Committee leadership

Economic Policy Committee
- Chair: Klaus Deutsch, BDI (Germany)
- Vice-chair: Raymond Van der Putten, BNP Paribas (France)
- Vice-chair: Darren Hannah, Canadian Bankers Association (Canada)
- Vice-chair: Shinichi Hara, Sompo Holdings (Japan)
- Vice-chair: Colin Hunt, AIB Wholesale (Ireland)
- Vice-chair: András Vértes, GKI Economic Research (Hungary)
- Vice-chair: Tayfun Bayazit, Bayazit Consulting Services, (Turkey)

Finance Taskforce
- Chair: Kent Andrews, TD Bank (Canada)
- Vice-chair: Gianluca Riccio, Lloyds Banking Group (United Kingdom)
- Vice-chair: Korkmaz Ilkorur, SOKTAS Tekstil (Turkey)
- Vice-chair: Filip Dierckx, BNP Paribas Fortis (Belgium)

SMEs and Entrepreneurship Taskforce
- Chair: François Hurel, Union des Auto entrepreneurs (France)
- Vice-chair: Patrik Kovács, Hungarian National Association of Entrepreneurs and Employers (Hungary)
- Vice-chair: Lars JAGRÉN, Confederation of Swedish Enterprise (Sweden)

Private Pension Taskforce
- Chair: Hans Gidhagen, Confederation of Swedish Enterprise (Sweden)

About this update

This update highlights key activities of the Business at OECD Economic Policy Committee, Finance Taskforce, and SMEs and Entrepreneurship Taskforce.

It summarizes key recent OECD publications, and provides a forward look at upcoming events and committee meetings.

As the officially recognized voice of business to the OECD, Business at OECD conveys business perspectives and expertise to policymakers on a broad range of global economic and regulatory policy issues.

In the framework of its consultative status, Business at OECD keeps the OECD informed of the private sector’s response to different policy options, offering a unique opportunity to shape the development of long-term policy making.
2018 Economic Policy Survey: a contribution to Going for Growth

The analysis and promotion of structural reforms is central to the mission of the OECD. Its accumulated knowledge in this area is presented in its annual flagship report Going for Growth.

To support this effort, Business at OECD launched its 2018 Economic Policy Survey in May. This biennial survey offers insight into the structural reform priorities of Business at OECD’s national business federation members.

It found that the business climate remains broadly positive, but is also becoming more polarized. Further, a majority of respondents saw no significant improvement in the enabling conditions for private investment in the past year.

Human capital (including skills and education), innovation policies (including R&D), taxation, public sector efficiency, and infrastructure are the top domestic structural reform priorities for business today. A lack of political will, and a lack of political or policy consistency, are considered the biggest obstacles to the implementation of reforms.

OECD 2018 Economic Outlook

The annual OECD Economic Outlook, released in May, characterized the global economic landscape as “stronger growth, but risks loom large.” In a more positive assessment than in recent years, it projects global growth to be around 4%. Investment and trade have picked-up, and unemployment is set to reach its lowest level since 1980, with wages set to increase.

However, the OECD sees growing risks. It calls attention to the role of supportive monetary and fiscal policy support, and the poor productivity performance of many OECD countries. Business at OECD Chair Phil O’Reilly joined ministers from New Zealand, Chile and Latvia to give the private sector reaction to the Outlook, at this year’s Ministerial Meeting.

The OECD Jobs Strategy

The Jobs Strategy, the OECD’s major contribution to labor economics, was revised across late 2017 and early 2018. OECD governments reached agreement on the new Strategy at the Ministerial Meeting in May, as set out on page two of the Chair’s Statement from the meeting.

The new Jobs Strategy is structured around three broad principles, and a commitment to implementation:

1. Promote an environment in which high quality jobs can flourish.
2. Prevent labor market exclusion and protect individuals against labor market risks.
3. Prepare for future opportunities and challenges in a rapidly changing labor market.
4. Emphasize policy implementation.

Business at OECD advocated strongly throughout the revision process, including through active participation at a joint OECD Economic Policy Committee – OECD Employment, Labor and Social Affairs Committee session.

The official public launch of the new Jobs Strategy will take place on December 4th 2018 at a high-level meeting in Paris.

Phil O’Reilly, Business at OECD Chair, speaks during a ministerial session of the OECD Forum. The panel featured ministers from New Zealand, Chile and Latvia.
Global Forum on Productivity

The productivity challenge remains a top concern for OECD governments. Through its Global Forum on Productivity, the OECD sponsors new research and international co-operation to promote productivity-enhancing policies. Engaging with this broad work program is an ongoing priority for Business at OECD.

Major new findings in this area include the description of productivity dynamics within the business population of OECD countries. Notably, the OECD finds evidence for growing productivity dispersion between ‘frontier firms’ and ‘laggards.’ Other important research explores potential policy levers. For example, both insolvency regimes, and the relative strength of national banking sectors, are found to significantly impact a country’s productivity performance.


