



The OECD and the International Network for SMEs - INSME invite you to the webinar

20 YEARS AFTER THE FIRST OECD SME MINISTERIAL CONFERENCE IN BOLOGNA: PROGRESS AND PERSPECTIVES FOR SME POLICIES IN A POST COVID-19 ENVIRONMENT



18 November 2020



9:30 – 11:00 CET



Zoom

Dear INSME friends,

We are delighted to invite you to celebrate the 20th Anniversary of the "Bologna Charter on SME Policies", the Ministerial declaration adopted in 2000 that laid the basis for the establishment of INSME. Take part in this inspiring session jointly organised with the OECD.

WHAT IS THIS WEBINAR ABOUT?

In June 2000, the Italian Government hosted in Bologna the first OECD SME Ministerial conference to discuss policies to spur entrepreneurship and enhance the competitiveness of SMEs, through innovation and internationalisation. The Bologna Charter on SME policies recognises the importance of SMEs in economic growth, job creation, regional and local development, inclusion and social cohesion and set forward an ambitious agenda to enable SMEs to seize the benefits of increased globalisation and rapid technological progress.

In Bologna, Ministers called to raise the profile of entrepreneurship and SMEs in the international policy making debate, but also to strengthen tools for the implementation of best practices world- wide. This call, strengthened in 2004 at the Second OECD SME Ministerial Conference in Istanbul, marked the beginning of a novel season in SME and entrepreneurship policy. A few years later, the World Bank developed the Doing Business indicators, the EU launched the Small Business Act, the SME envoys and the Think Small First proposition, and the OECD promoted with the Italian Government the creation of INSME, an International Network for SMEs among practitioners and policy-makers.

In 2018, the Third OECD SME Ministerial Conference in Mexico City gave a new momentum to this policy agenda, at a time when governments seek innovative solutions to address low productivity growth and rising inequality, as well as to harness major transformations in economy and society, such as increased globalisation, digitalisation, the changing nature of work, demographic changes, and the transition to a low-carbon economy. The OECD Declaration on Strengthening SMEs and Entrepreneurship for Productivity and Inclusive Growth highlights the multidimensional contributions of SMEs and entrepreneurs to inclusive growth, and calls on governments to enhance SME participation in the national and global economy and enable SMEs to make the most of the digital transition, offering a level playing field for all enterprises. It underlines the importance of access to appropriate forms of finance; entrepreneurial opportunities for all segments of the population; entrepreneurship education and training and upskilling of entrepreneurs and workers; and multi-stakeholder dialogue on effective policies.

We are now at a crucial moment, as the world battles the COVID-19 emergency, an unprecedented crisis that is putting the spotlight on the role of SMEs and entrepreneurs for resilient economies and societies. The rush to

mobilize funds for survival and recovery is strikingly different from the recent past and tells that governments worldwide are aware that they cannot afford to let their SME fabric collapse, but also that SMEs are crucial for job creation and innovation, for managing future shocks and for achieving the twin transformation to a digital and green economy. A new agenda for entrepreneurship and SME policy is needed to ensure they play their full role for more resilient, sustainable, creative and inclusive economies and societies.

WHY ATTEND THE WEBINAR

The OECD Working Party on SME and Entrepreneurship (WPSMEE) is at the forefront in setting the post-pandemics policy agenda and, through its members and partnerships, INSME is paying attention to its implementation at national, regional and local level.

The webinar will discuss current opportunities and challenges for SMEs and entrepreneurs, the progress in policy approaches over the past decades, the lessons learnt, long-standing and emerging policy challenges, and policy priorities to ensure SMEs and entrepreneurs are drivers of a strong, resilient, green, and inclusive recovery.

AGENDA

09:30 – 09:40 **Welcome and introduction by the Chair**

- **Martin Godel**, Chair of the OECD Working Party on SMEs and Entrepreneurship (WPSMEE) and Head of Division of the State Secretariat of Economic Affairs (Switzerland)
- **Sergio Arzeni**, President, International Network for SMEs (INSME)

09:40 – 09:45 **Opening remarks**

- **Ulrik Vestergaard Knudsen**, Deputy Secretary General of the OECD

09:45 – 10:30 **High-level panel**

- **Enrico Letta**, President of Notre Europe – Institute Jacques Delors and Director International Studies at Science-Po, Paris, former Italian Prime Minister and Minister of Industry hosting the Bologna Ministerial Conference,
- **Patrick Meinhardt**, Vice-President of European Entrepreneurs and Board member of INSME.
- **Josianne Cutajar**, Member of the European Parliament
- **Yves Leterme**, President of Tojoy Western Europe and Member of INSME, former Prime Minister of Belgium and Deputy Secretary General of the OECD
- **Gian Paolo Manzella**, State Undersecretary, Ministry of Economic Development, Italy

10:30 – 10:55 **Open floor discussion**

10:55 – 11:00 **Concluding remarks**

- **Lamia Kamal-Chaoui**, Director, OECD Centre for Entrepreneurship, SMEs, Regions and Cities (CFE)

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HERE**

After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the meeting. If you do not receive an email confirmation or have trouble registering, please contact secretariat@insme.org.