Digital transformation provides new avenues for the empowerment of women and girls - but discrimination, negative stereotypes, and social and cultural biases create other challenges for women and girls to thrive in a highly digital economy and society.

The Internet, online platforms, mobile phones, and digital financial services offer women and girls “leapfrog” opportunities to earn additional income, increase their employment opportunities, and access knowledge to help bridge digital gender divides. Action to close these gaps also requires providing the right skills; encouraging women into entrepreneurship and innovation, STEM, and software development; and providing the right conditions to enable women to participate fully in the labour market. National strategies and targeted educational programs can encourage women to develop the skills needed in digital-intensive sectors, foster female entrepreneurship, and combine motherhood and a professional career.

The OECD’s Going Digital Toolkit society and gender indicators show that women and girls are often less likely to pursue, or have more limited access to, educational opportunities in a highly digitalised economy, limiting their career options. Moreover, far fewer women than men engage in innovation or entrepreneurship, limiting women’s impact on the digital transformation.

In co-operation with the United States, and in particular the U.S. State Department Bureau of Economic and Business Affairs, the OECD is hosting this public webinar for robust discussion on this important topic. Join us to assess the current state of various digital gender divides; identify priority areas for further benchmarking efforts; explore policy priorities for closing digital gender gaps both domestically and via co-operation in international fora.
10:00 – 10:15 Opening Remarks

Mr. Mathias Cormann, Secretary-General, OECD (confirmed)

Mr. Jose W. Fernandez, Under Secretary for Economic Growth, Energy, and the Environment, United States (confirmed)

Ms. Aušrinė Armonaitė, Minister of the Economy and Innovation, Republic of Lithuania (confirmed)

10:15 – 10:25 Keynote Speech

Ms. Marta Lucía Ramírez, Vice President and Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Colombia (confirmed)

10:25 – 11:10 Panel 1: The opportunities and challenges of digital transformation for women and girls

Speakers will address the following questions:

◆ What are the greatest opportunities and challenges for women and girls in a highly digitalised economy and society?

◆ How can policy help support women and girls make the most of these opportunities and mitigate the challenges?

Ms. Audrey Plonk, Head of the Digital Economy Policy Division, OECD (moderator, confirmed)

Ms. Doreen Bogdan-Martin, Director of the Telecommunication Development Bureau, International Telecommunications Union (confirmed)

Ms. Žydrūnė Vitaitė, Co-founder of Women Go Tech (confirmed)

11:10 – 11:55 Panel 2: Charting the path to bridging digital gender divides

Speakers will address the following questions:

◆ How can digital technologies help improve the inclusion of women and girls in a digital economy and society?

◆ How can the international community work together to address digital gender divides? What evidence and guidance are needed most?

Ms. Madeleine Chenette, Canadian Ambassador to the OECD (moderator, confirmed)

Ms. Kimberly Bryant, Founder and CEO, Black Girls Code (confirmed)

Ms. Rebecca Riley, Director, UK Economics and Statistics Centre of Excellence (confirmed)

Ms. Lani Cossette, Senior Director and Chief of Staff, UN Affairs, Microsoft (confirmed)
11:55 – 12.00 Closing Remarks

Ms. Audrey Plonk, Head of the Digital Economy Policy Division, OECD (confirmed)

Send your questions to the speakers during Panels 1 & 2 on Slido
#DigitalGender

About the Going Digital Toolkit. The OECD Going Digital Toolkit – a one-stop shop for OECD indicators on digital transformation – provides core indicators that serve as a foundation on which to build an evidence base of gender-related statistics to benchmark progress on closing digital gender divides. It also includes policy analysis and guidance to help countries improve existing gender inequalities.

About Power. In 2019, the Bureau of Economic and Business Affairs launched a U.S. State Department initiative to promote women’s economic empowerment called POWER. The initiative leverages diplomatic resources to promote women in business and works with the private sector to establish professional networks and business environments focused on promoting women’s economic empowerment in a global context.