



## AGENDA

### **MENA-OECD WORKING GROUP ON SME AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP POLICY**

# **Boosting SMEs for diversification and inclusion in the MENA region**

**4-5 July 2017**

Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International  
Cooperation

Piazzale della Farnesina, 1

Rome, Italy



## OBJECTIVES OF THE MEETING

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The MENA-OECD Competitiveness Programme is organising the ninth meeting of the MENA-OECD Working Group on Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) and Entrepreneurship Policy. The meeting is hosted by the Agency for territorial cohesion, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Economic Development of Italy.

The meeting will identify how the Working Group can support the improvement of SME policies to address key development questions for the MENA region:

- ♦ How can SME policies support **economic diversification and competitiveness** through a dynamic private sector?
- ♦ How to improve SME policymaking through effective **institutions and public-private dialogue**?
- ♦ What to do to materialise the **economic potential of women and youth** through enterprise policy?
- ♦ How to develop a proactive approach for SME participation in **sustainable supply chains and responsible business conduct**?
- ♦ What is the progress of the implementation of key reforms identified by the “**2014 SME Policy Index for the MENA region**”?

## THE MENA-OECD COMPETITIVENESS PROGRAMME

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The Competitiveness Programme offers a platform for MENA-OECD co-operation on policies to promote the development of a vibrant private sector as an engine for growth and prosperity. Building on OECD standards, tools and working methods, the Programme:

- ♦ Promotes policy dialogue and peer-learning among MENA and OECD countries and engages governments, the private sector, civil society and other actors.
- ♦ Creates synergies with regional and international partners and initiatives (e.g. League of Arab States, Union for the Mediterranean, African Development Bank, Arab Monetary Fund, Deauville Partnership, UNDP, IMF, European Union, etc.).
- ♦ Supports MENA countries in the identification and implementation of reforms and paves the way for stronger involvement and partnerships of MENA countries with the OECD.

The Competitiveness Programme is part of the MENA-OECD Initiative on Governance and Competitiveness.

The Working Group provides a forum for multilateral dialogue and peer learning among MENA and OECD policymakers, experts and representatives of the private sector and regional and international organisations. The Working Group supports MENA economies in the identification and implementation of SME and entrepreneurship policy reforms through regional co-operation and country specific support. Its activities include regional dialogue, policy analysis and advice, and monitoring of the implementation of reforms. The Working Group is co-chaired by Tunisia and Italy.

## MENA-OECD Working Group on SME and Entrepreneurship Policy

Day 1: 4 July 2017

8.30–9.00	Registration of participants
9.00–9.30	<b>Welcome remarks</b>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– <b>Mr. Massimo GAIANI</b>, Director General for Global Affairs, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Italy.</li> <li>– <b>Welcome by the co-chairs of the Working Group</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <b>Mrs. Maria Ludovica AGRO</b>, General Director, Agency for Territorial Cohesion, Italy.</li> <li>○ <b>Mr. Sadok BEJJA</b>, General Director of SME promotion, Ministry Industry and Commerce, Tunisia.</li> </ul> </li> <li>– <b>Mrs. Miriam KOREEN</b>, Deputy Director, Centre for Entrepreneurship, SMEs, Local Development and Tourism, OECD.</li> <li>– <b>Mr. Carlos CONDE</b>, Head of the Middle East and Africa Division, Global Relations Secretariat, OECD.</li> </ul>
9.30 – 11.00	<b>Session 1: What to do to materialise the economic potential of women and youth through enterprise policy?</b>
	<p>Women and young people represent one of the greatest development promises for the region. The low levels of women’s participation in the economy, and the high levels of youth unemployment are not only a social issue; they also hold back the economic potential of the region. MENA economies and their international partners should increase their efforts to remove barriers and to promote the participation of youth and women in employment and enterprise development.</p> <p>The discussions will build on a forthcoming OECD report on <i>Women’s Economic Empowerment in Selected MENA Countries</i>, which analyses the impact of the legal frameworks of Algeria, Egypt, Jordan, Libya, Morocco and Tunisia. The session will also focus on international and MENA experience and practices.</p> <p>Questions for discussion:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– The legal and regulatory barriers holding women back in MENA countries?</li> <li>– How to tackle youth unemployment through enterprise development and entrepreneurship policies?</li> </ul> <p><b>Chair:</b> <b>Mrs. Maria Ludovica AGRO</b>, General Director, Agency for Territorial Cohesion, Italy; and Co-chair of the Working Group.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– <b>Keynote speech by Mr. Carlos CONDE</b>, Head of the Middle East and Africa Division, Global Relations Secretariat, OECD.</li> <li>– <b>Mrs. Leyla KHAIAT</b>, First Vice-President, Council of Arab Business Women, Tunisia.</li> <li>– <b>Mr. Mohammad NACIRI</b>, Regional Director for Arab States, UN Women.</li> <li>– <b>Mr. Giorgio MOSANGINI</b>, Team Leader for the Green Entrepreneurship Programme, Regional Activity Centre for Sustainable Consumption and Production, UN Environment/Mediterranean Action Plan–Barcelona Convention for the protection of the Mediterranean Sea.</li> </ul> <p><b>Open discussion</b></p>
11.00–11.15	<b>Coffee break</b>

