



OECD Digital Economy
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Gran Canaria, Spain, 2022

Chair's summary

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OECD Digital Economy Ministerial meeting: Driving long-term recovery and economic growth by building a trusted, sustainable, and inclusive digital future

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Chair's summary: issued under the responsibility of the Chair

H.E. Nadia Calviño, First Vice-President and Minister for Economy and Digitalisation, Spain

Ministers and Representatives of OECD Member countries and the European Union as well as those of Brazil, Bulgaria, Croatia, Dominican Republic, Egypt, Peru, Romania and Ukraine (virtual participation), with Representatives of Council of Europe, ITU and UNESCO as observers and expert representatives of BIAC, CSISAC, ITAC, and TUAC, met in Gran Canaria, Spain, under the leadership of Spain as Chair and with Denmark, Japan, Türkiye, the United Kingdom and the United States as Vice-Chairs, for the meeting of the OECD Committee on Digital Economy Policy (CDEP) at Ministerial level, to explore digital transformation policy opportunities and challenges with a focus on “Driving long-term recovery and economic growth by building a trusted, sustainable, and inclusive digital future”. The Ministerial meeting followed a [Stakeholder day](#) on 13 December, co-organised by the above-mentioned four stakeholder groups representing business, civil society, the Internet technical community, and trade unions.

First Vice-President Nadia Calviño, Chair of the meeting, led two days of constructive discussions on the policies and evidence-base needed for a human-centric and rights-oriented digital transformation, examining it from the perspective of the following four themes: economy, society, people and technology. The **opening events** included remarks from the President of the Government of Spain, Mr. Pedro Sánchez (virtual participation), OECD Secretary-General Mr. Mathias Cormann, Vice-President and Minister for Economy and Digitalisation, Spain, Ms. Nadia Calviño, and the President of the Government of the Canary Islands, Mr. Ángel Victor Torres Pérez. They welcomed the participants to the meeting, noted the importance of the event and the deliverables put forward for this meeting by the CDEP, outlined key policies related to the main themes of the meeting, and underscored the role of the OECD in promoting a shared vision for a trusted, sustainable and inclusive digital future.

High-level representatives of the Ministerial Bureau **set the scene** in the first high-level panel moderated by OECD Deputy Secretary-General Mr. Ulrik Vestergaard Knudsen, by reflecting on the following four themes: digital enablers of the global economy; building better societies; putting people first; and harnessing the power of AI and emerging technologies. In view of reaping the benefits of digital transformation for all, the Ministerial Bureau highlighted the importance of three key aspects: international and multi-stakeholder co-operation; human-centric technology development and deployment, aligned with democratic values; and the OECD's unique capacity to support governments with evidence, analyses and good practices for shaping domestic and international digital policy agendas.

The subsequent high-level opening panel on a **human-centric and rights-oriented digital transformation** included keynote remarks by First Vice-President Calviño, who highlighted Spain's international leadership on digital rights, ensuring that offline rights are equally protected and implemented online. She also mentioned España Digital, the roadmap for Spain's digitalisation, and a account of the national initiatives that advance a human-centric digital transformation in the areas of connectivity, economy and digital skills, emphasising the need to build a trusted, sustainable, and inclusive digital future. In a video address, Ukraine's Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Digital Transformation, Mr. Mykhailo Fedorov, articulated how the digitalisation of public services in times of peace has proven essential in helping people receive state support also in wartime, calling on OECD and non-OECD Members to promote digitalisation for the benefit of their citizens. During the subsequent panel discussion chaired by OECD Deputy Secretary-General Knudsen, Ministers and high-level Representatives discussed a variety of approaches in adopting and advancing human-centric and rights-oriented digital transformation, including related benefits and challenges. OECD Deputy Secretary-General Knudsen concluded by underscoring the importance of international cooperation between like-minded partners in the digital age, based on shared values, the rule of law, human rights, and democratic principles.



