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BUSINESSatOECD

*Business at OECD (BIAC)*

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# SME and Entrepreneurship Committee

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Annual Activity Report 2023

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# Message

## from the Committee Chair

In 2023, rapid technological changes and adaptation to the new normal posed many challenges, as well as opportunities for SMEs. Geopolitical crisis have been particularly causing tensions, as SMEs are most vulnerable. Even though continuous market uncertainty is still keeping them from returning to pre-COVID operational capacities, the economic outlook is rather positive, since turnover and employment is recovering.

This year, our *Business at OECD* (BIAC) SME and Entrepreneurship Committee particularly emphasized how SMEs are hotbeds of innovation and entrepreneurial spirit. They thrive on creativity, continuously pushing boundaries and exploring new frontiers. By embracing emerging technologies and disruptive business models, SMEs can spearhead advancements across sectors, driving competitiveness and ensuring a vibrant and dynamic economy.

As institutional stakeholders, it is our continuous goal to recommend and support effective and trusted policies that guided and assisted SMEs in pursuit of the twin transition. This year we gather over 150 participants, including Ministers, key stakeholders and partners for our Ministerial Stakeholder Dialogue event in Paris, submitted comments on OECD draft reports, participated in multiple OECD meetings, and produced our follow-up, *Looking for the New Normal 2.0* SME survey.

In 2024 we will continue our strong cooperation with the OECD at each level to support the entrepreneurial nature and strengthen the resilience of SMEs, which is vital for the overall economic health and long-term sustainability. I look forward to continuing our work together this year, as we work towards enabling SMEs to serve as catalysts for inclusive growth.



**Patrik Kovács**

*Business at OECD* SME and Entrepreneurship  
Committee Chair

# Context

The OECD is a global leader of statistics, forecasts, and evidence-based policy recommendations in the area of SMEs and Entrepreneurship. Its publications, such as SME and Entrepreneurship Outlook, SME digitalisation to “Build Back Better”, are closely followed by policymakers and industry.

The OECD has strongly contributed to the G20 SME agenda, in particular with regards to SME finance, with the G20/OECD High-Level Principles on SME Financing and the report on G20/OECD Effective Approaches for Implementing the G20/OECD High-Level Principles on SME Financing, or through its contribution to platforms like the GPFi.

*Business at OECD* (BIAC) is the officially recognized business advisory group to the OECD and represents the leading business and employers’ organizations in OECD countries. The work of our SMEs and Entrepreneurship Committee enables private sector representatives to participate in high-level OECD sessions and regular policy meetings, exchange and network with governments and OECD leadership, access information and contribute to OECD policy recommendations, and build momentum with private sector peers to impact policy-making at all stages.

This activity report provides selected year highlights of the *Business at OECD* SMEs and Entrepreneurship Committee in 2023, and includes a list of Committee releases and sessions. In line with the OECD’s priorities and the efforts of many others in our Committees, our activities in 2023 focused on aligning core issues of the Committee with SMEs digitalization, among other important entrepreneurship topics.

# Our activity highlights

## March

In March, A *Business at OECD* delegation led by Committee Vice-chair Chair Lars Jagrén participated in the session of the OECD Committee on SMEs and Entrepreneurship Committee (CSMEE) where we participated to discussions related to the update of OECD Recommendation on SME Financing, the Implementation Toolkit supporting the OECD Recommendation on SME and Entrepreneurship Policy and the OECD SME and Entrepreneurship Outlook 2023.



*(Our delegation at the OECD SME and Entrepreneurship Ministerial meeting, led by our Committee Chair, Patrik Kovacs (right))*

## April

In April, we submitted comments for the draft OECD Recommendation on SME Financing, which aims to embody the 2022 updated G20/OECD High-Level Principles on SME Financing in an OECD Recommendation, thereby strengthening the OECD's role in global standard-setting and providing a whole-of-government approach to SME financing.

Building on our engagement in the OECD SME & Entrepreneurship Ministerial meeting, we released the 2023 edition of their SMEs Survey Looking for the New Normal 2.0. The survey reveals that SMEs and entrepreneurs continue to tackle significant hurdles, including high input costs, inflation, and market uncertainty.

