

# Foreword

The *Economic Outlook for Southeast Asia, China and India* is a biannual publication on Asia's regional economic growth, development and regional integration processes. It focuses on the economic conditions of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) member countries (Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Indonesia, Lao PDR, Malaysia, Myanmar, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Viet Nam) and two large economies in the region, China and India.

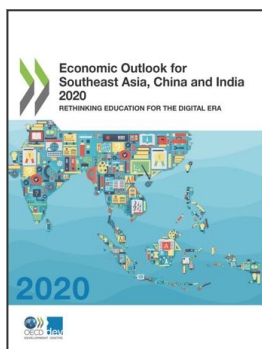
Beginning with the first release of the *Update of the Outlook* in 2018, following the *Special Supplements* of the 2016 and 2017 editions, the *Outlook* has become a biannual publication to ensure that the projections, data and analysis remain current and useful. The first issue of the report will be released in the fall and its update released the following spring. This publication evolved from the *Southeast Asian Economic Outlook*.

The *Outlook* was initially proposed at an informal reflection group on Southeast Asia in 2008 as a follow-up of the Council Meeting at Ministerial level (MCM) in 2007 and was accepted by ministers/senior officials from ASEAN countries at the occasion of the 2nd OECD-Southeast Asia Regional Forum in Bangkok in 2009. The *Outlook* project was officially launched in 2010 and each edition is regularly presented at the occasion of the ASEAN/East Asia Summit. It was included in the OECD's Southeast Asia Regional Programme (SEARP) at the Steering Group Meeting in Jakarta, Indonesia in March 2015, with its role of providing a horizontal view of activities, identifying emerging trends in the region and providing a backbone for the different streams of the Programme confirmed at the 2015 MCM. The *Outlook* serves as a strategic foresight and policy dialogue tool for the SEARP. The Outlook Consultation Group (OCG) was established in 2014 with OECD Delegations, Asian embassies in Paris.

This edition of the *Outlook* is comprised of three main parts: a regional economic monitor, a thematic focus specific to each year's report, and structural policy country notes. The 2020 edition of the *Outlook* focuses on the policy challenges for Emerging Asian countries in upgrading education for the digital era. Digitalisation and new technologies are developing rapidly, affecting businesses and the labour market. The digital era presents a huge opportunity while at the same time bringing significant risks. Education systems will therefore need to adapt to meet this new demand. Policy options to be considered in upgrading education for the digital era could include providing sufficient ICT infrastructure to schools and increasing access to ICT tools, improving ICT skills of teachers, and adapting curricula to include ICT. Closing the gender digital divide is also critical, while the role of TVET and lifelong learning will need to be enhanced as paths to digital inclusion.

The OECD Development Centre is committed to working alongside governments of developing and emerging economies and regional actors to identify key areas of intervention in order to address these challenges. The Centre enjoys the full membership of three Southeast Asian countries, namely Indonesia, Thailand and Viet Nam, as well as India and China. This project has also benefited from the generous support of other Emerging Asian countries.

The OECD is committed to supporting Asian countries in their efforts to promote economic and social well-being through rigorous analysis, peer learning and the sharing of best practices.



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