



**Analytical Report 2013/03**

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# **Urbanization in Central Asia: Challenges, Issues and Prospects**

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**Tashkent 2013**

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### **Abbreviations**

<b>CER</b>	Center for Economic Research
<b>CIA</b>	Central Intelligence Agency
<b>CIS</b>	Commonwealth of Independent States
<b>ESCAP</b>	Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific
<b>GDP</b>	Gross domestic product
<b>GRP</b>	Gross regional product
<b>IT</b>	Information technology
<b>NGO</b>	Non-governmental organization
<b>SMCs</b>	Small and medium-sized cities
<b>SMEs</b>	Small and medium-sized enterprises
<b>TIC</b>	Territorial industrial complex
<b>UNDESA</b>	United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs
<b>UNDP</b>	United Nations Development Programme
<b>UNFPA</b>	United Nations Population Fund
<b>USSR</b>	Union of Soviet Socialist Republics
<b>UTS</b>	Urban-type settlements

## Foreword

The history of Central Asian cities goes back thousands of years. Located along the Great Silk Road, Tashkent, Osh, Khujand, Samarkand, Bukhara, Khiva, Tashkent, Mary and other cities in the region emerged as centers of intercontinental trade, diplomacy and cultural dialogue. In the more recent past, the cities of the region have undergone complex political, economic, social and cultural transformations that have affected their status and roles.

Under Soviet rule new cities and municipalities were created in Central Asia primarily to meet the needs of the USSR's national economy. Many of those urban settlements were established as "monocities" (or company towns). After 1991, many urban settlements in Central Asia underwent a decline in economic activity and hence a decrease in local budget revenues and deterioration of urban infrastructure. They also had limited capacity to manage urban development under market conditions.

Central Asian countries have taken different approaches to urban development in their effort to re-establish urban governance systems and support social and economic development in urban areas. Each country's record includes both successes and failures, which must be carefully studied to assist governments and development partners in streamlining their policies and addressing future challenges of urban development in Central Asia.

Since 2011, the Center for Economic Research, with support from ESCAP and UNDP Uzbekistan, has been implementing a "Sustainable Urban Infrastructure Development" Project. The first phase of the Project (2011) focused on issues of urban development in Uzbekistan and resulted in a comprehensive report, presented during the international workshop on July 5-6, 2011, in Tashkent.

This report is the product of the Project's second phase, which focused

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