

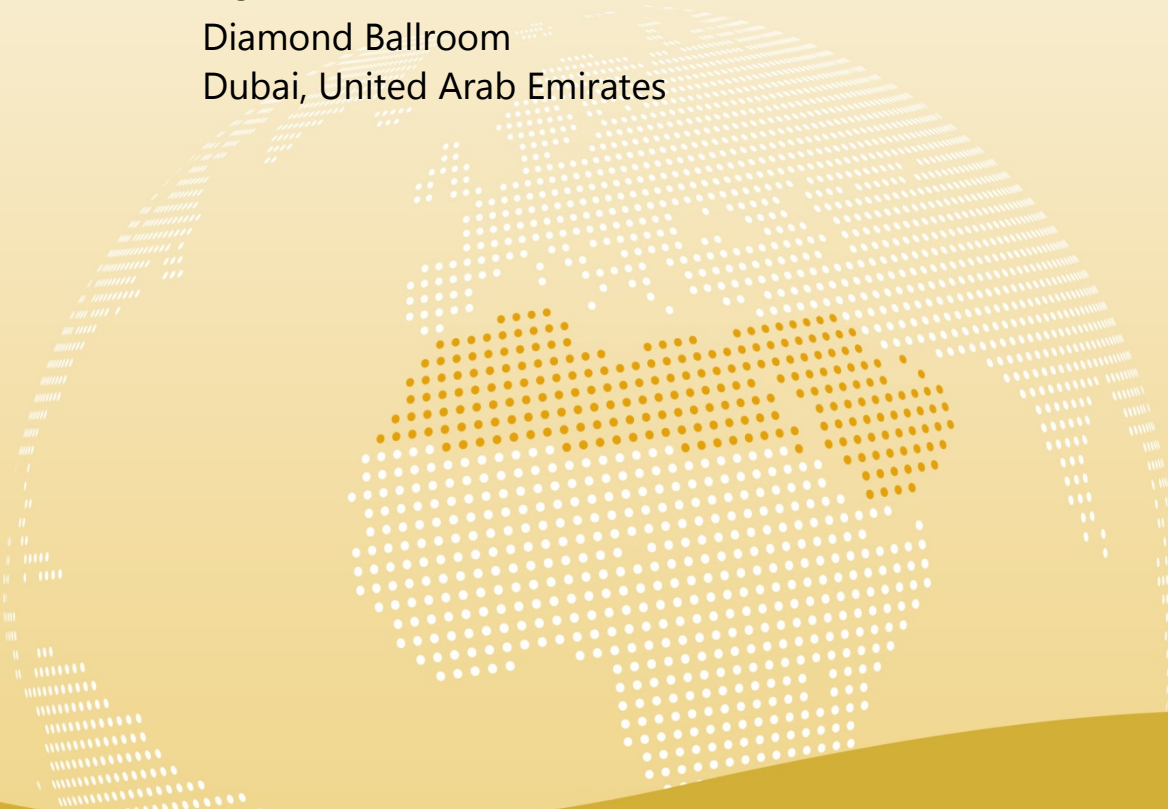
## AGENDA



### **MEETING ON AVENUES FOR CO- OPERATION BETWEEN GCC COUNTRIES AND THE OECD**

# **Maximise the potential of SMEs and entrepreneurs in GCC countries**

**8 March 2016**  
DUBAI MALL  
Diamond Ballroom  
Dubai, United Arab Emirates



## **OBJECTIVES OF THE MEETING**

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The MENA-OECD Competitiveness Programme and Dubai SME, an agency of the Department of Economic Development of the Government of Dubai, are organising a meeting to explore areas of co-operation on SME policy between countries of the Gulf Co-operation Council (GCC) and the OECD.

The main objectives of the event will be:

- ♦ To discuss the situation of SMEs and entrepreneurship in the GCC area and the role of SME policy in the wider development agendas of GCC countries.
- ♦ To present the work and tools developed by the OECD on SME promotion, including work undertaken in the context of global fora such as the G20.
- ♦ Explore common objectives, challenges and opportunities for regional policy dialogue and the possibility of undertaking a SME Policy Index adapted to the GCC area.

The participants will include policymakers involved in SME and entrepreneurship promotion, experts and the Secretariat of the OECD. Specific policy areas to be addressed are:

- ♦ The role of SME and entrepreneurship policy in economic reform and diversification;
- ♦ Priorities in the “SME policy mix”;
- ♦ SME institutions, coordination and consultation mechanisms;
- ♦ The way ahead: setting up a GCC network and the possibility of launching a SME Policy Index for the GCC.

## **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 work 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, whose new mandate will cover 2016-2020.

## **THE PROGRAMME’S WORK ON SMES AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP**

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The Programme helps MENA countries 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 and evaluation of the implementation of reforms. The thematic areas covered are improving the business environment for SMEs and entrepreneurs; encouraging entrepreneurship and SME growth, effective and efficient policymaking, and better access to finance.

