

Meeting of the OECD Council at Ministerial Level

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CORPORATE REFORM AND MANAGEMENT EXCELLENCE AGENDA: SUMMARY OF KEY REFORMS DELIVERED BETWEEN 2021-2026 AND PLANNED NEXT STEPS

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SUMMARY OF KEY REFORMS DELIVERED BETWEEN 2021 -2026

Since 2021, the Organisation's ongoing corporate reform and management excellence agenda has continuously strengthened the effectiveness, efficiency, transparency, and accountability of the OECD by:

- a) improving the **OECD Programme of Work and Budget** planning process and the long-term financial sustainability of the Organisation;
- b) **attracting, retaining and supporting talent** while also managing and containing staff-related costs;
- c) continuing to improve how the Organisation **communicates** its work and **measures its impact**;
- d) reinforcing **accountabilities, efficiency and effectiveness** in the OECD's unique and highly valued decentralised structure;
- e) continuing to **enhance horizontal and joint work** across the OECD substantive committees while safeguarding the OECD's highly appreciated deep policy specialisation; and,
- f) investing in the **OECD's data and digital future**, ensuring a strategic and secure approach to digitalisation and the use of Artificial Intelligence and supporting the renewal of IT infrastructure and data capabilities.

Since 2021, the **Secretary-General, in partnership with Members**, has delivered a significant series of reforms in support of a corporate modernisation and efficiency agenda to ensure that the OECD remains at the global best practice edge:

Programme of Work and Budget and financial sustainability reforms

- Delivered a set of **reforms to the Programme of Work and Budget process** including modifications to strengthen planning and enhance financial sustainability. This includes **stronger prioritisation** supported by clearer and more consolidated guidance on Organisation-wide priorities.
- Delivered a fundamental reform of the **OECD pensions system**, including amendments to the age parameters for existing staff, the creation of a Third Pension Scheme for staff taking up duty since 1 July 2025 and a reform of the pension contribution rate methodology. The reform is estimated to result in a cumulative reduction in pension costs for the Part I Budget of MEUR 253 over the next 30 years.
- Improved transparency and quality of reporting for Members on the Organisation's resources, including improved budget and Voluntary Contribution (VC) reporting. Since 2021, an **annual update on VCs** is provided to Council in response to an Executive Committee recommendation. In 2022-2023, several initiatives were launched to **improve the management and control framework and increased transparency to Members of VCs**, including: an improved framework for acceptance of VCs to ensure the highest standards of due diligence; expanded vetting on grants from Non-Member economies and private sector donors; and, increased reporting to Members through real-time VC acceptance data.
- Delivered a plan for **OECD office space management**, which is expected to result in estimated long-term cost avoidance of up to MEUR 139 over 11 years for the OECD and its Members (estimated as of July 2025).
- Delivered a streamlined mechanism for the Organisation's long-term capital investment needs with the Council's adoption of the **Fund for Asset Replacement**, replacing the previous fund with a unified, more flexible mechanism to smooth investment peaks, strengthen preparedness for unforeseen expenditure, and enhance strategic planning and Member oversight.

Attracting, retaining and supporting talent while also managing and containing staff-related costs

- Modernised the human resources framework through the first Organisation-wide **Human Resources Strategy** and **New Employment Package**, which reformed the **OECD grading and contractual frameworks** for officials.
- Implemented the **revision of the Salary Adjustment Method** for staff of the Co-ordinated Organisations following a comprehensive review of the Organisation's participation in the co-ordination system and the salary adjustment methodology.
- Completed a broad **review of the OECD recruitment process** to streamline and shorten timelines and improve overall recruitment process efficiency.
- Delivered a **new performance management framework** to ensure consistent assessment and clarity in evaluating officials' contributions, supported by a new core competency framework, reflecting industry best practice.

