

# Policy Note



## Working with partners in 2014

**"The G20 is not about us in government; it's about the people, our masters."**

Tony Abbott, Prime Minister of Australia, World Economic Forum, January 2014

### Engaging across the G20

G20 governments recognise that an active dialogue with the public is crucial to ensuring the G20's work lifts growth and increases employment opportunities for all citizens. Since the first G20 Leaders' Summit in November 2008, five official engagement groups – the Business 20 (B20), Civil Society 20 (C20), Labour 20 (L20), Think 20 (T20) and Youth 20 (Y20) – have been established, gathering key economic and social actors across the G20 to inform the G20's decisions.

Independent from government, these groups share with the G20 a desire to build prosperity for all people across emerging and developed economies. They provide advice on what the G20 can do to tackle global economic challenges, identify their own actions to support shared G20 goals and work with the G20 to advocate and implement Leaders' decisions. Governments need strong public support to put G20 decisions into action.

The engagement groups help build understanding and support for the G20's work, giving Leaders the confidence to move ahead with reform. They help the G20 to be accountable to the public and reflect the concerns of the people it seeks to benefit.

In September 2013, G20 Leaders announced in their fifth anniversary Vision Statement their intention to strengthen engagement with the B20, C20, L20, T20 and Y20. Australia has honoured that vision during its G20 presidency.

### INFORMING THE G20'S WORK

At the start of its presidency, Australia invited the engagement groups to identify practical actions countries can take to tackle global economic challenges and to consider how they can help G20 members to implement G20 decisions. Each group scheduled a major meeting in Australia in 2014, and all have developed recommendations that will inform G20 Leaders' deliberations at the Brisbane Summit in November.

The Australian presidency has connected these groups and G20 members to ensure their recommendations are taken into account.

In 2014, engagement groups advised G20 members on actions they could take to increase global growth and employment, and build economic resilience. The engagement groups have been deeply involved in G20 discussions this year, meeting with ministers, Sherpas, Finance and Central Bank Deputies and the G20's various working groups.



Leaders of G20 engagement groups present at a session of the first Sherpa meeting under Australia's presidency in Sydney on December 2013. (L-R) Holly Ransom (Y20), Rev Tim Costello AO (C20), Mike Callaghan AM PSM (T20), Heather Smith (Australian Sherpa), Sharan Burrow and Ged Kearney (L20)

### ISSUES OF COMMON INTEREST

By working with the engagement groups, the G20 has benefited from a diverse range of views, leading to significant progress on issues where the groups and the G20 agree.

The engagement groups agreed on the need to close the global infrastructure gap. The Australian G20 presidency has emphasised infrastructure, considering the recommendations of engagement groups such as the B20's proposal for a global infrastructure hub. In October, the B20, C20 and L20 hosted a discussion on infrastructure with Australian civil society and business leaders and released a joint

statement outlining shared goals and key recommendations to G20 members.

The groups, particularly the L20 and Y20, have consistently called for the G20 to boost female participation in the workforce and address youth unemployment. These issues were discussed at the September Labour and Employment Ministers Meeting. Ministers concluded that G20 action was needed to address the fact that women have a lower rate of employment participation than men and the fact that more than 74 million young people across the globe are out of work.

The B20 has helpfully informed the G20's trade work, underlining the need for countries to improve business access to global markets and value chains. The C20 and L20 highlight growing inequality in many G20 countries and the need for growth to be inclusive.

Several engagement groups also recommended a strong response to address international tax avoidance and improve transparency, issues on which the G20 has made significant progress this year.

## HIGHLIGHTS FROM 2014

During Australia's host year engagement groups participated in dialogue with senior officials and in ministerial meetings.

Engagement groups met with senior G20 officials at the first Sherpa meeting in December 2013 and shared initial thinking and plans for the year ahead.

In May 2014 Australia hosted a roundtable with the engagement groups at which Australia's Parliamentary Secretary to the Prime Minister, Josh Frydenberg, Australia's G20 Sherpa, Heather Smith, and Finance Deputy, Barry Sterland PSM, updated them on the G20's progress and heard about engagement group priorities.

In June, Sherpas and Finance Deputies jointly met with G20 engagement groups to hear their views on priorities for the Brisbane Summit, the first such meeting with representatives of the B20, C20, L20, T20 and Y20.

Engagement groups also were involved with G20 working groups, including in meetings and workshops held by the



*Policy makers and business leaders came together several times in 2014 to identify practical measures to lift infrastructure investment worldwide. (L-R) Treasurer Joe Hockey, B20 Chair Richard Goyder AO, B20 Sherpa Robert Milliner and B20 taskforce chair David Thodey in Sydney on 21 February for the first joint G20 and B20 roundtable discussion*

Taskforce for Employment, the Energy Sustainability Working Group, the Anti-Corruption Working Group, the Development Working Group, and the Investment and Infrastructure Working Group.

## MEETINGS WITH MINISTERS

The Treasurer chaired a joint G20-B20 infrastructure roundtable in February. Discussions focused on challenges associated with unlocking private sector investment in infrastructure, and practical measures the G20 and B20 can take to lift investment and facilitate further private sector involvement.

The B20 attended the Trade Ministers Meeting in July, helping to focus deliberations on how trade can drive growth and work better for business. G20 Trade Ministers considered B20 recommendations, which identified actions G20 members could take to support trade growth and help lift the G20's collective GDP by more than 2 per cent above the current trajectory over the next five years.

In September the L20, B20, C20 and Y20 presented their recommendations at the G20 Labour and Employment Ministers Meeting. Engagement groups also discussed with ministers the challenges and opportunities in implementing reform and the supporting role played

by the non-government sector. Labour and Employment Ministers underlined the importance of dialogue with the engagement groups in delivering stronger labour market outcomes.

