



Joint *Business at OECD* (BIAC) - OECD

# SME and Entrepreneurship Stakeholder Dialogue

Managing Shocks and Transitions —  
Future-Proofing SME and Entrepreneurship Policies

## Event Program

**Monday, 26 June 2023**  
OECD Conference Centre, Paris



Joint *Business at OECD* (BIAC) - OECD  
**SME and Entrepreneurship  
Stakeholder Dialogue**

**Managing Shocks and Transitions –  
Future-Proofing SME and Entrepreneurship Policies**

Monday, 26 June 2023 | OECD Conference Centre, Paris

**13:30 - 14:00 Registration**

**14:00 - 14:10 Welcome and opening remarks**

Yoshiki Takeuchi, OECD Deputy Secretary-General

Hanni Rosenbaum, Business at OECD (BIAC) Executive Director

**14:10 - 14:15 Setting the Scene**

Patrik Kovacs, Chair of *Business at OECD* (BIAC) SMEs and  
Entrepreneurship Committee

**14:15 - 15:15 Panel 1**

Navigating the rapidly changing business climate and building the  
resilience of SMEs and entrepreneurs

**15:15 - 15:40 Coffee Break**

**15:40 - 16:40 Panel 2**

Mobilizing SMEs and entrepreneurs in the green and digital  
transformations

**16:40 - 17:40 Panel 3**

The well-being of SMEs and entrepreneurs

**17:40 - 18:00 Concluding session**

Hon Ginny Andersen, Minister of Small Business, New Zealand

***To be followed by a cocktail reception at the OECD***

# Event Moderators



**Céline Kauffmann**

Head of the OECD  
Entrepreneurship, SME and  
Tourism Division

**Dr. Céline Kauffmann** started her career at the OECD in 2000. She joined the OECD Centre for Entrepreneurship, SMEs, Regions and Cities in September 2020, where she heads the Division on Entrepreneurship, SME and Tourism. She was previously Deputy Head of the Regulatory Policy Division in the OECD Directorate for Public Governance, where she led the development of the Regulatory Policy Outlook, as well as the work on international regulatory co-operation and on regulation and innovation. Before that, she was with the Investment Division of the OECD Directorate for Financial and Enterprises Affairs, responsible for the work on private sector participation in infrastructure and on green investment.

Prior to that, she was responsible for coordinating the OECD work on the annual African Development Bank / OECD African Economic Outlook Report. Before the OECD, Céline Kauffmann contributed to the 2000 Transition Report of the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development and worked at the London School of Economics as research assistant. Dr. Kauffmann holds a PhD in Economics from the Université Paris I, Panthéon-Sorbonne.



**Martina Le Gall Maláková**

Managing Director, Elektrik, and  
Vice-Chair of *Business at OECD*  
SMEs and Entrepreneurship  
Committee

**Mrs. Martina Le Gall Maláková** has extensive international experience in the creation and implementation of both national and international innovation policies. In her career, Martina Le Gall Maláková has supported the innovation ecosystem through the transfer of knowledge from research, development, and innovation into practice which supports Slovak talents and innovators. She is the co-founder of the Industrial Innovation Cluster, which supports joint international projects involving research in universities, practice, policy makers and the public. In 2021, together with MIRRI, IIC established the Gaia-X Hub Slovakia, which is part of the Gaia-X initiative, supported by the European Commission. Gaia - X increases the benefits of the European data economy for society based on openness, trust and security. Gaia - X is a member of the Working Group for International Cooperation, Research Infrastructures and EOSC, the Council for European Science Policy at the Ministry of Education and Culture of the Slovak Republic.

