

For Official Use**English - Or. English****21 November 2023****COUNCIL****Council****IN-DEPTH EVALUATION OF THE COMMITTEE FOR SCIENTIFIC AND
TECHNOLOGICAL POLICY****Executive Summary****JT03532261**

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IN-DEPTH EVALUATION OF THE COMMITTEE FOR SCIENTIFIC AND TECHNOLOGICAL POLICY

The Committee for Scientific and Technological Policy (hereafter “the Committee” or “CSTP”), was established in 1972 to enhance co-operation in the field of science, technology and innovation (STI) policy. According to its current mandate [C(2019)134], the Committee is to enhance such co-operation with a view to “contributing to the achievement of economic, social and scientific aims, including growth and the creation of jobs, sustainable development, improved well-being of [...] citizens and advancing the frontiers of knowledge”.

The relevance of CSTP’s mission is firmly anchored in the views of OECD Members. This is reflected in the high levels of interest generated by the Committee’s work and objectives, as well as the high and sustained levels of attendance by Member (and non-Member) capital-based delegates to committee meetings. There are however considerable differences in the levels of capital-based delegate attendance across the committee’s subsidiary bodies. Specifically, the levels of attendance in the meetings of the Working Party on Biotechnology, Nanotechnology and Converging Technologies (BNCT), and the Global Science Forum (GSF), are lower than for other committee subsidiary bodies (i.e., the Working Party of National Experts on Science and Technology Indicators (NESTI), the Working Party on Innovation and Technology Policy (TIP), and CSTP Level I).

CSTP occupies a unique position in the international arena of STI support organisations and policy shapers, as reflected by the strength and frequency of its policy contributions in OECD Members and non-Members. Certain CSTP products, including the Frascati and Oslo Manuals, constitute the backbone of the international STI statistical system, and are highly visible references in the world of STI policy globally. The CSTP is a valuable source of policy guidance, as well as an igniter of higher-level policy change, through some of the products and bodies of work it has developed over time. The Committee is also home to several policy “communities of practice” which regularly meet to exchange practices and ideas on solutions to strengthen STI policies and systems. However, the impact and perceived relevance of committee activities in the area of international collaboration are quite heterogeneous, in part given the multiple interpretations given to this concept in the context of committee work.

CSTP achieved policy impact in jurisdictions and organisations beyond OECD membership. This is illustrated by the use of CSTP work by international organisations and regional fora, as well as by the collaborations developed by the CSTP in the delivery of its programme of work with other international organisations which are active in the STI policy area (e.g. World Bank, UNESCO Institute for Statistics, Ibero-American and Inter-American Network of Science and Technology Indicators - RICYT). CSTP has also built a strong collaboration with the European

Union (EU) which has led to mutually beneficial outcomes, such as the streamlining of data collection exercises by both organisations. CSTP products and data are also frequently used in the context of STI policy making in non-OECD Members. This has been facilitated by the regular participation of non-Members in committee meetings, as well as in committee projects, events and data collection exercises.

CSTP also acted as an internal collaboration hub through its engagement with other OECD bodies, ranging from simple interactions on specific products or events, to the participation in long-term collaborations such as OECD Horizontal Projects. The demand for collaboration with CSTP from other OECD committees is high, which makes it important for the CSTP to establish a clear approach and priorities regarding such collaborations, including key areas of work within which it wishes to engage in such horizontal partnerships.

While CSTP's policy impact is substantial, it revolves around a small group of themes and products. Only a fraction of the products developed by the Committee during the review period, account for a majority of contributions to policy changes achieved by CSTP. CSTP's contribution to policymaking is mainly found in the areas of STI statistics, Mission-Oriented Innovation Policy (MOIP), Research and Development (R&D) tax incentives, and national innovation system reviews. The policy contributions of other committee products and lines of work including the STIP Compass, the Global Forum on the Knowledge Economy (GFKE), COVID-19 briefs, and some of the legal instruments under its responsibility, are less explicit.

While several dimensions of committee functioning have met high standards (e.g., management of the Committee during COVID-19, transparency of PWB development process, collaboration among subsidiary bodies, horizontal collaboration with other OECD bodies, collaboration with the European Union and BIAC); other elements are characterised by high levels of complexity and fragmentation. The differences in the status of committee subsidiary bodies (i.e., Part I vs. Part II) represent a potential limitation to the committee's internal coherence and may generate an uneven field for Member and/or non-Member participation in CSTP and its subsidiary bodies. Although created in 2015, the BNCT is yet to complete its consolidation process around a clearly defined and commonly accepted identity and, vision. While certain aspects of BNCT's work are highly appreciated by some OECD Members, the BNCT continued to witness low levels of capital-based delegate participation during the review period.

CSTP's work programming architecture and reporting procedures are complex and do not always reflect the committee substructure and project architecture. Other areas for potential improvement to committee functioning include reviewing the approach to committee observers, improving the timeliness of meeting document distribution, streamlining its web presence, enhancing the internal project evaluation culture, and enhancing communications with the Trade Union Advisory Committee (TUAC). Finally, CSTP's "modes of operation" guidelines adopted in 2011 are outdated and should be reviewed to reflect existing practices.

Assessment¹

<i>Relevance</i>	<i>High</i>
<i>Effectiveness</i>	<i>Medium to High</i>
<i>Quality of Committee Products</i>	<i>High to Very High</i>
<i>Committee functioning</i>	<i>Satisfactory</i>

Recommendations

Recommendation N° 1: The Committee should discuss the scope and relevance of its ambitions in the field of international co-operation, in view of the divergent relevance and impact assessment results of this area in OECD Members.

Recommendation N° 2: The Committee should identify and analyse the factors explaining the limited use and impact of a high share of outputs developed during the review period. On this basis, it could consider options to streamline its programme of work to focus on the development of high-value and impact outputs and lines of work.

Recommendation N° 3: The Committee should review and update its “modes of operation” guidelines to reflect its current practices and to make sure that they align with OECD rules and established practice, which would facilitate delegate understanding of committee functioning. This should be accompanied by increased efforts to ensure a timely distribution of committee documents; as well as potential improvements to the project ranking system used in the context of the Programme of Work and Budget development process.

Recommendation N° 4: The Committee should strengthen its self-evaluation culture and practices, especially with regard to large and strategically important projects and events. This should include the use of a more robust approach to its participation in the Programme Implementation Report (PIR) biennial survey.

Recommendation N° 5: The Committee should review and update its collaborations with international organisations in its work and activities, including participation to its meetings, in line with the nature, frequency and relevance of these collaborations.

Recommendation N° 6: The Committee should benefit from recent changes in leadership at TUAC and its confirmed interest in collaborating with CSTP, to explore opportunities to strengthen collaboration and mutual communications.

Recommendation N° 7: The Committee should discuss options to strengthen the coherence of its substructure and informal groups, mainly by discussing the possibility to formalise the informal groups overseeing the IPSO projects, and the impact of the funding of the GSF through the part II of the OECD budget.

Recommendation N° 8: The Committee should clarify, and possibly adjust, the scope of BNCT’s objectives, and fields of intervention, in line with the expectations of OECD Members, and their level of participation in the subsidiary body.

¹ Relevance, effectiveness and quality are rated on a 9-point scale (Very Low / Very Low to Low / Low / Low to Medium / Medium / Medium to High / High / High to Very High / Very High); committee functioning is rated on a 5-point scale (Poor / Fair / Satisfactory / Highly Satisfactory / Excellent).

Recommendation N° 9: The Committee should discuss its web presence after the launch of the new oecd.org site and Content Management System (CMS), in order to make suggestions to simplify, standardise and streamline its web presence.