



## **Responsible business conduct & digitalisation**

Workshop - 4 November 2019

[OECD Conference Centre](#), Room CC4

### **Background**

Digitalisation has had a profound impact on the global business landscape. Rapid innovation and new products and services involving online platforms, social media, digital ledger technology, big data and artificial intelligence (AI) are creating new business models. These developments are changing the notion of “multinational enterprise” with the emergence of new forms of firms and industries, such as platform companies operating globally, many of which were “born global”. Digitalisation also has a significant impact on the workplace and can affect production and distribution, both positively and negatively. It has driven innovation in all sectors, but also contributed to the transformation and disruption of traditional industries, making it imperative for incumbents to acquire new digital competencies rapidly.

The implications of digitalisation for responsible business conduct (RBC) are manifold but three aspects seem particularly relevant: the notion of multinational enterprises, the conduct of due diligence and the specific roles and responsibilities of business and governments in a digital context. For example, new digital tools can accelerate development, and enable businesses to strengthen their efforts to act responsibly, in particular as it relates to responsible supply chain management (e.g. blockchain technology to manage supply chains, machine learning and analytics to track risk). At the same time, the digital transformation can also lead to business causing or contributing to human rights and other social and environmental harms in new ways (e.g. risk of bias and discrimination in the use of artificial intelligence, and human rights risks associated with surveillance technology and the misuse of online content platforms).

Within this context, governments are confronted with new opportunities and challenges while promoting the implementation of RBC standards, including the OECD Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises. National Contact Points have already seen an increase in specific instances dealing with the RBC implications of new technologies. The OECD’s Due Diligence Guidance for Responsible Business Conduct, which is applicable to all sectors of the economy, provides a general framework that can help companies structure their processes to identify and address these emerging risks and opportunities. How this works in practice for companies involved in the digital transformation is an area that may be further explored. At the OECD, governments have discussed the broader challenges of digitalisation in the framework of the [Going Digital](#) project, which involves numerous policy communities and stakeholders.

### **Objectives of the workshop**

The workshop is aimed at educating and building capacity of Adherents to the Declaration on International Investment and Multinational Enterprises (“Adherents”), on emerging digital technologies and the implications for RBC. Specifically, the workshop will introduce Adherents to emerging technologies and help understand their potential for doing good, as well as their actual and potential adverse impacts on people, the environment and society. Adherents will also learn about key international, industry or multi-stakeholder efforts underway or planned to address those risks. Delegates from the OECD Committee on Digital Economy Policy will be invited. Experts from business, workers, civil society and academics will participate as necessary to present and inform the debate. The workshop will aim to support the Working Party on Responsible Business Conduct in identifying strategic areas for any future work in this field.

## Draft agenda

Sessions will be interactive and seek to foster discussion with participants. Each session will start with a brief presentation by expert(s) to explain the basics of the technology and the key RBC issues and efforts underway, followed by a discussion among experts and participants.

9:30 – 9:45      **Welcome from Christine Kaufmann, Chair of the OECD Working Party on Responsible Business Conduct**

9:45 – 10:45      **Scene setting – the digital transformation & responsible business conduct**

This introductory session will provide an overview of responsible business impacts of digitalisation, focusing on how artificial intelligence, online platforms, social media and blockchain offer both promises and risks to RBC.

*Moderator: Cristina Tébar Less, Acting Head, Centre for Responsible Business Conduct, OECD*

- Impacts on Society: How can digitalisation affect society, and what action is business taking to maximise its positive impacts and mitigate its negative ones? (Speaker: Faris Natour, Co-Founder and Principal, Article One)
- 10 minute “Lightning Talks” on how digitalisation can pose opportunities and risks to society, and how business responds:
  - Lightning Talk: **Facial Recognition**. Presentation on the opportunities and risks of facial recognition and why companies are calling for regulation. (Speaker: Cornelia Kutterer, Senior Director, EU Government Affairs, Microsoft)
  - Lightning Talk: **Deepfakes**. “Don’t Panic, Prepare” presentation on Deepfake Technology. (Speaker: Sam Gregory, Programme Director, Witness)
- The intersection of digitalisation and RBC - reflections from key delegates & policy makers.

The session will close with a real-time survey.

