Introducing The G20

Oct 2026, Steve Price-thomas



What do you know about the G20?

A quick quiz

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How many countries are full members of the G20?

A: 7

B: 19

C: 20

D: 21

E: 25

B: 19

Which of these countries always attends but is not a member of the G20?

A: Italy

B: South Korea

C: Spain

D: Thailand

E: The Netherlands

C: Spain

In 2023, the G20 decided to admit which regional body as a full member?

A: ASEAN

B: MERCOSUR

C: ECOWAS

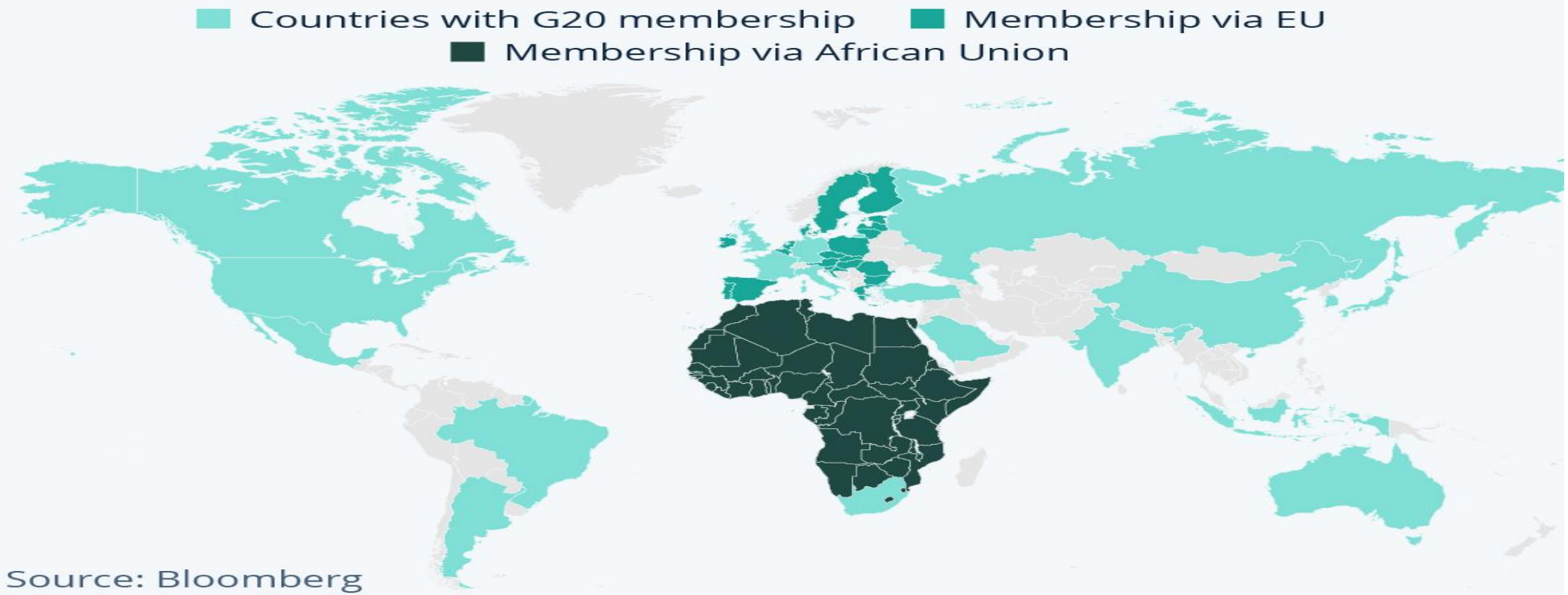
D: SADCC

E: African Union

E: African Union

G20 Expands with African Union Membership

Map of all G20 members as of Sept. 2023



Source: Bloomberg

statista

G20 background

- The G20 comprises 19 countries (Argentina, Australia, Brazil, Canada, China, France, France, Germany, India, Indonesia, Italy, Japan, Republic of Korea, Mexico, Russia, Russia, Saudi Arabia, South Africa, Türkiye, United Kingdom, and United States) and the States) and the African and European Union.
- G20 members represent around 85% of the global GDP, over 75% of the global trade, global trade, and about two-thirds of the world population.
- G20 calls itself the *'premier forum for international economic cooperation'* and it plays and it plays an important role in shaping and strengthening global architecture and architecture and governance on all major international economic issues.

