

## Foreword

The second edition of *Government at a Glance* is being published at a time when the aftermath of the financial and economic crises that started in 2008 is being felt everywhere. Reforming the financial sector, addressing persistent high unemployment, the lack of economic growth, the volatility of markets, the risk of trade and foreign direct investment restrictions and the increase in migration flows are serious policy challenges of unprecedented scope. The room for manoeuvre in most countries is further reduced through high debt and deficit levels. In fact, the speed, scope and timing of fiscal consolidation are considered by many as crucial for progress in other public policy objectives. *Government at a Glance 2011* provides key quantitative and qualitative data that can enable evidence-based decision making as well as help governments plan for the future. It allows for the comparison of government activities, practices and performance across a number of critical dimensions, and helps pinpoint areas that warrant further examination. Chapter II tackles questions about the quality of reforms announced to date in member countries.

This work was led by Zsuzsanna Lonti under the direction of Rolf Alter and Jón Ragnar Blöndal and drafted by Jordan Holt, Natalia Nolan Flecha and Alessandro Lupi. Major drafted contributions were received from Allen Schick (Chapter I on “Leveraged Governance”); Colin Forthun, Nikolai Malyshev and Elsa Pilichowski (Chapter II on “Fiscal Consolidation”); Colin Forthun, Dirk-Jan Kraan, Jean-François Leruste and William Oman (Chapter III on “Public Finance and Economics”); Elodie Beth, Janos Bertok, Maria Emma Cantera, Colin Forthun, Elsa Pilichowski and Barbara Ubaldi (Chapter IV on “Strategic Foresight and Leadership”); Elsa Pilichowski and Gabrielle Milosic (Chapter V on “Employment in General Government and Public Corporations”); Elsa Pilichowski, Jani Heikkinen and Gabrielle Milosic (Chapter VI on “Compensation in Selected Public Sector Occupations”); Elsa Pilichowski, Emmanuel Job and Gabrielle Milosic (Chapter VII on “Human Resources Management Practices”); Julio Bacio Terracino, Janos Bertok, Maria Emma Cantera, Marco Daglio, Anna Pons Vilaseca and Lisa Von Trapp (Chapter VIII on “Transparency in Governance”); Julio Bacio Terracino, Janos Bertok, Maria Emma Cantera and Anna Pons Vilaseca (Chapter IX on “Public Procurement”); Christiane Arndt, Gregory Bounds and Emmanuel Job (Chapter X on “Regulatory Governance”); Maria Emma Cantera, Marco Daglio, Jean-François Leruste and Barbara Ubaldi (Chapter XI on “Ways of Delivering Public Services”); Cumhur Bilen, Monica Brezzi, Bert Brys, Eric Charbonnier, Michael Förster, Gaetan Lafortune, Vladimir Lopez-Bassols and Jean Yip (Chapter XII on “Government Performance Indicators from Selected Sectors”). We thank Karena Garnier, Kate Lancaster, Hélène Leconte-Lucas, Jennifer Stein and Deirdre Wolfender for their help in preparing the document for publication.

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*Nadim Ahmad and Catherine La Rosa-Elkaim (OECD Statistics Directorate); Peter Hoeller, Margit Molnar and Eckhard Wurzel (OECD Economics Directorate); Philippe Burger (University of the Free State, Johannesburg, South Africa); and Stéphane Jacobzone, Josef Konvitz, Edwin Lau and Christian Vergez (OECD Public Governance and Territorial Development Directorate).*



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