

SUBREGIONAL FACTSHEET:

CENTRAL ASIA

INTRODUCTION

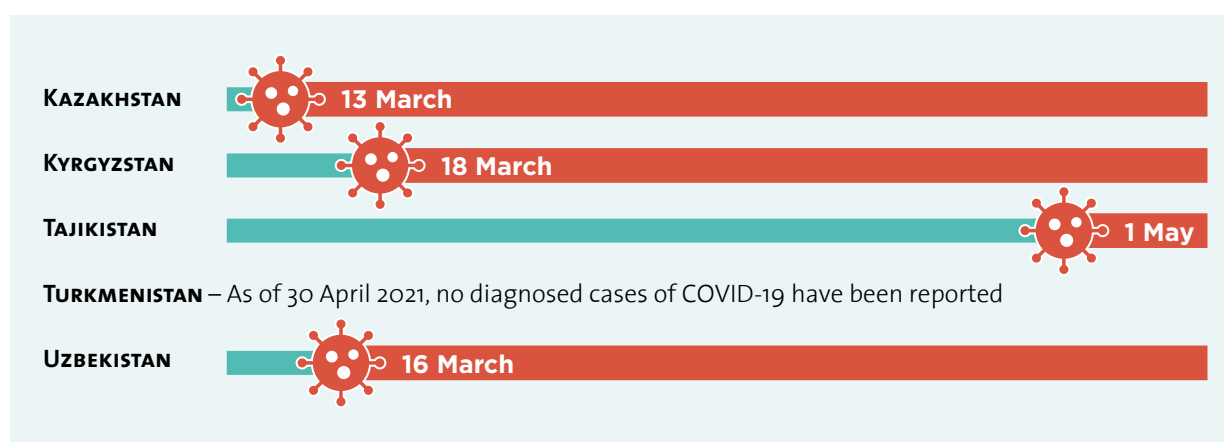
This factsheet draws on findings from the UN Women research study, 'One Year of COVID-19: A Gender Analysis of Emergency COVID-19 Socio-Economic Policy Responses Adopted in Europe and Central Asia' and its multiple data sources.¹ This factsheet provides an overview of the policy measures that the governments of five Central Asian countries – Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan – adopted in relation to social protection, labour market, and economic, fiscal and business stimulus.

This factsheet highlights measures taken with a gender lens² and the Leave No One Behind (LNOB) principle.³ By applying these perspectives, governments can mitigate the adverse and disproportionate impacts that the COVID-19 pandemic has had on women and

vulnerable groups while bolstering the fundamentals in 'building back better' after the pandemic.

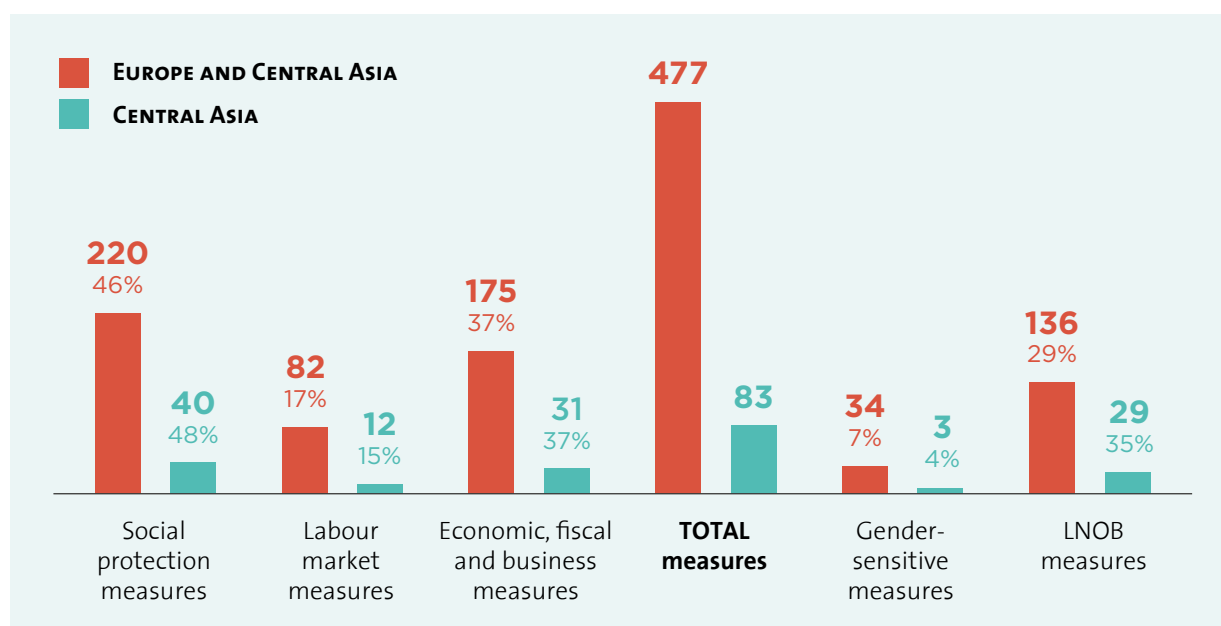
It is important to note that although the study applied a rigorous analysis, the underlying data "should be interpreted with caution.... there may be gaps or biases due to a lack of available information, underreporting of measures being announced, overreporting of measures that have been suspended, or the lack of data on the gender components of existing measures."⁴ It should also be noted that because the study took a broad approach that drew on multiple sources, some data points presented may differ from the UNDP-UN Women COVID-19 Global Gender Response Tracker of September 2020.

