



14<sup>th</sup> session

UNECE Team of Specialists on Innovation and Competitiveness Policies

## Exploring the power of transformative innovation

14 - 15 NOVEMBER 2022 | ROOM XVIII | PALAIS DES NATIONS | GENEVA & ONLINE

### International Policy Dialogue:

#### “Digital and green transformations – Innovation for a sustainable future”

14 and 15 November, 2022

Room XVIII, Palais des Nations, Geneva and on-line on Zoom

Register [here](#)

The world is not on track to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals by 2030. To accelerate progress, we need innovations that can transform key social and economic systems, from the built environment to agriculture, industry, energy generation, transport, and private consumption. Through transformative innovation, we can reduce environmental footprints; close material loops; move from a linear to a circular economy model; make our energy systems sustainable; and accomplish these in a way that is truly inclusive of everyone.

However, transformative innovation will not just happen. To get there, we need to reimagine the role and tools of innovation policy. Now, more than ever, is the time to understand the nature of such transformations better and find ways to enable, catalyse and coordinate the many innovations needed to achieve truly transformative impact, all the while mitigating related risks and short-term trade-offs.

In this context, at its fourteenth session on 14 and 15 November 2022, the Team of Specialists on Innovation and Competitiveness Policies of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) will hold a policy dialogue on the theme “Digital and green transformations – Innovation for a sustainable future”, and launch the UN-ECE Transformative Innovation Network (ETIN). Funded by the German Federal Ministry for Economic Affairs and Climate Action, ETIN aims to reinforce the innovation ecosystem in the UNECE region to promote innovation and digital technologies for sustainable development and for the circular economy transition.

Kicking off with a keynote address by renowned economist Jason Potts, the first panel of the policy dialogue will define and explore the nature of transformative innovation, drawing on past examples and looking to the future to identify obstacles and catalysts. This will be followed by a panel on innovation governance, which will illustrate how the need for larger societal transformations alters the dynamics and governance of innovation itself, and discuss how the experience of countries that have successfully encouraged transformative innovation can be replicated elsewhere.

The ETIN launch session will build on the discussions from the first two panels to explore how ETIN can best contribute to promoting transformative innovation in the UNECE region in support of the Sustainable Development Goals.

A cocktail reception following the ETIN launch will provide an opportunity for networking and interactive dialogue.

The policy dialogue will conclude on 15 November with a session on policies to promote the transition to sustainable energy as a case study in transformative innovation.

## Programme

| MONDAY, 14 NOVEMBER 2022 |  |
|--------------------------|--|
| 10:00 – 10:20            | <p><b>Welcome and opening</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Mr. Salvatore Zecchini, Chair, UNECE Team of Specialists on Innovation and Competitiveness Policies</li> <li>Ms. Olga Algayerova, Executive Secretary, UNECE</li> </ul>   |
| 10:20 – 10:35            | <p><b>Keynote speech:</b> Prof. Jason Potts, Distinguished Professor of Economics and Co-director of the Blockchain Innovation Hub at RMIT University and chief investigator on the ARC Centre of Excellence for Automated Decision-Making and Society</p> <p><b><i>“Defining transformative innovation: How can it accelerate progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals?”</i></b></p>  |
| 10:35 – 12:00            | <p><b>Panel 1: “Transformative innovation: What enables, catalyses, and constrains it?”</b></p> <p><b>Moderator:</b> Dmitry Mariyasin, Deputy Executive Secretary, UNECE</p> <p><b>Panelists:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ms. Signe Ratso, Acting Director-General, Directorate-General for Research and Innovation, European Commission</li> <li>Mr. Sagi Dagan, VP and Head of Strategy, Israel Innovation Authority</li> <li>Ms. Katarina Krecheva, Head of Strategic Planning, State Fund for Innovation and Technological Development, North Macedonia</li> <li>Mr. James Phipps, Deputy Director, Innovation Growth Lab, Nesta</li> <li>Mr. Clovis Freire Junior, Chief of the Technology and Innovation Policy Research section, Division on Technology and Logistics, UNCTAD</li> </ul> <p><b>Questions for discussion:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>How is transformative innovation defined?</li> <li>How can the innovation process promote transformative innovations to solve our global challenges?</li> <li>How can efforts in different areas be coordinated to have a transformative effect, in order to best take advantage of the innovation commons?</li> <li>What has been the experience of authorities at different governance levels?</li> </ul> <p><b>Q &amp; A, then wrap-up by moderator</b></p> |
| 12:00 – 15:00            | <b>Lunch break</b>   |

