

DRAFT AGENDA



OECD Eurasia Week 2023: Working Together in Challenging Times

Ministerial Meeting

12-14 December 2023

OECD Conference Centre
2 rue André Pascal, Paris

■ What is OECD Eurasia Week?

OECD Eurasia Week is the regular ministerial-level meeting of the OECD Eurasia Competitiveness Programme (ECP), bringing together top-level policy-makers, senior officials, experts and representatives of business, civil society and academia from OECD members, the countries actively participating in the OECD Eurasia Competitiveness Programme, and international development partners (EBRD, World Bank, and others).

It builds on the increasing involvement of countries in the Eurasia region in the work of the OECD and its platforms, networks and bodies, as well as on the region's growing importance to the members of the OECD. The objective is to strengthen further the existing relations between the Eurasia countries and the OECD, and to raise the visibility of co-operation between them on a wide range of issues affecting the region's competitiveness and its economic and social progress.

■ Where is OECD Eurasia Week?

OECD Eurasia Week 2023 will take place **at the OECD Conference Centre** at its headquarters in Paris, France.

OECD Headquarters & Conference Centre

2, rue André Pascal
75016, Paris

■ Who will be there?

OECD Eurasia Week will bring together high-level representatives of Eurasia countries, OECD member countries, academia, business, international partner organisations, and civil society.

Simultaneous interpretation in English and Russian will be provided.

■ Registration

Participation in OECD Eurasia Week is **by invitation only**. For logistic and security reasons, **registration is mandatory**.

■ OECD Eurasia Competitiveness Programme Countries

X (formerly known as Twitter): @OECD Eurasia
www.oecd.org/eurasia

OECD Central Asia Initiative: Afghanistan*, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Mongolia, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan.

OECD Eastern Europe and South Caucasus Initiative: Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus**, Georgia, the Republic of Moldova and Ukraine.

*Afghanistan: no active involvement since August 2021.

**Belarus: engagement with OECD activities suspended

■ Bilateral Meetings

Upon registration to OECD Eurasia Week, bilateral meetings will be scheduled between the delegations of the Partner Countries and the OECD Secretariat, as well as with representatives of OECD member countries upon request.

For further information, please contact the OECD Secretariat at grceurasia@oecd.org

■ OECD Eurasia Week Contacts

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■ Badges

Participants and Delegates are advised to collect badges on Tuesday, 12 December 2023, to avoid queues on 13 and 14 December.

■ Travel requirements for France

For the latest information in relation to visa and other travel requirements to France, please consult your local embassy or the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs web site:

<https://www.diplomatie.gouv.fr/en/coming-to-france/requesting-a-visa/>

Overview of OECD Eurasia Week 2023

Tuesday 12 December	Wednesday 13 December	Thursday 14 December	Friday 15 December
<p>Delegations' Arrivals in Paris, France</p> <p>Badge Collection No Badge → No Access</p>	<p>Opening of OECD Eurasia Week by Mathias Cormann, OECD Secretary-General</p> <p>Keynote interventions</p> <p>Denys Shmyhal, Prime Minister, Ukraine</p> <p>Edil Baisalov, Deputy Chairman of the Cabinet of Ministers, Kyrgyzstan</p> <p>Nicu Popescu, Deputy Prime Minister, Republic of Moldova</p> <p>Signing of the Memorandum of Understanding between the OECD and the Republic of Moldova CC 1</p> <p>Group Photo – Heads of Delegation</p>	<p>The OECD Eurasia Competitiveness Roundtable Promoting Digitalisation and Entrepreneurship</p> <p>Peer Reviews of Armenia and Ukraine CC 1</p>	<p>Delegations' Departure</p>
	<p>Plenary I: Resilience and Recovery <i>Overcoming the Shocks of War and Pandemic</i> CC 1</p>	<p>Plenary IV: Low Carbon Transitions in Eurasia <i>Strategic Frameworks for Sustainable Infrastructure</i> CC 1</p>	
	<p>Buffet Lunch George Marshall and Roger Ockrent, Château de la Muette</p>	<p>Lunch Break</p>	
<p>Pre-conference events:</p> <p><i>PISA 2022: Lessons for Eurasia</i> Auditorium, OECD Conference Centre</p> <p><i>Women's economic empowerment for inclusive and sustainable growth</i> Auditorium, OECD Conference Centre</p>	<p>Plenary II: Business Environment Reforms for Eurasia <i>SME Policy Index: Eastern Partner Countries, 2024</i> <i>Progress in Improving the Legal Environment for Business and Investment in Central Asia</i> CC 1</p>	<p>Plenary V: Connecting Eurasia: Trade and Transport <i>Realising the Potential of the "Middle Corridor"</i> <i>Trade Facilitation in Central Asia</i> CC 1</p>	
	<p>Plenary III: Building More Resilient Governance in an Era of Multiple Crises Challenges and Lessons from Ukraine and the Region CC 1</p>	<p>Meeting of the Steering Committees for the OECD Eurasia Competitiveness Programme CC 1</p>	
<p>Welcome Cocktail Red Chairs Coffee area, OECD Conference Centre (CC)</p>	<p>Networking Cocktail George Marshall and Roger Ockrent, Château de la Muette</p>	<p>Closing of Eurasia Week CC 1</p>	

