



BUSINESS ADVISORY BOARD

MENA-OECD Youth Business Organisations

STRATEGIC NOTE



MENA-OECD Business Advisory Board: Youth Platform

With one of the youngest populations, the MENA region possesses large potential but it needs to develop the tools to support and empower the youth. At the same time, the OECD is working to promote Public-Private Dialogue (PPD) to better engage with the private sector in policy-making. Including young businesspeople will be essential to ensure a diverse representation of the private sector in such dialogue processes and to build a vision for the future.

Through the right framework, larger numbers of youth can be encouraged to start their own businesses and sustain them. This will not only enhance the situation of youth in the MENA region, which suffers from high unemployment, but will also increase inclusive growth and contribute to the countries' development. As this is a crosscutting issue, it needs to be coordinated with other policy areas such as education, labour, and digitalization.

In light of this, the OECD is supporting the creation of a Youth Platform under the [MENA-OECD Business Advisory Board](#), a platform launched in Madrid on September 2018, under the umbrella of the [MENA-OECD Competitiveness Programme](#).

Objectives

The main objective of the BAB Youth Platform is to raise awareness of the needs and challenges of youth businesses. In order to do so, this platform will work on two tracks:

1. **Capacity building through peer-to-peer learning and sharing of best practices.** The BAB Youth Platform could serve as a platform for youth business organisations to exchange on how to effectively formulate and raise their issues to other business organisations and the public sector.
2. **Foster the voice of youth business organisations.** Through the continuous work on topics relevant to youth businesspeople, youth business organisations can formulate these needs more coherently within their respective countries and across the region. Thereby, these views can be included more effectively in the national PPD initiatives and make them more inclusive.

Moreover, the members of the Platform will work and discuss topics relevant to them and their members. These topics will be discussed during in-person meetings as well as through the utilization of digital means of communication, which will enable a continuous engagement of the members throughout the year. Preliminary, four key topics have been identified:

Role of the private sector
in policymaking:
Representation of youth
business organisations

Export and Investment:
Business linkages

SMEs and
entrepreneurship:
Innovation and start-ups

Informality in the private
sector

Members

Membership is open to all organisations that focus and work with youth businesses from MENA and OECD countries. Primarily this includes youth business organisations or youth chapters/sections of business organisations. Additionally, this core group of organisations will be complemented by organisations that work supporting youth businesses and entrepreneurs to provide further expertise and knowledge.

Governance structure

- **Co-chairs:** The Platform will be co-chaired by the youth business organisations of Spain and Tunisia: the Spanish Confederation of Young Businesspeople (CEAJE) and the Centre des Jeunes Dirigeants (CJD). These organisations will lead and guide the Platform's activities from the beginning to achieve the defined objectives.
- **Core-group:** A core group of organisations will be formed to pilot the first phase of the Platform and to ensure a high level of commitment. The participation of the member organisations will complement the Platform and ensure the input of different perspectives and experiences. The initial outreach will concentrate on the MENA and OECD countries mentioned below, but participation is open to all countries covered by the MENA-OECD Competitiveness Programme¹ and OECD countries:
 - **MENA:** Algeria, Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, Libya, Mauritania, Morocco, and Tunisia
 - **OECD:** France, Italy, Portugal, and Spain

Activities

To achieve its goals, the BAB Youth Platform will undertake a series of activities aiming at engaging its members, initiating exchanges and building capacities. Based on the needs identified, these activities can include:

- **In-person meetings:** Regular in-person meetings will be held in order to enable the member organisations to exchange ideas and build networks. These meetings can include presentations of other entities or study tours, whenever they are beneficial to the issues addressed by the Platform.

Members are encouraged to engage in the yearly meeting of the BAB and other events of the MENA-OECD Competitiveness Programme.
- **Positions papers:** Position papers will be drafted to identify, structure, and analyse the issues that are critical to youth businesses and to convey the message to other audiences.
- **Digital webinars:** Through webinars, knowledge can be easily shared and participating members have the opportunity to interact. Digital webinars can be organised to hold in-depth discussions on topics of interest e.g. showcasing the experience of individual organisations or focusing discussions to advance position papers.

¹ The Initiative covers Algeria, Bahrain, Djibouti, Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Libya, Mauritania, Morocco, Oman, Palestinian Authority, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Syria, Tunisia, United Arab Emirates and Yemen.

- **Online space:** An online space will be piloted (*ONE Community space*) to provide information for members, serve as repository of documents, and enable interactive exchanges and discussions between members.

Timeline (to be defined)

Jan 24-25, 2019	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• First meeting of Youth Business Organisations from the MENA region and OECD, OECD headquarters, Paris
Feb-Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Conference calls / webinars (to be defined)
June 2019	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• BAB Annual Meeting