# Meeting on avenues for co-operation between GCC countries and the OECD

8 March 2016

Time	Item
8.30 – 9.00	<b>Registration of participants</b>
9.00 – 9.15	<p><b>Welcome remarks</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>♦ <b>Mr Abdul Baset Mohammed Al Janahi</b>, Chief Executive Officer, Mohammed Bin Rashid Establishment for SME Development (Dubai SME).</li> <li>♦ <b>Mr Carlos Conde</b>, Head of the Middle East and Africa Division, Global Relations Secretariat, OECD.</li> </ul>
9.15 – 10.30	<p><b>Session 1: The importance of SME policy for economic reforms and diversification</b></p> <p>GCC countries are stepping up their efforts for economic diversification, employment creation and sustainable growth. Measures for private sector development, including the promotion of SMEs and entrepreneurship are fundamental elements of the wider economic reform agenda. This session will analyse specific practices from GCC, OECD and other countries to promote the transformation of the economy through SME growth and entrepreneurship. The discussions will focus on initiatives to materialise the latent development of less diversified economies and also how to take advantage of the increasing fragmentation of production in global value chains.</p> <p><b>Moderator: Mr Jorge Gálvez Méndez</b>, Economist/Policy Analyst, Global Relations Secretariat, OECD.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>♦ <b>Keynote speech by Dr Raed Safadi</b>, Chief Economist, Department of Economic Development, Dubai, UAE.</li> <li>♦ <b>Mr. Essam Disi</b>, Director, Strategy and Policy, Dubai SME, UAE.</li> <li>♦ <b>Mr Marco Marchese</b>, Economist/Policy Analyst, Centre for Entrepreneurship, SMEs and Local Development, OECD.</li> </ul> <p><b>Round table and open discussion:</b> GCC countries are invited to briefly outline their main economic reform priorities and the role of SMEs and entrepreneurship in their reform agendas.</p>
10.30–10.45	<i>Coffee break</i>
10.45–12.00	<p><b>Session 2: The SME “policy mix”: combining measures to improve business environments with targeted measures for SME support</b></p> <p>The promotion of SMEs and entrepreneurship involves numerous policy actions including horizontal measures to strengthen the business environment and the rule of law. Governmental and other organisations also support specific types of firms, economic activities or entrepreneurs through microfinance, grants, credit guarantees, export promotion, business development services and technology transfers, among other measures. This session will focus on the different levers involved in the SME “policy mix”.</p> <p><b>Moderator: Mr Sadok Bejja</b>, General Director of SME promotion, Ministry of Energy, Industry and Mines, Tunisia.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>♦ <b>Prof Salvatore Zecchini</b>, Former Chair of the OECD Working Party on SMEs and Entrepreneurship (WPSMEE).</li> <li>♦ <b>Dr Zakaria Ahmed Hejres</b>, Chairman, MENA Centre for Investment, Bahrain.</li> </ul> <p><b>Round table and open discussion:</b> GCC countries are invited to share their flagship initiatives to i) improve the business environment for SMEs and ii) to support specific groups of SMEs and entrepreneurs (e.g. business development services, support for start-ups, access to finance, etc.).</p>

12.00–13.00	<i>Lunch break</i>
13.00–14.15	<p><b>Session 3: Policy design and implementation: institutions, coordination and consultation mechanisms</b></p> <p>The diversity of the SMEs population and the role of SME policy in economic and social development agenda involve a great number of institutions: public, private and non-governmental, as well as national and sub-national. This session will focus on key matters such as institutional responsibilities, coordination and public-private dialogue. The session will also analyse the implications of SME policy at the central (national), sub-national and local levels.</p> <p><b>Moderator: Mr Antonio Fanelli</b>, Senior Advisor, Global Relations Secretariat, OECD.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>♦ <b>Mr Giuseppe Gramigna</b>, SME Expert and advisor to the MENA-OECD Working Group on SMEs.</li> <li>♦ <b>Mr Abdulaziz B. Al Loughani</b>, Vice Chairman, Kuwait National Fund for SMEs Development.</li> </ul> <p><b>Round table and open discussion:</b> GCC countries are invited to briefly outline the roles of the main institutions in charge of SME policies, and the coordination mechanisms among those institutions.</p>
14.15–14.30	<i>Coffee break</i>
14.30–16.00	<p><b>Closing session: Avenues for co-operation between GCC countries and the OECD on SME and entrepreneurship policies</b></p> <p>Building on the discussions and conclusions throughout the day, considering good practices, and taking into account the Gulf countries' priorities, the final session will focus on launching a sub-regional platform for GCC-OECD work on SME and entrepreneurship promotion and the possibility to undertake a SME Policy Index for the Gulf Co-operation Council.</p> <p><b>Introduction and moderation by Mr Antonio Fanelli</b>, Senior Advisor, Global Relations Secretariat, OECD.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>♦ <b>Mr Essam Disi</b>, Director, Strategy and Policy, Dubai SME.</li> <li>♦ <b>Mr Jorge Gálvez Méndez</b>, Economist/Policy Analyst, Global Relations Secretariat, OECD.</li> <li>♦ <b>Ms Pillar Sánchez Bella</b>, Economist/Policy Analyst, Global Relations Secretariat, OECD.</li> </ul>