The opening ceremony further included the **launch of key deliverables** developed by the CDEP:

- A set of integrated outputs from the third phase of the OECD [Going Digital horizontal project](#) on data governance for growth and well-being, including two books *Going Digital to Advance Data Governance for Growth and Well-being* and the *Going Digital Guide to Data Governance Policy Making*, five OECD Digital Economy Papers on topics such as fostering cross-border data flows and measuring the value of data and data flows, and an online resource for data-related indicators. The conclusions and outcomes of the horizontal project, led by the CDEP in collaboration with four co-lead OECD Committees and in co-operation with over 10 other OECD bodies, recognise the importance of data as a driver of the global economy, advance a better understanding and measurement of the value of data, and support countries in developing coherent and holistic data governance policies.
- Multilingual Going Digital Toolkit “experiences” in French (oe.cd/toolkit-fr) and Hebrew (oe.cd/toolkit-he) that focus on the data and indicators on the Toolkit. These experiences extend the reach of the Toolkit – and the digital policy framework that underpins it – to more French and Hebrew speakers around the world. They also allow countries to more easily use the Toolkit indicators as their own national digital dashboard.
- A set of four OECD Recommendations on [digital security](#).¹ These include the Recommendation on Digital Security Risk Management, which identifies general and operational principles that inform organisations on managing security risks related to digital technologies. Embedding these principles and supporting their implementation, three complementary Recommendations inform governments on the development of national digital security strategies, whilst also responding to urgent needs on the digital security of products and services and the treatment of digital security vulnerabilities.

Over a working lunch on the first day, 14 December, Ministers and high-level Representatives discussed and adopted the [Declaration on Government Access to Personal Data Held by Private Sector Entities](#) [OECD/LEGAL/0487], the outcome of a two year process. The Declaration was subsequently launched in a public high-level panel where Ministers and high-level Representatives emphasised the important contribution of this international agreement to fostering trust in cross-border data flows, a key enabler of the global economy. OECD Secretary-General Cormann recognised the work and determination by Member countries and the European Union, the OECD Secretariat, and stakeholders to reach this ground-breaking achievement: a formal and mutual recognition that OECD Member countries uphold the same principles to safeguard privacy and other human rights when governments access data held from the private sector for national security and law enforcement purposes. Panellists underscored the historic importance of the Declaration in articulating how rule of law democracies balance privacy and other rights with the legitimate needs for government to access data. They considered the Declaration a springboard and proof of concept for further initiatives to promote data free flow with trust, including awareness raising, outreach to partner countries, and further collaboration with stakeholder organisations to advance its implementation.

On the second day of the meeting, 15 December, Ministers and high-level Representatives of the 38 OECD Member countries and the European Union, alongside Bulgaria, Croatia, Peru and Romania, concluded the meeting by discussing and adopting the [Declaration on a Trusted, Sustainable and Inclusive Digital Future](#) [OECD/LEGAL/0488], which reflects commitments and calls on the OECD to advance work on all of the topics mentioned in this summary. The Declaration was launched in a public concluding session, where Ms. Carme Artigas, Secretary of State for Digitalization and AI, Spain, introduced the Chair's summary of the meeting – recalling the outcomes of the discussions under each of the four themes (see below) – and OECD Deputy Secretary-General Knudsen introduced the Declaration, reflecting on the vision it embodies for countries' digital future and the role of the OECD in supporting its fulfilment. The closing event further included the public [announcement](#) on the creation of the OECD Global Forum on Technology, a platform for regular, multi-stakeholder and values-based in-depth dialogue to foresee and get ahead of long-term opportunities and risks presented by technology. The event concluded with a panel of OECD Ambassadors reflecting on the impact of

¹ The Recommendation on Digital Security Risk Management [[OECD/LEGAL/0479](#)]; the Recommendation on National Digital Security Strategies [[OECD/LEGAL/0480](#)]; the Recommendation on the Digital Security of Products and Services [[OECD/LEGAL/0481](#)] and the Recommendation on the Treatment of Digital Security Vulnerabilities [[OECD/LEGAL/0482](#)].



the Ministerial meeting and the Declaration on a Trusted, Sustainable and Inclusive Digital Future in their countries.