TIMELINE OF 1ST CONFIRMED COVID-19 CASES IN CENTRAL ASIAN COUNTRIES



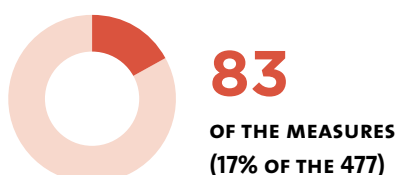
- 1 Secondary data was collected from six data sources: [Council of Europe: Promoting and protecting women's rights at national level](#); [International Monetary Fund Policy Tracker on Policy Responses to COVID-19](#); [ILO Country Policy Responses](#); [Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development POLICY TRACKER: Tackling COVID-19 - Contributing to a global effort](#); [World Bank Social Protection and Jobs Responses to COVID-19: A Real-Time Review of Country Measures](#); [UNDP-UN Women COVID-19 Global Gender Response Tracker](#)
- 2 A gender lens methodology considers measures to be gender-sensitive if they include explicit reference to "women" and "seek to directly address the risks and challenges that women and girls face during the COVID-19 crisis." (See [COVID-19 Global Gender Response Tracker Methodological Note](#).)
- 3 The Leave No One Behind (LNOB) principle's methodology considers measures that directly address and make explicit reference to vulnerable and marginalized households and groups. LNOB is the central, transformative promise of the 2030 Agenda and its Sustainable Development Goals
- 4 [COVID-19 Global Gender Response Tracker Methodological note](#)

HOW THE SUBREGION RESPONDED

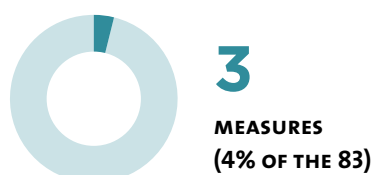


Country/Territory	Social protection measures	Labour market measures	Economic, fiscal and business measures	TOTAL measures	Gender-sensitive measures	LNOB measures
Kazakhstan	13 (45%)	5 (17%)	11 (38%)	29	1 (3%)	10 (35%)
Kyrgyzstan	7 (44%)	1 (6%)	8 (50%)	16	0 (0%)	5 (31%)
Tajikistan	5 (56%)	0 (0%)	4 (44%)	9	0 (0%)	2 (22%)
Turkmenistan	1 (33%)	1 (33%)	1 (34%)	3	0 (0%)	1 (33%)
Uzbekistan	14 (54%)	5 (19%)	7 (27%)	26	2 (8%)	11 (42%)
TOTAL	40 (48%)	12 (15%)	31 (37%)	83	3 (4%)	29 (35%)

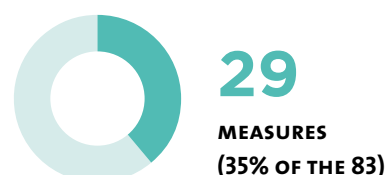
Of the 477 measures that were recorded in Europe and Central Asia to address the socio-economic impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic:



under the three categories were from the five countries in the Central Asia subregion;



can be classified as being gender-sensitive in that they specifically reference women;



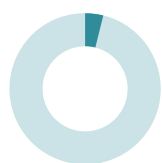
can be classified as being inclusive of the LNOB principle in that they specifically reference vulnerable and marginalized households and groups.

SOCIAL PROTECTION



Of the 83 measures collected from all five Central Asia countries, **40 MEASURES (48 PER CENT)** fall under the social protection category in that they provide social assistance, social insurance and welfare benefits to all citizens or members of an age group.

Findings from a gender lens and the LNOB principle show that:



ONLY 1 OUT OF 40 SOCIAL PROTECTION MEASURES (3 PER CENT) from one country can be classified as being gender-sensitive. **Uzbekistan** was the only country that made explicit reference to women ("elderly women") as one of the beneficiaries of in-kind support.



25 MEASURES (63 PER CENT) from all five Central Asia countries can be classified as being inclusive of the LNOB principle in that they include assistance and benefits to varying degrees to vulnerable and marginalized households and groups.