Tuesday, 12 December 2023

15:30-16.30
OECD Auditorium

PISA 2022 Results: Lessons for Eurasia

A knowledgeable and skilled population is critical to a competitive, vibrant economy, as well as inclusion and social cohesion. This makes education reform a central pillar for development efforts across Central Asia and the Eastern Partner region. For effective reform, countries need to gauge the performance of their education systems and compare their outcomes with those of others. The OECD's Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) is a survey designed to evaluate student learning and gather data on the characteristics of students and schools globally. PISA 2022 looks at how education systems are helping students navigate a changing world, and at how education systems can strengthen their student performance, enhance equity, and foster well-being. Eighty-one jurisdictions participated in the study, including Azerbaijan (Baku), Georgia, Kazakhstan, the Republic of Moldova, Mongolia, Ukraine, and Uzbekistan. These have also confirmed their participation in the PISA 2025 cycle, along with Armenia, Kyrgyzstan, and Tajikistan, which will join the upcoming cycle, with Azerbaijan extending participation to the national level.

This session will discuss the PISA 2022 results and explore how countries in the region can leverage PISA to advance priority reforms in education and skills. Furthermore, it will explore how these reforms support the broader agenda of economic competitiveness and good governance.

Moderator: Elizabeth Fordham, Senior Advisor for Global Relations, Directorate for Education and Skills, OECD

Panel Discussion

Panellists:

- **Miyako Ikeda**, Senior Analyst, Directorate for Education and Skills, OECD
- **Askar Abdrakhmanov**, Ambassador of Kazakhstan to UNESCO and other International Organisations in Paris
- **Corina Călugăru**, Ambassador of the Republic of Moldova to France and UNESCO
- **Rustamkhon Azizov**, Deputy Director General of the Agency for Strategic Reforms under the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan
- **Rafayel Gevorgyan**, Deputy Minister of Economy, Armenia

16.15-16.30

Open Discussion and Q&A period for participants

16.30-17.00

Coffee Break

17.00-18.30
OECD Auditorium

Women's Economic Empowerment for Inclusive and Sustainable Growth

Co-organised with the Republic of Lithuania

In 2021, the OECD released *Gender Gaps in Eurasia: The Daunting Effects of COVID-19*, which revealed a worrisome effect of the COVID-19 pandemic, setting back gender parity in the region by as much as 15 years. Since then, Eurasia countries have taken action and integrated the gender agenda in their development plans. Thus, this session will offer an opportunity to take stock of recent progress and the next steps to be taken regarding the economic empowerment of women in the region.

According to the *Global Gender Gap Report 2023* by World Economic Forum, Lithuania ranks 6th in Europe and 9th in the world for gender equality. Despite these impressive achievements, some structural problems remain, preventing equality in terms of career achievement. Contributing to gender equality and empowerment of women and girls in partner countries is also one of the key objectives of Lithuania's development cooperation. Thus, Lithuania is keen to work together with our partner countries, share its practical experience and co-create solutions in gender equality.

