at global and Africa level, respectively, showing stronger innovation outputs (93rd) than inputs (108th) on the 2025 Global Innovation Index, with strengths in creative services

and unicorn valuation.¹⁰⁴ The country is attracting the requisite private sector investment to develop infrastructure that supports AI and emerging technologies. In 2025, Google launched its AI Community Centre, backed by a US\$37 million commitment to support artificial intelligence innovation across the continent.¹⁰⁵ Degas Limited pledged US\$100 million over the next four years to make Ghana the first AI-powered agricultural hub in Africa.¹⁰⁶ Ghana and the United Arab Emirates (UAE) signed a US\$1 billion partnership to build Africa's largest AI and Technology Hub in Ningo-Prampram.¹⁰⁷

102. Ghana Is Pushing A New Law For Emerging Technologies. But Does It Create Too Much Bureaucracy? (2025) <https://labarjournal.com/ghana-is-pushing-a-new-law-for-emerging-technologies-but-does-it-create-too-much-bureacracy/> (Accessed on 07 December 2025)

103. Ghana Faces Regulatory Coordination Challenges in AI Framework (2025) <https://www.newsghana.com.gh/ghana-faces-regulatory-coordination-challenges-in-ai-framework/> (Accessed on 07 December 2025)

104. Global Innovation Index: Ghana (2025) <https://www.wipo.int/edocs/gii-ranking/2025/gh.pdf> (Accessed on 08 December 2025)

105. Google Launches AI Community Center in Ghana With \$37M Investment, Deepening U.S.–Africa Tech Collaboration (2025) <https://amchamghana.org/2025/07/31/google-launches-ai-community-center-in-ghana-with-37m-investment-deepening-u-s-africa-tech-collaboration/> (Accessed on 08 December 2025)

106. Ghana's \$100M AI-Powered Agriculture Hub: What It Means for the Future of Farming (2025) <https://sesitechnologies.com/ghanas-100m-ai-powered-agriculture-hub-what-it-means-for-the-future-of-farming/> (Accessed on 08 December 2025)

107. Ghana, UAE sign \$1bn deal to build tech hub - Targets over 11,000 foreign companies (2025) <https://www.graphic.com.gh/news/general-news/ghana-news-ghana-uae-sign-1bn-deal-to-build-tech-hub-targets-over-11-000-foreign-companies.html> (Accessed on 08 December 2025)

Digital Inclusion

Gender gaps exist in the ownership of digital devices in Ghana. Smartphone ownership and overall mobile phone ownership are lower for women, limiting their access to internet-based services and opportunities. This phenomenon is primarily influenced by two main factors: the high costs of acquiring these devices and the lack of adequate skills to utilise these technologies effectively. These factors originate from underlying social structures that contribute to gender disparities. As a result, women often have limited access to education compared to men, affecting their earning potential. As of mid-2025, reports indicated that smartphone ownership among women in Ghana was nearly 87%, approaching

parity with men.¹⁰⁸ While mobile device ownership is lower among women, 75% of them access the internet exclusively via mobile devices, compared to 58% of men. Access to smartphones and the internet remains beyond the reach of certain segments of the population, including the poor.¹⁰⁹ Even though the data on multidimensional poverty for 2025 have not been released yet, the 2024 report shows that 24% of Ghana's population are multidimensionally poor. As of 2025, approximately 25.4% of the country's total population, mostly in rural Ghana, do not have internet access.¹¹⁰ In rural communities, only 19% of households have reliable internet access, compared to 63% in urban areas.¹¹¹

The private sector is leveraging the robust digital payment ecosystem

108. African women gain financial control through mobile money (2025) <https://www.africanewsanalysis.com/african-women-gain-financial-control-through-mobile-money/18/09/31/58/07/2025/> (Accessed on 08 December 2025)

109. Multidimensional Poverty Report, Ghana (2024) <https://statsghana.gov.gh/gssmain/fileUpload/pressrelease/MPI%20GHANA%20REPORT.pdf> (Accessed on 08 December 2024)