At *Business at OECD* (BIAC), Martina Le Gall Maláková participates in three committees: Committee for Digital Policies in the Economy (CDEP), for SMEs as a Vice Chair of the Committee and Education. She represents BUSINESS EUROPE (BE) in the Cyber Certification Group (SCCG) established by EC and ENISA to prepare certification schemes for digital technologies. In BE, she is an active member of the Digital Committee and the Internal Market Committee (IMCO). Martina Le Gall Maláková is a member of the Permanent Commission for Ethics and Regulation of Artificial Intelligence in Slovakia (CERAI), established by MIRRI. She is a member of the EIT Manufacturing East Advisory Board, where she advises with her expertise on strategies to strengthen European industry, built on innovation and cooperation between universities, businesses, and start-ups. This year she became the advisor to State Secretary of Ministry of economy on data economy.

**Ms. Kamal-Chaoui**, a key member of the OECD Executive Leadership team, supports the Secretary-General in achieving the OECD’s mission to advance economic growth and social progress as well as contributing to other global agendas such as the G20 and G7, the Paris Agreement on Climate Change and the implementation of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Supported by a team of over 160 staff members, Ms. Kamal-Chaoui leads the Centre’s work to advance the OECD mission of “better policies for better lives” by ensuring that all people, all types of places and businesses of all sizes can prosper from green and digital transitions (read the Centre’s brochure and dedicated blog for more details). This includes work in the fields of: SME and entrepreneurship policy; Regional, urban and rural development; Local employment and economic development (LEED programme); Subnational statistics; social economy; Multi-level governance, local finance and decentralisation; Tourism and Culture. Prior to being Director, Ms. Kamal-Chaoui has held several senior positions at the OECD since 1998. From 2012 to 2016, she served as Senior Advisor to the OECD Secretary-General. In this role, she supported the Secretary-General’s strategic agenda and led the OECD Inclusive Growth Initiative, the Knowledge-Sharing Alliance programme, the development of the Global Deal and the implementation of the OECD Strategy on Development. From 2003 to 2012, she was Head of the Urban Programme in the OECD Directorate for Public Governance and Territorial Development. Previously, she also worked in the OECD Trade Directorate and the OECD Directorate for Financial and Enterprise Affairs.



**Lamia  
Kamal-Chaoui**

Director of OECD Centre for  
Entrepreneurship, SMEs, Regions  
and Cities

Before joining the OECD, Ms. Kamal-Chaoui worked for a university-based research institute as well as several media outlets. During her extensive career at the OECD, she has spearheaded several ground-breaking, multi-stakeholder OECD initiatives including the Roundtable for Mayors and Ministers, the Champion Mayors for Inclusive Growth Coalition, the Digital for SMEs (D4SMEs), and the StandbyYouth Initiative. She has also authored, co-authored, and overseen hundreds of policy reports and articles, and forged numerous strategic partnerships and collaborations with companies and international institutions. They include major philanthropic organisations (e.g. Ford Foundation, Bloomberg Philanthropies, Rockefeller Foundation, Kauffmann foundation, MacArthur Foundation, Open Society Foundations) as well as other prominent organisations (e.g. Vatican Pontifical Council of Justice and Peace, Club of Madrid), international civic organisations (e.g. Youth Forum, Ashoka Global) and multilateral institutions (e.g. World Bank, IADB, ADB, EBRD, European Commission, UN Habitat, APEC). She has also partnered with the private sector, including large corporations (e.g. Facebook, Amazon, Kakao, Microsoft, Vodafone) and business associations (e.g. International Chamber of Commerce (ICC), B4IG, SMEUnited).

Ms. Kamal-Chaoui has been a member of several International Committees and Advisory Boards (e.g. Lancet Green Recovery Task Force on COVID 19 recovery, C40 Women for Climate, UNWTO COVID-19 Crisis Group, World Economic Forum Deputy Board of Trustees, Vatican Expert Group on Inclusive Globalisation, Club of Madrid’s Shared Societies, Shanghai World Expo, Michael Bloomberg Mayors Challenge for Europe, Mayor of Paris Anne Hidalgo’s Strategic Committee). She has also been a lecturer at Sciences Po Paris for the “Governing Large Metropolis” Master’s Programme. Ms. Kamal-Chaoui is a French and Moroccan national. She holds a Master’s Degree in Macroeconomics from the University of Paris Dauphine and a Master’s Degree in Foreign Languages and History from the University of Paris Diderot. She recently received the “Women of the Decade in Enterprise and Leadership” award of the Women’s Economic Forum.

