

**UNECE**

**17<sup>th</sup> session**

**Committee on Innovation, Competitiveness  
and Public-Private Partnerships**

24-26 June 2024

Palais des Nations | Geneva



17<sup>th</sup> session

# Committee on Innovation, Competitiveness and Public-Private Partnerships

24-26 JUNE 2024 | ROOM V | PALAIS DES NATIONS | GENEVA

## Seventeenth session of the Committee on Innovation, Competitiveness and Public-Private Partnerships

### Preliminary Programme<sup>1</sup>

Monday, 24 June 2024

10:00 – 10:15

#### OPENING

**Ms. Tatiana Molcean**, Executive Secretary, United Nations Economic Commission for Europe

**Mr. George Katapodis**, Chair, UNECE Committee on Innovation, Competitiveness and PPPs

10:15 – 10:30

#### 1. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

#### 2. ELECTION OF OFFICERS

#### A. GENERAL SEGMENT

#### 3. IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PROGRAMME OF WORK

10:30 – 11:45

#### 3.A TEAM OF SPECIALISTS ON INNOVATION AND COMPETITIVENESS POLICIES

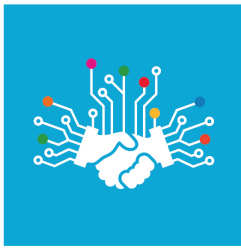
##### TRANSFORMATIVE INNOVATION POLICIES – CHALLENGES AND PROSPECTS

Transformative innovation, i.e. innovations in many fields that complement each other in cumulatively moving the needle on sustainability transitions, will be central to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The UN-ECE Transformative Innovation Network (ETIN) serves as a platform to support peer learning on transformative innovation policies. This panel discusses some of the early results of this work.

Discussions will be guided by the policy document [Digital and green transformations: exploring the strategic dynamics of experimenting and learning \(ECE/CECI/2024/3\)](#) developed as a result of the 2023 session of the Team of Specialists on Innovation and Competitiveness Policies.

- ECE secretariat

<sup>1</sup> Speakers are listed alphabetically by member States (first) and organizations they represent.



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- **Ms. Kirsi Hanhisalo**, Senior Lead, SITRA, Finland
- **Mr. Jakob Lindvall**, CEO, ALDAB Innovation and DigitalWell Arena

### INNOVATION FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IN THE UNECE REGION – PROGRESS ON POLICY REFORMS

The Committee is supporting the implementation of innovation policy reforms in pursuit of the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda in the UNECE seventeen programme countries. The work includes assessments, recommendations and capacity building projects to address key bottlenecks for successful innovation, such as weak industry-science linkages, lacking capacity for innovation-enhancing procurement or unexploited opportunities for diaspora engagement. This panel reviews the impact this work is having on the ground.

- **ECE Secretariat**
- **Ms. Tatevik Soghomonyan**, Head of Market Development Department, Ministry of High-Tech Industry of the Republic of Armenia
- **Ms. Annie Vakashmadze**, Head of International Relations, Innovation and Technology Agency, Georgia
- **Mr. Igor Yegorov**, Professor, National Academy of Sciences, Ukraine
- **Mr. Bunyod Rahmatullayev**, Deputy Director-General, National Office of Innovation and Technology, Uzbekistan
- **Ms. Tania Tam**, Monitoring and Evaluation Advisor - USAID - Office of Transition Initiatives (OTI)

Q&A

11:45 – 13:00

### 3.B WORKING PARTY ON PUBLIC-PRIVATE PARTNERSHIPS

#### THE IMPACT OF THE PPP ACTIVITIES SINCE THE SIXTEENTH SESSION OF THE COMMITTEE

In this panel, policy makers, leaders of national PPP units, business leaders and infrastructure project developers will review the progress on the Committee's upcoming guidelines and standards in areas such as green and sustainable PPP procurement; digital transformation in PPPs for sustainable development; sustainable finance; gender equality and women empowerment; stakeholder engagement; off-grid renewable energy; small-scale PPPs; and climate resilient infrastructure. They will also discuss the impact of capacity building activities supporting requesting Governments in self-assessing PPP and infrastructure projects using the UNECE PPP and Infrastructure Evaluation and Rating System (PIERS).

