

Third Ministerial Summit on Productivity

HARNESSING  
**THE DIGITAL  
TRANSFORMATION**  
TO BOOST PRODUCTIVITY  
IN LATIN AMERICA  
AND THE CARIBBEAN

Hotel  
Tequendama  
Bogota,  
Colombia

**25**  
October



EU Regional Facility for Development in Transition

OECD Latin America & the Caribbean  
Regional Programme



## CONTEXT

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The OECD Regional Programme was established in 2016 with the objective of supporting the region in achieving three objectives: increasing productivity, fostering social inclusion, and strengthening institutions. Together with the OECD Global Forum on Productivity, established in 2015 to foster international co-operation between public bodies with responsibility for promoting productivity-enhancing policies, periodic Ministerial Summits in LAC countries have been organised to exchange information and discuss best practices. In 2016, the first Productivity Ministerial on “[Boosting Productivity and Inclusive Growth in Latin America](#)” was hosted by Chile. The second Productivity Ministerial Summit took place in Costa Rica in 2018 under the theme “[Regional Trade Integration and Productivity](#)”. The third Productivity Ministerial Summit is organised by Colombia’s National Planning Department and the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) in partnership with the UN Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) the European Union, under the auspices of the EU Regional Facility for Development in Transition, the OECD Regional Programme for Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC), and the OECD Global Forum on Productivity. It will gather policy makers from OECD and LAC countries as well as representatives from international organisations to discuss and exchange experiences on how to harness the digital transformation to increase productivity and growth in Latin America and the Caribbean.

The Third Ministerial Summit on Productivity takes place against a background where slow and diverging productivity growth is a matter of concern in most Latin American and Caribbean countries. According to OECD indicators, trend labour productivity annual growth in five main LAC countries has declined from 2.2% in the decade preceding the global financial crisis to about 1.6% in 2018. This slowdown happened despite digital technologies being taken up rapidly with, in particular, the rapid diffusion of mobile broadband enabling more and more people to connect to digital networks. At the end of 2017, 391 million out of 628 million people in the LAC region were online, or some 62% of the population, up from just over 50% at the end of 2014. Yet the region still fails to use more advanced digital technologies in its business sector, which is vital to revive the region’s productivity growth and therefore facilitate stronger workers’ earnings and sounder public finances. Digital transformation therefore represents an opportunity for sustainable economic growth and shared prosperity. The Ministerial Summit will seek to engage participants in a discussion around some of the following questions:

*What are LAC countries doing to enhance access to technologies and reduce digital divides, including by age, education, gender, income, and geography? How are LAC countries bridging the gap of technology uptake between SMEs and big firms while at the same time fostering greater use and innovation of digital technologies? What are some of the regional initiatives countries have embarked on to cooperate on digital transformation policies and open their borders to e-commerce? How can LAC countries make the most of the digital transformation to address informality and low productivity? How can digital transformation support the integration of LAC countries in global value chains? How is the region advancing in critical aspects of digital economy policy such as data protection and cybersecurity in their quest to conform a more integrated digital market?*

*The aim is that these discussions provide relevant inputs to policy makers in the region in the design of their national strategies towards the digital transformation and in efforts to advance a regional digital agenda in the framework of eLAC.*

For questions, please contact [LACRegionalProgramme@oecd.org](mailto:LACRegionalProgramme@oecd.org)

## DRAFT AGENDA

### **Public session**

*Session open to the public and press. The format of the panels is Davos-style.*

**7:00 – 8:00**      **Registration and welcome coffee**

**8:00 – 9:00**      **Welcome remarks**

- **Iván Duque**, President of Colombia
- **Angel Gurría**, OECD Secretary-General
- **Alicia Bárcena**, Executive Secretary, ECLAC
- **EU Commission representative**

**9:00 – 10:00**      **Panel: Bridging Digital Divides**

*The ongoing digital transformation of the economy and society holds many promises to spur innovation, generate efficiencies, and improve services, and in doing so boost more inclusive and sustainable growth as well as enhance well-being. For example, Fintech offer the opportunity to deepen financial inclusion and foster entrepreneurship among groups left behind. Overcoming “supply side” (e.g. lack of broadband access, including at the regional level, competition) and “demand side” (e.g. income and skill levels, by gender) obstacles is important to fully reap the benefits of digital transformation for inclusive growth.*

**Moderator: Gabriela Ramos**, OECD Chief of Staff and Sherpa

- **Yehudi Castro**, Vice-Minister for Digital Economy, Colombia
- **LAC Minister**
- **International researcher**
- **EU country representative**

**10:00 – 11:00**      **Panel: Leveraging the digital transformation to boost productivity in a complex international setting**

*The path of the world economy is undergoing significant changes since the crisis, with smaller progress of investment, trade, globalisation and productivity, despite the fast digital transformation. In this challenging environment, how could Latin American and Caribbean countries make the best of economic reforms to embrace the potential offered by digital transformation, foster business dynamism and seize large economic gains?.*

**Moderator: Alvaro Pereira**, Director of the Country Studies Branch at the Economics Department of the OECD

- **Colombian minister**
- **Richard Martinez**, Minister of Economy, Ecuador\*
- **Private sector representative**
- **UN ECLAC representative**