Moderator: Lina Viltrakienė, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Lithuania to the OECD

17.00-17.10

Keynote Address: Simonas Šatunas, Chief of Cabinet and Special Representative of the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Lithuania

17.10 -18.00

Panel Discussion

Panellists:

- **Ainura Usenbekova**, Deputy Minister of Economy and Commerce, Kyrgyzstan
- **Christina Kokkinakis**, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of the European Union to the OECD and UNESCO
- **Veronica Arpintin**, State Secretary, Ministry of Economic Development and Digitalization, Republic of Moldova
- **Willem Adema**, Senior Economist, Social Policy Division, Employment, Labour and Social Affairs Directorate, OECD
- **Catherine Kardava**, Director of the Parliamentary Research Center, Parliament of Georgia
- **Žydrūnė Vitaitė**, Co-founder of “Women Go Tech” Initiative

18.00-18.20

Open discussion moderated by Lina Viltrakiėnė, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Lithuania to the OECD

18.20-18.30

Concluding remarks: Ulrik Vestergaard Knudsen, Deputy Secretary-General and OECD Gender Champion

18.30-19.30

Red Chairs Coffee area

Welcome Cocktail, OECD Conference Centre hosted by Poland

Wednesday, 13 December 2023

8.30-8.50

Outside CC 1

Welcome Coffee

9.00-9.40

CC 1

Opening of OECD Eurasia Week

The COVID-19 pandemic and Russia's aggression against Ukraine have profoundly affected economies across the world and will have serious economic implications for development for years to come. The Secretary-General will look ahead at the challenges facing the region and the world as we emerge from these shocks, as well as the role the OECD can play in helping countries address them. From economic growth to public health to climate and technology, the critical issues facing our governments and citizens today cannot be tackled by any nation alone. Finding solutions to these global challenges requires multilateral dialogue and co-operation.

Opening Address: Mathias Cormann, OECD Secretary-General

Keynote Interventions:

- **Denys Shmyhal**, Prime Minister of Ukraine (online)
- **Edil Baisalov**, Deputy Chairman of the Cabinet of Ministers, Kyrgyzstan
- **Nicu Popescu**, Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Foreign Affairs and European Integration, Republic of Moldova

9.40-9.45

Signing of the Memorandum of Understanding between the OECD and the Republic of Moldova

9.45-10.00

Group Photo – Heads of Delegation

10.00-12.30

CC 1

Plenary I: Resilience and Recovery: Overcoming the Shocks of War and Pandemic

Russia's invasion of Ukraine has not only caused a human tragedy; it has created enormous challenges of post-war reconstruction and recovery. War and pandemic have also left Eurasia countries with a heightened sense of their vulnerability to further shocks and the need to address their own structural challenges. In this plenary session, high-level policymakers from Eurasia and the OECD will reflect on the socio-economic impact of the war, explore policy responses to support recovery and reconstruction, and share their views on the long-term reforms needed to build more resilient economies over the medium-to-long term.

10.00-11.00

CC 1

Part 1

	<p>Moderator: František Ružička, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of the Slovak Republic to the OECD</p>
10.00-10.10	<p>Setting the stage: Isabell Koske, Deputy Director, Country Studies Branch, Economics Department, OECD</p>
10.10-11.00	<p>Panellists: Ministers from Eurasia countries</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Edil Baisalov, Deputy Chairman of the Cabinet of Ministers, Kyrgyzstan • Dumitru Alaiba, Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Economic Development and Digitalization, Republic of Moldova • Faiziddin Qahhorzoda, Minister of Finance, Tajikistan <p><i>Tour de Table with Delegations from Eurasia countries</i></p> <p><i>Open Discussion and Q&A period for participants</i></p>
11.00-11.15	
11.15-11.30	<p>Coffee Break</p>
11.30-12.30 CC 1	<p>Part 2</p> <p>Panellists: High-level representatives from OECD Members and OECD Accession Candidates</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Péter Szijjártó, Minister of Foreign Affairs and Trade, Hungary • Andris Pelšs, Secretary of State, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Latvia • Ahmet Yozgatligil, Deputy Minister of Industry and Technology, Türkiye • Tihomir Stoytchev, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs, Bulgaria • Zdenko Lucić, State Secretary of Foreign and European Affairs, Croatia • Luca Niculescu, State Secretary of Foreign Affairs, Romania • Paweł Gębski, Deputy Director of the Economic Cooperation Department, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Poland <p><i>Open Discussion and Q&A period for participants</i></p>
12.10-12.25	
12.25-12.30	<p>Concluding Remarks: Ulrik Vestergaard Knudsen, Deputy Secretary-General of the OECD</p>
12.30-14.00	<p>Buffet Lunch, George Marshall and Roger Ockrent, Château de la Muette</p>
14.00-16:30 CC 1	<p>Plenary II: Business Environment Reforms in Eurasia</p> <p><i>The crises of the last four years have thrown into sharp relief some of the longstanding structural vulnerabilities of the EESC and Central Asian economies, particularly the need to promote the investment, entrepreneurship and innovation that will help them diversify production, employment and exports, lifting productivity and enhancing resilience. Diversification is critical to navigating successfully the digital and low-carbon transformations and for increasing equity and inclusion. In this session, participants will discuss a range of business-environment reforms that can create better conditions for both local entrepreneurs and foreign investors, while helping countries realise the potential benefits of the digital transformation.</i></p> <p>Moderator: William Tompson, Head of the Eurasia Division, Global Relations and Co-operation, OECD</p>
14.05-15.05	<p>Launch of the SME Policy Index: Eastern Partner Countries 2024</p> <p>Opening remarks by partners:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mathieu Bousquet, Director, Directorate General for Neighbourhood & Enlargement Negotiations (DG NEAR), European Commission • Mark Bowman, Vice President, European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD) <p>Presentation of the report:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Francesco Alfonso, Deputy Head of the Eastern Europe and South Caucasus Unit, Eurasia Division, Global Relations and Co-operation, OECD <p>Key interventions from Eastern Partner countries:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dumitru Alaiba, Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Economic Development and Digitalization, Republic of Moldova

