

**COMMISSION ON SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY FOR DEVELOPMENT
(CSTD)**

Twenty-fifth session

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**Submissions from entities in the United Nations system, international
organizations and other stakeholders on their efforts in 2021 to
implement the outcomes of the WSIS**

Submission by

Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development

This submission was prepared as an input to the report of the UN Secretary-General on "Progress made in the implementation of and follow-up to the outcomes of the World Summit on the Information Society at the regional and international levels" (to the 25th session of the CSTD), in response to the request by the Economic and Social Council, in its resolution 2006/46, to the UN Secretary-General to inform the Commission on Science and Technology for Development on the implementation of the outcomes of the WSIS as part of his annual reporting to the Commission.

DISCLAIMER: The views presented here are the contributors' and do not necessarily reflect the views and position of the United Nations or the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development.

The Director

DIRECTORATE FOR SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY AND INNOVATION

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Dear Ms. Sirimanne,

I write in response to the letter dated 15 July 2021 from Acting Secretary-General Durant addressed to the OECD Secretary-General. In Acting Secretary-General Durant's letter, she requests a contribution from the OECD towards the report to be submitted to the Commission on Science and Technology for Development (CSTD).

Although the OECD was not specifically part of the Tunis Agenda and the Tunis Commitment, and therefore has no formal follow-up commitments, we have always been willing to provide information on our work to enhance co-operation on public policy issues pertaining to the Internet. As such, we would like to direct your attention to a few relevant OECD initiatives.

Further to my letter from last year, I am pleased to note that the OECD Council has adopted in February 2021 its revised Recommendation on Broadband Connectivity [[OECD/LEGAL/0322](#)]. The Recommendation provides a reference for policy makers and regulatory authorities to ensure equal access to connectivity for citizens and companies, in order to unleash the full potential of connectivity for the digital transformation. It was launched in a [high-level event](#) presenting different perspectives and country experiences and underscoring the timeliness for connectivity efforts against backdrop of the COVID-19 pandemic. Three analytical reports that supported the review of the Recommendation will be published soon.

This Recommendation is supported by the OECD's broadband statistics on the [OECD Broadband Portal](#). For example, the pandemic spurred the uptake of high-speed broadband subscriptions in the OECD area. In the first half of 2020, and thus the first phase of the pandemic, the number of new fixed broadband subscriptions increased sharply to 10.3 million, representing a 50% growth compared to the average of additional subscriptions observed in the past five years. In addition, users have been upgrading their connections, reflecting the need for symmetrical upload and download speeds to work and study from home. As such, the share of fibre in all fixed broadband subscriptions in OECD countries rose to 29.2% by June 2020.

In addition, I am pleased to draw your attention to a second Recommendation adopted this year by the OECD Council – the Recommendation on Children in the Digital Environment [[OECD/LEGAL/0389](#)]. This Recommendation aims to help governments better address technological, legal and policy advances, identify tools that can continue to support children in realising the opportunities of the digital environment, and address the new and evolving risks that they may encounter in it.



Both Recommendations will be featured in an Open Forum at the Internet Governance Forum in Poland this year. The session will engage representatives from government, business and civil society, with the objective to foster a reflection on equal access to connectivity, as well as on the safe and beneficial use of digital environment for children. We aim to contribute with these reflections to the issue of universal access and meaningful connectivity, one of IGF's main focus areas this year.

I hope this information is useful in the preparation of the annual report. Do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions about the materials referred to above or our work on digital economy policy.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Andrew Wyckoff". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Andrew Wyckoff