Financial Services

The costs of regulatory fragmentation

Promoting efficiency and consistency in the international regulatory environment is a long-term objective for Business at OECD. In April, we launched a major new study on Regulatory Divergence: Costs, Risks, Impacts, conducted jointly with the International Federation of Accountants (IFAC), and which featured in the Financial Times. It found that dealing with inconsistencies in regulation between different jurisdictions costs financial institutions between 5 to 10% of annual turnover – conservatively estimated as $700 billion annually.

Advocacy of the report’s findings included presentations to the OECD Committee on Financial Markets, and Governance Committee, and the 5th annual meeting of International Organizations, in Geneva.

OECD Insurance and Private Pensions Committee

Following an initial conference on cyber risk in February the OECD is currently developing recommendations to support the market’s development.

The OECD Working Party on Private Pensions has also launched a major new study into ‘the role of employers in saving for retirement.’
**Responsible Business Conduct for institutional investors, and in corporate lending**

The OECD’s [Guidelines for multinational enterprises](https://www.oecd.org) are the most comprehensive multilateral tool on Responsible Business Conduct. The current focus is implementation by developing practical tools to address specific products, sectors or countries.

The OECD recently published its report on responsible business conduct for institutional investors, which summarizes key considerations for due diligence in this sector. The next phase of this project focuses on corporate lending and how it relates to responsible business conduct due diligence. Our continued advocacy efforts seek to ensure this does not create any additional expectations and obligations for companies, and that it does not introduce prescriptive guidance that goes beyond the Guidelines.

**B20 engagement – Financing SMEs in Global Value Chains (GVCs)**

In partnership with B20 Argentina, the 4th Roundtable on SMEs Access to GVCs was held in May. Building on our 2017 contribution this year’s roundtable focused on the productivity challenge. Participants identified and prioritized recommendations from across different B20 Taskforces that support productivity growth and sustain SME financing and participation in GVCs.

A report bringing together the outcomes of this discussion, along with policy recommendations in this area is due to be published in September.

**Ministerial Conference**

Ministers, with responsibility for small and medium sized enterprises, convened in Mexico City in February. A senior level Business at OECD delegation contributed throughout the conference, calling for policies to support SMEs participate in rapidly digitalizing markets and integrate them further into Global Value Chains. Our views were summarized for the OECD Observer. As a key outcome, the Ministerial Deceleration set out renewed commitment from OECD governments to work together on these issues, and gave direction to future OECD effort.

**Blockchain**

Decentralized distributed ledger technology is set to have an impact far beyond cryptocurrencies. Today, its economy wide applications are under investigation at the OECD, which is taking a leading role to support policymakers manage its successful application.

Business at OECD recently participated in a special session on corporate governance and blockchain, and has now launched a new Blockchain Network. We will also actively participate in the forthcoming OECD Blockchain Policy Forum in September.

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Daniel Funes de Rioja, B20 Chair, Gianluca Riccio, Vice Chair Business at OECD Finance Taskforce, and Inés Berton, Chair B20 Taskforce on SMEs Development.

Angel Gurría, OECD Secretary General, and Jackie King, COO, Canadian Chamber of Commerce, at the Mexico City Ministerial in February.
Leadership engagement on SMEs

Two new vice chairs were appointed to the Business at OECD Taskforce on SMEs and Entrepreneurship in May. Following his appointment Patrik Kovacs, Vice Chair of the Business at OECD Taskforce on SMEs and Entrepreneurship, was hosted by the Hungarian delegation to the OECD for a high-level breakfast with OECD Ambassadors, government delegates, and experts.

In a keynote address, he highlighted the generational challenge of boosting youth entrepreneurship, and called for the OECD to give greater focus to how businesses are transferred between generations. OECD Secretary General Angel Gurría opened the event and stressed the importance of working with businesses of all sizes to help drive growth.

SME and Entrepreneurship Outlook

In late 2018 the OECD will publish the first edition of its new flagship biennial SME & Entrepreneurship Outlook, bringing together a vast array of country level data and policy information pertaining to SME framework conditions.

The Outlook builds on the initial 2017 benchmarking report Small, Medium, Strong. The new Outlook will scale-up this work, extending coverage to all OECD and G20 countries.

Upcoming meetings

Please note that some meetings are subject to confirmation and others might be added. Please contact the Business at OECD Secretariat for final confirmation.

5 September | OECD Blockchain Policy Forum

28 September | OECD Expert Working Session on Responsible Business Conduct and Corporate Lending

10-11 October | OECD Working Party on Small and Medium Sized Enterprises and Entrepreneurship

24 October | OECD Roundtable on Investment and Sustainable Development

24 October | Business at OECD Economic Policy Committee

25-26 October | OECD Working Party No. 1 on Macro-Economic and Structural Policy Analysis

25 October | OECD Committee on Financial Markets

26 October | Business at OECD Finance Taskforce

12-13 November | OECD Economic Policy Committee

13-14 November | 5th OECD Forum on Green Finance and Investment

3-4 December | OECD Working Party on Private Pensions

6-7 December | OECD Insurance and Private Pensions Committee

For more information about the meetings and policy issues highlighted in this update please contact either:

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