“Digital Access” is defined as the overall ability of individuals to access and use ICTs. To measure it, the ITU proposed a methodology to arrive to a composite “Digital Opportunity Index”. The study covers five areas: availability of infrastructure, affordability of access, educational level, quality of ICT services and Internet usage. Countries are, then, classified into one of four Digital Access categories: high, upper, medium and low access. The methodology was prepared by the Telecommunications Management Group (TMG) on behalf of ITU. The Index is based on a core list of indicators agreed by the United Nation “Partnership for Measuring ICT for Development” in February 2005. The core list of indicators agreed upon during the said meeting.
It is structures around eleven indicators in four clusters (small groups):

- Affordability and coverage: mobile phone coverage and tariff baskets for mobiles and Internet
- Access path and device: penetration of fixed lines, mobile phones and PCs
- Infrastructure: Availability Fixed and mobile Internet subscribers and international Internet bandwidth per inhabitant
- Quality: Penetration of fixed and mobile broadband subscribers

Unsurprisingly, the world poorest countries rank mostly in the low access category, confirming the persistence of a global digital divide. Until now limited structure has often been regarded as the main barrier to bridging the digital divide, the research suggests that affordability and education are equally important factors.
The report points out that, as expected, there is a close relationship between each country’s DOI and its Gross National Income per capita. Nonetheless, the report notes that a number of economies such South Korea and Taiwan are doing much better in ICTs than their incomes would, while countries such as Austria and the United States have lower DOI scores than it would be expected.
This show how important are factors other than income.
High growth rates in some areas, and particularly the mobile sector, are not sufficient to bring digital opportunities to all and many developing countries risk falling behind, particularly in terms of internet access and newer technologies such as 3G and broadband. The introduction of high speed internet access is of great importance for the transformation of Information Society since it opens up new possibilities and visions on how the Internet can provide a platform for enhancing countries’ social and economic development. Since access to basic communications in the developing world has largely been achieved through mobile, communications, broadband wireless access (BWA) is expected to play a key role for developing countries seeking to foster the Information Society. The report highlights that the mobile boom by itself is not enough, and increasing efforts must be undertaken to take advantage of great potential offered by these new technologies.
The lack of comprehensive, timely and comparable data remains a major barrier to analysing the status and the progress of Information Society, identifying reliable targets and adapting policies. But measuring access to, and use of, ICTs is not enough, particularly since it has been widely recognised that ICTs are not and end in themselves. One of the main reason that ICTs have received so much attention is the promise they hold for social and economic development.

Coverage. The full coverage of a territory depends very much from its configuration (mountains, desert areas) and from the spreading of population. The implementation of network let reach areas, frequently rural, where economic activity may be limited or non existent: potential subscribers are only residential (rural or families) which may have individual limited need or, in specific case of Agriculture, might take profit out of expert suggestions on how to protect cultivation or on how to improve their output. The expansion of network and the spreading of broadband and of its services excited the Providers all over the world: all seem happy to move again, once again, to the concept of "Universal Service". Coverage means financing available. Under monopoly regulation, Government might have provided public money for that; but in a competitive market, are competitors ready to share relevant expenses without knowing whether a probability exists to get reasonable economic return?

Affordability. It is intended as the economic capacity of potential consumer to purchase one or more ICT services; relevant expenses should be such as to let satisfy other necessary needs either in Business and in the Residential sectors. As a rough approach, average affordability may be given by the ratio of average Communications revenue/consumer to average GDP/employee (business sector) and to the average Salary/employee (residential sector): the indicator is linked, clearly, to the expected economic return from unattended areas and as such it does not provide any valid reference. The market should be explored in details and this would, at least, means to know GDP, Salaries; Revenue, ITC consumers and general employment separated by sector of economic activity. The distribution of income (% of active population enjoying a given GDP/employee and Salary/employee) in a country gives the appropriate reference: the greater is the GDP/employee or the Salary/employee, the greater is the probability of potential demand (business or Residential.

Access path. It is the representation of expansion of services and gives an idea about the expressed preference such as to individuate possible trends, ranking of commodities of demand. It is linked with market survey and with the potential it shows. It provides, as well, the direction in which network can expend facilitating choices technical.

Infrastructure. A complete view of existing network let understand where the service cannot be provided and plan how to face this situation

Quality. It is seen as the penetration of fixed and mobile lines