- **ECE secretariat**
- **Ms. Turkan Vusat**, Head of PPP Division, Ministry of Economy, Azerbaijan



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- **Mr. Ulan Danilbekov**, Deputy Director, PPP Center, Kyrgyzstan
- **Mr. Mehmet Uzunkaya**, Senior Strategy and Budget Expert, Türkiye
- **Ms. Doris Chevalier**, CEO, Infraboost
- **Mr. David Dodd, President**, International Sustainable Resilience Center
- **Mr. Steven Van Garse**, Vice-Dean, University of Hasselt, Belgium

13:00 – 15:00

### LUNCH BREAK

15:00 – 16:00

#### 4. PROGRAMME OF WORK FOR 2025, INTERSESSIONAL IMPLEMENTATION PLAN FOR 2024-2025, AND RECOMMENDATIONS ON KEY COMPONENTS OF THE PROGRAMME OF WORK FOR 2026

##### BILATERAL AND SUB-REGIONAL COOPERATION OPPORTUNITIES

Building on the results of the Committee's analytical and capacity building work, this panel will identify priority areas for new initiatives and follow-up work to sustain existing efforts. It will also identify needs and opportunities for fundraising.

- **ECE secretariat**
- **Ms. Turkan Vusat**, Head of PPP Division, Ministry of Economy, Azerbaijan
- **Mr. Ulan Danilbekov**, Deputy Director, PPP Center, Kyrgyzstan
- **Ms. Bojana Femic-Radosavovic**, Executive Director, Innovation Fund, Montenegro
- **Mr. Igor Yegorov**, National Academy of Sciences, Ukraine

16:00 – 17:40

#### 5. AREAS OF COMMON INTEREST WITH OTHER ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR EUROPE BODIES AND INTERNATIONAL ORGANISATIONS

- **Mr. Mario Cervantes**, Secretary, Committee on Scientific and Technological Policies, Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD)
- **Mr. Dimo Calovski**, Economic Affairs Officer, United Nations Trade and Development (UNCTAD)
- **Mr. Dario Liguti**, Director, Sustainable Energy Division, ECE
- Representatives of the UNECE divisions on Environmental Policy, and Trade

17:40 – 17:50

#### 6. FOLLOW-UP TO THE EVALUATION OF THE ECONOMIC COOPERATION AND INTEGRATION SUBPROGRAMME AND THE TRADE SUBPROGRAMME BY THE OFFICE OF INTERNAL OVERSIGHT

In 2022, the United Nations Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS) evaluated the relevance, effectiveness, coherence, sustainability, and integration of cross-cutting issues in subprogramme 4: Economic Cooperation and Integration, and subprogramme 6: Trade of UNECE for the period 2018-2021. The evaluation was part of the United Nations secretariat's regular program



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periodically evaluating selected aspects of its operations. This segment will discuss the progress of implementing the recommendations of the evaluation as they pertain to subprogramme 4.

17:50 – 18:00

7. OTHER BUSINESS

8. MODALITIES FOR THE ADOPTION OF THE REPORT OF THE 17<sup>TH</sup> SESSION

Tuesday, 25 June 2024

10:00 – 13:00

B. SUBSTANTIVE SEGMENT

9. INTERNATIONAL POLICY DIALOGUE

OPENING

Mr. George Katapodis, Chair, ECE Committee on Innovation, Competitiveness and PPPs

9.A ACCELERATING PROGRESS TOWARDS THE SDGS: THE ROLE OF INNOVATION AND PPPS

The 2024 UNECE SDG Progress Report found that the UNECE region is on track to achieve only 20 of the SDG targets by 2030, down from 21 and 26 in 2023 and 2022, respectively, with 80 requiring accelerations, and 17 requiring a reversal of trend. The 2024 Regional Forum on Sustainable Development for the UNECE Region has called on member States to increase momentum for the SDGs and to take strong messages forward to the High-level Political Forum in July 2024 and the Summit of the Future in September 2024 to underscore the UNECE region's role as a global champion of sustainable development.

