

Mr Chair,

Norway welcomes Slovenia's accession to the OECD.

With the invitation to three new countries, the OECD's 'founding twenty' from 1961 will soon become thirty-four. With this expansion the OECD is growing stronger, more representative and more relevant.

The accession process leading up to an invitation to join the OECD is an extensive one, and Slovenia has been reviewed in-depth by 18 OECD bodies all together. Throughout this process Slovenian authorities have showed their commitment by readily cooperating with a wide array of OECD-interlocutors and member countries.

The OECD's main working method is the peer review, allowing member countries to regularly receive its peers' coordinated recommendations and policy advice. This is a major source of learning for all member countries, and the basis for bringing about constructive change. For Slovenia, we have seen that the review process among other things has lead to the adoption of key legislation improving the framework for the corporate governance of state-owned enterprises.

But welcoming Slovenia to the OECD also means that current member countries will have a lot to learn. Slovenia is one of the most successful reformers among the new EU members, and thus a country that brings important reform experience to the table - for instance in the fields of regulatory reform and public governance.

Norway strongly appreciates the good bilateral relations between our two countries and the work we do together in various international fora. Now we are looking forward to working together in a new arena, and we are convinced that our co-operation in the OECD will a constructive one.

Thank you.