Communication and impact measurement reforms

- **Restructured the OECD's communications function**, with a leaner Directorate for Communications (COM), resulting in 50% of savings on OECD communications (**MEUR 9.7 annually for Members**). This included streamlining and re-focusing the OECD Regional Centres to ensure they remain fit for purpose.
- Reformed OECD communications through a move to **free access (Open by Default)** to all OECD publications, a **new OECD website** that better showcases integrated policy work and with improved functionality for Members and external audiences, and an **OECD Communications Strategy** with strengthened dissemination infrastructure to enhance visibility, accessibility and discoverability of OECD content.
- Completed a Member-driven review of the **Programme Implementation Report (PIR)**, providing Members with a clearer view of the relevance, use and contribution of OECD work to policy processes as reported by officials in Member governments. The strengthened PIR enhances accountability, organisational learning and strategic decision making, while improving the Organisation's ability to assess and communicate the value of its work.

Accountabilities, efficiency and effectiveness in workplace improvements

- Delivered the first ever **Independent External Evaluation** of the Organisation¹, resulting in a Secretariat plan outlining 48 actions to improve the impact, efficiency and relevance of the Organisation, with all actions having been implemented. The Evaluation reported that the OECD functions efficiently; the exercise was delivered on time, within budget, and was supported by a fully transparent and independent process with a high level of Member engagement.
- Delivered an **external functional review** of IT, HR, conference, infrastructure and budget management services at central and directorate levels producing 27 recommendations to enhance corporate service delivery and monitoring across the Organisation, which have been delivered or are underway. The review, conducted by KPMG², concluded that the OECD is well-managed, noting that the Organisation's central corporate functions and services perform well in terms of efficiency and cost-effectiveness compared to organisations of a similar size.

¹ [Independent external evaluation of the OECD | OECD](#)

² [C\(2025\)108/ADD1](#)

- **Strengthened the OECD's ethics and workplace culture** with an updated Code of Conduct and investigation procedure, a new conflict and harassment prevention and resolution policy, a reinforced OECD Ethics Office, a new mandatory staff and management training scheme, and the Organisation's first-ever Policy on the Prevention and Response to Sexual Exploitation and Abuse.
- Enhanced management transparency with an **improved Annual Management Report**³, which provides a comprehensive overview of the Organisation's corporate governance and management. The report includes management updates on finance, human resources, IT, office space, legal, ethics and communications, as well as data on Council, committees, audit and risk management, and other corporate functions, services and governance activities. The 2026 edition will be released in June 2026.
- Delivered an **external benchmarking analysis of mission policies** carried out by Deloitte and practices, which found that the OECD's mission spending and travel practices are broadly aligned with those of peer international organisations.
- Updated the **Enterprise Risk Management (ERM) Policy** and a new ERM Manual, aligned with the most recent international risk management standards to enhance the culture of accountability across the Organisation, and introduced a new framework for the management of reputational risks and improvements to strengthen business continuity and crisis management.
- Launched a new **Standard Operating Manual** to standardise and centralise corporate processes and related documentation to enhance staff access to consolidated corporate guidance.
- Significantly **improved working methods in Council and the Executive Committee**, including providing documents earlier to Members and increasing the level of translation in both official languages; strengthening the sharing of best practices across substantive committees; and, delivering a report on best practices for governance mechanisms and working methods of governing bodies across international organisations.

Horizontal and joint work improvements

- Developed under Members' leadership **seven new Organisation wide strategies** to provide more coordinated and coherent policy advice on key challenges.
- Created an **OECD Priority Fund** and the new **Multi-Donor Voluntary Contribution mechanism** to facilitate Organisation-wide priority projects and horizontal initiatives as agreed by Members.
- Introduced a new requirement for committees to submit **Collaboration Plans** as part of their Preliminary Programmes of Work and Budget.
- Increased **joint committee Chair dialogues in Council** to facilitate Members' consolidated discussions with Chairs of various committees on cross cutting work.

Digitalisation reforms

- Developed a **corporate approach on the responsible use of Artificial Intelligence (AI)** across the Organisation, including guidelines to staff on the use of AI, a new Corporate AI Hub, an AI Handbook of Use Cases, and new availability of a suite of AI tools for use by staff. These actions align with the recommendations of the OECD External Auditor's 2025 Performance Audit on the OECD's Use of Artificial Intelligence.