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15.05-16.05



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- **Rafayel Gevorgyan**, Deputy Minister of Economy, Armenia
- **Elmar Isayev**, Head of Secretariat, SME Agency (KOBIA), Azerbaijan
- **Irakli Nadareishvili**, Deputy Minister of Economy and Sustainable Development, Georgia
- **Volodymyr Kuzyo**, Deputy Minister of Economy, Ukraine

Launch of Improving the Legal Environment for Business and Investment in Central Asia – Progress Report

Opening remarks:

- **Edil Baisalov**, Deputy Chairman of the Cabinet of Ministers, Kyrgyzstan
- **Youri Skaskevitch**, Programme Manager, Delegation of the European Union to Kazakhstan

Setting the stage:

- **Nikoloz Gigineishvili**, Deputy Chief of Central Asia Division, International Monetary Fund

Presentation of the report:

- **Grégory Lecomte**, Senior Policy Analyst and Head of the Central Asia Unit, Eurasia Division, Global Relations and Co-operation, OECD

Key interventions:

- **Sadi Qodirzoda**, Chairman of the State Committee for Investment and State Property Management, Tajikistan
- **Abzal Abdikarimov**, Vice Minister of National Economy, Kazakhstan
- **Ainura Usenbekova**, Deputy Minister of Economy and Commerce, Kyrgyzstan
- **Badriddin Abidov**, Deputy Minister of Investment, Industry and Trade, Uzbekistan
- **Dovlet Dovletallyev**, Head of the Division of Monitoring the Execution of Programmes for the Department of Strategic and Sustainable Development, Ministry of Finance and Economy, Turkmenistan

16.05-16.30

Open discussion and private sector responses

Initial reflection from:

- **Mungunchimeg Sanjaa**, Deputy Minister of Finance, Mongolia
- **George Christopoulos**, Secretary General of Economic Policy and Strategy, Ministry of Economy and Finance, Greece

16.30-17.00

Coffee Break

17.00-18.30
CC 1

Plenary III: Building More Resilient Governance in an Era of Multiple Crises: Challenges and Lessons from Ukraine and the Region

Public governance reforms can help increase the effectiveness of the public administration and equip governments with the capacities and instruments they need to address immediate priorities and deliver on long-term development goals in a global context marked by multiple crises, while building trust to ensure the success of reforms. A number of Central Asian and Eastern Partner countries have embarked on ambitious public governance reforms and are working to modernise and strengthen the resilience of the public administration, often with a deep focus on digitalisation and civil service reform. The OECD and SIGMA, along with international partners, have been supporting these efforts through comprehensive reviews, for instance SIGMA monitoring reports on the Republic of Moldova and Ukraine and OECD Public Governance Reviews of Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan, and through more focused work on specific policy challenges, such as public sector integrity and regulation. In Ukraine's case, Russia's war of aggression has exacerbated these challenges by greatly increasing the threat of mis- and dis-information, adding a layer of complexity to policy-making and calling for the use of new tools to respond to this threat. This session will discuss the current reforms efforts, needs and challenges in Ukraine and the region, and discuss innovative governance arrangements and instruments to help governments and civil society build resilient public governance systems and societies for the future.