11.15–12.30	<b>Session 2: How to improve SME policymaking through effective institutions and open dialogue?</b>
	<p>Effective SME and private sector development policies depend on a complex mix of “horizontal” measures to improve the general business environment (e.g. a favourable regulatory framework, market conditions, access finance, etc.). SME policies also rely on targeted support measures from specific actors to specific firms, economic activities, geographical locations and others. A more dynamic private sector therefore requires strong partnerships between governments, the business community and other actors, including the international community.</p> <p>Questions for discussion:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– How to improve institutional coordination where there the existence of multiple SME actors (ministries, agencies, donors, etc.) can lead to policy gaps in some areas and overlaps in others?</li> <li>– How to strengthen public-private dialogue, and in particular how to enhance the voice of SMEs in such dialogue?</li> <li>– What to do to improve evidence-based SME policymaking through better statistics and monitoring and evaluation?</li> </ul> <p><b>Chair: Mr. Sadok BEJJA</b>, General Director of SME promotion, Ministry Industry and Commerce, Tunisia.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– <b>Keynote speech by Mrs. Miriam KOREEN</b>, Deputy Director, Centre for Entrepreneurship, SMEs, Local Development and Tourism, OECD.</li> <li>– <b>Dr. Maher AL-MAHROUQ</b>, Director General, Jordan Chamber of Industry.</li> <li>– <b>Mr. Odeh SHEHADEH ZAGHMOURI</b>, Secretary General Palestinian Federation of Industries.</li> <li>– <b>Mr. Mattia CORBETTA</b>, DG Industrial Policy, Competitiveness and SMEs, Ministry of Economic Development, Italy.</li> </ul> <p><b>Open discussion</b></p>
12.30–14.00	<b>Lunch break</b>
14.00–15.30	<b>Session 3: How SME policies can support economic diversification, regional integration and competitiveness through a dynamic private sector?</b>
	<p>MENA economies are stepping up their efforts to find new sources of growth and jobs. SME and private sector development policies should take a central place in the region's efforts to diversify away from hydrocarbons and over-reliance on the state as a producer, consumer and employer. A multilateral exchange among peers on these issues is therefore timely and crucial. The session will include a focus on the experience of Latin America and the MENA region in terms of SME policy and regional integration.</p> <p>Questions for discussion:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– How SME and entrepreneurship promotion fit into wider diversification and competitiveness strategies, considering the important differences among MENA economies?</li> <li>– What can be done to increase the growth potential of SMEs through their participation in regional and global markets, including through global value chains?</li> <li>– What concrete policies can be mobilised to enhance the productivity of SMEs so that they constitute a dynamic element of the economy?</li> </ul> <p><b>Chair: Mrs. Maria Ludovica AGRO</b>, General Director, Agency for Territorial Cohesion, Italy.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– <b>Keynote speech by Mr. Alejandro GONZALEZ HERNANDEZ</b>, General Coordinator</li> </ul>

