



International Policy Dialogue

Digital and green transformations

ROOM XXVI | PALAIS DES NATIONS | GENEVA | SWITZERLAND

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Wednesday
31 May 2023

10:30-12:00

Panel 1. **Digital and green transformations – the role of innovation and public-private partnerships**

The world is not on track to reach the Sustainable Development Goals by 2030. Accelerating progress becomes more urgent by the day. Incremental changes to the ways we consume and produce will no longer be enough. A green transformation is necessary in order to address climate change, arrest biodiversity losses, and overall reduce environmental pressures.

At the same time, a digital transformation is underway in the UNECE region. Albeit at varying speeds, the use of the internet, but also advanced digital technologies such as cloud computing, the internet of things, artificial intelligence and blockchain, are proliferating. This digital transformation can accelerate the green transformation, while also contributing to increased prosperity, for instance by enabling the “smart” management of critical infrastructure, or by enabling digital platforms that facilitate circular economy business models.

However, digital technologies also often have a sizeable environmental footprint. As the growth of the digital economy accelerates, “greening” the digital economy becomes increasingly important. It is therefore imperative to shape these twin transformations in line with the Sustainable Development Goals. This panel will discuss the role of innovation and infrastructure public-private partnerships in driving the twin transformations, and the role of policy in shaping the process.

Guiding questions

How do green and digital transformations interact? How can the digital transformation accelerate the green transformation? How can the digital economy be greened?

What is the role of partnerships, between government, the business sector, and civil society, in driving the twin transformations?

How are the twin transformations relevant to the PPP process?

How are they relevant to innovation processes?

What are the respective challenges?

Contact:

Ralph Heinrich

Secretary of the Committee on Innovation, Competitiveness and Public-Private Partnerships

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16th session
**Committee on Innovation, Competitiveness
and Public-Private Partnerships**
DIGITAL AND GREEN TRANSFORMATIONS
The role of innovation and public-private partnerships

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What is the role of international cooperation in shaping the twin transformations? How can the Committee on Innovation, Competitiveness and Public-Private Partnerships contribute?

Moderator: Ms. Stacy Sinclair, Partner, Fenwick Elliott LLP

Keynote: Ms Shahlo Turdikulova, First Deputy Minister of Innovative Development, Uzbekistan

Panelists (in alphabetical order):

Mr. Christophe Dossarps, CEO, Sustainable Infrastructure Foundation

Ms Clea Kaske-Kuck, Director Policy, World Business Council on Sustainable Development

Mr Jakob Lindvall, Compare Foundation and CEO Wide Ideas, Sweden

Mr Joao Mendes Borga, Executive Board Member Compete 2030, Portugal, and member, UN-ECE Transformative Innovation Network

Mr. Mehmet Uzunkaya, PPP Department, Presidency of the Republic of Türkiye

12:00-15:00

Lunch break

15:00-16:00

Panel 2. Implementing UNECE PPPs for the SDGs guidelines to promote the circular economy in countries

Developing policy documents is just a first step to good governance and sustainable infrastructure projects. The challenge is to ensure that policy documents are used and implemented in countries. The session will explore how three core policy documents developed in 2022 by the UNECE Economic Cooperation and Trade Division (ECTD) as a contribution to the cross-cutting theme of the 69th Commission session in 2021 on the circular economy, could be effectively implemented in countries and contribute to the circular economy agenda.

Guiding questions

What are the enablers driving implementation of the three documents on the circular economy?

What are the main challenges?

How can implementation be accelerated to ensure fast progress towards a circular economy?