# Welcome & opening remarks

14:00 - 14:10



**Yoshiki  
Takeuchi**

OECD Deputy Secretary-General

**Mr. Yoshiki Takeuchi** was appointed Deputy Secretary-General in November 2021. His portfolio includes the strategic direction of the OECD policy on Tax, Financial and Enterprise Affairs along with the Centre for Entrepreneurship, SMEs, Regions and Cities. He also represents the OECD at the Financial Stability Board and guides OECD work with the Asia-Pacific region. Mr. Takeuchi has had a distinguished career over nearly four decades at the Japanese Ministry of Finance. Prior to joining the OECD, he served as Special Advisor to Japan's Minister of Finance. He was Vice-Minister for International Affairs (2019-2020), Director-General of the International Bureau (2016-2019) and has held other senior positions including as Deputy Minister in many international fora such as G7, G20, IDA and International Monetary and Finance Committee. Mr. Takeuchi has a wealth of experience in the field of international economy and finance. He worked closely with international organisations including the IMF, the World Bank, the Asian Development Bank and other regional development institutions. He also led Japan's G20 Presidency finance team with a particular focus on digital taxation, quality infrastructure investment, capital flow management and global imbalances. Mr. Takeuchi holds a B.A. in Law from University of Tokyo, a MPhil in Economics from University of Oxford and conducted research at Chatham House.



**Hanni  
Rosenbaum**

Executive Director  
*Business at OECD (BIAC)*

**Hanni Rosenbaum** is the Executive Director of *Business at OECD (BIAC)*. In this role, she leads our business diplomacy efforts with the OECD and its members, guides the strategy and policy engagement of our Paris-based office, and ensures we adequately reflect the views of our national member organizations in our communications with the OECD and stakeholders. She works together with our Executive Board to drive our mission forward and oversees our budget. She previously worked at the Nürburgring/Circuits International in Germany, the European Parliament in Brussels, and Brussels-based global recycling industry association, BIR. She holds advanced degrees in French and English, in applied economic sciences from the Hautes Etudes Commerciales in Brussels and in international relations from the Centre for Diplomatic and Strategic Studies in Paris. She joined *Business at OECD* in 1997 and held positions of increasing responsibility. She is fully fluent in English, French and German, and speaks Russian. She also has a black belt in karate and is involved in community projects teaching French for foreigners.

# Setting the scene

14:10 - 14:15

**Patrik Kovacs** is an international businessman, investor and economic diplomat, who is globally active in international business development and policy affairs. Among his investments one of his main business activity is to globally develop, sell, build and buy companies. He is Co-President of the Hungarian National Employers Organization (VOSZ) which represents 46% of the Hungarian GDP and the founder and President of the Young Entrepreneurs Association of Hungary, which has contributed to the creation of more than 4.14% of all the Hungarian companies in year 2014. In this process with his organization, he has contributed to create 1322 companies in the past 5 years. He is one of the most appreciated and demanded expert in the field of youth entrepreneurship development and governmental policies related, hence he has drafted and advised adoption on many successful programs applicable for implementation on national, EU and global level. As Honorary President at the largest Young Entrepreneurs Organization of the European Union (JEUNE), he is actively building bridges between young businessmen of Europe and rest of the world. Patrik is member of several boards of international business organizations with active involvement in World Economic Forum, United Nations ILO, EuCham and European Commission, as well as member of the Business20 (B20) Digitalization Taskforce. In 2018 he became the Vice-President and since 2020 he is the President of the SME and Entrepreneurship Committee of *Business at OECD* (the Business and Industry Advisory Committee of OECD), where he supports the work to create better economic policies for OECD governments and countries, which represent 65% of global GDP.