Moderator: Gregor Virant, Head of SIGMA Programme, Public Governance Directorate, OECD

Presentation by the Public Governance Directorate, OECD

Key Interventions:

- **Tetyana Kovtun**, Executive Director of the Reform Delivery Office, Ukraine
- **Cristina Gherasimov**, State Secretary, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and European Integration, Republic of Moldova
- **Simonas Šatunas**, Chief of Cabinet and Special Representative of the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Lithuania
- **Rustamhon Azizov**, Deputy Director, Agency for Strategic Reforms under the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan

18:15-18:30

Open Discussion and Q&A period for participants

18.30-20.00

Networking Cocktail, George Marshall and Roger Ockrent, Château de la Muette

Thursday, 14 December 2023

8.30-8.50

Outside CC 1

9.00-11.00

CC 1



Welcome Coffee

The OECD Eurasia Competitiveness Roundtable – Promoting Digitalisation and Entrepreneurship

Chair: Indulis Ābelis, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Latvia to the OECD, and Chair of the OECD Eurasia Competitiveness Roundtable.

*Policies for promoting the successful digital transformation of firms cut across a wide range of fields, from skills to regulation and competition to infrastructure policies. All are crucial to enabling businesses to realise the potential benefits of digitalisation. This edition of the OECD Eurasia Competitiveness Roundtable will see peer reviews of policies for supporting the digitalisation of SMEs in **Armenia** and **Ukraine**, as well as other Partner countries from the region. This session will bring together the OECD Secretariat, experts and representatives of Eurasia and OECD Countries to discuss ways to build a common understanding of the transformative power of digital technologies, digital skills, IT infrastructure, the role of SME skills in advancing digital transformation and the role of government support agencies in promoting digitalisation and entrepreneurship.*

9.00-9.10

OECD Eurasia Competitiveness Roundtable Welcome Remarks

- **Indulis Ābelis**, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Latvia to the OECD, and Chair of the OECD Eurasia Competitiveness Roundtable
- **Aleš Chmelař**, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Czechia to the OECD
- **Jeanne Robles**, Programme Manager, DG NEAR, European Union

9.10-10.00

The Peer Review of Armenia

9.10-9.15

Key intervention from the Government of Armenia

- **Rafayel Gevorgyan**, Deputy Minister of Economy, Armenia

9.15-9.40

Discussion of the Peer Review findings

OECD presentation of key project findings: **Advancing the digital transformation of SMEs in Armenia** by **Daniel Quadbeck**, Senior Policy Analyst and Head of Unit, Eurasia Division, Global Relations and Co-operation, OECD

Lead Reviewer observations

- **Anita Zimele**, Deputy Director of Department of Business Support, Ministry of Economics, Latvia

Perspectives from Eurasia Partner countries:

- **Dumitru Alaiba**, Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Economic Development and Digitalization, Republic of Moldova
- **Narzulo Malikov**, Deputy Chairman of the Tax Committee, Tajikistan

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9.40-10.00



10.00-10.50

10.00-10.05

10.05-10.30

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10.30-10.50

10.50-11.00

11.00-11.30

11.30-13.00
CC 1



- **Jasur Asqarov**, Head of IT Investment Project Office, Ministry of Digital Technologies, Uzbekistan

Open Discussion

The Chair will open the floor to all participants for discussion focusing on:

- Measures to improve framework conditions for digitalisation
- Building a structured system for digitalisation support
- Fostering synergies in the ecosystem to facilitate digital transformation

Response from Armenia

- **Rafayel Gevorgyan**, Deputy Minister of Economy, Armenia

The Peer Review of Ukraine

Chair: Indulis Ābelis, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Latvia to the OECD, and Chair of the OECD Eurasia Competitiveness Roundtable

Key intervention from the Government of Ukraine

- **Anatolii Komirnyi**, Deputy Minister for Communities, Territories and Infrastructure Development, Ukraine

Discussion of the Peer Review findings

OECD presentation of the key project findings: **Enhancing Resilience through Digital Business Transformation in Ukraine** by **Salomé Will**, Policy Analyst, Eurasia Division, Global Relations and Co-operation, OECD

Lead reviewer observations

- **Veronika Špírková**, Expert in SME Development and Innovation policy, Ministry of Industry and Trade of Czechia, Prague University of Economics and Business

Perspectives from Eurasia Partner countries:

