



## WEDNESDAY 30 JUNE – DIGITAL

16:00 – 18:00  
CEST

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### FRONTIERS OF DIGITAL LEARNING: BRIDGING THE DIGITAL SKILL GAPS FOR SMES AND ENTREPRENEURS

*JOINT WEBINAR WITH OECD DIGITAL FOR SMES GLOBAL INITIATIVE (D4SME) AND GEOGRAPHY OF HIGHER EDUCATION (GoHE)*

DESCRIPTION	<p>Life-long learning systems are critical to improve availability and access of digital skills to SMEs, in all regions and cities. The OECD report on “<a href="#">The Digital Transformation of SMEs</a>” highlights that the digital skills gap is one of the greatest barriers to SME digital adoption. Due to size and resource constraints, many small firms are more dependent on their ecosystem and networks to access the relevant skills to transform their business models to be digital, and accordingly more productive, sustainable and resilient. This means, that SMEs have to be aware about their needs in terms of digital skills and proactive in reaching out to their ecosystem and networks to up-skill, re-skill, or externalise digital functions.</p> <p>Actions are needed to help SMEs access to digital skills within their ecosystems, and help them close the digital skills gap. Higher education institutions, for example, can improve availability and access to digital skills. Higher education institutions, governments, large firms and technology practitioners can work together to develop practical and innovative digital learning for SMEs. Proximity among these actors can facilitate collaboration. Impactful digital learning is achieved when stakeholders from private and public sectors come together with education institutions to implement an effective lifelong learning system.</p> <p>This webinar will discuss the many innovative approaches that can improve availability and accessible of digital skills for SMEs, in all regions and cities. The discussion will highlight the role HEIs, large firms and technology providers are increasingly playing to offer learning opportunities, which SMEs should take advantage of to close the digital skill gap.</p>
OPENING REMARKS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Celine Kauffmann, Head of Entrepreneurship, SME and Tourism Division, Centre for Entrepreneurship, SMEs, Regions and Cities, OECD</li> </ul>
PANEL 1	<p>The SME digital skills gap &amp; the barriers to overcome</p> <p>Moderated by Marco Bianchini, Economist, Centre for Entrepreneurship, SMEs, Regions and Cities, OECD</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ms Claudia Suaznabar, Private Sector Development Lead Specialist, Inter-American Development Bank</li> <li>• Mr Yossi Hayut, Head of Education, Wix</li> <li>• Dr David Brian Devallance, Vice-Rector for Internationalisation, University of Primorska</li> <li>• Ms Beth Ann Lim, Director of Policy Programs and Government Outreach for Asia Pacific, Facebook</li> <li>• Mr Paolo Manfredi, Consultant for SME digitalisation, Responsible for SMEs’ digital transition, Confartigianato</li> </ul>
PANEL 2	<p>How to scale up ‘disruptive’ &amp; innovative higher education models to up-and reskill SMEs?</p> <p>Moderated by Anne Rimmer, Policy Analyst, Centre for Entrepreneurship, SMEs, Regions and Cities, OECD</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mr Quang-Minh Lepescheux, Director, European Government Affairs, Microsoft</li> <li>• Mr Jeff Sandhu, Head of FutureX Talent Sunway iLabs, 42 Kuala Lumpur</li> <li>• Ms Anastasia Chalkidou, Co-founder, Quantum Accounting</li> <li>• Ms Anna Klissouras, EU Public Policy Manager, Amazon</li> <li>• OECD government representative (TBC)</li> </ul>
CONTACT	<p><a href="mailto:Marco.Bianchini@oecd.org">Marco.Bianchini@oecd.org</a> / <a href="mailto:Anne.Rimmer@oecd.org">Anne.Rimmer@oecd.org</a></p>

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