**Patrik Kovacs**

Chair of *Business at OECD* (BIAC)  
SMEs and Entrepreneurship  
Committee

**1 in 2** SME owners and entrepreneurs identify **market uncertainty** as their biggest barrier in returning to pre-COVID business operation levels.

## Panel 1 | 14:15 - 15:15

### Navigating the rapidly changing business climate and building the resilience of SMEs and entrepreneurs



**H. E. Mr. Ewon  
Benedick**

Minister of Entrepreneur and  
Cooperatives Development,  
Malaysia

**Mr. Ewon Benedick** (born 1 August 1983) currently serves as the Minister of Entrepreneur and Cooperatives Development (MECD), since December 2022. Prior to serving at the federal level, he was the State Minister of Rural Development of Sabah from May 2018 to September 2020. He is presently the youngest member of the Cabinet.

Combining his sound experience with passionate leadership, MECD under his stewardship will continue to create a holistic and conducive entrepreneurial ecosystem to support Malaysia's inclusive, sustainable, and competitive development agenda. This includes a focus on uplifting marginalised communities, including cultivating entrepreneurship amongst the youth, women, the B40 community, people with disabilities, rural and remote populations, minorities, and local communities.

He received his Bachelor in Computer Science (Software Development) from the Malacca Technical University of Malaysia (UteM) in 2005.



**Fabrice  
Le Saché**

Chair of BusinessEurope  
Entrepreneurship & SME Committee

**Fabrice Le Saché** is Aera's Co-Founder and Executive Chairman, the leading carbon finance group operating in Africa. He structured and closed spot and forward carbon credits contracts for a total market value of €500+ million. He established Aera's commercial presence in 20+ African countries (Côte d'Ivoire, DR-Congo, Ghana, Senegal, Uganda, Mauritius, Burundi, Morocco...) and trading lines with 150+ counterparties including world leading oil & gas companies, banks, commodity traders and investment firms in Europe, North America & Asia. Beyond Aera, Fabrice serves several non-for-profit positions. He is Vice-Chair and spokesperson for the largest French Business Union Association ("Mouvement des Entreprises de France – MEDEF"). He is member of MEDEF national Executive Committee. Other related mandates include: Board Member of "MEDEFI" the international branch of MEDEF; Chair of the SME & Entrepreneurship Committee of Business Europe, the largest European Business Union; Chair of Immobilière 3F, the leading social housing entity in France covering 300,000 workers & households.

Fabrice holds a LL.M. in International Comparative Laws from the University of San Diego School of Law, a master's degree in international public law from Paris-II Panthéon-Assas and a Diploma in International Relations from the Institute for Higher International Studies of Paris La Sorbonne University.



**Kelly Culver** is an entrepreneur, founder and director, strategist, coach, and doctoral candidate. She is CEO of The Culver Group Inc and Chair of iIMPACT uIMPACT Innovation Foundation. She helps CEOs, leaders and entrepreneurs build resilience to strategically navigate rapidly changing business environments and generate innovative and purposeful solutions to global challenges.

She has over 25 years' experience working with countries at the strategic level on economic and social development. She is a Fellow of the Royal Society of Arts, Manufactures and Commerce, recognised for her leadership in public sector transformation in small developing states and Commonwealth countries.

Ms. Culver holds a BA in English and History from the University of Toronto and is concluding an executive doctorate in business administration at the Paris School of Business with a research focus on strategic resilience for companies and countries. She is a Certified Management Consultant, a certified leadership coach, and holds certifications in negotiation and mediation.

**Mark Burdon** is Secretary General of the World Pharmacy Council (<https://www.worldpharmacycouncil.org>). He is a practicing community pharmacist and pharmacy owner in the UK and has been a prescriber for many years. Mark has considerable experience across a range of healthcare settings, including community pharmacy, general medical practice, and public health.