Over 13 **parallel sessions**, Ministers and high-level Representatives from government, intergovernmental organisations, business, civil society, technical community and trade union stakeholders discussed four main themes as well as new directions for the Going Digital Toolkit:

Digital enablers of the global economy

Strengthening the foundations for digital security across products and services

- This panel focused on the issue of security within supply chains and vulnerabilities for products and services, building on the recently adopted OECD Recommendations on digital security. Panellists noted historic cyber-attacks and the criticality of security across the digital environment, stressed the importance of companies becoming proactive in managing vulnerabilities and of creating a culture of security from the top of organisations, and called for a swift implementation of the OECD Recommendation for the Treatment of Digital Security Vulnerabilities [OECD/LEGAL/0482] in order to increase the resilience of supply chains. Panellists further reflected on lessons that can be learned for digital security policy from specific sectors, such as aviation, and on the potential future role of insurance in digital security risk management.
- Highlighting the importance of co-ordination among like-minded partners, multi-stakeholder collaboration and public-private partnerships, the panel called on the OECD Global Forum for Digital Security for Prosperity to leverage global partnerships on digital security, including 'secure by design' approaches in the context of emerging technologies. The next event of the Global Forum for Digital Security for Prosperity will take place in March 2023 and be hosted by Japan at the OECD headquarters in Paris.

Fostering trust in cross-border data flows

- This panel discussed different perspectives on fostering trust in cross-border data flows, which are an essential driver of the global economy. Panellists highlighted the value of data sharing, recognised related risks, and noted the need for safeguards to protect data across borders, especially personal data held both by the private and public sector. Discussants offered a variety of considerations from different regions that identified multiple complementary factors (policy, technological, business, and social) considered necessary for building trust in cross-border data flows, while underscoring the importance of inclusive policies.
- Panellists highlighted the importance of the OECD as a multilateral forum for sharing knowledge and good practices among countries of all sizes, and for identifying medium- and long- term practical solutions to realise trusted cross-border data flows. Taking as an example the newly adopted Declaration on Government Access to Personal Data held by Private Sector Entities [OECD/LEGAL/0487], panellists called for leveraging commonalities that OECD Member countries share as like-minded democracies.

Shaping policies for online platforms

- This panel discussed the benefits of online platforms, such as their potential to spur new business models, boost innovation, and extend market reach, including across borders, as well as challenges related to competition, particularly with respect to market power of large online platforms, and concerns about privacy and personal data protection in the context of online platforms' collection, processing, and sharing of personal data. Panellists underlined the importance of promoting more competitive markets, accounting for diverse business models across firms of all sizes and considering policy options for balancing the protection of privacy with benefits for innovation and productivity. Regulatory aspects were discussed extensively, including the European Union's Digital Services Act and Digital Markets Act, with panellists observing that with the growing impact of online platforms on



society, regulation remains a complex challenge that requires cross-ministry and cross-regulatory cooperation.

- The panel noted that the OECD is uniquely placed to analyse and explore the economic and social impacts of online platforms, including on economic growth, business capabilities, competitive markets, innovation, productivity, societies, and individual well-being. In particular, panellists highlighted OECD's capacity to support policy developments in areas such as competition, data sharing, privacy and data protection.

Combating misinformation and disinformation online

- This panel explored the ways that technology and policy can help mitigate the harmful effects of misinformation and disinformation on people and society. The session built on CDEP's work on false and misleading content and other forms of "untruths" that circulates online. Panellists noted that mis- and disinformation are not new phenomena, but that advances in technologies – including generative artificial intelligence (AI) – have increased the ways in which spreaders of such content can create and propagate it online. Discussants emphasised that there is still much work to be done to address the negative effects of mis- and disinformation, including in the "lawful but harmful" grey area.
- Panellists stressed the importance of access to accurate information, in particular in times when human rights and democratic values are at stake, including the right to freedom of speech and the right to choose leaders in free and fair elections. The discussion also touched on mis- and disinformation in the context of the Russian war of aggression against Ukraine, and efforts to combat Russian propaganda. Panellists underlined the immense capacity of disinformation to scale, and while technology – including AI – can also play a key role in addressing it, a new approach to trust is needed between different actors. There was some debate about the potential implications of such solutions to adequately protecting privacy.
- The panel highlighted the urgency of co-operating on global solutions to this complex global challenge and underscored the importance of the CDEP's work to date on mis- and disinformation, including the OECD taxonomy of untruths developed in 2022. One promising workstream for CDEP going forward involves measuring key aspects of and improving the evidence base about mis- and disinformation online across countries. Another relevant workstream could investigate the impact of and possible solutions by generative AI.