Moderator: Ms. Elisabeth Türk, Director ECTD, UNECE

Panelists (in alphabetical order):

Mr. Konstantinos Aravossis, Secretary General for Forestry, Ministry of Environment and Energy, Greece

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16:00-17:00

Mr. Dilshod Sharifi, Head of the International Economic Department, Ministry of Economic Development and Trade, Tajikistan

Discussants:

Mr. Athanasios Bourtsalas, Lecturer, Columbia University

Ms. Doris Chevalier, CEO, Infraboost

Panel 3. PPPs in digital infrastructure: telemedicine and other digital public services

Access to key public services remains a challenge for millions of citizens in many countries. Digital technologies can enable access to key public services and accelerate PPP and infrastructure projects in support of the 2030 Agenda. The COVID-19 pandemic accelerated the pace of development of cutting-edge digital and ICT solutions across multiple industries. These advancements have facilitated sustained access to critical services, even amidst social distancing measures, and offered valuable lessons that can be applied to furthering the attainment of the SDGs. This panel will consider how the digitalization of public service provision can foster and accelerate sustainable and cost-effective solutions in projects, thereby enhancing access to public infrastructures and be consistent and aligned with the PPPs for the SDGs approach.

Guiding questions

How can the integration of digital tools in PPPs contribution to the green transformation and the circular economy transition?

In which sectors or sub-sectors has the incorporation of ICT technologies sparked significant change and evolution?

How can the UNECE PPPs for the SDGs approach assist governments take steps to further advance the development of digital PPP and infrastructure projects?

Moderator: Mr. Gabriele Pasquini, Director, Presidency of the Council of Ministers, Italy

Overview: Mr. Tony Bonnici, UNECE

Panelists (in alphabetical order):

Mr. Mark Halliday, Director PPP, Medtronic

Mr. Nasser Massoud, Managing Director, Concept Realisation

Ms. Tamara Sunbul, Medical Director, Clinical Informatics

Ms. Esen Tümer, CEO, Essential Evolutions

Thursday
1 June 2023

Panel 4. The role of innovation policy in driving the twin transformations



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Innovations in digitally enabled products, services and business models, including digital market places, are driving the digital economy. Digitalization has great potential to contribute to greening our economies in many ways. Inter-connected smart devices and big data analytics can save resources and reduce climate gas emissions by helping governments, firms and citizens to manage infrastructures, factories, buildings, and household appliances more efficiently. Digital platforms can facilitate the circular economy transition by more cheaply matching sellers of used goods with buyers and with businesses that repair or repurpose them. Blockchain technology can facilitate the tracing of raw materials and goods along international supply chains, thereby helping to create transparency and expand markets for sustainably produced goods.

But significant challenges remain around bridging digital divides within and across countries, aligning the incentives for innovations in the digital economy with the imperatives of green growth, and security, privacy and ethical concerns.

Even as these challenges are surmounted, the expansion of the digital economy itself risks putting additional pressures on the environment and natural resources, as some digital technologies are energy-intensive, others depend on rare critical raw materials, and yet others generate rapidly growing amounts of electronic waste. If the potential of the digital transformation for the green transformation is to be realized, innovation efforts will have to be directed also at reducing the environmental footprint of digital technologies themselves. This panel will discuss policy options to create favorable conditions for accelerating innovations that drive the twin transformations.

Guiding questions

How can innovative digital technologies and associated business models contribute to the green transformation and the circular economy transition? How can public policy catalyze and accelerate this process?

How can innovation contribute to reducing the environmental footprint of the digital economy? How can public policy incentivize the development and uptake of innovations that reduce e-waste, reduce greenhouse gas emissions from the digital economy, or reduce its dependence on rare critical raw materials?

How can digital technologies contribute to innovation in the design and implementation of public policies for the green transformation?

Which kind of eco-systems and partnerships are needed for innovation in support of the twin transformations and how can they be created?

Moderator: Annie Vakashmadze, Georgian Innovation and Technology Agency

Panelists (in alphabetical order):

Mr. Filippo Addarii, CEO PlusValue, Italy

Mr Andrei-Silviu Covatariu, Co-chair, UNECE Taskforce on the Digitalization in Energy

Ms. Bojana Femic Radosavovic, Executive Director, Innovation Fund, Montenegro

Mr. Angel Gonzalez Sanz, Chief, Science, Technology and ICT Branch, United Nations Conference on Trade and Development

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Mr. Ilias Iakovidis, Advisor, Digital Aspects of Green Transition, DG CNECT, European Commission

Ms Ljupka Mitrinowska, Co-founder and Global Programme Manager, Accelerate2030

Mr. Igor Yegorov, National Academy of Sciences, Ukraine

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