## Kelly Culver

Founder and Director  
The Culver Group and iIMPACT  
uIMPACT Innovation  
Foundation



## Mark Burdon

Secretary General World  
Pharmacy Council



## Louis Taylor

Chief Executive Officer,  
British Business Bank

**Louis Taylor** is CEO of the British Business Bank. Prior to that, he was Chief Executive of UK Export Finance (UKEF), the UK's export credit agency, for seven years. He also held roles as a Director General in the Department for International Trade, and a member of its Executive Committee and Management Board. Before joining UKEF, Louis held a range of senior roles at Standard Chartered Bank, including from 2013 to 2015 as Chief Operating Officer of Group Treasury, based in London. Before that, he spent three years as the bank's CEO for Vietnam, Cambodia and Laos, based in Ho Chi Minh City. During this time he was also Vice Chairman of the European Chamber of Commerce in Vietnam (Eurocham). He joined Standard Chartered in London in 2004, working in Group Corporate Development, which undertakes the bank's acquisitions, divestments and other inorganic growth initiatives. His earlier career included eight years working for JP Morgan in debt capital markets and mergers and acquisitions, and five years in corporate development and strategy with two industrial companies, Cookson Group plc and BTR plc. Louis is a trustee of the charity Sightsavers, which prevents sight loss and avoidable blindness, and promotes equal rights for the disabled. He is also a former chair of trustees of the charity Music in Prisons, which runs music education projects to help rehabilitate offenders, and a former chair of governors of the Royal Grammar School in Newcastle upon Tyne. He has an MA in Law from the University of Cambridge.



## Dan Kelly

President & CEO,  
Canadian Federation of  
Independent Business

**Dan Kelly** serves as CFIB's President and CEO and is the lead spokesperson and advocate for the views of the organization's 97,000 members. Dan joined CFIB in 1994 as a Policy Analyst in Winnipeg, later holding various positions across Western Canada, including Vice-President. Before becoming President in 2012, Dan served as CFIB's Senior Vice-President of Legislative Affairs, where he focused on the need for major changes in the payments industry and drafted the first version of Canada's Code of Conduct for the Credit and Debit Card Industry. In over 3,000 media interviews over the pandemic, Dan led the call for support for small business owners. This resulted in the wage and rent subsidies, the CEBA loan program and other provincial supports. Dan has served on dozens of committees and task forces, including Finance Canada Payments Consultative Committee (FINPAY). He also represented Canada's small businesses at the International Labour Organization in Geneva. Dan is a regular speaker in Canada and around the world on international trade, the payments industry, and skills and labour shortages. Dan was born and raised in Winnipeg and graduated with a Bachelor of Commerce from the University of Manitoba.

## Panel 2 | 15:40 - 16:00

### Mobilizing SMEs and entrepreneurs in the green and digital transformations

**Ieva Valeškaitė** serves as the Vice-Minister of the Economy and Innovation of the Republic of Lithuania. In this role, she holds responsibilities pertaining to the areas of better regulation, business supervision, taxation environment for business, and economic analysis. Vice Minister has acquired a decade of extensive expertise in economic policy analysis, business regulation, and taxation. She has successfully executed tax-related projects both within the non-governmental sector in Lithuania and abroad.

Prior to her current position, Ieva Valeškaitė spent five years as a senior policy expert at the Lithuanian Free Market Institute. During her tenure, she played a pivotal role in initiatives focused on enhancing the business environment, improving legislative quality, promoting tax system transparency, and streamlining tax administration. Moreover, she served at the Department of Foreign and EU Affairs at the Office of the Government between 2012 and 2015.

