

## *Foreword*

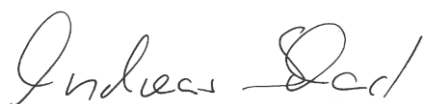
Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Mongolia, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan have recorded impressive economic growth rates since 2000, driven mainly by the export of commodities and labour. However, the end of the commodity super-cycle and the economic slowdown that followed have highlighted the risks inherent in this reliance on minerals exports and remittances, as well as the challenges to be overcome to achieve more stable and inclusive growth.

The Central Asian countries have long recognised the importance of enhancing the competitiveness of their economies, diversifying the production structures and improving resilience to external shocks. This will require ambitious reforms in the areas of governance, connectivity, and business environment.

This publication focuses mostly on aspects of the business environment and reflects several years of OECD work with Central Asian countries on access to finance, business internationalisation and skills development. Each of the country case studies presented here is the result of a country-specific project carried out by the OECD, hand-in-hand with the governments of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Mongolia, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan.

*Enhancing Competitiveness in Central Asia* is the result of co-operation between the OECD and the European Commission's Directorate General for International Co-operation and Development (DG DEVCO), in partnership with the governments of the above-mentioned countries and in consultation with international experts, representatives of the private sector and other stakeholders. The work was conducted under the aegis of the European Commission's Central Asia Invest programme and as part of the OECD Eurasia Competitiveness Programme. We look forward to continuing this collaboration on policy reforms in Central Asia and to extending it to address new and broader challenges in the future. Going forward, we will also aim to work with Central Asian countries on monitoring and advancing the pace of reform.

A more stable and inclusive growth model for the region is within reach. The OECD stands ready to continue its support for Central Asia, so that it can achieve higher growth, better jobs and better development perspectives, ultimately providing "better policies for better lives".



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