The future of connectivity – Investing in high-quality network

- This panel discussed a broad range of issues pertaining to evolving broadband networks in light of changing needs for successful digital transformation. Panellists discussed possible actions by governments to support next generation networks, how to integrate different technologies such as fibre, advanced wireless and non-terrestrial networks, as well as policy measures that could facilitate alternative providers to deploy networks, especially in un- or underserved areas to bridge connectivity divides. Discussants also considered the need for affordable devices that support the newest generations of mobile networks.
- Panellists highlighted the importance of continued investment in the next generation of mobile networks like 6G. They considered both the private sector perspective on investing and deploying networks and emerging actors investing in communication infrastructure, such as private equity firms. In addition, speakers discussed the role of both public funding and enabling regulatory frameworks for stimulating investment. Panellists also mentioned that spectrum sharing could maximise the effective use of spectrum, especially in areas where it is underutilised. Furthermore, they shared national experiences relating to lowering deployment costs such as through infrastructure sharing, to reducing administrative burden, to decreasing prices for end-users and to encouraging fixed network deployment, while at the same time preserving incentives to invest. Open access networks were cited as an effective method for network deployment, including their potential to aggregate demand. Panellists also highlighted the need to increase network resilience and the environmental sustainability of broadband networks.

- The panel underlined the important role of the OECD for further analysing the topics discussed and for developing policy recommendations for future connectivity, including on appropriate regulatory frameworks. In addition, panellists highlighted the OECD's unique position in facilitating collaboration among relevant actors from across countries and the connectivity ecosystem.

Digital technologies in the green transition: Friend or foe?

- This panel explored how digital technologies can support a green future and considered the potential policy trade-offs when pursuing environmental sustainability in tandem with digitalisation. The discussion touched on themes such as artificial intelligence, connectivity and consumer empowerment, and perspectives on how to maximise the potential and development of digital technologies for driving green growth and green tech, while minimising their environmental footprint, e.g. linked to their energy consumption, use of raw materials and e-waste, particularly impacting emerging economies.
- Panellists discussed how digital tools can be used to develop more energy efficient products and systems and to model complex scenarios. They also highlighted the unique challenges small and medium enterprises face when adopting programs that support the green transition. While discussants identified existing indicators and tools to measure the growing footprint of digital technologies, they agreed that relevant data to inform policy making remains a key challenge and that stronger and harmonised indicators are needed for evidence-based policy decisions.
- The panel agreed that the OECD is well placed to work on this topic, in particular to help create measurement standards for quantifying the environmental impacts of digital technologies. The panel emphasised the importance of involving non-Members, specifically in sharing best practices, and underscored OECD's role in further fostering a multi-stakeholder approach to supporting the green transition.

Advancing inclusive digital societies – Bridging digital divides and breaking down barriers

- This workshop explored different forms of digital divides emerging or persisting across economies and societies. Discussants identified the most pressing divides, notably related to connectivity, income levels, gender, age and skills, and discussed policy approaches to address these divides, such as legal and regulatory certainty to foster investment, competition policies, as well as spectrum management to boost infrastructure deployment and access to affordable connectivity. Drawing on lessons from past digital inclusion policies, participants stressed the importance of multi-stakeholder engagement in policy making and of continuously adapting policies to evolving digital divides. There was broad agreement that better inclusion policies require better measurement, in particular of skills and literacy divides.
- Discussants highlighted the central role of the OECD in facilitating international and multi-stakeholder co-operation in support of countries' efforts on making digital societies more inclusive. They underlined that the OECD's work on digital divides to date helped improve the understanding of different types of divides and called for further work. Among others, the OECD may consider the role of emerging technologies and next generation networks and how to avoid potential divides resulting from their uneven deployment or adoption. The OECD could improve the measurement of digital divides, identify good practices, and develop policy recommendations that can support countries in improving policies for inclusive digital societies.