³ [C\(2025\)90](#)

- Launched a **Smart Data Strategy**, which included an overhaul of the Organisation's metadata and data governance and migration and consolidation of all OECD data assets.
- Enhanced **corporate digital security** with a strengthened corporate digital security policy and technology framework and strengthened **personal data protection controls**, including proactive compliance reviews to assess the effectiveness of the OECD's data protection framework in selected data processing activities.
- **Streamlined and updated the OECD staff intranet**, making it more efficient for staff to search for information and access corporate rules, guidelines, information and services, including the new Standard Operating Manual, as referenced above.

The OECD External Auditor⁴, the Organisation's Internal Audit and Evaluation function and external reviews referenced above provide **reporting and independent assurance to Members** on the effectiveness and efficiency of the Organisation's systems and practices, including controls and governance arrangements that safeguard the Organisation's financial, human and physical resources. In 2025, **the External Auditor issued an unqualified opinion for the 20th consecutive year.**⁵

Planned next steps to drive a corporate modernisation and efficiency agenda

The Secretary-General, in partnership with Members, will continue to implement this agenda, including in the following key areas:

- **Improving the OECD Programme of Work and Budget planning process and the long-term financial sustainability of the Organisation** by implementing (1) the reform of the PWB process; and (2) the new and simplified funding mechanism for the Organisation's long-term sustainability and capital assets, including new funding sources currently considered by Members. The long term financial sustainability of the Organisation will also be enhanced through implementation of the Plan for Future OECD Office Space Management.
- **Attracting, retaining and supporting talent while also managing and containing staff related costs** by continuing the implementation and monitoring of the New Employment Package, reforming the OECD recruitment process, carrying out a review of the OECD's Human Resources Strategy in 2027, and continuing the implementation of the strengthened Ethics Framework.
- **Continuing to improve how the Organisation communicates its work and measures its impact, reinforcing accountabilities, efficiency and effectiveness in the OECD's unique and highly valued decentralised structure** to ensure the OECD remains resilient and future-proof. This includes implementing the recommendations of the corporate functional review of IT, HR, conference, infrastructure and budget management services at central and directorate levels. Delivering cost-effective core operations will include harnessing digital technologies and AI to streamline and automate corporate processes within available budget, optimise existing resources and leverage the use of data for decision-making.
- **Continuing to enhance horizontal and joint work across the OECD substantive committees while safeguarding the OECD's highly valued deep policy specialisation** through two new horizontal funding mechanisms for promoting cross-cutting Member priorities and emerging work – the OECD Priority Fund and the Multi Donor Voluntary Contributions.
- **Investing in the OECD's data and digital future, ensuring a strategic and secure approach to digitalisation and the use of Artificial Intelligence and supporting the renewal of our IT and data infrastructure and data capabilities**, by building on the Secretary-General's Staff

⁴ Supreme Audit Institution of Portugal (Tribunal de Contas)

⁵[C\(2025\)88/PART1/ADD1](#)

Guidelines on the Responsible Use of AI, developing updated staff guidance and a framework for Secretariat coordination on digitalisation and the use of AI at the Organisation.

- **Leading the modernisation of our Statistics and Data Governance and Quality Assurance Framework** to incorporate new developments, such as big data, geospatial information and statistics, citizen science and AI. We will strengthen our internal microdata management systems to protect against the growing risks of data breach. Building on the modernisation work already done, we will undertake a fundamental re-engineering of our data processing operations – moving from a fragmented, manual landscape to a streamlined, cloud-based and AI-enabled data lifecycle. We will also continue to improve the OECD Data Explorer user experience, with enhanced visualisations and AI-assisted tooling.

This document, as well as any data and map included herein, are without prejudice to the status of or sovereignty over any territory, to the delimitation of international frontiers and boundaries and to the name of any territory, city or area.

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