The policy dialogue will discuss policy options to strengthen science, technology and innovation and sustainable finance, including PPPs, to accelerate key transitions and advance cooperation towards the SDGs in the region, focusing in particular on climate action and resilient infrastructure.

Moderator: Elisabeth Türk, Director, Economic Cooperation and Trade Division, ECE

Panellists:

- Ms. Katarzyna Balucka-Debska, Senior Policy & EU Affairs Advisor, Climate KIC
- Mr. Steven Van Garsse, Vice-Dean, University of Hasselt, Belgium

Q&A



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### CHANGING THE GAME: TRANSFORMATIVE INNOVATION POLICIES FOR CLIMATE ACTION

At the SDG Summit 2023, the countries of the world have committed to accelerating climate action and to building resilient and sustainable infrastructure. They have also committed to increasing funding for SDG-related innovation in all regions. The UN Summit of the Future later this year is expected to adopt a new Pact for the Future which inter alia renews the commitment to combat climate change and to adapt to its impact, and which calls for supporting private sector investment in science, technology and innovation, and deepening public-private partnerships.

In this panel, policy makers and leading change makers from the business community explore how to act on these commitments. They will showcase real world examples of truly transformative innovations that drive climate action, net zero transitions and resilience in key sectors, such as transport and energy. Key questions for discussion include: Why have science, technology and innovation not led to faster progress to the net zero transition and climate change adaptation? What new approaches are necessary to achieve breakthroughs? What can policy makers do to accelerate the transition?

Moderator: , ECE

Panelists:

- **Ms. Tatevik Soghomonyan**, Head, Market Development Department, Ministry of High-Tech Industry of the Republic of Armenia
- **Ms. Bojana Femic-Radosavovic**, Executive Director, Innovation Fund, Montenegro
- **Mr. Tim Forslund**, Circular Economy Specialist, Sitra, Finland
- **Mr. Bunyod Rahmatullayev**, Deputy Director-General, National Office of Innovation and Technology, Uzbekistan
- **Mr. Florian Linke**, Director, Institute of Air Transport, Germany
- **Mr. Mario Cervantes**, Secretary, Committee on Scientific and Technological Policies, Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD)

Q&A

### SMARTER NOT HARDER? OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES OF ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE IN SOLVING CLIMATE CHANGE

Recent breakthroughs in Artificial Intelligence (AI) hold the promise of dramatically increasing the productivity and hence pace of research, science, technology and innovation in all areas, including climate action. AI holds particular promise as a tool to cope with the complexities of driving sustainability transitions, of interpreting vast amounts of data, of modelling the responses of complex socio-economic systems, such as transport or the built environment, to possible policy changes, and of informing foresight exercises.

At the same time, many applications of AI today have large energy and environmental footprints. As these applications grow exponentially, they risk creating large new demands on energy supply and distribution. They also pose significant new challenges for data security, data privacy, data



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access and ownership, and ensuring that AI is used for the common good. In this panel, leading experts and policy makers explore this tension and how to resolve it by drawing on cutting edge use cases from the ECE region. Key questions for discussion include: How can AI accelerate breakthrough innovations for climate change mitigation and adaptation? How can innovation reduce the footprint of AI itself? What can policy makers do to support this process?