Putting people first in digital transformation

Rights in the digital age – Building solid evidence

- This workshop facilitated discussion on advancing a rights-oriented digital transformation and on addressing challenges related to protecting and respecting rights in the digital age, for example challenges caused by algorithmic discrimination, the impact of hate speech or mis- and disinformation on democratic societies, as well as the question whether new legislation or implementation rights or

policy frameworks are needed to address tensions emerging from the use of digital technologies or neurotechnologies. The discussion focused on how to promote, protect and respect of rights online as well as the need to empower individuals, enhance digital literacy, transparency or accountability, with references to the potential of claiming new rights. It also highlighted the responsibilities of governments in this endeavour as well as the key role of businesses, including the need for corporate responsibility. Speakers stressed the central importance of a multi-stakeholder approach and of comprehensive and reliable evidence for making policies related to rights in the digital age.

- Speakers discussed several initiatives that aim to protect rights in the digital age, such as Spain's Charter of Digital Rights, Portugal's Charter of Human Rights in the Digital Age, and the Lisbon Declaration on Digital Democracy with a Purpose, which underpinned the recent European Declaration on Digital Rights and Principles in the Digital Decade; and the proposed Korean Bill of Digital Rights. Discussants emphasised that addressing rights in the digital age involves meeting the twin priorities of empowerment and protection. Participants agreed that the OECD – with its whole-of-government approach, convening power as a forum for multi-stakeholder and multilateral co-operation based on shared values – is well placed to internationally champion this discussion, analysing the evidence and the impact of emerging technologies on the respect of rights and considering the development of policy recommendations.

Creating a safer online environment

- Participants in this workshop discussed how to help people safely benefit from digital transformation, particularly the most vulnerable, such as children. Considering actions needed to minimise risk and prevent harms, speakers emphasised the need for human-centric approaches that protect rights and balances tensions between them. Such approaches should be developed through international co-operation, rely on evidence-based policies, and include laws that are fit for purpose. Several already existing initiatives were discussed, such as the work of Australia's eSafety Commissioner on safety-by-design; Hungary's efforts to strengthening digital and media literacy, and the upcoming UK Online Safety Bill.
- The OECD was highlighted as an ideal place to continue this policy dialogue, including with multiple stakeholders, and to raise awareness of key challenges, in particular related to protecting and empowering children online.

Empowering consumers in a digital world

- This panel investigated the consumer benefits brought by digital transformation and the risks raised by various commercial practices that potentially render consumers vulnerable online. These include dark commercial patterns – which use of elements of digital choice architecture to subvert consumer decision-making, such as through drip-pricing, subscription traps and fake count-down timers – as well as the sale of unsafe products online. Key challenges raised in addressing such practices relate to ensuring the effectiveness of information disclosures, sufficient enforcement resources and evidence, as well as adequate competition to help discipline businesses employing harmful practices. Discussants pointed to various means to address such practices, including robust investigations, well-designed and enforced regulatory measures, more effective and targeted consumer awareness campaigns, ethical marketing principles (e.g. for the design of websites and apps) and independent self-regulatory initiatives.
- Panellists highlighted key emerging issues to focus further research on, including businesses' use of practices involving personalisation and automated decision-making, the impact of particular dark commercial patterns on consumers as well as effective, technologically-driven enforcement approaches. The panel also noted the increasing importance of consumer policy and product safety in the digital transformation and their linkages with other policy areas such as environment, competition, data protection, AI and digital security.



- In this context, the panel highlighted key elements of the OECD Committee on Consumer Policy's upcoming work programme, including empirical work on dark patterns and the use of AI to detect problems online, policy analysis and recommendations on how to empower consumers in the green transition, as well as work on measuring the effectiveness of consumer agency activities.

