

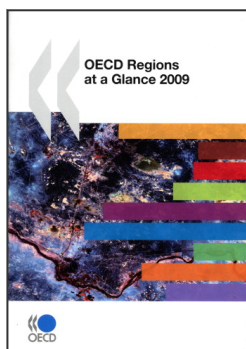
## Foreword

**W**ith the right development policies, regional economies can boost national growth. Comparing and improving a region's competitiveness in the global arena requires sound statistics and data, but such information is often limited and difficult to compare across countries.

Regions at a Glance aims to respond to this need. It is a unique source of information for policy makers, researchers and citizens illustrating, with the use of graphs and maps drawn from the OECD Regional Database, trends and differences among OECD regions on demography, economics, employment, education, health care, environmental outputs and knowledge based activities.

This edition of Regions at a Glance is organised around four major themes, with a special focus on regional innovation. Part I looks at the role of innovation in regional competitiveness and national economic growth. Part II highlights how regional assets tend to be concentrated geographically, and the impact on national growth of such an economic agglomeration. Part III examines the often large and persistent economic disparities among regions of the same country, suggesting that market mechanisms and prosperity spillover effects may be insufficient or slow to take root. It identifies unused resources that can be mobilised to maximize regions' competitive edge and improve economic performance. The geographic concentration of resources and the ability to exploit them are drawn together in Part IV, where a region's economic growth is examined in detail in order to highlight the impact of certain key factors. Finally, Part V underlines the important interplay between individual well-being and the collective good. Improved access to high quality public services – such as health, education, quality of environment and security – not only gives citizens the possibility of sharing the benefits of economic growth, but also strengthens a region's competitiveness.

Regions at a Glance is co-ordinated by Monica Brezzi, Directorate of Public Governance and Territorial Development. This edition was prepared by Brunella Boselli, Monica Brezzi, Enrique Garcilazo and Vicente Ruiz. Eric Gonnard contributed to the statistical data needed for the publication. Delegates of the Territorial Development Policy Committee (TDPC) and its Working Party on Territorial Indicators (WPTI) helped to shape the policy framework and the statistical tools to measure regional economies used in this publication.



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