110. Digital 2025: Ghana (2025) <https://datareportal.com/reports/digital-2025-ghana> (Accessed on 08 December 2025)

111. Technology in Rural Education to Bridge the Digital Divide in Ghana (2025) <https://futureseedsfoundation.com/technology-in-rural-education-to-bridge-the-digital-divide-in-ghana/> (Accessed on 08 December 2025)

and identification system, to roll out buy-now-pay-later schemes that enable low income earners to own smartphones on credit basis. Through the Ghana Investment Fund for Electronic Communications (GIFEC), the government is also implementing several projects, including the Ghana Rural Telephony and Digital Inclusion Projects to bridge the digital divide.¹¹² As of 2025, GIFEC has constructed 1,897 roaming sites, 269 community ICT centres, and connected 1,139 schools to the Internet. These projects were funded by a 1% regulatory fee levied on the net annual revenue of communication service providers and operators, contributions from government, and grants from development partners. At the time of writing this report, there were no comprehensive annual financial reports available online to ascertain the total funds accessible to GIFEC for projects and operations.

Online child protection and safety are crucial for digital inclusion, particularly as smartphone penetration increases. Recent data indicates that 90.5% of children aged 8 to 17 have used the Internet at some point. Of those who use the Internet, 45.7% access it via smartphones. Furthermore, 56.7% of children who access the Internet through smartphones receive little or no supervision. This lack of oversight could lead to involvement in fraudulent activities, exposure to sexual and violent content online, and other risks, such as addiction.¹¹³ While there is no recent data for 2025, a 2020 report by the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children revealed that over 13,000 images and videos of child sexual abuse were accessed or uploaded to the internet from Ghana.¹¹⁴ The Cybersecurity Act (Act 1038) criminalises online child abuse, including the production, viewing, and distribution of child sexual abuse materials, online grooming, cyberstalking, and sextortion under Sections 62-67. The Children Act of 1998 does not adequately cover the nuances of the current technological advancements and the

112. Government Is Determined to Bridge Digital Divide (2024) <https://moi.gov.gh/newsroom/2024/02/govt-is-determined-to-bridge-digital-divide-ursula-owusu/> (Accessed on 11 December 2024)

113. Internet usage, access, and supervision among Ghanaian children: a cross-sectional study (2024) <https://doi.org/10.1057/s41599-024-03482-8> (Accessed on 27 March 2025)

114. President of FIDA-Ghana leads child online protection in Ghana (2022) https://www.csa.gov.gh/president_of_fida_leads_cop.php (Accessed on 27 March 2025)

associated exposure of children to harm. The government seeks to bridge the gaps with the National Child Online Protection Framework.¹¹⁵ Ghana has ratified several international legal frameworks, conventions, and protocols in the past that address child sexual exploitation and abuse both online and offline. Some of the frameworks include the Council of Europe Convention on Cybercrime, the African Union Convention on Cyber Security and Personal Data Protection, and the United Nations Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the Sale of Children, Child Prostitution and Pornography. There were no reported incidents of child online abuse in the under review.

115. Cyber Security Authority <https://www.csa.gov.gh/resources/National%20COP%20Framework.pdf> (Accessed 20 March 2025)

Conclusion

Liberalising the Information and Communications Technology (ICT) sector has been instrumental in enhancing infrastructure and elevating Ghana's competitiveness within the regional landscape. The implementation of a comprehensive and coherent set of laws, policies, and targeted projects—each aimed at addressing specific objectives—has significantly contributed to this advancement. Ghana boasts relatively favourable rankings in various global indices related to ICT development; however, the nation continues to grapple with several critical challenges. One of the most pressing issues is the ongoing decline in press freedom and the curtailment of online expression. This trend raises concerns about the implications for democratic engagement and the flow of information.