15:00 – 16:00

**Panel 2: “Rethinking innovation policy: the imperative of innovation in governance”**

**Moderator:** Ms. Elisabeth Türk, Director, UNECE Economic Cooperation and Trade Division

**Panelists:**

- Prof. William Bonvillian, Lecturer at the MIT and Senior Director, Special Projects, at MIT's Office of Digital Learning
- Ms. Luciana Vaccaro, Vice President of Innosuisse and Rector of University of Applied Sciences and Arts of Western Switzerland
- Mr. Johan Englund, Director, Directorate of Public Administration and Financial Management, Norwegian Agency for Public and Financial Management
- Ms. Ani Vashakmadze, Head of Donor Relations and International Relations Department, Georgia's Innovation and Technology Agency
- Mr. Philippe Larrue, Policy Analyst, Directorate for Science, Technology and Industry, OECD

**Questions for discussion:**

- How can innovation policy create opportunities for transformative innovation out of gaps, needs and challenges?
- Which institutions are needed to translate these gaps, needs and challenges into innovation opportunities?
- How can policymakers ensure the agility needed to ensure continued experimentation, even in the face of failed experiments?
- How can the experience of countries that have successfully encouraged transformative innovation be replicated elsewhere?

**Q & A**

**Wrap-up by moderator**

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|-----------------------------|---|
| <p><b>16:00 – 17:00</b></p> | <p><b>Launch session of the UN-ECE Transformative Innovation Network (ETIN)</b></p> <p><b>Moderator:</b> <i>Mr. Mikael Román, coordinator, UN-ECE Transformative Innovation Network (ETIN)</i></p> <p><b>Speakers:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• H.E. Nele Leosk, Ambassador-at-Large for Digital Affairs, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Estonia</li> <li>• Mr. Marco-Alexander Breit, Deputy Director-General for Artificial Intelligence, Data and Digital Technologies, German Federal Ministry for Economic Affairs and Climate Action</li> <li>• Mr. Rafael Laguna de la Vera, Founding Director, German Federal Agency for Disruptive Innovation</li> <li>• Mr. Kjell Håkan Närfelt, Chief Strategy Officer, VINNOVA</li> <li>• Ms. Mar Fernández-Méndez, Co-Founder, Seafields</li> </ul> <p><b>Questions for discussion:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What should be the principle aims and objectives of ETIN?</li> <li>• How can ETIN best complement and support existing actors in the innovation policy space?</li> <li>• What ETIN activities, planned and additional, are most important to support the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals?</li> </ul> <p><b>Q &amp; A</b></p> <p><b>Wrap-up by moderator</b></p> |
| <p><b>17:15 – 19:15</b></p> | <p><b>Networking cocktail</b></p> <p><b>Venue:</b> Reception area outside Room XVIII, E-building, Palais des Nations</p> <p><b>Welcome remarks:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ms. Olga Algayerova, Executive Secretary, UNECE</li> <li>• H.E. Katharina Stasch, Permanent Representative of Germany to the United Nations in Geneva</li> </ul>   |

## TUESDAY, 15 NOVEMBER 2022

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|----------------------|---|
| <b>08:00 – 09:45</b> | <p><b>Regional Policy Dialogue: <i>Sustainable and Innovation-Enhancing Public Procurement to Support the Circular Economy Transition in the UNECE Region</i></b></p> <p>This meeting is organized under the 13<sup>th</sup> tranche UNDA project on “Accelerating the transition towards the circular economy in the UNECE region”.</p> <p><b>Location:</b> In-person at Room H307, Palais des Nations or on-line on Zoom</p> <p>Event webpage: <a href="https://unece.org/info/events/event/371905">https://unece.org/info/events/event/371905</a></p> <p>Register <a href="#">here</a> for access</p>  |
| <b>10:00 – 11:00</b> | <p><b>Panel 4: “<i>Transformative innovation and energy</i>”</b></p> <p><b>Moderator:</b> <i>Mr. Mikael Román, coordinator, UN-ECE Transformative Innovation Network (ETIN)</i></p> <p><b>Speakers:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Mr. Christoph Beuttler, Chief Climate Policy Officer, Climeworks (TBC)</li><li>• Ms. Alena Fargere, Principal, SWEN Capital Partners</li><li>• Mr. Andrei Covatariu, Senior Expert, Energy Policy Group</li><li>• Ms. Els de Wit, Chair, UNECE Working Party on Transport Trends and Economics</li><li>• Presentation of the <a href="#">UNECE Carbon Neutrality Toolkit</a> by Ms. Denise Mulholland, Secretary of the UNECE Committee on Sustainable Energy</li></ul> <p><b>Questions for discussion:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• What innovative approaches are being pioneered to transform the energy sector?</li><li>• What challenges do innovators face in the energy sector?</li><li>• What role for regulations in enabling transformative innovation?</li><li>• What are the prospects and conditions in scaling innovative approaches, including across borders?</li></ul> <p><b>Q &amp; A</b></p> <p><b>Wrap-up by moderator</b></p> |

**Further Information:**

[Meeting website](#)

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