Moderator:

Panellists:

- **Mr. Amane Dannouni**, Managing Director and Partner, Boston Consulting Group
- **Mr. Ashutosh Chadha**, Senior Director, UN Affairs and International Organisations, Microsoft
- **Ms. Lucy Yu**, CEO, Centre for Net Zero, Octopus Energy
- **Ms. Devorah West**, Senior Policy Advisor, Climate and Energy, Tony Blair Institute, United Kingdom

13:00 – 15:00

LUNCH BREAK

15:00 – 18:00

### 9.A ACCELERATING PROGRESS TOWARDS THE SDGS: THE ROLE OF INNOVATION AND PPPS (continued)

#### INTEGRATING CLIMATE RESILIENCE INTO PPP AND INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECTS FOR CLIMATE ACTION

Climate change has accelerated beyond the direst predictions, besieging the planet with increasingly intense and frequent natural events such as floods and earthquakes. This escalating crisis necessitates urgent measures to better adapt, withstand, and recover from these adverse events. The need for PPPs to finance both the infrastructure gap and the integration of climate resilience and adaptation into projects is acute.

This panel will provide key insights on these topics, emphasizing the importance of pursuing this workstream. Key questions for discussion include: How can climate resilience be progressively integrated into PPP and infrastructure projects to support the SDGs? How can existing infrastructure be adapted to become climate resilient? What are the main areas that the new UNECE workstream on PPPs in climate resilience and adaptation would need to cover to address existing and future needs?

Moderator: **Mr. David Dodd**, President, ISRC

Panelists:

- **Mr. Moritz von der Wense**, Policy Officer, Federal Ministry of Finance, Germany
- **Ms. Eleni Bakoula**, Legal Counsel, Athens Urban Transport Organization, Greece
- **Mr. Ulan Danilbekov**, Deputy Director, PPP Center, Kyrgyzstan
- **Ms. Natascha Schmitt**, Lawyer, Federal Board of the Brazilian Bar Association





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- **Ms. Doris Chevalier**, CEO, Infraboost

Q&A

### GENERATIVE AI AND PPPS: OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES

The integration of Generative Artificial Intelligence (AI) at the development stage of PPPs presents distinct opportunities and challenges. Employing AI early in the process can significantly lower transaction costs and speed up the PPP lifecycle, offering a major boost in efficiency and effectiveness in support of the SDGs. However, these benefits must be weighed against the legal, ethical, and technical risks associated with deploying generative AI at this crucial stage.

This panel will critically examine the pros and cons of using generative AI in the early phases of PPPs, exploring its current utilization to predict infrastructure needs and generate documentation, and evaluating its broader potential. Key questions for discussion include: How are existing PPP projects benefiting from generative AI at the development stage? What potential does generative AI hold to lower transaction costs for governments and expedite the PPP process? What are the challenges of AI in PPPs and how can these be mitigated?

Moderator: **Mr. Tony Bonnici**, Chief, Cooperation and Partnerships Section, UNECE

Panelists:

- **Mr. Thibaut Mourgues**, Managing Partner, Camden Advisory
- **Mr. Jan van Schoonhoven**, International PPP expert, Netherlands (by video message)
- **Mr. Toufi Saliba**, CEO, Hypercycle AI
- **Mr. Frederic Werner**, Chief, Strategy and Operations AI for Good, ITU (tbc)
- **Ms. Ella Carey-Phillips**, Business Development Manager, KPMG
- **Mr. Ziad-Alexandre Hayek**, President, WAPPP

Q&A

18:00 – 19:30

RECEPTION

## Wednesday, 26 June 2024

10:00 – 13:00

### 9.B UNECE REGIONAL CONFERENCE ON THE CIRCULAR ECONOMY

See separate [programme](#)<sup>2</sup>

<sup>2</sup> This Conference is part of the Committee on Innovation, Competitiveness and Public-Private Partnerships (CICPPP) (agenda item 9, substantive segment (b) Accelerating the Circular Economy transition in the UNECE) and part of the Steering Committee on Trade Capacity and Standards (SCTCS) (agenda item 2, high-level substantive segment (a) Regional Conference on the Circular Economy). It is organized with support of the United Nations Development Account (UNDA) project on "Accelerating the Transition towards a Circular Economy in the UNECE region".





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## Registration:

<https://indico.un.org/e/ece/eci/cicppp17>

## Further Information:

[17th session of the Committee on Innovation, Competitiveness and Public-Private Partnerships | UNECE](#)

## Contact:

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