Additionally, the digital divide poses significant hurdles, evidenced by stark disparities in service quality, access to digital technologies, and levels of digital literacy among diverse demographic groups. Vulnerable populations, particularly those in

rural areas, face pronounced barriers that hinder their ability to participate in the digital economy. There are rising concerns surrounding data protection, individual privacy, and cybersecurity. As the technology landscape evolves, it is essential to devise proactive solutions that address these issues while ensuring the safety and security of online users. To effectively tackle these challenges, developing robust regulatory frameworks is crucial, as is fostering meaningful collaboration between government entities and the private sector. Such partnerships can lead to innovative strategies that not only address existing gaps but also anticipate future needs.

A more equitable and secure digital future for all citizens can be achieved when the government implements targeted policies that focus on safeguarding investments in the digital sector, encouraging innovation, and expanding access to technology, especially for underserved communities. By prioritising existing initiatives, Ghana can create a more inclusive digital ecosystem that truly benefits everyone.

Recommendations

Recommendations to improve internet access, freedom of expression, access to information, digital inclusion, data protection and privacy and protect digital rights are based on an analysis of reported events and the country's overall score on TheScore Index. These recommendations are presented in relation to the interactions among stakeholders in the digital space.

The Government should:

- Elevate the National Media Commission to an Authority status to enhance its power in overseeing and regulating media content with the confines of the Misinformation, Disinformation, Hate Speech and Publication of Other Information (MDHI) Bill, 2025. This would establish ethical reporting and responsible behaviour guidelines, fostering a more transparent and trustworthy media environment for journalists and the public.
- Establish a specialised court to swiftly address assaults on journalists, ensuring timely justice and enhancing press freedom protections. By prioritising these cases, the country can deter violence against media professionals and safeguard their rights. Additionally, resources and support for journalists affected by such attacks during legal proceedings should be provided.
- Expand GIFEC's resources to support AI and emerging technologies by increasing funding, enhancing infrastructure, and fostering collaborations with tech innovators. This will drive economic growth and improve nationwide services. The current 1% being levied on telecom networks should be reviewed and increased. Big tech companies and social media platforms must also be levied to fund internet expansion initiatives.

- Implement comprehensive policies to ensure fair competition among all participants in the digital ecosystem. These policies should remove barriers that disadvantage certain market players, promote transparency in pricing, encourage innovation, and protect consumer interests. By focusing on fair practices, the country can create an environment where large and small entities can thrive. This, in turn, will benefit the overall economy and foster a diverse and vibrant digital landscape.
- Implement regulatory framework, guidelines, and standards for mobile network operators, internet service providers and big tech social media companies to protect children online. This should include measures for safeguarding personal information, implementing age verification protocols, promoting digital literacy, and enhancing reporting mechanisms for online threats.
- Consider reviewing the unique policy of a single and shared wholesale 4G/5G network infrastructure through Next Gen InfraCo (NGIC) to allow participation of other providers. This approach will create market efficiency and accelerate the deployment of 5G networks.

Civil Society Organisations should:



- Work with agencies under the sector ministry to launch a public engagement campaign to educate citizens about their rights and responsibilities regarding freedom reporting. This initiative should provide legal representation, financial support for legal fees, and resources to navigate the legal system. It should also in

- of expression, data protection, and data privacy. The campaign should provide clear information on these rights, emphasising expression and the importance of recognising boundaries to prevent harm and misinformation.
 - Work with government stakeholders to develop research-based and data-driven policies that promote digital inclusion for underrepresented communities while protecting citizens' rights.
 - Develop a legal aid initiative to support journalists facing trials and legal challenges due to their
- clude education on journalists' rights and foster partnerships with legal professionals dedicated to press freedom, ensuring journalists can perform their duties without fear of legal repercussions.
- Continue the advocacy and gate-keeping role to ensure accountability from the political class. By actively interrogating government policies and tracking government initiatives, civic society organisations can hold the government to stringent ethical standards.

The Private Sector should:















- Comply with regulatory industry guidelines, including conducting regular audits and assessments to evaluate compliance status.
- Provide training and resources to enhance understanding of regulations and promote a culture of accountability and continuous improvement.
- Work with civic society organisations to create and implement initiatives to educate citizens about their responsibilities when using digital solutions and consuming information.