## June

In June, we contributed to the OECD's 2023 SME & Entrepreneurship Ministerial Meeting as the institutional voice of the OECD private sector. Over 100 government delegates, including close to 25 Ministers, gathered at the OECD in Paris to set strategic priorities for the years ahead for the OECD Committee on SMEs and Entrepreneurship and to discuss the findings of the 2023 OECD SME and Entrepreneurship Outlook.



*(Members of our delegation at the OECD SME & Entrepreneurship Ministerial meeting with the New Zealand Minister for Police, Small Business, Digital Economy and Communications and Seniors, the Hon Ginny Andersen MP (center right), and our Committee Chair, Patrik Kovacs (center left))*

In this context, we have also held a ministerial stakeholder dialogue event with the OECD Centre for Entrepreneurship in the margins of the 2023 OECD SME & Entrepreneurship Ministerial meeting. Ministers and other high-profile government delegates, international organizations such as BusinessEurope, IOE and the International Chamber of Commerce, SME owners, international businesses and associations joined the discussions. Our panels focused on:

- Navigating the rapidly changing business climate and building the resilience of SMEs and entrepreneurs.
- Mobilizing SMEs and entrepreneurs in the green and digital transformations.
- The well-being of SMEs and entrepreneurs.



*(Our stakeholder event organized in the context of the OECD SME & Entrepreneurship Ministerial meeting, including OECD Leadership, the Deputy Secretary-General, Yoshiki Takeuchi, and New Zealand Minister, the Hon Ginny Andersen MP)*

In this context, we have also launched our Key Business Takeaways document, which provides a summary of key messages delivered at the roundtable, for information of OECD and Ministers.

## November

In November, a *Business at OECD* delegation participated to the OECD Committee on SMEs and Entrepreneurship (CSMEE) and convened business policy priorities regarding topics such as fostering SME growth, skills to navigate the twin transition, strengthening SME and entrepreneurship finance, boosting SME and entrepreneurship participation in the green transition and fostering SME and entrepreneurs' contributions to the digital and global economy.

## December

In December, we participated to the 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Conference of the OECD Platform on Financing SMEs for Sustainability, held under the theme *From standards to action – Fostering a holistic approach to sustainable finance for SMEs*. The conference aims to share experiences and work towards operational solutions to address the growing sustainability-related data needs of financial institutions, the challenges that SMEs face in measuring their sustainability performance and initiatives to address these challenges.

# Sessions

## Our Meetings with the OECD and Governments

### ***Business at OECD Sessions***

**26 June**

Joint *Business at OECD* – OECD Ministerial Stakeholder Dialogue Event

### ***Engagement in High-Level OECD Sessions***

**27 June**

OECD SME Ministerial Meeting

**14 December**

Annual Conference of the OECD Platform on Financing SMEs for Sustainability

### ***Engagement in OECD Committee Sessions***

**21-31 March**

OECD Committee on SMEs and Entrepreneurship (CSMEE)

**11-14 April**

OECD Committee on Industry, Innovation, and Entrepreneurship (CIIE)

