

# Foreword

The *OECD Review of Innovation Policy for Korea 2023* is the 34<sup>th</sup> in a series of OECD Country Reviews of Innovation Policy (<https://www.oecd.org/sti/inno/oecd-reviews-of-innovation-policy>) and the third one that covers Korea (following the OECD Reviews of Innovation Policy: Korea 2009 and the OECD Reviews of Innovation Policy: Industry and Technology Policies in Korea [2014]). This review was requested by the Ministry of Science and ICT (MSIT) and the Science and Technology Policy Institute (STEPI).

Societies and economies are undergoing significant transitions and challenges, such as digital transformation, the green transition, demographic change, growing geopolitical divides as well as the global COVID-19 pandemic. All of these have highlighted both vulnerabilities and strengths of the Korean economic model and national innovation system and have underscored the need for continuous policy attention. While Korea is commonly considered an innovation leader in some digital technologies, which also contributed to its widely recognised pandemic response at the onset of the COVID-19 crisis, these emerging technologies also hold significant disruptive potential for the more traditional manufacturing industries. Furthermore, the growing geopolitical divides have particularly exposed some of the vulnerabilities of Korean embeddedness in global value chains. In addition, the green transition and population ageing will significantly shape Korean industry and society at large. In order to prepare for the structural change brought about by these challenges, STI policy should assume a leading role. This review presents a comprehensive analysis of how Korea can leverage its world-leading potential in STI to achieve resilience amidst societal challenges and solidify its position as a global innovation leader.

This review lays out an analysis of the key elements, dynamics and processes which characterise the Korean national innovation system and, as such, provides a comparative assessment and recommendations drawing on experiences and good practices from OECD and non-OECD countries. The findings also serve as a thorough knowledge base for the Korean government to support the implementation of its 5th S&T Basic Plan. The comprehensive review is relevant to a wide array of stakeholders ranging from government officials, researchers, and entrepreneurs to the general public in Korea, other OECD countries and beyond as the transitions are global in nature, and the assessment, as well as identified solutions, may be applicable in other contexts.

The review was led and managed by Alan Paic, Senior Policy Analyst at the Science and Technology Policy (STP) Division at the OECD. The main authors of the review were Alan Paic, Philippe Larrue, Mario Cervantes, Wanho Song, Christian Biesmans and Bora Kim (Directorate for Science, Technology and Innovation, OECD). The review draws on an extensive background report prepared by Byeognwon Park, Jungwon Lee, Hyeok Lee, Hyeonchae Yang, UngKyu Han, Kwangho Lee, Eunjung Shin, Soojung Sohn, Sunwoo Kim, Yongsuk Jang, Myonghwa Lee, Seunghyun Kim, Seoln Baek, Mijung Um and Inkyoung Sunof of the Science and Technology Policy Institute (STEPI). The analysis benefited from invaluable inputs provided by Erik Arnold (consultant to the OECD; Senior Partner of the Technopolis Group and an Honorary Professor at the University of Manchester) and Sylvia Schwaag Serger (consultant to the OECD; Professor at Lund University), particularly to Chapters 1, 2 and 4. Martin Hemmert (consultant to the OECD; Professor at Korea University) contributed in particular to Chapters 1, 3 and 4. All consultants provided extensive analytical, research and drafting support. Within the OECD Science, Technology and Innovation

directorate, the report received valuable contributions from Blandine Serve and Kei Kato, particularly statistical analytical support, Seoyeon Kim, who provided research support to Chapters 4 and 5 and Beatrice Jeffries, who continuously offered administrative support. Sebastian Ordelheide and Sylvain Fraccola facilitated the communication and publication processes of the review. Julie Harris (external editor) provided immaculate professional editing services for the report.

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The review benefited from invaluable inputs and guidance provided by Andrew Wyckoff (Director of the OECD Science, Technology and Innovation (STI) Directorate), Jens Lundsgaard (Deputy Director of the STI Directorate), Dirk Pilat (former Deputy Director) as well as Alessandra Colecchia, Head of the Scientific and Technological Policy Division in the STI Directorate. The review has furthermore received feedback as part of the presentation of its draft overall assessment and recommendations (Chapter 1) at the Working Party on Technology and Innovation Policy (TIP) meeting on 30 May 2022, which included a peer review session with valuable inputs provided by Amélie Clément, Rebecca Leinen and Lennart Stenberg. The final version of Chapter 1 was presented at the Committee for Science and Technological Policy (CSTP) meeting on 21 March 2023, and the TIP meeting on 8 December 2022 specifically discussed Chapter 4 of the review. The Secretariat is grateful for comments and feedback received by the MSIT and the Ministry of Education throughout the process, as well as from other OECD directorates, including the Economics Department, the Education and Skills Directorate and the Centre for Entrepreneurship, SME, Regions and Cities.



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