



Government of Canada

Gouvernement du Canada



# Canada and the OECD Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises

## Promoting Corporate Social Responsibility



### What Are the (OECD) Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises (“Guidelines”)?

Canada is a member of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) and a signatory to the Guidelines. The Guidelines are a government-endorsed framework of voluntary standards and principles for responsible business conduct. The Guidelines provide general and specific recommendations in the following areas:

**General Policies:** Sets out general areas of good corporate behaviour, including contributing to sustainable development and respecting human rights.

**Disclosure:** Covers the public dissemination by multinational enterprises (MNEs) of reliable and relevant information on their activities.

**Employment and Industrial Relations:** Covers issues of non-discrimination, forced labour, child labour, and freedom of association and collective bargaining.

**Environment:** Covers issues such as MNEs’ environmental management systems and the environmental impact of their actions.

**Combating Bribery:** Aims to eliminate bribery of foreign public officials.

**Consumer Interest:** Seeks to ensure that MNEs respect consumer rights, including those on quality and safety of products.

**Science and Technology:** Recognizes that MNEs can have a significant role to play in improving local knowledge without compromising their intellectual property rights.

**Competition:** Promotes respect for competition rules and avoidance of anti-competitive behaviour.

**Taxation:** Addresses MNE compliance with tax laws and regulations.

The Guidelines are a part of the OECD Declaration on International Investment and Multinational Enterprises which provides a balanced framework to improve the international investment climate and encourages the positive contribution enterprises can make to sustainable development. The Guidelines also aim to prevent misunderstandings and build an atmosphere of mutual confidence and predictability between enterprises, labour, governments and society as a whole.

The thirty OECD member governments and several non-member governments have endorsed the Guidelines and thus represent the “adhering countries”\*. Business interests in the Guidelines are officially represented at the OECD by the Business and Industry Advisory Committee (BIAC). The Canadian Council of International Business is the Canadian representative to BIAC. Labour interests are officially represented at the OECD by the Trade Union Advisory Committee (TUAC).

The Canadian voices in TUAC are the Canadian Labour Congress and the Confédération des syndicats nationaux. Other organizations in Canada have an interest in the Guidelines as well.

### Implementing the Guidelines in Canada — The Canadian National Contact Point

As a signatory to the Guidelines, Canada is obligated to establish a National Contact Point (NCP). The NCP is responsible for promoting the Guidelines nationally to ensure that they are well known and understood by the business community and other interested parties. It is also responsible for handling inquiries and assisting in resolving issues that arise concerning specific instances of business conduct. The Canadian NCP is a government entity involving the participation of several departments, including Foreign Affairs and International Trade, Industry, Human Resources Development, Finance, Environment, Natural Resources and the Canadian International Development Agency.

### Canadian Companies and the OECD Guidelines

The Guidelines represent good practices for all companies. Its recommendations are voluntary and are directed specifically at multinational

enterprises operating in or from the “adhering countries”. In Canada, they are addressed to multinational enterprises operating within our borders as well as to the overseas operations of Canadian firms.

### Using the Guidelines as a Tool for Corporate Social Responsibility

The Guidelines seek to reinforce and complement private voluntary initiatives by providing a common frame of reference and an institutional home for international efforts to encourage progress in the area of corporate social responsibility.

### Contact Information

To obtain a copy of the Guidelines and related information please visit our website at [www.ncp-pcn.gc.ca](http://www.ncp-pcn.gc.ca), or contact us by phone at **613-996-3324**, facsimile at **613-944-0679** or email at [ncp.pcn@international.gc.ca](mailto:ncp.pcn@international.gc.ca)

\* *Adhering Countries: OECD Members* – Australia, Austria, Belgium, Canada, Czech Republic, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Korea, Luxembourg, Mexico, Norway, New Zealand, Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Slovak Republic, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey, United Kingdom, United States; *Non-Members* – Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Estonia, Israel, Latvia, Lithuania, Romania, Slovenia.