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Cover; Contents; Erratum; Introduction and Overview; Tables; 1. European Countries: Real GDP Growth and CPI Inflation, 2009-12; 1. Advanced Europe: Reversing the Slide; Divergent Recoveries, but a Synchronized Slowdown?; Figures; 1.1. Selected Advanced European Countries: Sectoral Debt Levels, 2010; 1.2. Selected Advanced European Countries: Export Market Share, 2000 and 2010; 1.3. Selected Advanced European Countries: Real GDP, 2007:Q1-2011:Q2: 1.4. Euro Area: Contributions to GDP Growth, 2006:Q1-2011:Q2; 1.5. Euro Area Countries and United Kingdom: External Imbalances, 2009-11 1.6. Selected European Countries: Drivers of Public Debt Increase, 2007-111.7. Euro Area and Selected Countries: Monetary Policy Stance, 2009-11; 1.8. Euro Area and United Kingdom: Headline and Core Inflation, January 2006-July 2011; 1.9. Selected European Countries: Tangible Common Equity and Wholesale Funding Ratio, 2007-10; 1.10. Selected European Countries: Financial Sector Assets Relative to Size of Economy, 2010; 1.11. Selected European Countries and the United States: Unemployment Rate, January 2006-July 2011; Boxes; 1.1. Labor Reforms in the Euro Area: Still Too Little? New Headwinds from an Escalating Euro Area Sovereign Crisis1.12. Euro Area: Mergers and Acquisitions by Nationality of Buyer, 2005-11; 1.13. Euro Area: Banking Sector Risk Index, 2007-11; 1.14. Selected European Countries: Key Short-Term Indicators, 2006-11; Policies to Stop the Slide; 1.15. Selected European Countries: Decomposition of 10-Year Government Bond Spreads vis-a-vis OIS Rate, 2009:Q3-2011: Q2; 1.16. Selected Advanced Countries: Claims on Domestic Banks and Public Sector, 2009:Q4 and 2011:Q1; 1.1. Advanced European Countries: Main Macroeconomic Indicators, 2009-12 1.17. Selected Advanced European Countries: Changes in General Government Fiscal Deficits, 2010-131.2. Monetary Policy and Bank Performance in Advanced Europe; 1.3. Macro-prudential Reforms in the EU: Objectives and Progress; 2. Emerging Europe: Reducing Vulnerabilities to Prevent Financial Turmoil; Developments in the First Half of 2011; 2.1. Emerging Europe: Contributions to GDP Growth; 2.2. Global Markets: Commodity Prices, January 2006-August 2011; 2.3. Emerging Europe: Real Private Sector Credit Growth, 2007-08 versus Latest: 2.4. Emerging Europe: Real GDP

2.5. Emerging Europe: Inflation, January 2008-July 20112.6. Emerging Europe: Industrial Production, January 2008-July 2011; Outlook for the Remainder of 2011 and 2012; 2.7. Emerging Europe: Consumer Confidence, January 2007-August 2011; 2.1. Emerging Europe: Growth of Real GDP, Domestic Demand, Exports, and Private Consumption, 2009-12; Risks to the Outlook; 2.8. Emerging Europe: Contributions to GDP Growth, 2011-12; 2.2. Emerging Europe: CPI Inflation, Current Account Balance, and External Debt, 2009-12; Key Policy Issues 2.9. CESEE and EA3 Countries: Funding Costs, January 1, 2007-September 6, 2011

Sommario/riassunto

Following a strong showing in early 2011, the economies across Europe now face the prospect of a pronounced slowdown, as global growth has softened, risk aversion has risen, and strains in Europe's sovereign debt and financial markets have deepened, according to this issue of the Regional Economic Outlook for Europe. Downside risks are significant, and a further deepening of the euro area crisis would affect not only advanced Europe, but also emerging Europe, given its tight economic and financial ties. The policy stance in advanced Europe will need to be adapted to reflect the weakening and tense outlook, financial systems strengthened further, and a consistent, cohesive and cooperative approach to monetary union adopted by all euro area stakeholders. The cross-country experience in the past decade in Europe shows the difference that good policies can make in boosting growth, with some European countries having grown rapidly while others have stagnated. Escaping low-growth traps, through broad-based reforms that address macroeconomic imbalances and country-specific structural rigidities, is possible.