**Jeremy Rollison** is Senior Director, Head of EU Policy, European Government Affairs, within Microsoft's Corporate, External & Legal Affairs (CELA) group. Based in Brussels, his work focuses on policy related to EU regulatory frameworks for digital, cloud, and increasingly AI take-up for Microsoft's customers in Europe. His background includes particular emphasis on data issues and corresponding public policy covering AI, privacy, cybersecurity, cloud, intellectual property and copyright. Prior to joining Microsoft, he worked in the Government Relations team at Nokia in the company's EU representative office and was previously Director of the online services association Dot.Europe in Brussels. He has over 15 years of experience in Brussels at the company, association, and consultancy levels, focusing and engaging with EU stakeholders and regulators on issues related to the development and delivery of digital technology in the Internal Market and corresponding EU regulatory policy.



**Ieva Valeškaitė**

Vice-Minister of the  
Economy and Innovation of  
the Republic of Lithuania



**Jeremy Rollison**

Senior Director, Head of EU  
Policy, European Government  
Affairs, Microsoft



## Emma Jones

Founder  
Enterprise Nation

**Emma Jones** is the best-selling author of the business books *Spare Room StartUp*, *Working 5 to 9*, *Go Global*, *The StartUp Kit* and *Turn Your Talent Into a Business*. She hosts the popular one-day business class *StartUp Saturday* in London, and speaks at several other business events.

In March 2011, Emma was one of eight co-founders to launch *StartUp Britain*, the national campaign to encourage more people to start a business and support existing businesses to grow. Over a period of 3 years (March 2011 to 2014), Emma led and managed the private sector campaign that facilitated mentoring, hosted *Industry Weeks*, toured the UK with entrepreneurs and experts, launched special projects such as *PopUp Britain* and had a critical role to play in record results of people becoming their own boss. In February 2019 Theresa May appointed Emma to co-chair the Prime Minister's Small Business, Scale-up and Entrepreneurs Business Council. In June 2012 Emma was awarded an MBE for Services to Enterprise. Emma was awarded the rank Commander of the Order of the British Empire (CBE) in 2021. In November 2015 Emma was appointed by the UK Prime Minister as a Business Ambassador with a focus on increasing international trade. In July 2016, Emma was appointed SME Representative for Crown Commercial Service.



## Nicolás Uribe

Executive President of  
Bogota Chamber of Commerce,  
Chair ICC-World Chambers  
Federation

**Nicolás Uribe** is a lawyer with studies in Colombia, the United States, and Spain. He has held several high positions in the public and private sectors, most outstanding as a Member of the House of Representatives and the High Presidential Counselor for the Colombia Joven Program (Young Colombia). He was also the CEO of an advisory firm on public relations, a professor at several universities, a newspaper columnist, and a radio commentator. Mr. Uribe is currently the Executive President of the Bogotá Chamber of Commerce, the ICC World Chambers Federation Chair, and a member of several boards.

**Markus Jerger** is a Swiss-German entrepreneur and member of the board of companies, associations, think tanks, private + public alliances and academic institutions. The Jerger family's history in business dates back to 1866 and includes the invention and consequently industrial manufacturing of alarm clocks and time measure instruments.

Later the business expanded towards the development and licensing of patents, trademarks and exclusive distribution rights. In 1980 a new pillar was added to the activities with the restoration and reconstruction of properties of historic significance, (some dating back to the 10th Century). Historic treasures were given a sustainable modern existence as corporate headquarters, residences, hotels and leisure resorts. Today, the activities also encompass the strategic management and supervision of global business associations and B2B/B2G network organizations.



**Markus Jerger**

CEO, BVMW - German Mittelstand  
Vice-President, INSME

**1 in 3** SME owners and entrepreneurs identify **support for innovation and technology development** as the most important measure governments should put in place to strengthen SMEs and entrepreneurs' resilience to future shocks.

