

Our 10 business priorities for 2022

Established in 1962, *Business at OECD* (BIAC) stands for policies that enable businesses of all sizes to contribute to growth, economic development and societal prosperity. Through *Business at OECD*, national businesses and employers' federations representing over 7 million companies provide and receive expertise via our participation with the OECD and governments promoting competitive economies and better business.

The priorities below are based on close dialogue with our member organizations and focus on areas in which the OECD has a key impact, including G20 and G7 mandates, legal instruments, work on global governance, and targeted research that drives the OECD agenda.

In addition, our crosscutting policy dialogue also includes work in areas such as development and regulatory policy, which have a strong horizontal nature. The 10 priorities should therefore not be considered exhaustive, but should guide our members and stakeholders into the areas that will feature prominently in our agenda for 2022. Work on more technical and sector-specific issues will also continue to play an important role in our overarching agenda.

Provide comprehensive business input as the OECD implements global tax deal

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Implementation of the G20-mandated OECD Base Erosion Profit Shifting (BEPS) project recommendations remains on top of the international corporate tax agenda. The current focus of this work is on advancing detailed guidance for the OECD/G20 Agreement on Taxation of the Digitalizing Economy addressing profit allocation and a proposed minimum tax, working together with the OECD and the 141 countries part of the BEPS Inclusive Framework towards an operational framework that works for all.

In 2022, we will continue to work on ways to increase tax certainty, through improved dispute prevention and resolution, administrative simplification, and tools for enhanced engagement and cooperation with tax authorities. Enhancing trust between taxpayers and tax administrations is an important building block and requires close dialogue between tax administrations and business supported by the OECD. Greater tax certainty will give businesses the confidence to make the necessary investments for growth.

Our business input will focus on encouraging the OECD to reinforce its position as standard setter for international pro-growth tax policy, and to ensure a holistic coordinated approach to assessing and implementing fiscal measures for a rapid recovery across sectors, including for key issues such as environmental taxation, value added tax, and reporting standards for new and emerging technologies in OECD countries and beyond.

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Defend OECD's role in clearly advocating for open markets

The OECD is a key provider of fact-based analysis on trade and investment trends and barriers, and acts as knowledge partner to national governments, the WTO, G7, and G20. The Organization is positioned upstream of trade negotiations, and pioneers research on cutting-edge trade debates such as the level playing field, digital trade, the flow of services, and trade and sustainability. The OECD also hosts important legal instruments on national security, national treatment of foreign investment, and export credits, and is an important platform for investment policy coordination, for instance, via its Freedom of Investment Roundtable.

In 2022, we will advocate for Building Back Better Trade, combining long-standing trade policy priorities with new insights including those garnered during the pandemic. Our trade agenda is forward-looking and aims to respond to the Covid-19 pandemic, strengthen the core principles of trade policy, address specific issues of concern for trade policy, and advance trade policy for the 21st Century.

The OECD is also active in its efforts to counter cross-border illicit trade practices. In particular, it seeks to provide insights and data on this subject and promote consumer awareness as well as public-private cooperation that can contribute to tackling cross-border illicit trade in the future.

A key focus area in 2022 on investment will be the finalization of the OECD's FDI Qualities toolkit, providing recommendations to policy makers on how to attract Sustainable Development Goals enhancing investment, which will be featured at next year's Ministerial Council meeting—also supported by an OECD Council Recommendation. Discussions on investment and sustainability will also continue in the context of the OECD's work on the future of Investment Treaties, where we will advocate for a practice-oriented, balanced approach to investment treaty reform.

Advance smart policies to further leverage the digital transformation

Our cross-cutting digital economy policy agenda aims to advance the responsible use of digital technologies, enable business resilience, and inform timely government actions in the current Covid-19 and technological context. Business participants in this work address privacy and data governance, digital safety and security, internet related policy, the impacts of new and emerging digital technologies.

OECD digital policy instruments are the global standards for privacy, digital security, broadband connectivity, internet policy cooperation, benchmarking and measurement, and Artificial Intelligence. We work with OECD Members and relevant stakeholders to shape this guidance and ensure its practical implementation for enhanced trust and security, with a strong focus on governance, and regulatory frameworks that support investment, innovation and digital inclusion. OECD Standards for digital are highly relevant across sectors increasingly advancing through data-driven digital innovation.

In 2022, we will focus on the continued development and implementation of OECD Digital Policy instruments, and inform the OECD's horizontal project on Data Governance for Growth and Well Being. The impacts of trusted government access to personal data held by the private sector, and data localization on privacy and cross border data flows will also be among issues high on our business agenda.

Put job creation and youth integration at the heart of the OECD agenda

OECD work on employment is in the spotlight given that the Ambassador-led OECD Global Strategy Group discussed the topic of telework and that it convened a Ministers meeting to discuss employment policies in December 2021. Our business priorities for the future of work were launched at a virtual event that gathered over 25 Ambassadors. Our work going forward will focus on implementation. Ensuring the OECD can address the challenges employers face in light of labor shortages, and the policies needed to sustain job creation will be central to our efforts.

Our collaboration with the OECD will also focus on sustaining the momentum for our Business for Youth campaign, with a focus on access to upskilling and reskilling. We will also showcase industrial relations models to the OECD that broaden the scope beyond collective bargaining as a panacea for all future of work-related challenges. The Covid-19 crisis is also changing educational systems. Next year, our work will address the urgent priority for school and training curricula to equip young citizens to thrive and successfully adapt with digital and greening factors in the minds of governments and businesses.

