
Warsaw, October 27, 2020



My vision of New Growth

Esteemed OECD Members,

As we battle to restore global growth after the shock provoked by the Covid-19 pandemic, I want to address you with a plan to answer the challenges of our times and to spur a New Growth.

Initially, national and regional responses had to attempt to limit human casualties, ensure proper functioning of health systems, keep basic subsistence for families, preserve jobs and safeguard businesses. Despite all our efforts, we are not yet able to thoroughly assess all long-term societal and economic consequences of the pandemic. Moreover, prior to the pandemic the world already was full of challenges such as environmental degradation and climate risks, increasing inequalities, limited access to digital resources or education. And now - lockdowns destroyed mobility, perturbed trade and exposed hidden weaknesses of our economies. No single country can on its own forge an adequate answer to face collapsing trade and tourism, fragmented value chains and fading investments. With all the uncertainty, there is one thing I know for sure - we must act as vigorously as only possible, feeling responsibility for the vulnerable while being united and credible.

I can imagine what millions of people have been going through, some of them without access to proper health care or with lost revenues. I have gone through Covid-19 myself. Although I was fortunate to fully recover, I know what it means to experience initial fears of possibly being a threat to the loved ones and people I cooperate with and whom I deeply respect.

It is a special honour for me to have been nominated as a candidate for the position of Secretary-General of the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development in these unprecedented times. With my background of an economist and engineer, I have had the pleasure of architecting the energy and climate transition of Poland as its first ever Minister of Climate which made me fully appreciate the way our policies impact economies and our citizens' well-being. Furthermore, as COP24 President I came to understand that transparency, bringing different positions together and trust are clef de voûte for a fruitful international cooperation.

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It is this experience that makes me convinced that only special efforts will let us fully restore the socio-economic growth, but we should also have the courage to use this critical juncture to build back better. However, to construct truly inclusive, more innovative, digitalised and resilient economy of tomorrow we will need a renewed impetus and a coherent vision for the future. The OECD, strong with its breadth, the brainpower of world-class experts and an established legitimacy, is the right place to get all the necessary elements together. Challenges are countless and responses must be found and guided here at the OECD. It is simply our responsibility.

My vision for the OECD is to enable a New Growth.

1. (Re)Constructing Wisely

Just as the Marshall Plan put its recipients on track for sustainable recovery, we need now to set up a comprehensive agenda to ensure that the unprecedented recovery funds have proper investment guidance. Our actions need not be remedial only. Even in the midst of the crisis, we need to think beyond the immediate and enhance resilience against future shocks. As the OECD Secretary-General, I would strongly push for identifying new opportunities to stimulate sustainable growth and improve well-being:

- New technologies aligned with climate goals in economies, energy and environment sectors should be seen as a chance to drive long-term investment. New Growth unleashes the potential of new industries and jobs while at the same time improves the quality of the environment. This agenda offers a chance of mobilising an unprecedented volume of public and private capital for the development of new resilient infrastructures, scalable technologies and innovative business models. **We cannot create green islands instead of green Planet.** We must not forget that over the last 3 decades little overall progress has been achieved globally as 80% of global energy supply today is still fossil – just as it was 30 years ago. Bearing in mind that fossil fuels create negative externalities for public health and common well-being, the OECD must propose schemes that will help to avoid locking-in unsustainable infrastructure worldwide.

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- In the face of Covid-19, many economies had to transfer their activities to the cyberspace overnight. Access to health care services, education and work became almost impossible without digital infrastructure and skills.

Digital economy is part of a complex, interconnected system that cannot grow apart - it must be fully integrated and synchronized with all levels of our economy including settling the issue of new market's arrangements. Artificial intelligence and automation open a completely new era in the history of innovation and must spur increases in productivity but should also be enhancing the quality of people's lives.

- Mobilising international assistance and providing emerging economies with standards so that no one is left behind. The very nature of the pandemic means that the exposures of some increase risks for others. Addressing global inequalities is today more than ever the condition sine qua non of world collective well-being. During the pandemic benevolence rhymes more than ever with good sense. **Solidarity must be at the heart**, not as the cherry on the top of our actions.

Looking at the world of today, **we cannot afford not to be ready**. Another crisis may or may not come, but we certainly have to be prepared - in terms of resilience of our societies and economies as well as flexibility of approaches.

2. Rebuilding Global Confidence

The scars left by Covid-19 might be profound, long-lasting and largely unpredictable. The pandemic can drag on growth by altering people's confidence about future. Social distancing and lockdowns may well have a hysteresis effect: lower consumption, lower mobility, lower overall expectations. Fragmented value chains can result in increased costs and growing unemployment. People out of work may become disconnected from the labour markets, losing skills and motivation. We must act smarter to regain confidence and rebuild our world to the best new standards.

