



# What business needs from the OECD in challenging times

**A call to the Council and the candidates for the succession of Secretary General Angel Gurría**

December 2020

International cooperation is essential to bring our economies back to growth and prosperity following Covid-19. Global efforts hold the key to strengthen the vital interdependence of economic growth and social inclusion. We need a strong OECD to defend the fundamental principles of open economies through fact-based advice, best practice sharing, and global standards for a level playing field. As the OECD turns 60, we encourage new leadership to seize the opportunity to prove the value of multilateralism.

Business and entrepreneurs are the main drivers of economic recovery, job creation, digital transformation, and innovation. They play an important role in realizing the Sustainable Development Goals, but they need the right policy framework to compete and succeed. The OECD can make a tangible difference by consulting effectively with the private sector through *Business at OECD* (BIAC). With an official mandate from OECD governments, we have close to 59 years of experience bringing the voice of companies of all sizes and sectors to the OECD and Member countries.

As an important solutions partner, we stand ready to reinforce our work with the OECD and governments to address urgent global challenges and tangibly increase prosperity. As the 10 candidates for the OECD Secretary General position present their leadership vision, and as a core part of the OECD family, we present our priorities for the future of the Organization:



**Keep markets open**



**Increase global impact**



**Focus on core mandates**



**Turn evidence into effective communications**



**Develop a foresight and preparedness role**



**Strengthen the cooperation with institutional OECD stakeholders**



## Keep markets open

In line with its Convention, contributing to the “expansion of world trade on a multilateral, non-discriminatory basis” should continue to be very high on the OECD agenda. Open markets have come under severe pressure in recent years as doubts over their benefits have increasingly dominated the political agenda in some countries. Resulting rhetoric and policy actions currently threaten prosperity. The Organization should vigorously and visibly explain why trade and investment, paired with effective domestic policies, are essential to expand prosperity and to reduce inequalities. We will work with the OECD to make that case and to demonstrate why protectionism leads to less inclusive societies.



## Focus on core mandates

For the OECD to “achieve the highest sustainable economic growth and employment (...) while maintaining financial stability”, its future leadership should promote a growth agenda based on open and productive economies. It should consolidate and streamline the work of currently over 300 committees and working groups to ensure effectiveness. In parallel, an integrated approach to policy discussions on key areas including employment, digital transformation, tax, health, trade, investment, education, and environment, among others, would achieve coherence. The OECD should consistently show that economic and social well-being are two sides of the same coin.



## Increase global impact

OECD standards make a major contribution to enhance productivity and to create a level playing field across markets. To the benefit of our economies, they should become more global in reach. At the same time, and echoing our [2018 Statement on OECD enlargement](#), OECD membership expansion should be selective and protect the Organization’s ability to develop coherent policy advice. Any candidate country must prove its track record in promoting open markets, legal certainty, and the ability to enforce OECD standards.

Furthermore, more non-Member economies should be encouraged to follow core OECD standards in areas such as taxation, economic governance, and responsible business conduct. Business also widely appreciates the value of OECD advice to the G20. Based on our longstanding collaboration with the Business-20, we will support continuity between rotating Presidencies and dialogue with G20 officials.



## Develop a foresight and preparedness role

Instead of firefighting crises as they come, international collaboration should proactively anticipate major challenges. The OECD has the cross-disciplinary expertise and convening power to assess potential future economic, regulatory, health, and demographic disruptions. Adequate foresight will enable the Organization to identify the strategic and long-term perspective that effectively manages the realities of today by having a clear and compelling vision of tomorrow.



## Turn evidence into effective communications

New technologies and social media have accelerated the challenge for policymakers, business, and stakeholders to process essential information. The OECD is a powerhouse for economic data, analysis, and knowledge, and this evidence should not sit on shelves. While we need in-depth analysis and targeted policy advice, the OECD should also contribute to the wider public debate with succinct, fact and evidence-based policy communications. Our messages must resonate with the wider public to make sure empirical truths overcome sensationalist arguments.



## Strengthen the cooperation with institutional OECD stakeholders

*Business at OECD* (BIAC) offers structured high quality input and consolidated, representative policy guidance from business and employers in OECD countries and beyond. Our member organizations representing the views of more than 7 million companies of all sizes and sectors can inform the OECD about the most recent developments in markets and the respective needs of companies.

We are ready to take on new debates with incoming OECD leadership and further deepen our business input through the OECD Committees. Through their Member-driven processes, they remain the cornerstone of the Organization's policymaking. The incoming OECD leadership should build on this cooperation with *Business at OECD* (BIAC), particularly at a time where transparency and accountability are fundamental to ensure stakeholder support in Member countries.

We look forward to the dialogue with OECD Ambassadors and candidates on future priorities for the OECD and ways to secure its global leadership for open markets, economic cooperation, and social well-being.