Discussions covered job creation, overcoming the mismatch of skills and combatting long-term unemployment. Increasing the participation of women and young people in formal employment are priorities of the G20 and the engagement groups. Participants also discussed how governments, international organisations and non-government

*We appreciate the role of the Business 20 and Labour 20 in the G20 process, and the importance of social dialogue in delivering stronger labour market outcomes. We also welcome the dialogue held with civil society, youth and think tanks.*

*Labour and Employment Ministers, Ministerial Declaration, 11 September 2014*

sectors can work together to improve employment outcomes in G20 economies.

The groups helped set the tone for the Finance Ministers and Central Bank Governors Meeting in Cairns in September through an informal session with Ministers before the meeting.

## ABOUT THE G20 ENGAGEMENT GROUPS



### Business 20

The B20 brings together business leaders from across the G20 to advise G20 Leaders on policy. As the main driver of economic activity, the private sector plays a key role in achieving strong, sustainable and balanced growth. Business representatives have been involved in G20 Leaders' Summits since 2008. The B20 became a formal group in 2010.

This year the B20 has been organised by the Australian B20 Leadership Group, chaired by Richard Goyder AO, Managing Director and CEO of Wesfarmers. Robert Milliner is the B20 Sherpa and a Senior Adviser at UBS.

At its Summit in July, which brought together nearly 400 business leaders from across the G20, the B20 made recommendations on financing for growth, human capital, investment and infrastructure, trade and

anti-corruption. Australian Prime Minister Tony Abbott, Australian Treasurer Joe Hockey, and Australian Minister for Trade and Investment Andrew Robb participated.

*Profitable private businesses are at the heart of the strong economy that's needed for a strong and stable society.*

Australian Prime Minister Tony Abbott,  
Address at the B20 Summit in Sydney,  
17 July 2014



Prime Minister Tony Abbott and B20 Chair Richard Goyder AO at the B20 Australia Summit in Sydney on 17 July



Foreign Minister Julie Bishop delivers the keynote address to the C20 Summit in Melbourne on 20 June



### Civil Society 20

The C20 gathers independent civil society organisations to advise to the G20 using the sector's broad expertise, experience and knowledge. Civil society's involvement reflects the G20's recognition of the need for economic growth to benefit all citizens, particularly the most disadvantaged. A substantive dialogue with civil society was initiated in 2012 and the first C20 Summit was held in 2013.

The C20 has been run by the C20 Steering Committee, chaired by World Vision Australia CEO Rev Tim Costello AO. The C20 held its summit in Melbourne in June, and developed recommendations on inclusive growth and employment, infrastructure, and climate and sustainability. It was attended by Australian Minister for Foreign Affairs Julie Bishop and Australian Minister for Social Services Kevin Andrews. Australian Prime Minister Tony Abbott received the C20 Summit communique, and discussed the recommendations with an international group of C20 representatives.

*The C20 has an important role in presenting the voices of the world's most vulnerable to G20 Leaders.*

Australian Foreign Minister Julie Bishop,  
Address to C20 Summit in Melbourne,  
20 June 2014



### Labour 20

The L20 represents the perspectives of international organised labour, a key stakeholder given the G20's focus on creating and enriching jobs.

Organised labour has been involved in the G20 since 2008, and the L20 was formalised in 2011. The L20 is organised annually by the International Trade Union Confederation and the OECD's Trade Union Advisory Council, working this year with the Australian L20 Steering Group, chaired by Ged Kearney, President of the Australian Council of Trade Unions.

The L20 had a significant presence at this year's G20 Labour and Employment Ministers Meeting, where it presented its views including on reducing inequality, infrastructure investment and implementing structural reforms to lift employment and support quality work.

The L20 will hold an international summit in Brisbane on 13–14 November.



### Think 20

The T20 brings together international think tanks and academics to undertake research and share knowledge on G20 issues. T20 meetings have been held since its inception in 2012.

The G20 Studies Centre at the Lowy Institute, headed by Mike Callaghan AM PSM led the T20 process in 2014.

It hosted a major international conference in Sydney in December 2013, which produced T20 papers making recommendations on trade, infrastructure and investment, development, and G20 goals and processes. A second T20 conference, held in Melbourne in June 2014, focused on strengthening the G20's accountability and effectiveness and was attended by several G20 Sherpas.

Experts from leading think tanks and universities from G20 countries took part in a Think 20 seminar on 28 October in Sydney. Public forums were held on 28 and 29 October in Sydney and Brisbane to discuss what to expect from the Brisbane Summit.



## Youth 20

The Y20 is a meeting of young leaders from across the G20 that seeks to build skills, expand networks, and contribute to addressing economic challenges and promoting opportunities for young people. The G20 recognises the long-lasting and far-reaching effect G20 decisions have on young people across the globe.

G20-related youth events have been held since 2010, and were first included in the G20 calendar in 2012.

In 2014, the Y20 has been organised by the Australian Y20 Planning Group, co-chaired by Holly Ransom and Josh Zwar. The Y20 held its major summit in Sydney in July, where it developed recommendations on growth and jobs creation, global citizenship (education and labour mobility), and sustainable development. Australian Parliamentary Secretary for Education Scott Ryan and Australian G20 Sherpa Heather Smith attended and Australian Treasurer Joe Hockey received the Y20 Summit communique.



L20 leaders Ged Kearney and Sharan Burrow at the G20 Labour and Employment Ministers Meeting social dialogue session with engagement groups (B20, C20, L20 and Y20), in Melbourne, September 2014



Mr Mike Callaghan AM PSM (T20), speaking at the G20 Engagement Roundtable in Canberra in May



Treasurer Joe Hockey receives Y20 recommendations from Y20 Co-chairs Holly Ransom and Josh Zwar in Canberra in July