Mission to Mexico
On 2 May, the OECD Chief of Staff and Sherpa, Ms Gabriela Ramos, was in Mexico City to hold a number of meetings with Ministers and other high-level officials. During her meeting with Ms Helena Hofbauer Balmori, Director of the Ford Foundation for Mexico and Central America, Ms Ramos informed Ms Hofbauer about the growing OECD collaboration with foundations in the promotion of an inclusive growth agenda. She acknowledged the long-standing good relations between the Ford Foundation and the OECD. She also mentioned that the OECD has launched a Foundation Leaders Roundtable which will be meeting annually in the margins of the OECD Forum to discuss key issues of joint interest. She finally invited Ford Foundation to strengthen its partnership with the OECD and to explore possibilities of joint work on civic engagement.

UNICEF Advisory Group, New York
On 3 May, Ms Gabriela Ramos addressed the Inaugural Meeting of the UNICEF Advisory Group at the United Nations headquarters in New York. In her remarks, she stressed that child income poverty rate is unacceptably high and that it has increased in almost two-thirds of OECD countries since the start of the crisis. She highlighted that poverty has devastating impacts on children and that there is a risk that with growing digital divides, existing inequalities may deepen. As such, Ms Ramos recommended increasing the focus and resources on early childhood education and care (ECEC); encouraging stable, full-time parental employment; strengthening anti-poverty strategies; and improving social safety nets. She stressed the urgent need to tackle challenges such as child labour, child marriage and the online protection of children. Lastly, she encouraged UNICEF to remain ambitious in its targets for improving the well-being of the world’s most vulnerable children, and insisted that the OECD is ready to work closely with UNICEF to continue improving the data bank of evidence on children’s outcomes.

G7 Gender Ministerial, Paris
On 10 May, Ms Gabriela Ramos participated in the G7 Gender Ministerial Meeting Session with the Gender Equality Advisory Council (GEAC), in Paris. In her remarks, she noted that the OECD Social Institutions and Gender Index (SIGI) identifies legal weaknesses and loopholes and demonstrates how laws are making a difference. However, she mentioned that although law adoption is necessary, it is not sufficient. Countries should further exchange good practices on the adoption and implementation of legislation, as well as track the progress and quantify the impact of countries’ efforts on gender equality. She added that the OECD Recommendation on Gender Equality in Public Life calls for concrete implementation criteria to be associated to policy reforms.

G7 Digital Ministerial, Paris
On 14-16 May, Ms Gabriela Ramos participated in the G7 Digital Economy Ministerial. Addressing the session “Strengthening international cooperation on a human-centric AI and its use against inequality”, Ms Ramos stated that increased investments in Artificial Intelligence reflect the hopes and expectations that this technology will contribute to improving people’s lives. However, she emphasised that the future of AI will depend on our common and coordinated ability to create a predictable, stable policy environment that fosters innovation in trustworthy AI. Ms Ramos added that the OECD Recommendation on AI calls for systems that respect human rights and democratic values; systems that are transparent and explainable, as well as secure, safe and accountable.

On the session on “How to effectively fight online harms?”, Ms Ramos highlighted that, besides the many benefits that the digital transformation has brought, it has also enabled the faster dissemination of negative social interactions, including cyberbullying, hate speech and discrimination against specific groups. As such, she stressed the need to combat misuses of the Internet, while preserving freedom of expression and innovation.

On the session on “Building Trust in Data-Driven Technologies and Digital Infrastructure Together”, Ms Ramos underlined that data is an invaluable resource as a driver of productivity and innovation. She added that it also poses various challenges in terms of their governance, including: management of data availability, accessibility, usability, integrity, privacy and security. As such, she stressed the need to better understand and account for the heterogeneity of data; as well as to build capacities for data analytics, comprehensive and coherent national approaches, and strong international co-operation on data.