### The well-being of SMEs and entrepreneurs



**Jerome  
Bellion-Jourdan**

Deputy Secretary General,  
International Organisation of  
Employers (IOE)

**Jerome Bellion-Jourdan** joined the IOE as Deputy Secretary-General in May 2023. He developed his expertise on global social, economic, and business issues as a diplomat for the European Union. For almost 9 years, he led negotiations on Business and Human Rights and other issues on behalf of the EU in the UN Human Rights Council and other fora. He also engaged in several multistakeholder initiatives, as a member of the Steering Committee of the Mega-Sporting Platform and of the Group of Friends of the Montreux Document Co-Chairs (Switzerland, ICRC) to improve the governance of the Private Military and Security Industry. Prior to his work in Geneva, Jerome Bellion-Jourdan was posted with the European Commission in Cairo and Jerusalem where he was in charge of the Political Section. He also served as an Arabic-speaking detention delegate with the International Committee of the Red Cross and as a researcher on Middle East and North Africa at the International Secretariat of Amnesty International in London. Jerome Bellion-Jourdan sits on the Board of Directors of Sciences Po Grenoble, on the Advisory Council of the Institute for Negotiation Innovation and is a Senior Fellow at the Institute for Global Negotiation chaired by former HRVP Catherine Ashton. He has published several blog posts and podcasts on negotiation and on Business and Human Rights, and an Op-Ed for SwissInfo on Ukraine when he was the Director of the Geneva Graduate Institute's International Negotiation and Policy-Making Program. He holds a Ph.D. in Political Science from Sciences Po. Paris, and co-authored *The Charitable Crescent. Politics of Aid in the Muslim World* (IB Tauris, 2009) with Jonathan Benthall.



**Gabriel Petrus**

Global Head  
ICC Centres of Entrepreneurship

**Gabriel Petrus** is the Global Head of the ICC Centres of Entrepreneurship, and former Deputy Director for Global Partnerships & Development at the International Chamber of Commerce. He is an Associate Professor of International Law at University of Paris Cité and Lecturer at Sciences Po. Steering Committee Member of the ICC/United Nations Centre of Entrepreneurship in Africa (UN ECA) and Western Asia (UN ESCWA). Based in Paris, driving the global work of the ICC on entrepreneurship, open innovation, and digitization of SMEs through global partnerships with governments, multilateral development agencies and industry associations across the EMEA region, Asia and Latin America. Former Senior Public Policy Associate @ Uber and Former Advisor to Brazil' President of Republic between 2010-13.

**Cecilia Wessinger** is the Director for Global Community at the Global Entrepreneurship Network. She serves as the primary interface between GEN and its leadership teams in nations around the world as they seek to nurture more robust ecosystems and build GEN's brand and presence in those economies. Prior to joining GEN, Cecilia was a consultant with the Kauffman Foundation, Future Agro Challenge and has led small group mastermind workshops and cohorts around the world. She has extensive experience mentoring and advising startup founders, ecosystem builders and organizations.

As a certified Cultural Competency and Unconscious Bias facilitator, she moves conversations beyond diversity and inclusion to connecting, engaging, and belonging. Cecilia has served as a speaker, facilitator and panelist at innovation and entrepreneurship focused events such as Shift, Inventures, Tom-Tom Festival and ESHIP Summit. She has judged and supported pitch competitions for SXSW, U.S. Small Business Administration and the U.S. Department of State's Global Innovation through Science and Technology program. She currently serves on the executive board(s) of the Institute for Work and the Economy and Startup Champions Network, and has served on over a dozen non-profit boards in her local community ranging from the arts to education and entrepreneurship. She is a former travel industry professional who has lived, worked, and traveled throughout the world.