	<p>of Strategic Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation, National Institute for Entrepreneurs, Mexico; and Chair of the OECD Working Party on SMEs and Entrepreneurship.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– <b>Mr. Jorge GALVEZ MENDEZ</b>, Economist/Policy Analyst, Middle East and Africa, Global Relations Secretariat, OECD.</li> <li>– <b>Mrs. Sofana DAHLAN</b>, Vice-Governor of Entrepreneurship Advancement, Small and Medium Enterprises General Authority (SMEA), Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.</li> <li>– <b>Mr. Wajdi NEFFATI</b>, Head of the International Co-operation, Agency for the Promotion of Industry and Innovation and SBA National Coordinator, Tunisia.</li> </ul> <p><b>Open discussion</b></p>
15.30–17.00	<p><b>Session 4: Sustainable supply chains and responsible business conduct: how can governments and SMEs in the MENA region be proactive?</b></p>
	<p>This session will explore the involvement of SMEs in global supply chains and on their proactive approach to responsible business conduct in response to big companies due diligence policies. At the same time the session will be an opportunity for governments (mainly National Contact Points for the OECD Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises), international organisations, and for companies to present their programmes and experiences on sustainable supply chains with a SMEs lens.</p> <p>Questions for discussion:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– How can National Contact Points (NCPs) from the MENA Region, within their mandate, help SMEs to implement the OECD Guidelines on Responsible Business Conduct and the interrelated Guidance documents (such as the OECD-FAO Guidance for Responsible Agricultural Supply Chains)?</li> <li>– How can big companies from OECD countries proactively engage SMEs in the MENA region to foster sustainability in their supply chains?</li> </ul> <p><b>Chair: Mr. Sadok BEJJA</b>, General Director of SME promotion, Ministry Industry and Commerce, Tunisia.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– <b>Mrs. Jennifer SCHAPPERT</b>, Policy Analyst, Responsible Business Conduct, Investment Division, OECD.</li> <li>– <b>Mrs. Maria Benedetta FRANCESCONI</b>, Italian National Contact Point for the OECD Guidelines, Ministry of Economic Development.</li> <li>– <b>Mrs. Assia BEN SAAD</b>, Moroccan National Contact Point for the OECD Guidelines, Agence Marocaine de Développement des Investissements.</li> <li>– <b>Mr. Majdi CHAABOUNI</b>, Director General, Groupe Christine Confection, Tunisia.</li> </ul> <p><b>Open discussion</b></p>
17.00–17.30	<p><b>Closing remarks</b></p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– <b>Mrs. Maria Ludovica AGRO</b>, General Director, Agency for Territorial Cohesion, Italy.</li> <li>– <b>Mr. Sadok BEJJA</b>, General Director of SME promotion, Ministry Industry and Commerce, Tunisia.</li> <li>– <b>Mr. Alejandro GONZALEZ HERNANDEZ</b>, General Coordinator of Strategic Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation, National Institute for Entrepreneurs, Mexico; and Chair of the OECD Working Party on SMEs and Entrepreneurship.</li> <li>– <b>Mr. Jorge GALVEZ MENDEZ</b>, Economist/Policy Analyst, Middle East and Africa, Global Relations Secretariat, OECD.</li> </ul>
<p><b>END OF DAY 1</b></p>	

## MENA-OECD Working Group on SME and Entrepreneurship Policy

Day 2: 5 July 2017

9.00–12.00	<p><b>Session 5: Technical session on the Interim assessment of the 2014 SME Policy Index for the Mediterranean Middle East and North Africa</b></p>
	<p>The OECD, the European Commission and the European Training Foundation are undertaking a concise assessment of the level of the implementation of key recommendations put forward by the SME Policy Index for the Mediterranean Middle East and North Africa 2014, “Implementation of the Small Business Act for Europe”.</p> <p>The assessment focuses on key policy priorities, namely:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Improving business environments for SMEs and entrepreneurs;</li> <li>– Facilitating access to finance;</li> <li>– Fostering entrepreneurship, human capital development and SME growth; and</li> <li>– Enhancing SME policy making.</li> </ul> <p>This session will consist of technical discussions that will feed into the assessment. The discussions will focus on the Mediterranean economies which took part in the 2014 SME Policy Index (Algeria, Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco, Palestinian Authority and Tunisia). All other participants of the Working Group are invited to take part and contribute to the discussion.</p>
9.00 – 9.15	<p><b>Introduction:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– <b>Mr. Antonio FANELLI</b>, Senior Advisor, Global Relations Secretariat, OECD.</li> <li>– <b>Mrs. Mariavittoria GARLAPPI</b>, Specialist in Entrepreneurship and Enterprise skills, European Training Foundation.</li> </ul>
9.15 – 10.30	<p><b>Part 1:</b> Discussion of themes: a) Improving business environments for SMEs and entrepreneurs; and b) Facilitating access to finance.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Interventions by the National Coordinators (5 minutes per coordinator)</li> </ul> <p><b>Open discussion</b></p>
10.30 – 10.45	<p><b>Coffee break</b></p>
10.45–11.45	<p><b>Part 2:</b> Discussion of themes: a) Fostering entrepreneurship, human capital development and SME growth; and b) Enhancing SME policy making.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Interventions by the National Coordinators (5 minutes per coordinator)</li> </ul> <p><b>Open discussion</b></p>
11.45–12.00	<p><b>Conclusion</b></p>
12.00	<p><b>End of the meeting and light lunch break</b></p>