TOTAL SOCIAL PROTECTION MEASURES:

TARGETED CASH TRANSFERS SCHEMES:

7 measures across 4 countries (Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan)



HOUSING AND UTILITY RELIEF, AND IN-KIND SUPPORT:

9 measures across 5 countries (Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan)



UNEMPLOYMENT AND LEAVE BENEFITS (SICK, PAID AND FAMILY, PARENTAL AND CHILDCARE LEAVE):

10 measures across 3 countries (Kazakhstan, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan)



UNPAID CARE WORK:

3 measures across 2 countries (Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan)



OTHER WELFARE BENEFITS AND ASSISTANCE, INCLUDING PENSION AND DISABILITY BENEFITS:

11 measures across 4 countries (Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan)



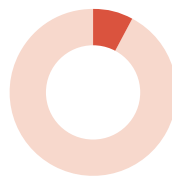
	Social protection measures	Gender-sensitive measures	LNOB measures
KAZAKHSTAN	13 (45%)	0 (0%)	8 (62%)
KYRGYZSTAN	7 (44%)	0 (0%)	5 (71%)
TAJIKISTAN	5 (56%)	0 (0%)	2 (40%)
TURKMENISTAN	1 (33%)	0 (0%)	1 (100%)
UZBEKISTAN	14 (54%)	1 (7%)	9 (64%)
TOTAL	40 (48%)	1 (3%)	25 (63%)

LABOUR MARKET



The mapping collected 12 measures in the labour market category from four Central Asian countries. The measures adopted protect the jobs and incomes of employees and assist employers of businesses affected by the COVID-19 pandemic to mitigate the risks of contract termination, including with state support for the payment of wages. Policy responses under this dimension also include labour policy and regulation adjustments and/or reinforcements.

Findings from a gender lens and the LNOB principle show that:



ONLY 1 OUT OF 12 (8 PER CENT) of the labour market measures from one country can be classified as being gender-sensitive. **Uzbekistan** was the only country that made explicit reference to women (“pregnant women”) as one of the beneficiaries of labour regulatory adjustments on new work arrangements (distance-working with flexible working hours).



FOUR MEASURES (33 PER CENT) from two countries (**Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan**) can be classified as being inclusive of the LNOB principle in that they include assistance and benefits to varying degrees to vulnerable and marginalized households and groups.

TOTAL LABOUR MARKET MEASURES:



SALARY/WAGES SUPPORT TO EMPLOYED AND SELF-EMPLOYED: 8 measures across 3 countries (Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan)



LABOUR POLICY/REGULATORY ADJUSTMENTS AND/OR REINFORCEMENTS: 4 measures across 3 countries (Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan)

	Labour market measures	Gender-sensitive measures	LNOB measures
KAZAKHSTAN	5 (17%)	0 (0%)	2 (40%)
KYRGYZSTAN	1 (6%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
TAJIKISTAN	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
TURKMENISTAN	1 (33%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
UZBEKISTAN	5 (19%)	1 (20%)	2 (40%)
TOTAL	12 (15%)	1 (8%)	4 (33%)

ECONOMIC, FISCAL AND BUSINESS

All five governments introduced emergency responses in the form of socio-economic support policies and programmes to address the economy and citizens' economic vulnerabilities. **No country** in the subregion explicitly referenced women in their COVID-19 emergency policy-level responses. From the LNOB principle, **Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan** referenced vulnerable households and groups in their emergency support policy-level responses.

All countries revised their national budgets to offer state fiscal assistance packages, including through COVID-19 anti-crisis funds, ranging from two per cent of GDP in **Uzbekistan** to 9 per cent in **Kazakhstan**.

Out of the 31 economic, fiscal and business measures collected for Central Asian countries, only one measure

offered support to the feminized sectors of the economy (i.e. sectors that absorb a higher proportion of women's employment compared to that of men). In **Kazakhstan**, the measure that explicitly offered credit support to SMEs included an exemption from taxes and social payments from 1 April to 1 October 2020 for select sectors, including the wholesale and retail trade sector, which represents 18 per cent of women's employment and 10.8 per cent of men's employment.

While business and entrepreneurship stimulus measures were recorded in all five Central Asian countries, analysis revealed that **no country** offered business stimulus measures that can be considered as being gender-sensitive in that they offer categorical reference to women-run businesses and/or women as entrepreneurs.

	Economic, fiscal and business measures	Gender-sensitive measures	LNOB measures
KAZAKHSTAN	11 (38%)	1 (3%)	0 (0%)
KYRGYZSTAN	8 (50%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
TAJIKISTAN	4 (44%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
TURKMENISTAN	1 (34%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
UZBEKISTAN	7 (27%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
TOTAL	31 (37%)	1 (3%)	0 (0%)