



## Publication launch

# **Beyond COVID-19:** Advancing digital business transformation in the Eastern Partner Countries

## **Draft agenda**

### **30 November 2021**

*10:00 – 11:30 (France, Belgium, CET)*

*11:00 – 12:30 (Moldova, Ukraine)*

*12:00 – 13:30 (Belarus)*

*13:00 – 14:30 (Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia)*

## ■ CONTEXT

In the context of the “**EU4Business: From Policies to Action – Phase 2**” project, the OECD launched a multi-country project component, co-financed by Poland and Romania, to support governments of Eastern Partner (EaP) countries in designing and implementing policies to promote the digital transformation of small and medium-sized enterprises (SME).

**The COVID-19 crisis has given renewed urgency to efforts aiming to support the digitalisation of SMEs.** In the process of digital adoption, small and medium sized enterprises face a clear opportunity to introduce fundamental changes to the way they do business, experiment with new technologies and ultimately increase productivity. The limited size of SMEs, however, can act as a barrier to adoption due to a widespread lack of financial resources and human capabilities to sustain the digital transformation. As such, policy makers can play an important role to create the right environment for SMEs to start their digital journeys, both by working on the main drivers of the digital economy, as well as by designing dedicated tools to help SMEs overcome their size-related barriers impeding their digital transformation.

A regional high-level event kicked-off the project on 18 May 2021, in which senior policy makers from EaP countries and practitioners from OECD member countries exchanged on their vision and experience with policies to promote the digital transformation of small and medium-sized enterprises. This was followed by **a series of technical seminars for policy makers and practitioners** to delve deeper into the ways Eastern Partner countries can support the digital transformation of SMEs, with a focus on 1) building a common understanding of the transformative power of digital technologies, 2) fostering the SME skills for digital transformation and 3) the role of enterprise support agencies to accelerate the digital transformation of SMEs.

## ■ OBJECTIVE

Today’s webinar supports the launch of the OECD publication “**Beyond COVID-19 - Advancing digital business transformation in the Eastern Partner countries**”. The report introduces a definition of digital transformation and its relevance for Eastern Partner countries. It also discusses important elements of the framework conditions for the digital economy, such as broadband connectivity, the regulatory environment, and the human capital dimension of the digital economy. Finally, the report and presents a “blueprint” to design the building blocks of policy instruments to respond to SME needs and facilitate their digital transformation

The OECD secretariat will present key highlights from the report and its main policy recommendations. After that, senior members of the governments of Eastern Partner countries will comment on the proposed policy roadmaps and highlight the main policy initiatives to foster the digital transformation of enterprises in their respective countries.

## ■ PARTICIPANTS

This policy webinar will bring together policy makers, practitioners and experts involved in the design and implementation of policies that promote digital transformation of SMEs across OECD and the Eastern Partner countries. Other participants include representatives from the private sector, as well as representatives from the EU and the OECD.

## ■ TECHNICAL DETAILS

**Registration:** Advance registration is required. Please [register here](#). A personalised confirmation link will be sent following registration by email. Please check both your inbox and spam folder.

**Access:** Please join the session 15 minutes prior to the start with the personalised confirmation link provided following registration.

**Working Language:** English and Russian

## ■ CONTACTS

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EU4Business

This project is implemented within the framework of a multi-country project “EU4Business: From Policies to Action – Phase 2” in the Eastern Partnership with the financial support of the European Union within the EU4Business initiative. The project is co-financed by Poland and Romania.

## ■ DRAFT AGENDA

*Please note that the timing of the draft agenda is based on GMT+2 (Paris).*

### 09:45-10:00 Access to the webinar

*Participants are advised to join the meeting with their personalised link 15 minutes prior the start time to familiarise themselves with the video conference tool, Zoom.*

Moderator: **William Tompson**, Head of the OECD Eurasia Division

### 10:00-10:25 Opening

- **Andreas Schaal**, Director of OECD Global Relations
- **Sergiu Gaibu**, Minister of Economy, Republic of Moldova
- **Paweł Jabłoński**, Undersecretary of State, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Poland
- **Cornel Feruță**, State Secretary for Global Affairs, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Romania
- **Diana Jabłońska**, Head of Unit C1 Georgia, Moldova, Economic Investment Plan, DG NEAR, EU

### 10:25–10:35 Keynote speech: Business digitalisation as enabler of economic recovery

- **Anne Bioulac**, Vice President, Capgemini Invent

### 10:35–10:45 Highlights and policy roadmap from the publication: Beyond COVID-19 - Advancing digital business transformation in the Eastern Partner countries

*In this session, the OECD secretariat will present the highlights from the publication “Beyond COVID-19 in the Eastern Partner Countries - Advancing digital business transformation”. The authors will touch upon the framework conditions for the digital economy in the Eastern Partnership, and propose a blueprint of policy instruments to support the digital transformation of SMEs.*

- **Francesco Alfonso**, Economist, OECD Eurasia
- **Carlotta Moiso**, Policy Analyst, OECD Eurasia

### 10:45–11:25 Tour de table with Government representatives of Eastern Partner countries

*In this session, Government representatives of Eastern Partner countries will comment on the policy roadmap presented in the OECD publication and highlight the main policy initiatives to foster the digital transformation of enterprises in their respective countries.*

High-level intervention: **Sergiu Gaibu**, Minister of Economy, Republic of Moldova

- **Valeriya Ionan**, Deputy Minister, Ministry of Digital Transformation, Ukraine
- **Rovshan Najaf**, Deputy Minister, Ministry of Economy, Azerbaijan
- **Irakli Gabriadze**, Deputy Head of Enterprise Georgia
- **Jack Hakimian**, Digital transformation expert, National Center of Innovation & Entrepreneurship, Armenia

Q&A with webinar participants

### 11:25–11:30 Closing remarks

- **Daniel Quadbeck**, Head of Unit for Eastern Europe and South Caucasus, OECD Eurasia Division