

Leading in  
the New  
Reality

BCG

*Hans-Paul Bürkner, BCG's chairman and my predecessor as CEO, has led BCG's support to the B20 for many years. I've asked him to share some thoughts with you about the summit this week.*

To BCG's network around the world,

The [B20 Summit](#) starts today in a virtual format for the first time in history to share the business community's recommendations to the G20, ahead of that group's annual event set to take place at the end of November.

For this B20—the seventh in which BCG has collaborated with the forum as a knowledge partner—we worked on three of the summit's six final task forces: Digitization, Trade & Investment, and Energy, Sustainability & Climate. Here is a summary of the recommendations and a link to each report.



#### Digitization



- Enable and support a resilient digital infrastructure
- Support the healthy development and adoption of AI
- Lay the foundation for smart cities
- Drive digital inclusion and increase digital skills



#### Trade & Investment



- Strengthen the multilateral trade and investment system
- Foster the growth of e-commerce
- Promote the services and trade finance agendas
- Promote sustainable trade and investment



- Commit to action toward carbon neutrality
- Provide predictable, effective policy frameworks to achieve carbon neutrality
- Strengthen the climate resilience of infrastructure
- Promote the sustainable use of freshwater systems and oceans

In all the years I have guided our work with the B20, 2020 was the most challenging. The three topics we worked on—all part of recent mainstream thinking, with broad alignment on their importance—have taken on a sudden sense of urgency and increased complexity amid a pandemic and broad geopolitical uncertainty around the world.

For example, the need for faster digital transformation was clearly on everybody's mind, as 2020 has reinforced the many benefits of technology. But we had to address ways of balancing the digital imperative with worries about the potential for technology to create problems in job markets and possible risks to privacy and security.

And for many years, trade and investments were widely regarded as key drivers of global growth and improved standards of living. Now, while many business leaders are still pushing for removing trade and investment obstacles, government representatives insist on careful wording that reflects a range of points of view and does not rule out certain policies.

Energy, sustainability, and climate were, of course, very complicated matters, too. It was a huge task to find a way to advance the date at which we can reach net-zero emissions while enabling the suppliers of conventional energy to transform themselves in due time. Quite honestly, a lot more work needs to be done to get there.

But despite the difficulties, the results we reached are remarkable—especially in a year of such uncertainty. The goal is not to offer yearly breakthroughs. Instead, we work on a path of steady progress to get a better understanding of the differences and come closer to alignment on key issues in the business community and the world at-large. Through these efforts, we see important results year after year.

BCG will stay involved as a knowledge partner for the next cycle, as Italy takes over the B20 and G20 presidencies from Saudi Arabia beginning December 1, 2020. We are prouder than ever to contribute to multilateral decision making in a world struggling with unprecedented challenges.



Hans-Paul Bürkner  
Chairman



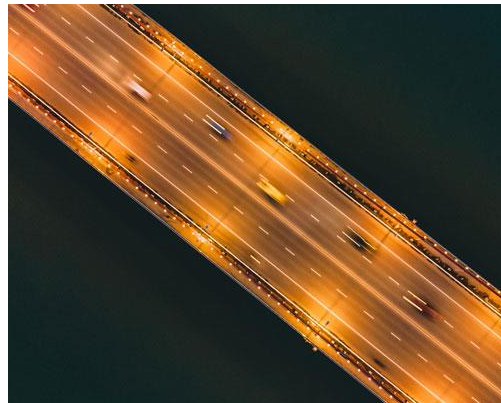
## How to Accelerate Digital

The pandemic has forced organizations to jump-start their adoption of digital technologies. Now the task is to embed their digital approaches.



### Why the New Competitive Advantage Demands Sustainability

Companies can no longer simply  
focus on maximizing total



### The \$10 Trillion Case for Open Trade

Compared to a future of rising  
protectionism, fair trade would lead  
to gains of \$2 trillion in global GDP

shareholder returns. To win, they must hone sustainable business models.

annually, through 2025—and much faster economic recovery from COVID-19.