

# Preface by the OECD

Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, we saw entrepreneurs confront unparalleled challenges while they navigated their business through a health crisis and economic lockdowns. But these challenges were even greater for entrepreneurs in under-represented and disadvantaged groups such as women, immigrants, youth, seniors, people with disabilities and those starting a business from unemployment, especially as they were more likely to operate a business in the most heavily impacted sectors and often struggled to qualify from support measures. Not surprisingly, many closed their business due to the crisis.

Many of the challenges they faced are not new, nor unique to the current crisis. This crisis, however, magnified them. Gaps in entrepreneurship activity rates and business survival rates across the population are long-standing. While Governments had made progress in closing them, through a wide range of tools, COVID-19 has undone some of what has been achieved.

This 6<sup>th</sup> edition of the Missing Entrepreneurs comes at a critical time as governments look to map out a pathway to a strong and sustainable recovery. The report highlights many lessons about how we can seize the opportunity presented by large-scale recovery packages to “build back” economies and societies that are more inclusive.

The OECD is determined to support governments in unleashing entrepreneurial talents across the population. Diversity and inclusion are now priority issues for many OECD committees, including the newly created OECD Committee on SMEs and Entrepreneurship and the Local Employment and Economic Development (LEED) Committee. The commitment of the OECD in this regard, and its member countries, is also visible through the updated OECD Youth Action Plan and ongoing monitoring of the OECD Gender Recommendation (2012), which calls on countries to address gender gaps in employment, education and entrepreneurship.

I would like to thank the European Commission for this long-term partnership on inclusive entrepreneurship policy. We have achieved a lot together but there is still much more to do in order to leverage on the full potential of our missing entrepreneurs.



Lamia Kamal-Chaoui

Director

Centre for Entrepreneurship, SMEs, Regions and Cities



From:

## The Missing Entrepreneurs 2021

Policies for Inclusive Entrepreneurship and Self-Employment

Access the complete publication at:

<https://doi.org/10.1787/71b7a9bb-en>

### Please cite this chapter as:

OECD/European Commission (2021), "Preface by the OECD", in *The Missing Entrepreneurs 2021: Policies for Inclusive Entrepreneurship and Self-Employment*, OECD Publishing, Paris.

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1787/33e07caf-en>

This work is published under the responsibility of the Secretary-General of the OECD. The opinions expressed and arguments employed herein do not necessarily reflect the official views of OECD member countries.

This document, as well as any data and map included herein, are without prejudice to the status of or sovereignty over any territory, to the delimitation of international frontiers and boundaries and to the name of any territory, city or area. Extracts from publications may be subject to additional disclaimers, which are set out in the complete version of the publication, available at the link provided.

The use of this work, whether digital or print, is governed by the Terms and Conditions to be found at <http://www.oecd.org/termsandconditions>.