

PROJECT FACTSHEET

INVESTMENT AND COMPETITIVENESS IN CENTRAL ASIA

To promote economic development and business climate reforms across the Central Asia region, the Investment and Competitiveness in Central Asia project brings together OECD experts, governments, the private sector, other international organisations and civil society.

Objective

- Improve the business climate for small and medium enterprises (SMEs) in Central Asia.
- Encourage regional economic dialogue by helping countries design and implement SME support policies and by providing capacity building to BIOs, policy-makers and the private sector as a whole.
- Track three policy dimensions most relevant to SME development and entrepreneurship, as identified in consultation with national governments:
 - Human capital development
 - Investment policy and promotion
 - Access to finance for SMEs

Timeline

- **Assessment Phase (December 2009 – December 2010):** Assess key strengths and barriers to private sector development in the region and present instruments for analysis. Three Regional Assessment meetings were held to discuss ways in which to improve investment, competitiveness, and SME development in the targeted countries, as well as share OECD instruments addressing these challenges. Each meeting had its own distinct topic:
 - Investment Policy and Promotion (Paris, June 2010)
 - Access to Finance for SMEs (Vienna, November 2010)
 - Human Capital Development (Vienna, November 2010)
- In January 2011, the **Competitiveness Outlook Report** was published. The report highlighted the region's competitive advantages, identified key barriers to competitiveness in each of the three policy areas and presented the results of the World Economic Forum's Competitiveness Index for four of the seven countries
- **Recommendation Design Phase (January 2011 – December 2012):** Working Group meetings to design policy recommendations tailored to the 7 countries in the region and prepare for their implementation:
 - Human Capital Development with a focus on vocational education and training (Paris, December 2011)
 - Investment Policy and Promotion with a focus on business linkage programmes (Vienna, April 2012)
 - Access to Finance for SMEs with a focus on credit guarantee schemes and credit bureaus (Istanbul, September 2012)

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ In December 2012, a Competitiveness Policies and Strategies Report will be published. The report will list suggested policy reforms for targeted areas on the basis of the second series of Working Group meetings and present capacity-building measures using OECD tools and methodologies.
Structure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Regional Policy Working Groups: bring together SME and government stakeholders to discuss regional co-operation in each of the three policy areas. Each group meets twice to conduct peer reviews, exchange experiences, and develop policy recommendations to foster regional dialogue and strengthen enterprise and entrepreneurship development.
OECD Eurasia Competitiveness Programme	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ The OECD Eurasia Competitiveness Programme was launched in 2008 to support Eurasian economies in developing more vibrant and competitive markets. It includes seven countries from Central Asia (Afghanistan, Kazakhstan, the Kyrgyz Republic, Mongolia, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan) and six countries from Eastern Europe and the South Caucasus (Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, the Republic of Moldova and Ukraine). ➤ The Programme's approach leverages OECD instruments and tools in order to assess where and how to enhance the competitiveness of countries, sectors and regions to generate sustainable growth. Since its inception, the Programme has developed and implemented several regional and country specific competitiveness strategies, complemented by capacity building seminars and coaching for policy makers.
Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ A mission to promote policies that will improve the economic and social well-being of people around the world. ➤ A forum to address the economic, social, and governance challenges of globalisation. ➤ A setting where governments can compare policy experiences, seek answers to common problems, identify good practice, and co-ordinate domestic and international policies.

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