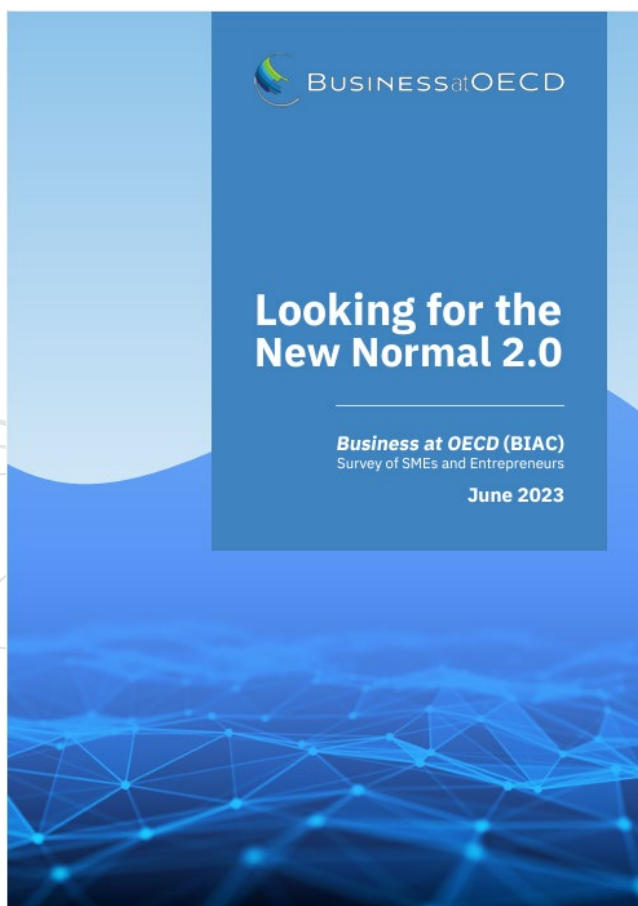
**9-10 November**

OECD Committee on SMEs and Entrepreneurship (CSMEE)

**21-24 November**

OECD Committee on Industry, Innovation, and Entrepreneurship (CIIE)

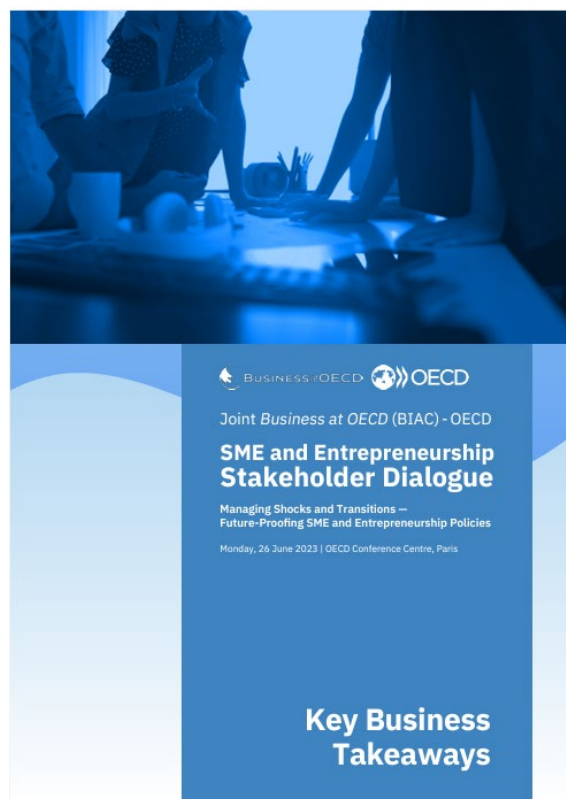
# Our **key releases**



[Looking for the New Normal 2.0](#)  
(June 2023)

## Looking for the New Normal 2.0

The renewed "Looking for the New Normal 2.0" survey report aims to offer OECD Ministers and a broader audience insights into the recovery progress of SMEs, ahead of the OECD SME and Entrepreneurship Ministerial, taking place in June 2023. Additionally, it seeks to present valuable recommendations for decision-makers and policy practitioners regarding future challenges. The report outlines the adaptive policies taken up by SMEs to bolster their resilience in the face of uncertainty.



[Key Business Takeaways from SME Ministerial Dialogue Event](#)  
(June 2022)

## Key Business Takeaways

On 26 June 2023, in preparation for the June 2023 OECD Committee on SMEs and Entrepreneurship (CSMEE)'s Meeting at the Ministerial Level, Business at OECD (BIAC), in partnership with the OECD, hosted an SME and Entrepreneurship Stakeholder Dialogue event. The event was organized to explore the private sector's role in the context of the overarching theme of the Ministerial, "Managing Shocks and Transitions – Future-Proofing SME and Entrepreneurship Policies." Setting the scene for the Ministerial, the event provided a rich platform for nearly 200 business, government, and international organizations representatives to share insights and explore pertinent policy measures designed to strengthen SMEs and entrepreneurs.

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# Committee **Leadership**

Chair

**Patrik Kovács**

Hungarian National Association of  
Entrepreneurs and Employers (VOSZ)  
(Hungary)

Vice Chair

**Lars Jagrén**

Confederation of Swedish Enterprise  
(Sweden)

Vice Chair

**Martina Le Gall Maláková**

Elektrik (Slovakia)

Vice Chair

**Guy Primrose**

Suasor Commercial Consultants  
(Australia)



*(Participants from our Ministerial Stakeholder Event with the OECD in June 2023)*





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## Contact



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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.