10:45 – 11:15      *Coffee break*

11.15 – 12.45      **Artificial intelligence & responsible business conduct**

This session will outline key RBC risks related to artificial intelligence, including risks related to discrimination, privacy, job security related to automation, and use by authoritarian regimes. The session will begin with an overview of the technology and its ecosystem and before providing an overview of the key risks to RBC. The session will then proceed to case studies from civil society and business.

*Moderator: Chloe Poynton, Co-Founder and Principal, Article One*

- Introduction on artificial intelligence and its relevance for RBC (Speaker: Martijn Scheltema, Professor, Erasmus University).
- Expert views: the risks related to discrimination in algorithmic decision making and the response from civil society in the form of the [Toronto Declaration](#) (Speaker: Anna Bacciarelli, Advisor AI & Big Data, Amnesty International).

- Case Study: Ethical AI Principles – Overview of how an AI company is addressing the risks associated with AI – developing and implementing Ethical AI Principles. (Speaker: Cornelia Kutterer, Senior Director, EU Government Affairs, Microsoft).
- Introduction to international standards and efforts on AI and Ethics – the [OECD Principles on Artificial Intelligence](#) (Speaker: Dirk Pilat, Deputy Director, Directorate for Science, Technology and Innovation, OECD)

The session will close with a Q&A and moderated discussion with participants, including additional experts. A real-time survey will be used at the end to collect delegates views on priorities for future work.

12:45 – 13:45      *Lunch*

13:45 – 15:15      **Blockchain & responsible business conduct**

This session will outline key RBC risks and opportunities related to blockchain. The session will begin with an overview of the technology and will then proceed to case studies from civil society and business.

*Moderator: Faris Natour, Co-Founder and Principal, Article One*

- Introduction on blockchain & digital ledger technology for supply chain management (Speaker: Burkhard Stiller and Rolf H. Weber, Blockchain Centre University of Zurich)
- Presentation of OECD paper on the relevance of blockchain for supply chain due diligence (Speaker: Rashad Abelson, Policy Analyst, Centre for Responsible Business Conduct, OECD)
- Case Study: Tracing Indonesian nutmeg from tree to plate, using blockchain for traceability and verification of wage payments to farmers (Speaker: Marianne van Keep, Director of Sustainability, Verstegen Spices & Sauces B.V.)

The session will close with a Q&A and moderated discussion with participants, including additional experts. A real-time survey will be used at the end to collect delegates views on priorities for future work.

15:15 – 15:45      *Coffee break*

15:45 – 17:15      **Online platforms, social media & responsible business conduct**

This session will outline key RBC risks related to online platforms, including impacts on freedom expression, abusive content and human trafficking, micro-targeting and responsible marketing. The session will begin with an overview of the technology and key risks and then proceed to case studies from civil society and business. It will then address the rising societal expectations on online platforms and social media as they are for instance expressed in recent court decisions from different stakeholder perspectives.

*Moderator: Tyler Gillard, Head of Sector Projects, Centre for Responsible Business Conduct, OECD*

- New and emerging expectations on online platforms and social media – an overview of recent developments and relevance for RBC (Speaker: Chloe Poynton, Co-Founder and Principal, Article One)
- Case Study: Multi-stakeholder approaches to protecting free expression and privacy in online platforms and social media (Speaker: Jason Pielemeier, Policy Director, Global Network Initiative)

- Case Study: Content Moderation – *Facebook*. An overview of how Facebook approaches content moderation, balancing Freedom of Expression and User Safety. (Speaker Vittoria Federici, Stakeholder Engagement Manager, Product Policy, Facebook)
- Case study: Multi-stakeholder collaboration to address terrorist content online in the wake of the Christchurch terrorist attack. (Speaker: Flora Deverell, Research Analyst, Tech Against Terrorism)

The session will close with a Q&A and moderated discussion with participants, including additional experts. A real-time survey will be used at the end to collect delegates views on priorities for future work.

**17:15 – 18:00 Wrap up & key takeaways**

*Moderator: Christine Kaufmann, Chair of the Working Party on Responsible Business Conduct*

The closing session will start with 30 minutes of group work to reflect on the day and collect ideas and proposal. Rapporteurs from Adherent countries will be invited to lead the break out groups and report back during the 5 November meeting of the Working Party on Responsible Business Conduct.