## 11:00 – 12:00 Panel: National strategies, international cooperation and regional efforts towards an integrated digital market

*National development strategies are an essential step to provide a comprehensive and clear strategy to potentiate development. This session will discuss the role of digitalisation to design, adopt and implement national strategies in the region under the development in transition approach, which supposes LAC countries to build new capacities to overcome development traps and where international cooperation should play a role of facilitator in that context.*

**Moderator: Gloria Alonso**, Director General of the National Planning Department, Colombia

- **Mario Pezzini**, Director of the OECD Development Centre
- **Pelayo Rocés**, Programme Manager, Directorate-General for International Cooperation and Development, European Commission
- **UN-ECLAC representative**

## Ministerial Summit on Productivity

*This session is open only to registered government officials and invited international organisations. Participants will be seated in a round table. The Chair of each session will provide opening remarks and introduce the topic. Lead discussants will intervene from their seats and the floor will be open for discussion following their interventions.*

## 12:30 – 13:45 Ministerial opening

- Remarks by **Andreas Schaal**, Director for Global Relations, OECD and **Sylvia Constain\***, Minister of Information Technology and Communications, Colombia
- **Lunch**
- **Family photo** (Heads of delegations only)

## 14:00-15:30: Session 1 – Expanding access and diffusion of digital technologies: making SMEs a driver of productivity

*Digital transformation can only be fully realised if high quality access to communication networks and services is made available at affordable prices to all people, regions and firms. This involves investing in upgraded communication infrastructures that can address the increasing demand for data generated by the billions of devices coming online in the near future. Ensuring adequate access to communication infrastructures for all citizens and firms is essential for the realisation of the opportunities of digital transformation. At the same time, access is not enough and needs to be turned into effective use of digital technologies. Harnessing digital transformation requires policies that strengthen the diffusion of digital technologies and related practices and business models across the economy, notably to SMEs, that are at the greatest risk of being left behind. It also requires sufficient dynamism in the economy, thus enabling digitally-intensive firms to grow, access new markets, including abroad, and create new and better quality jobs.*

**Chair: Sylvia Constain**, Minister of Information Technology and Communications

**Lead discussants:**

- **Alejandro Peralta Vierci**, Minister of Information and Communication Technologies, Paraguay
- **OECD country representative**
- **UN-ECLAC representative**

Discussion amongst delegations (75 minutes)

## 15:30-17:00: Session 2 – Enabling innovation and experimentation while ensuring privacy and cybersecurity

*The economic and policy ramifications of the digital transformation are far-reaching, as it already shaping investment, trade, jobs and skills. It has unlocked new sources of potential growth and disrupted whole industries through the innovative use of data and technology. However, the innovations that take advantage of digital technologies often challenge existing policy and regulatory frameworks. Increasingly, there is a need for policy makers to mediate the tension between accomplishing the legitimate goals of regulation without disincentivising innovation, and potentially missing the benefits of the digital transformation. Regulatory sandboxes, for example, provide regulatory flexibility, and facilitate experimentation and testing of new business models, while venture capital can provide the needed financing.*

**Chair:** Gloria Alonso, Director General of the National Planning Department, Colombia

### Lead discussants:

- **Dirk Pilat**, OECD Deputy Director for Science, Technology and Innovation (5 minutes)
- **Andres Michelena**, Minister of Telecommunications, Ecuador (5 minutes)\*
- **EU country representative** (5 minutes)

Discussion amongst delegations (75 minutes)

## 17:00-18:30: Session 3 – Preparing for the future today: opportunities and challenges for LAC countries

*New digital technologies, such as artificial intelligence, the Internet of Things, and big data, will provide further opportunities for LAC countries to improve productivity and transform their economies and societies. However, these ongoing developments also raise new challenges. LAC countries will need to invest more in skills and improve access to education, as well as boost innovation and entrepreneurship, in order to create new jobs and help people adjust to the new opportunities. Individuals, business and governments will need to work together to develop the skills and capabilities that will enable LAC countries to enjoy the dividends of the digital transformation. The session will discuss the Development in Transition perspective and its contribution to addressing these challenges.*

**Chair:** Victor Muñoz, High Presidential Counsellor for Digital Transformation, Colombia

### Lead discussants:

- **Duayner Salas**, Vice-Minister of Foreign Trade, Costa Rica (5 minutes)
- **LAC minister** (5 minutes)
- **European Commission representative** (5 minutes)

Discussion amongst delegations (75 minutes)

## 18.30-19:00: Concluding remarks

*This session will aim to conclude and draw policy conclusions, noting the particularities that LAC countries face in advancing their digital economy and productivity agendas. It will also examine how the OECD can help address these issues and contribute with a concrete and actionable agenda for LAC countries that will enable them to leverage the digital transformation.*

- **Marta Lucia Ramírez**, Vice-President of Colombia
- **Gabriela Ramos**, OECD Chief of Staff and Sherpa
- **Co-Chairs of the LAC Regional Programme: Mexico and Brazil\***

\*To be confirmed