

Mathias Cormann starts term at OECD

Mathias Cormann was appointed as the Secretary-General of the OECD on 1 June 2021, for a five-year term.

Office of the Secretary-General

The Office of the Secretary-General provides support to the Secretary-General in the exercise of his functions and the fulfillment of his mandate, including the preparation of his daily activities, missions abroad and overall coordination of the work of the OECD Secretariat. The Office is led by the Chief of Staff. The Secretary-General is assisted in his function by OECD Deputy Secretaries-General.

A landmark step forward on tax

05/06/2021 – [OECD Secretary-General Mathias Cormann](#) welcomed today's groundbreaking [agreement by G7 Finance Ministers](#) on key elements of international tax reform designed to address the tax challenges of the digitalisation and the globalisation of the economy.

“Governments around the world need to be able to raise the necessary revenue to fund the essential public services and support that their populations require and expect, in a way that is efficient, least distorting and also fair and equitable”, said Mr. Cormann.

“The combined effect of the globalisation and the digitalisation of our economies has caused distortions and inequities which can only be effectively addressed through a multilaterally agreed solution.

“Today's consensus among the G7 Finance Ministers, including on a minimum level of global taxation, is a landmark step toward the global consensus necessary to [reform the international tax system](#).

“There is important work left to do. But this decision adds important momentum to the coming discussions among the 139 member countries and jurisdictions of the [OECD/G20 Inclusive Framework on BEPS](#), where we continue to seek a final agreement ensuring that multinational companies pay their fair share everywhere.”

Working with over 100 countries, the OECD is a global policy forum that promotes policies to improve the economic and social well-being of people around the world.

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OECD launches COVID travel blueprint

31/05/2021 – OECD Ministers have endorsed a new initiative to promote safe international travel during the COVID-19 pandemic at the OECD's annual Ministerial meeting in Paris.

The Initiative involves a safe travel blueprint and a temporary international cross-sectoral forum for knowledge sharing. The forum will allow governments and stakeholders to share information in real time on plans and approaches facilitating travel. The blueprint promotes greater certainty, safety and security in travel as reopening takes place. It builds on existing initiatives and aims to increase interoperability amongst travel regimes. It will be used by countries on a voluntary basis.

International air passenger transport dropped around 75% in 2020 and international tourism fell by around 80%. For the average OECD country, pre-pandemic, international tourism contributed 4.4% of GDP, 6.9% of employment, and 21.5% of service exports, but with much higher shares for some countries, including Greece, Iceland, Mexico, Portugal and Spain. The halt in international travel and tourism is having a dramatic knock-on impact on the entire, interlinked global economy.

“The OECD is in a unique position to help countries coordinate international action in the context of reopening global travel,” said OECD Secretary-General Angel Gurría at the Ministerial meeting in Paris. “This initiative will help reduce uncertainty and complexity and enable countries to prepare more effectively for a return to safe international travel and tourism.”

Without an international framework for travel policies, a patchwork of national and regional rules, inconsistent with each other, will continue to be confusing and costly for travellers and transport and tourism companies, discouraging travel due to the uncertainty and complexity. It could also increase the incidence of use of fraudulent certificates and so undermine the ability of authorities to mitigate public health risks.

The OECD Blueprint, initiated by Spain, supports and complements existing international initiatives, such as the European Union's proposed 'Digital COVID-19 Certificate', by taking a principles-based approach to ensuring that

they are compatible with each other, and adopted in a consistent way across a range of countries.

The Blueprint is a flexible and voluntary set of guidelines not a legal text. It consists of a traffic-light system to classify risks; guidance on how vaccination should be certified for travel to those countries that decide to take vaccination status into account; protocols for testing travellers in different circumstances; and principles to be followed in generating electronic certificates for travel that ensure privacy protection and security and promote interoperability among systems.

Countries that use the OECD Blueprint may do so unilaterally or in bilateral or multilateral agreements, or through mechanisms provided in other bodies, such as, in particular the ICAO Public Health Corridor arrangement.

Read the [document](#) and the [Q&A](#) for more information.

For more information, journalists should contact the [OECD Media Office](#) (tel. + 33 1 45 24 97 00).

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[Statement from OECD Secretary-General Mathias Cormann on the outcome of the G7 Finance Ministers' Meeting](#)

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[OECD: Costa Rica becomes the organisation’s 38th member country](#)

25/05/2021 – Today Costa Rica has formally become an OECD Member, the 38th country to do so in the Organisation’s 60-year history.

Costa Rica has now completed its domestic procedures for ratification of the OECD Convention and deposited its instrument of accession. This brings to a successful conclusion an accession process that began in April 2015.

OECD Member countries formally invited Costa Rica to join the Organisation in May 2020, following a five-year accession process during which it underwent in-depth technical reviews by 22 OECD Committees and introduced major reforms to align its legislation, policies and practices to OECD standards. These spanned a wide range of policy areas and included a comprehensive reform of competition policy and enforcement, a redesign of the national statistics system, the introduction of criminal liability of legal persons for foreign bribery and the establishment of a register of shareholders to ensure tax transparency.

Welcoming the news, OECD Secretary-General Angel Gurría said: “We are delighted to welcome Costa Rica into the OECD family at a time when multilateralism is more important than ever. We have been impressed that the cross-party commitment to OECD accession that we witnessed during the accession process continued into the ratification phase, despite the pandemic. This reflects the importance of working together for designing and implementing better policies, and Costa Rica will no doubt represent a new beacon for the OECD in the region,” Mr Gurría said.

Costa Rica's accession will extend the OECD's membership to 38 countries. It will be the fourth Member country from the Latin America and Caribbean region to join following Mexico, Chile and Colombia.

[Further information on Costa Rica's engagement with the OECD.](#)

Media requests should be directed to the [OECD Media Office](#) (+33 1 4524 9700)

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Note to Editors:

The Paris-based Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) is an international organisation that promotes policies to improve the economic and social well-being of people worldwide. It provides a forum in which governments can work together to share experiences and seek solutions to the economic, social and governance challenges they face.

The OECD's 38 members are: Austria, Australia, Belgium, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Japan, Korea, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Mexico, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Slovak Republic, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey, the United Kingdom and the United States.

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