Source: https://www.g20.in/en/about-g20/about-g20.html

G20 background

- Founded in 1999 after the Asian financial crisis of 1997-98 as an informal forum for Finance Ministers and Central Bank Governors of the most important industrialized and developing economies to discuss international economic and financial stability.
- Upgraded to the level of Heads of State/Government in the wake of the global economic and financial crisis of 2007
- Self-selecting and undemocratic (cf. UN bodies)
- The G20 Summit is held annually, under the leadership of a rotating Presidency. The forum initially focused largely on broad macroeconomic issues, but it has since expanded its agenda to include trade, climate change, sustainable development, health, agriculture, energy, environment, anti-corruption, etc.

Source: https://www.g20.in/en/about-g20/about-g20.html

G20 background

- In addition to the member countries, each G20 Presidency invites other guest countries and international organizations to participate in the G20 meetings and Summit.
- E.G in 2024 Brazil invited Angola, Egypt, Nigeria, Norway, Portugal, Singapore, Spain, UAE, plus the LAC Development Bank, FAO, IADB, ILO, IMF, New Development Bank, World Bank, UNESCO, UN, UNCTAD, WHO, WTO.

Source: G20.org

G20 background

- The G20 does not have a permanent secretariat or staff. Instead, the G20 Presidency rotates annually among the members and is selected from a different regional grouping of countries.
- The G20 Presidency is responsible for bringing together the G20 agenda in consultation with other members and in response to developments in the global economy. To help ensure continuity, the Presidency is supported by a “troika” made up of the current, immediate past and next host countries.
- During South Africa’s Presidency in 2025, the members of the G20 troika were Brazil (2024) South Africa (2025) and USA (2026). Things have been a bit different this year…
- The G20 has a poor institutional memory and its record of follow-through can be weak

Source: https://www.g20.in/en/about-g20/about-g20.html

G20 structure – sherpa track

Focus areas: Socio-economic issues such as agriculture, anti-corruption, climate, digital economy, education, employment, energy, environment, health, tourism, trade and investment.

- Agriculture Working Group
- Anti-corruption Working Group
- Culture Working Group
- **Development Working Group – launched under the last Korean Presidency in 2010**
- Digital Economy Working Group
- Disaster Risk Reduction Working Group
- Education Working Group
- Employment Working Group
- Energy Transitions Working Group
- Environment and Climate Sustainability Working Group
- Health Working Group
- Tourism Working Group
- Trade and Investment Working Group

G20 structure – finance track

Headed by the Finance Ministers and Central Bank Governors, who generally meet four times a year, with two meetings being held on the side-lines of WB/IMF meetings.

Focus areas: Fiscal and monetary policy issues such as the global economy, infrastructure, financial regulation, financial inclusion, international financial architecture, and international taxation. The Working Groups and Workstreams under this track include:

- I. Framework Working Group
- II. International Financial Architecture Working Group
- III. Infrastructure Working Group
- IV. Sustainable Finance Working Group
- V. Global Partnership for Financial Inclusion
- VI. Joint Finance and Health Task Force
- VII. International taxation Issues
- VIII. Financial Sector Issues

Engagement groups (2023)

I. Business20

II. Civil20

III. Labour20

IV. Parliament20

V. Science20

VI. SAI20

VII. Startup20

VIII. Think20

IX. Urban20

X. Women20

XI. Youth20

Why should civil society care?

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How do we have influence?

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Insider – outsider strategies

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TAX THE SUPER-RICH
FOR PEOPLE AND PLANET
DESEMBARQUE
Padero




TAX THE
RICH


G20
BRASIL 2024
G20
BRASIL 2024
AGU
G20


VTV HD
G20 SUMMIT
BRISBANE 2014




RUSSIA
G20


C20 SUMMIT
2015





Evidence of impact

“President Hu Jintao wanted development left out of the G20 agenda, but because of South Korea and Oxfam's insistence it is now there”

Senior Chinese official. June 7, 2011



- **Under last G20 Korean Presidency, Civil Society was successful in getting Development onto the G20's agenda**

- **The 2028 G20 is a great opportunity for Asian civil society to have global impact**

- **Starting now will maximize our impact!**

What is one thing you still need to know to engage the G20?

Questions go on the "G20 Questions" wall.

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