**Véronique Willems** is representing Crafts and SMEs in Europe as the Secretary General of SMEunited (formerly known as UEAPME) since January 2017. Beforehand and as from 2009, she was the Head of European affairs at UNIZO (SMEunited Belgian member organisation) and was responsible for advocacy on policies affecting SMEs at EU-level. In January 2016, she was nominated deputy to the SME-representative for Belgium at the European Economic and Social Committee. Ms. Willems started her career at UNIZO in 1999 as Policy Officer in charge of education, training and SME counselling and went on to work at the regional office (Vlaams-Brabant & Brussel) as responsible for advocacy at regional level, mentorship programs and individual counselling for entrepreneurs. Ms. Willems holds a Law degree from Vrije Universiteit Brussels and a Master's Degree in Commercial sciences / Business management from VLEKHO Brussels.



**Cecilia  
Wessinger**

Director for Global Community,  
Global Entrepreneurship  
Network (GEN)



**Véronique  
Willems**

Secretary General, SMEunited



## Alessandro Carnicella

CEO & Founder,  
Brand Partners Group

**Alessandro Carnicella** is a creative, open-minded and energetic professional and entrepreneur with a genuine passion for Lifestyle Brand Development and Marketing. He is a pragmatic and innovative strategic thinker with a strong International Background and Network who has developed remarkable cross-functional knowledge in Brand Strategy and Communication, Brand Experiences and Extension, PR, Digital, Marketing & Events, Sponsorship, Product positioning, Business Development, Retail & Licensing in the Luxury, Lifestyle, Fashion, Media and Sport industries.

After starting his career at The Boston Consulting Group he joined Ferrari where he has been responsible for the F1 Sponsorship management and development and for the Scuderia Ferrari brand marketing activities. He then became Ferrari Head of Brand Promotion with responsibilities over the Licensing, Retail and Brand Extension projects. In 2011 he started the Bugatti Lifestyle Business Unit launching all the super luxury car brand extension initiatives from real estate to retail, licensing, designer collaborations and partnerships, digital.

Most recently he became Senior Director for Brand and Business Development at Lands End where he has coordinated marketing and brand operations at international level. On the 4th of July 2017, He founded Brand Partners Group, a contemporary Brand Advisory platform and Incubator specialized in global brand development projects within the Luxury, Lifestyle and Entertainment industries.



## Maia Royal

Co-Founder  
The Pure Food Co Limited

**Maia Royal** has 10 years of domestic and international experience in consulting, corporate finance, and investment prior to co-founding The Pure Food Co. From a family of social workers, Maia is passionate about having a social impact through business, which led him to co-founding The Pure Food Co, a purpose-led Senior nutrition company on a mission to solve Senior malnutrition. In addition to overseeing strategy and operations of the global parent company, Maia will focus on driving growth and managing operations in France, and expansion throughout Europe.



# Concluding session

17:40 - 18:00

**Hon Ginny Andersen** is the MP for Hutt South and has significant experience in the justice sector; she has worked in Parliament as a private secretary and senior political advisor, in the Office of Treaty Settlements in negotiations and policy, and for nine years she worked for the New Zealand Police where she delivered action plans to reduce the harm associated with gangs, organised crime and methamphetamine.

Ginny studied Te Reo Māori at secondary school and university and previously taught night classes as part of Adult and Community Education. Since entering Parliament in 2017, Ginny has combined her professional experience and her personal passions into being a strong advocate for New Zealanders. Appointed as a Cabinet minister and Minister for Small Business in February 2023, Ginny has been working to build the resilience of small businesses and help them respond to the rising cost of living/ increasing economic pressures. She subsequently became Minister of Police in March, her focus is on preventing crime, addressing the drivers of crime and reducing youth offending. She is a mother of four, and loves living in the Hutt Valley.



**Hon Ginny Andersen**

Minister of Small Business  
New Zealand

**Work-life balance (or lack thereof), market uncertainty, and increased input costs** are among the main sources of stress for entrepreneurs and SME owners.











**13-15, Chaussée de la Muette – 75016 Paris**  
**@BusinessatOECD | [businessatoecd.org](http://businessatoecd.org)**  
**Tel: +33 (0) 1 42 30 09 60**