- **Mikheil Khidureli**, CEO, Enterprise Georgia
- **Nurlan Kulbatyrov**, Deputy Director of QazTrade, Kazakhstan

Open Discussion

The Chair will open the floor to all participants for discussion focusing on:

- Measures to build an effective ecosystem for digitalisation at the national and sub-national level
- Developing comprehensive support services for digitalisation
- Ways to leverage digitalisation to enhance resilience, including e-commerce and digital security

Response from Ukraine

- **Volodymyr Kuzyo**, Deputy Minister of Economy, Ukraine

Concluding Remarks and Next Steps

Chair: Indulis Ābelis, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Latvia to the OECD and Chair of the OECD Eurasia Competitiveness Roundtable

Coffee Break

Plenary IV: Low Carbon Transitions in Eurasia: Strategic Frameworks for Sustainable Infrastructure

Policy-makers today face conflicting and competing needs for accelerated climate action at the same time as they must respond to social and economic crises, upended global markets and value chains, geopolitical tensions, and a slow economic recovery. In Eurasia, a region greatly affected by climate change, this challenge takes particular forms, as the energy intensity of production and reliance on fossil fuels remain high. On the other hand, the low carbon transition offers a range of opportunities for economic diversification and attraction of new investments, including through the development and promotion of sustainable infrastructure projects. Against the backdrop of the OECD-led Sustainable Infrastructure Programme in

Asia (SIPA), this session will consider available policies and tools for co-ordinated and integrated economic development and low carbon transition planning in Eurasia, such as Low Emission Development Strategies (LEDS). It will also present the work of the OECD Inclusive Forum for Carbon Mitigation Approaches (IFCMA).

Moderator: Kumi Kitamori, Deputy Director, Environment Directorate, OECD

11.30-11.45

Setting the stage: OECD Presentation of key project findings

- **Alain de Serres**, Deputy Director, Policy Studies Branch, Economics Department, OECD
- **Peline Atamer**, Head of Sustainable Infrastructure Programme in Asia (SIPA), Eurasia Division, Global Relations and Co-operation, OECD

11.45-12.40

Panellists: Perspectives from Eurasia countries and OECD members

- **Rafayel Gevorgyan**, Deputy Minister of Economy, Armenia
- **Abzal Abdikarimov**, Vice Minister of National Economy, Kazakhstan
- **Veronica Arpintin**, State Secretary, Ministry of Economic Development and Digitalisation, Republic of Moldova
- **Aleksey Sim**, Head of Investment Climate and Ratings Department, Ministry of Investment, Industry and Trade, Uzbekistan
- **Mikheil Khidureli**, CEO, Enterprise Georgia
- **Cyrille Bellier**, Head of Department – Europe, Middle East, Asia, French Development Agency

12.40-12.55

Open Discussion and Q&A period for participants

12.55-13.00

Concluding remarks by the moderator

13.00-14.30

Lunch Break

14.30-16.00

Plenary V: Connecting Eurasia: Trade and Transport

CC 1

This session considers the challenges of trade and transport connectivity in Eurasia in the context of Russia's large-scale invasion of Ukraine.

The Trans-Caspian International Transport Route – the so-called “Middle Corridor” – which connects China to Europe via multimodal transport routes in Central Asia, crossing the Caspian Sea and the Caucasus to reach Europe via the Black Sea or Türkiye, has been at the centre of renewed discussion. Further West, Russia's war of aggression has hugely disrupted transport networks in and around Ukraine. The International Transport Forum's work on rebuilding transport networks there will also be presented.

Developing the potential of such a route will require investments in “soft”, as well as physical, infrastructures. Trade facilitation reforms are critical to the development of trade within the region and to its better integration in global value chains. This session will thus highlight recent work on trade facilitation reforms in Central Asia and the challenges ahead.

Moderator: Guineng Chen, Team Lead, International Transport Forum

14.30-14.40

Opening Remarks:

- **Abzal Abdikarimov**, Vice Minister of National Economy, Kazakhstan
- **Simonas Šatunas**, Chief of Cabinet and Special Representative of the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Lithuania

14.40-14.50

Discussion on Trade and Transport Connectivity in Eurasia

Presentation of the following publications: **Realising the Potential of the “Middle Corridor”** and **Trade Facilitation in Central Asia**, by **Grégory Lecomte**, Senior Policy Analyst and Head of the Central Asia Unit, Eurasia Division, Global Relations and Co-operation, OECD