Harnessing the power of artificial intelligence and emerging technologies

The OECD AI Principles – Impact on the global policy landscape

- This panel discussed mechanisms to implement the OECD Recommendation on Artificial Intelligence [OECD/LEGAL/0449] (OECD AI Principles) for trustworthy, beneficial AI for people and the planet, and the need to develop open and interoperable standards, tools and metrics for the trustworthy development and deployment of AI systems. Panellists noted the great progress of generative AI (e.g., ChatGPT) and that policy responses, institutions and regulatory frameworks need to stay agile and flexible to adapt to such developments. While AI regulation to date has been designed for AI systems deployed in a given context and accomplishing a specific purpose, new frameworks may be needed to seize the opportunities and risks of general-purpose AI systems. They highlighted the tremendous growth in AI compute and the necessary access to semiconductors underpinning AI compute, as well as the role of cloud services for meeting increasing computing demand, and for leveraging energy efficiency gains and renewable energies. The discussion further focused on risks to fundamental rights and safety posed by a fairly small proportion of AI applications and the urgent need for internationally interoperable risk management and impact assessment mechanisms.
- In view of realising the potential of AI technologies for augmenting human capabilities and increasing productivity, discussants underlined the need for governments and other actors to invest in AI education as well as people's technical skills, functional competences and an understanding of the capabilities and limitations of AI to prepare for labour market transformation.
- Speakers recognised the key role of the OECD to foster multidisciplinary, international and multi-stakeholder co-operation for AI policy development, based on shared values. They called on the OECD to continue building the evidence base and identifying good practices for trustworthy AI, particularly through the Working Party on AI Governance and the [OECD.AI Policy Observatory](#) and network of experts. Panellists also highlighted the key role of the OECD in facilitating international interoperability in AI risk management and incident reporting for a more efficient and less costly implementation of trustworthy AI.

The future of simulated environments and immersive technologies

- Opened with a video of a meeting between Korea and Spain in a simulated environment, this workshop shed light on the potential benefits and risks that the future of simulated environments and immersive technologies may bring and explored how policy makers might support a safe, equitable, innovative and sustainable immersive digital world. While immersive technologies are still at an early stage, participants noted the wide-reaching developments and rapid uptake of these technologies, along with their impact on consumers, businesses and society, and related policy implications, for example for privacy and security. Discussants considered the need for new tools and rules, such as policies, legislation, or regulations, to govern the trustworthy use of these technologies and largely agreed that international, human-centred and rights-oriented principles, such as the OECD AI Principles, can help foster norms for the development and use of immersive technologies. Participants also stressed the importance of governments investing in digital literacy to ensure everyone is equipped with the skills they need to maximise the potential of these technologies.
- The OECD's capacity to support policy makers to understand and address the implications of increasingly used immersive technologies was noted as a crucial contribution to realising their full economic and social benefits while ensuring their safe and responsible use through the right tools,



policies, and standards. The workshop concluded by highlighting the OECD's important role in fostering good measurement practices and promoting human-centred principles for immersive worlds.

New directions for the Going Digital Toolkit

- This workshop explored the Going Digital Toolkit's "Data Kitchen" feature and the French and Hebrew Toolkit experiences. Participants teased out how countries approach designing and developing their digital policy frameworks, and how the Toolkit – including the new multilingual experiences – can help them to benchmark and monitor their digital performance. It was highlighted that country specificities cannot completely be taken into account in the indicators, and that the inclusion of additional data and policy documents on the Toolkit country pages can be helpful in providing this additional context.
- Several "practitioner" presentations went into depth about various aspects of the Toolkit, including the Israeli experience and its decision to use the Toolkit as its national digital dashboard, as well the "Data Kitchen" feature, a less curated data exploration tool that taps into the rich databases that underpin the Toolkit. A new "dimension switcher" was launched during the workshop, which allows for a deeper exploration of digital performance *within* countries, an important complement to the cross-country comparisons offered by the Toolkit indicators.
- As digital technologies and data continue to transform our world in new ways, panellists underscored the importance of the Toolkit evolving in tandem. It was noted that a new multilingual experience in Arabic will be launched in 2023, new countries will be added, and new dashboards may be envisaged. Participants suggested that the OECD could make the Toolkit even more useful by adding new indicators, in particular related to climate change and the health sector, and that nowcast estimates of the growth of the ICT sector would allow users to get important new insights and tell meaningful digital stories with data.



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