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Build trust and restore confidence in global cooperation, international mobility and commercial exchanges
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Only a coordinated answer can save us from chaos: humanitarian, economic and societal. There can be no other solution to a world-wide challenge such as the pandemic, than a global one. To preserve the benefits of international cooperation and trade as well as to keep those linked with open frontiers and uninterrupted flow of goods and ideas around the world we must work together. Starting from sharing data and good practices, including in health policy. Going through business standards to increase resilience of our economies, including to limit the spread of the pandemic. Through synchronizing investments to boost global recovery. To improve

how to use local assets to enhance answers to global challenges. **To provide right assurances in order to build trust and restore confidence in global cooperation, international mobility and commercial exchanges.**

As the OECD Secretary-General, I would build on the Organisation's strengths to help ensure that the right policies are proposed to regain trust:

- As the most recognised economic body in the world, we have a duty to help in **designing tailored instruments** to implement concepts that we develop together as effectively as possible. Yet, to build back better and regain confidence, the OECD should commit to providing good practices and investment guidelines for New Growth and acting resolutely to win social acceptance in a spirit of trust. Therefore, **societies need to see more of our work**. Targeted social media solutions directed to different age, ethnic and language groups would help to promote understanding of our work. However, we must not forget that the OECD is a powerhouse of best-in-class analysis and shall remain so delivering solid policies for governments, also based on feedback from societies.
- The Organisation must continue showcasing its strengths and developing its hallmarks – such as the only “go-to place” in taxation, development assistance, structural reforms and education matters. This heritage today needs to be the backbone of global strive for **more economic growth and good quality lives** – it is especially in this highly uncertain setting that the OECD must prioritize evidence-based policies. However, to win more credibility in the eyes of the people, we may have to shift some of our focus from rising number of **periodical OECD reports, and replace them with shorter, targeted information** and analysis of highest quality and of narrower scope to provide appropriate answers to detailed questions so as to show greater responsiveness to governments' needs.
- **OECD's outreach** to the rest of the world is the key to a successful renovation of global ties. In that sense, I would propose to look deeper into Association activities and **create a structure where non-Member countries will be sharing their perspectives and receiving access to OECD's resources** without necessarily considering membership option immediately but upon reciprocity of costs and benefits.

The pandemic will only alter history to the extent we allow it to. As we struggle to regain control over processes that accelerate before our eyes, New Growth is a proposal to expand on our strengths and fix weaknesses.

3. Enhancing OECD's Effectiveness and Governance

Full coordination of the OECD with Member states must be the focal point of our agenda, also through avoiding overlapping and looking for synergies with other international institutions and bodies. In the first place, taking stock of existing capacities within the OECD system must be assured. International Energy Agency with its excellent expertise; International Transport Forum

with unique sectorial analysis on mobility and Nuclear Energy Agency also in terms of non-energy nuclear applications – we already have so much and, if we coordinate well, so much more can be brought to the table in terms of added value and synergies.

Narrow project-based OECD experts assignments will have to be enabled to cooperate closely with governments and stakeholders in situ to provide countries with an impartial, evidence-based analysis that will help to build a robust, coordinated **investment guideline schemes** serving the resilience of our economies. I would like to see **OECD presence increased in Member countries** in order to intensify contacts. This would allow for broadening the expertise and let the Organisation better grasp the needs of Member states and thus provide our Committees with even better analysis.

If elected Secretary-General of the OECD I also commit to engage closely into budgetary issues and make sure that we do not demand from Members more than needed to cover for jointly agreed Programme of Work and Budget. I would also propose to explore other possible revenue streams and to review strategy for voluntary contributions to assure the most efficient and transparent use of resources. I will also make sure that full financial information is available to Members through **reinforced Budget Committee**.

Flexibility of working standards aligned with countries' expectations, agility, responsiveness to new challenges, thorough financial management and highest in-house governance should be driving factors. The Council should be the key decision-making body of the OECD. The council should **be a place where Member states, supported by the Secretary-General find consensual decisions among themselves**. Therefore, I would also invite Members to discuss the most efficient way to proceed during the Council sessions.

Furthermore, **OECD employees have been and will always remain its main asset**. Human capital should match our level of ambition and new fields to be explored. We need to offer working conditions that attract the best, as working for Members' governments is an utmost responsibility. I have been personally engaged in OECD matters for years, also leading very important financial reform of the IEA few years back, and then serving as the Chair of the 2019 IEA Ministerial, which we managed to successfully conclude with a historic Communiqué. It not only helped me to gain expertise, but also to understand the needs of the Organisation.

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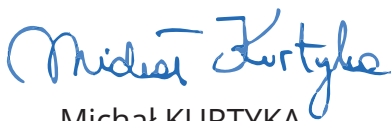
I will ensure that balance and inclusivity is a continued standard of the OECD at all levels providing equal opportunities for all. I have learnt over my career that **diversity and trust put into people pay back a hundred of times**.

Our strategy needs to refocus the world's economy, restore global confidence, and to build better lives after Covid-19 and beyond. Therefore, New Growth is designed so as to improve how we use local resources and international cooperation to enhance answers to global challenges and open new business sectors in new technologies. This all must happen with the **acceptance and enthusiasm of all Member states**.

I commit to forge unity, build consensus and provide the right structure to the OECD in the face of uncertainties. **However, not what we do but whom we do it for is the key.** New Growth puts all people where they belong to – in the very centre of all our actions. Since so many of the problems we face today can only be solved through a shared ambition, we all **shall pledge to move forward without creating bigger winners and smaller losers**.

If elected Secretary-General of the OECD I will work relentlessly to deliver all these ambitious objectives together with the fantastic Team of the Organisation through cooperating closely with Member countries and always keeping to the highest standards.

Truly yours,


Michał KURTYKA