14.50-15.40

Perspectives from partner organisations

- **Peteris Ustubs**, Director for the Middle East, Asia and the Pacific, Directorate General for International Partnerships, European Commission
- **Kubanychbek Omuraliev**, Secretary General of the Organisation of Turkic States



- **Pierre Bonthonneau**, Senior Trade Facilitation Adviser, International Trade Centre

Perspectives from OECD Member and Eurasia Partner countries:

- **Sahib Mammadov**, Deputy Minister of Economy, Azerbaijan
- **Irakli Nadareishvili**, Deputy Minister of Economy and Sustainable Development, Georgia
- **Farhod Vosidiyon**, Deputy Minister of Economic Development and Trade, Tajikistan
- **Durmuş Ünüvar**, Deputy Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure, Türkiye
- **Rustamkhon Azizov**, Deputy Director General of the Agency for Strategic Reforms under the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan
- **Nurlan Kulbatyrov**, Deputy Director General of QazTrade, Kazakhstan
- **Musa Kataganov**, Head of Department on Business Policy, Ministry of Economy and Commerce, Kyrgyzstan
- **Merdan Annagulyyev**, Head of the Foreign Economic Relations Department, Ministry of Trade and Foreign Economic Relations, Turkmenistan

15.40-15.55

Open Discussion and Q&A period for participants

15.55-16.00

Closing Remarks: Guineng Chen, Team Lead, International Transport Forum

16.00-16.30

Coffee Break

16.30-17.45
CC 1

Steering Committees Meeting of the OECD Eurasia Competitiveness Programme

(For Government representatives of Eurasia and OECD countries and partner organisations)

The Secretariat will present the main outcomes of the OECD Eurasia Competitiveness Programme since the last meeting of the Steering Committees and the activities envisaged for 2024 and beyond. As the Secretariat will be preparing the Programme's next mandate during the course of 2024, OECD and Eurasia countries' representatives will be invited to share their reflections on the themes and policy challenges that may merit particular attention in the mandate for the period from 2025, in view of their relevance to the region and the OECD's own global relations priorities.

Moderator: Lina Viltrakienė, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Lithuania to the OECD and Chair of the OECD Eurasia Advisory Board

Presentation of the main outcomes and activities envisaged for 2023-24

- **Ulrik Vestergaard Knudsen**, Deputy Secretary-General, OECD

Responses from OECD members and regional Co-Chairs:

- Central Asia Initiative: European Union and Kazakhstan
- Eastern Europe and South Caucasus Initiative: Poland and Georgia

17.30-17.45

Open Discussion and Q&A period for participants

17.45-18.00
CC 1

Closing of OECD Eurasia Week

Ulrik Vestergaard Knudsen, OECD Deputy Secretary-General

The [Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development](#) (OECD) is a unique forum where governments work together to address economic, social and environmental challenges. The Organisation provides a setting where governments can compare policy experiences, seek solutions to common problems, identify good practices and work to co-ordinate domestic and international policies.

The [OECD Eurasia Competitiveness Programme](#) was launched in 2008 to support Eurasia economies in developing more vibrant and competitive markets – both at the national and regional level – in order to generate sustainable growth. The Programme focuses on a comprehensive approach that includes regional dialogue, peer review, definition of reform priorities and assistance in the design and implementation of policies.

The **OECD Central Asia Initiative (CAI)**: Co-chaired by the European Union and Kazakhstan, the CAI was launched in November 2008 and covers Afghanistan*, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Mongolia, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan.

The **OECD Eastern Europe and South Caucasus Initiative (EESCI)**: Co-chaired by Poland and Georgia, the EESCI was launched in April 2009 and covers the countries of the Eastern Partnership: Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus**, Georgia, the Republic of Moldova, and Ukraine.

Through both Initiatives, the **OECD Eurasia Competitiveness Programme** encourages Eurasia countries to align to OECD standards, identify policy barriers to competitiveness and support capacity building in the design and implementation of policies.

The OECD Eurasia Competitiveness Programme would like to thank all its donors in supporting the Programme's work which otherwise would not be carried out without their financial contributions: Bulgaria, Croatia, Czechia, Finland, Germany, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Kazakhstan, Latvia, Lithuania, New Zealand, Norway, Poland, Romania, Slovak Republic, Sweden, United States, European Union.

**Afghanistan: no active involvement since August 2021.*

***Belarus: engagement with OECD activities suspended March 2022.*

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