Ensure the OECD develops a foresight role for post-pandemic health policies

The OECD develops health policy recommendations that affect the market operations of the pharmaceutical and healthcare-based industries on the one hand and the agri-food, well-being, and sports sectors on the other hand. In 2022, the OECD will deepen its analysis and policy options on challenges and opportunities related to pharmaceuticals and medical devices. We will encourage the OECD and governments to adopt a pro-innovation approach. We will encourage the OECD to pursue new work on pull incentives to address anti-microbial resistance as part of our proactive recommendations on health security and preparedness.

On the agri-food side, we will raise proactively the benefits of adopting healthy lifestyles to reduce risk factors for non-communicable diseases. The OECD has an ambitious program in public health, which provides governments with recommendations to tackle obesity, improve nutrition, and address alcohol abuse. We will also bring back our Annual Health Forum following a 2-year hiatus, which will bring on-the-ground business perspectives on how developments on health are shaping up from a company perspective, addressing mental health in the workplace, and explaining perspectives from entrepreneurs in the hospitality sector, among others. From an innovative healthcare standpoint, we will also detail the science behind innovation and its role in creating health resilience.

Our work on economic policy and finance allows business delegates to use OECD insights on economic policy to shape structural reform debates. Our annual Economic Policy Survey next year will provide input to shape the OECD Economic Outlook. Particular attention will be placed on the financing of the economic recovery, global value chains, and on how to address public and private sector indebtedness following the crisis. We will also continue our ongoing dialogue with OECD bodies and provide members the opportunity to understand and shape the direction of OECD initiatives.

Furthermore, members will be able to participate in discussions on key topics including the financing conditions of sustainable growth, digitalization of the economy and the emergence of new business models, ESG, financial policy, and green infrastructure investment. We will also provide value to members by connecting them with the OECD ahead of the preparation of the country-specific Economic Surveys to ensure business insights are duly considered in these impactful reports.

Address the ambitious OECD work program on environmental sustainability and climate change

In 2022, our work will focus on the OECD's cross-cutting climate change agenda, including the International Program on Action for Climate, which aims to support country efforts to move to net-zero emissions pathways, addressing distributional aspects of climate policies, climate-resilient infrastructure and technology diffusion. Emerging sustainable finance definitions and strengthening investment will be further core themes we will address in our engagement with the OECD. Work on environment and tax will allow members to provide views on effective carbon rates, energy taxes, and emissions trading systems. In this context, will also explore energy policy issues in the wider OECD framework, including with the IEA.

As OECD Environment Ministers will convene in March 2022, the OECD is finalizing its Global Plastics Outlook, a flagship report that develops a policy agenda on the environmental impacts linked to plastics use and waste. To strengthen resource efficiency and enable circular economy business models, we further explore the potential of digital technologies, the role of extended producer responsibility, and work on international trade and circular economy.

We will continue our involvement in the OECD environment, health and safety program. Its high-quality tools and guidance on technical chemicals management issues provide concrete cost-saving effects of about 309 million Euros annually for industry and governments by harmonizing testing and assessment approaches.

Promote integrated approaches to fight corruption and enhance responsible business conduct

The OECD is taking a leading role in the promotion of responsible business conduct through its Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises—the most comprehensive government-supported instrument in the field, covering all areas relevant to business ethics and counting close to 50 country adherents.

In 2022, our efforts will focus on advising governments and the OECD on concrete follow-up to the 2021 stocktaking of the MNE Guidelines, which focused on its successes, gaps, and challenges. Members active in this work will help us highlight the need for better visibility of the Guidelines, capacity building among SMEs, global outreach for a level playing field and improvements to the National Contact Points system. Our business input will underline business perspectives in conducting due diligence in practice, including practical challenges companies might face.

We have also been active in the fight against corruption, achieving tangible results in ensuring that business recommendations such as the demand side of bribery, the use of technology, and the responsibilities of SOEs, are reflected in the updated OECD Council Recommendation addressing bribery.

As part of our strategy for 2022, we will continue to highlight the potential of emerging digital technologies in the identification and prevention of corruption. We will also seek avenues to support compliance efforts in the private sector, with a special focus on providing support to SMEs.

Stimulate innovation, entrepreneurship and small business development

The OECD provides governments with the analytical basis to develop innovation policies that are both effective and economically efficient and contribute to addressing global challenges and opportunities. Harnessing the innovation ecosystem, the Organization also provides analysis to develop economic policies that boost small businesses and entrepreneurs.

Businesses can use OECD tools to identify the structural and regulatory barriers to small business growth, and help shape governments' response to SME policy design and implementation. Besides recovering from the economic shock that Covid-19 induced, SMEs must deal with long-term structural challenges, which call for leveraging digital and “green” transformations.

Through our open dialogue with the OECD platforms that address SME policies, we will stay actively engaged throughout 2022 in identifying what SMEs need from policymakers, and the role the OECD can play in this field. Business input will focus on concrete ways to diversify the finance landscape, including financing to adapting and capitalizing on policies to address climate change, addressing administrative hurdles, youth entrepreneurship, embracing the digital transformation, adapting to post-Covid realities, and integrating SMEs into international trade opportunities.

Pursue better corporate governance and competitive neutrality that works for all

Following a G20 mandate, the OECD will review its G20/OECD Corporate Governance Principles to address growing awareness of sustainability and inclusiveness in this field. This update will also have substantial implications on future expectations regarding board responsibility, reporting standards, and ESG. We will also continue our active engagement in work on competitive neutrality and addressing competitive distortions with internationally active State-Owned Enterprises. Our priorities for 2022 will therefore focus on the review of the Principles to ensure the project will help business navigate the post-Covid world effectively.

Our Competition Committee will continue its work in advocating for open markets and in preventing distortions that may discourage investments and create regulatory uncertainty. To this end, we will keep ourselves abreast of developments by proactively engaging the OECD discussions and advocating our efforts both internally and externally.