



# REFORMING STATE-OWNED ENTERPRISES IN THE WESTERN BALKANS

## DRAFT AGENDA

**Friday, 23 October 2020**

**9:30am – 12:30pm (GMT +2 Paris,  
Brussels, Belgrade, Pristina,  
Podgorica, Sarajevo, Skopje,  
Tirana)**

**10:30am – 13:30pm (GMT +3  
Sofia, Vilnius)**

**Zoom meeting: [register here](#)**



**#OECDseeurope**

## ■ THE OECD

The [OECD](#) is a unique forum where governments work together to address the economic, social and environmental challenges of globalisation. The Organisation provides a setting where governments can compare policy experience, seek answers to common problems, identify good practice and work to co-ordinate domestic and international policies.

## ■ THE OECD SEE PROGRAMME

Since 2000, the [OECD South East Europe regional programme](#) has been closely collaborating with economies of the region to foster growth, investment and employment through reforms in favour of competitiveness and private sector development. The programme addresses regional and national needs, capacities and reform priorities while translating OECD standards and best practices into actionable advice for South East European (SEE) economies.

## ■ WHAT IS THE REGIONAL POLICY DIALOGUE ABOUT?

State-owned enterprises (SoE) play an important role in the Western Balkans' economies as they account for between 3 and 7% of total production and employment\*. In addition, they are also sometimes the sole providers of key public services, such as water, electricity, transportation and telecommunications.

Despite their significant contributions to the region's economies, assessments point to SoEs' significant under-performance and in many cases outright losses. That brings about the pressing need to enhance the efficiency and, hence the contributions, of SoEs to the competitiveness of the Western Balkan economies.

**The aim of this webinar is to discuss the policy measures and options to reform SoEs and to make them perform according to the OECD and EU corporate and commercial standards.** It will increase the Western Balkan policy makers' awareness of the OECD guidelines on SoEs, and support them in its effective implementation.

The webinar will also shed light on good practices and experience from OECD/EU members who have recently undergone reforming their own SoE sectors.

## ■ SPEAKERS AND AUDIENCE

The seminar will bring together the Competitiveness Outlook 2021 state-owned enterprise (SoE) policy co-ordinators, as well as other policy makers and technical experts from the relevant ministries in the Western Balkans and OECD/EU member states.

The six Western Balkan economies' participants will be the key beneficiaries from the seminar, taking home fresh ideas to implement measures in order to reform their SoEs and improve their governance and efficiency.

## ■ Technical details

**Registration:** Advanced registration is required. A personalised confirmation link will be sent following registration. Detailed explanations on connections procedures will follow registration.

**Access:** Please join the session 15 minutes prior with the link provided by email following your registration.

**Working Language:** English – No simultaneous interpretation will be provided.

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OECD (2018), "State-owned enterprises in South East Europe" in [Competitiveness in South East Europe: A Policy Outlook 2018](#)

# REFORMING STATE-OWNED ENTERPRISES IN THE WESTERN BALKANS

Friday, 23 October 2020 / 09:30 – 12:30  
ZOOM MEETING

**09:30 -09:45**      **SIGN-IN TO THE MEETING**

**09:45 – 10:00**      **OPENING REMARKS**

- **Ms. Marzena Kisielewska**, Head of South East Europe Division, OECD
- **Mr. Javier Menendez Bonilla**, Team Leader, Thematic Support, Economic Governance & IFIs, Public Administration Reform Unit, DG NEAR, European Commission

**10:00-10:30**      **SETTING THE STAGE: The OECD Guidelines as Roadmap for Reform**

The *OECD Guidelines on Corporate Governance of State-Owned Enterprises* have provided an internationally agreed benchmark to help governments assess and improve the way they exercise their ownership functions of SoEs since 2005. The introductory part will provide an overview of the guidelines and how they are being implemented in the OECD/EU countries. It will also outline the preliminary findings of the *Competitiveness Outlook 2021* assessment of SoE policies undertaken based on the OECD Guidelines.

*Implementing the OECD Guidelines on Corporate Governance of State-Owned Enterprises: Review of recent developments and trends*

- **Mr. Hans Christiansen**, Senior Economist, OECD Corporate Governance and Corporate Finance Division

*Preliminary findings of the Competitiveness Outlook 2021: State-owned enterprises policies in the Western Balkans*

- **Mr. Umur Gökçe**, Project Manager, OECD South East Europe Division
- **Mr. Martin Kohtze**, Project Manager, OECD South East Europe Division

**10:30 – 11:10**      **SESSION 1: THE STATE AS OWNER - REFORMING OWNERSHIP ARRANGEMENTS**

According to the *OECD Guidelines*, the exercise of ownership rights should be clearly identified within the state administration – either centralised in a single ownership entity or co-ordinated by a centralised body. Moreover, the governments should use its ownership policy to clarify and prioritise its reasons for state ownership. This clarification provides the market with information, and the general public with predictability and a clear understanding of the state's overall objectives as an owner.

In this framework, the panellists will explain the ownership arrangements in their economies, by shedding light on the recent reforms they have undertaken.

*Moderator* - **Ms. Korin Kane**, Corporate Governance Expert

- **Mr. Galin Zhelev**, Head of PPP Department, Ministry of Finance, Bulgaria
- **Ms. Arjana Dyrmishi**, Director, Directorate of Economic Development Policies, Ministry of Finance and Economy, Albania
- **Ms. Ivana Popović**, Senior Advisor, Directorate for Industry and Transformation, Ministry of Economy, Montenegro
- **Mr. Ivo Ramljak**, Head of Service for non-strategic SoEs, Ministry of Physical Planning, Construction and State Assets, Croatia

**11:10 – 11:50**

## **SESSION 2: STATE-OWNED ENTERPRISES IN THE MARKET PLACE - ENSURING A LEVEL PLAYING FIELD**

The *OECD Guidelines* state that the legal and regulatory framework for SOEs should ensure a level playing field and fair competition in the marketplace when SOEs undertake economic activities. If certain economic agents are put at an undue disadvantage, goods and services are no longer produced by those who can do it most effectively.

The panellists will outline their economies' efforts in ensuring a level playing field for all businesses. They will discuss if their SoEs have any advantages or disadvantages owing to their state ownership and how this affects SoEs and markets in which they operate.

*Moderator* - **Hendrik Bosshammer**, Project Manager, OECD South East Europe Division

- **Mr. Aleksandras Jocius**, Head of Governance and Analysis unit, the Governance Coordination Center, Lithuania
- **Ms. Vesna Vožni**, Assistant Minister, Ministry of Transport and Communications of Republika Srpska, Bosnia and Herzegovina
- **Ms. Aida Soko**, Consultant, Prime Minister's Office, Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina
- **Ms. Qëndresa Morina Isufi**, Analyst, Ministry of Economic Development, Kosovo\*

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\* This designation is without prejudice to positions on status, and is in line with United Nations Security Council Resolution 1244/99 and the Advisory Opinion of the International Court of Justice on Kosovo's declaration of independence

- **Mr. Kreshnik Thaqi**, Head of Investment Promotion at Kosovo Investment and Enterprise Support Agency, Kosovo\*

**11:50 – 12:25**      **OPEN DISCUSSION**

The participants will be invited to take part in an instant poll to reflect on the challenges and potential policy solutions to improve governance and efficiency of state-owned enterprises.

The poll results will be a starting point for the discussion, and participants will be invited to comment on the way forward in reforming state-owned enterprises in the Western Balkans.

**12:25-12:30**      **CLOSING REMARKS**

**Ms. Marzena Kisielewska**, Head of South East Europe Division, OECD

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