The Score Index





Ghana, 2025

Totally non-compliant, Mildly compliant - which is a mild attempt at compliance with critical gaps , Moderately compliant - where there are areas of improvement, Considerably compliant - Minimal areas of reform, Fully Compliant - No concerns

Indicator	ACHPR Principle	2024 Score	2024 Score	2025 Justification
Internet Shutdowns	P38(2)			There have been no reported cases of Internet Shutdowns. The government works with stakeholders to keep the Internet on.
Inexistent laws, policies and other measures to promote universal, equitable, affordable and meaningful access to the internet	P37			The government has several policies and initiatives to achieve the desired outcome on this indicator. The majority of the initiatives are spearheaded by GIFEC. This law will be replaced with the Digital Economy and Innovation Development Fund Bill, 2025. The NCA has also amended Quality of Service (QoS) Indicators to ensure good service to consumers.
False News Criminalisation	P22(2)			A law prohibiting the publication of false news exists. The Criminal Code and the Electronic Communication Act (Act 775) are the applicable laws at present. A new law - Misinformation, Disinfor

Indicator	ACHPR Principle	2024 Score	2024 Score	2025 Justification
				<p>mation, Hate Speech and Publication of Other Information (MDHI) Bill, 2025, is currently being worked on.</p>
Sedition Legislation	P22(2)			<p>Sedition is no longer a crime after the repeal of the criminal libel and seditious laws in 2001. Concerns persist regarding Section 208 of the Criminal Offences Act, which targets false news intended to incite fear, as well as aspects of the Electronic Communications Act, 2008 (Act 775).</p>
Arbitrary Arrests and Harassments of the Media, HRDs and Citizens	P20(1) & (2)			<p>Existing laws are being misapplied to arrest and harass journalists, and the government does not appear to be protecting them. The Criminal Code and the Electronic Communications Act are the applicable laws. The Electronic Communication Act is undergoing amendment. A Revised Broadcasting Bill is also being worked on.</p>
Data Protection Legislation.	P42			<p>A law exists to safeguard citizens' personal information and data and ensure privacy. The Data Protection Act, Cyber Security Act, Electronic Communication Act, and the Constitution are applicable laws. The Data Protection Act, Cybersecurity Act, and the Electronic Communications Act are undergoing amendments. There's no public data on enforcement</p>

Indicator	ACHPR Principle	2024 Score	2024 Score	2025 Justification
States interfere and require the removal of online content by internet intermediaries	P38 and P39(4)			There is a provision in the Electronic Communication Act that is rarely utilised. This legislation is undergoing an amendment.
Invasion of Privacy of Communications	P41			There are laws protecting privacy, but there are also provisions within these laws that allow for exceptions to this protection. The applicable laws include the Constitution, Data Protection, Electronic Communication Act and Cyber Security Act. The Data Protection, Electronic Communication Act, and Cyber Security Act are undergoing amendment.
Failure by the government to proactively disclose and disseminate information digital technologies.	P29(3)			The right to information is protected by The Right to Information Act. Implementation however is fraught with challenges. The law is being amended.
AI and Emerging Technologies national strategies	P39(6)			There is a national strategy, tools for ethical use, and policies to build the required infrastructure. The Emerging Technologies Bill is being worked on to set the framework for AI, blockchain, and other

Indicator	ACHPR Principle	2024 Score	2025 Score	2025 Justification
				advanced technologies.
Adoption of specific child laws, policies and measures promoting children’s digital safety and privacy online	P39(6)			There is existing policy and legislation to protect children online, but gaps remain, particularly in regulations for mobile operators and telecom companies. The Cyber Security Act applies, while the Children Act of 1998 is outdated regarding current technology and its risks to children. The Cyber Security Act is undergoing amendments to expand the powers of the Cyber Security Authority,
Digital Inclusion	P37(3)			Institutions, policies, initiatives, and strategies exist to ensure inclusive access to digital technology. The majority of initiatives are driven by GIFEC. This law will be replaced with Digital Economy and Innovation Development Fund Bill, 2025.

Total (out of 60):	2024: 42	2025 43	The overall country performance rating indicates that Ghana is moderately compliant.
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