

Foreword

This report is part of the series of “best practice principles” produced under the auspices of the OECD Regulatory Policy Committee.

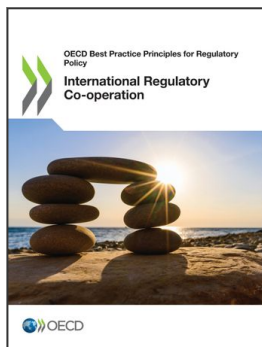
Established domestic regulatory mechanisms and tools are reaching their limits to cope with transboundary challenges. The rapid internationalisation of markets, goods, flows, as well as common threats such as the COVID-19 pandemic presents unprecedented challenges to policy makers and regulators that cannot be dealt with in isolation. There is an urgent need for more consistent, resilient and dynamic rules to face the increasing complexity of issues. International regulatory co-operation (IRC) provides an opportunity for countries to consider the impacts of their regulations beyond their borders, expand the evidence basis for decision making learning from the experience of their international peers, and develop concerted approaches to challenges that transcend borders. As part of custom regulatory activities, IRC can strengthen the competence of public administrations on global issues.

The OECD Regulatory Policy Committee (RPC) has played a leading international role in promoting regulatory reform and sound regulatory practices across the whole of government. It identified the importance of IRC as early as 1994 and systematically collected a profound *acquis* on analytical work from 2011. Pursuant to the visionary Principle 12 of the 2012 Recommendation on Regulatory Policy and Governance [[OECD/LEGAL/0309](#)], which encourages Adherents to “*give consideration to all relevant international standards and frameworks for co-operation in the same field and, where appropriate, their likely effects on parties outside the jurisdiction*”, RPC work has taken several directions. It has stabilised the definitions and key concepts around IRC; investigating the various IRC approaches through a range of studies of specific sectors (i.e. financial sector), policy areas (i.e. competition) or approaches (i.e. mutual recognition); unpacking the interface between regulatory and trade policy; highlighting the contribution of international organisations; analysing the national levers for embedding IRC in domestic rulemaking; and led to the development of dedicated IRC platforms (such as the Partnership of International Organisations for Effective International Rulemaking). With the Best Practice Principles on International Regulatory Co-operation (“Best Practice Principles”), the RPC builds on and synthesises this work and consolidates its role as the only international forum with recognised expertise on regulatory policy and with a well-established normative basis on IRC.

The Best Practice Principles intend to assist policymakers and civil servants with practical guidance to make better use of IRC. They outline essential steps in defining a whole of government strategy and governance, to embed international considerations throughout the regulatory design, development and delivery, and to leverage bilateral, regional and multilateral co-operation on regulatory matters to support national policy objectives.

The Best Practice Principles bring together expertise from a broad range of stakeholders. Beyond leveraging the wealth of knowledge of the OECD RPC members, a public consultation conducted in January – March 2021 led to valuable inputs from governments, international organisations, civil society, and different OECD policy communities.

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