



17 May 2015 – Today, [ITU](#) is celebrating its 150th anniversary with a special gathering in Geneva. On this date we mark the signing of the first [International Telegraphic Convention](#) in Paris in 1865.

On its birthday – normally observed as [World Telecommunication and Information Society Day \(WTISD\)](#) – ITU helps raise awareness of the possibilities of the Internet and other information and communication technologies (ICT).

In 2015, this celebration coincides with the organization's 150th anniversary, which is organized around the theme 'ICTs as the drivers of innovation'.

150 years of remarkable advances in human communications

ITU is the UN's specialized agency for ICTs. ITU allocates global radio spectrum and satellite orbits, develops the technical standards that ensure networks and technologies seamlessly interconnect, and strives to improve access to ICTs to underserved communities worldwide. ITU has [three main areas of activity](#), namely radiocommunications, standardization and development.

One of the most remarkable advances of the past 150 years has been the incredible increase in both the speed and variety of human communications.

First we saw the telegraph and the telephone, then radio and television, followed by satellite communications and the Internet, heralding a new era of ubiquitous connectivity over the past twenty years.

The exponential growth of science and technology over the past 150 years is fascinating and it is part of ITU's story.

ICT Drivers of Innovation

As part of its 150th celebration, ITU focuses on a [different ICT-related theme each month](#).

In this most historic month, today's [ITU 150th anniversary celebration in Geneva](#) brings together participants from all over the world representing governments, private sector, academia, UN agencies, various international organizations, and other stakeholders.

At the event, the special [ITU150 Award](#) will be presented, which recognizes eminent individuals from government, ICT industry, academia and civil society that have demonstrated an extraordinary contribution to improving the lives of the world's citizens through ICT Innovations.

How can you partake?

To get a better sense of ITU's history, [consult the organization's interactive timeline](#) .

For additional in-depth browsing, you can access the [History of ITU Portal](#) , showcasing e.g. the organization's digital collections.

Finally, [download the ITU 150 Anniversary smartphone App](#) , which includes an interactive quiz on the history, development and structure of ITU and also includes access to ITU's historic timeline, monthly feature stories, ITU150 news, international events and connection to the worldwide #ITU150 community.