



# The End of the Nation State: The Rise of Regional Economies

By Kenichi Ohmae

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*By Kenichi Ohmae*

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### Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

Nations are becoming obsolete from an economic standpoint, declares Tokyo-based business consultant Ohmae (*The Borderless World*). He argues that the traditional nation-state, now beholden to domestic special interests, its government "an enemy of the public at large," has become an inefficient, even impossible, business unit in the new global economy. Instead of a world order based on discrete, independent nations, Ohmae envisions autonomous networks of what he calls "region states"—geographically linked economic zones that forge productive ties with the global marketplace by putting the right policies, information technology and infrastructure in place. Examples of emerging region states cited here are San Diego/Tijuana; Hong Kong and southern China; and northern Italy and the Rhine-Alps region of France. Although Ohmae overstates his case, his challenging primer gives managers, economists, politicians and policymakers new ways to think about global economic problems and opportunities.

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From [Booklist](#)

Ohmae, a former McKinsey & Company senior partner, has touted the global economy in *The Borderless World* (1990) and *Beyond National Borders* (1987). His new book spells out more specifically Ohmae's conviction that the nation state and the global economy cannot comfortably coexist. National boundaries are too porous, he argues, to control the flows of communication, corporations, customers, capital, and currencies, and most national governments are too focused on *distributing* wealth to be effective in *creating* it. Ohmae sees "region states"—natural economic zones of 5 to 20 million affluent residents, such as Hong Kong and contiguous areas of China, San Diego, and Tijuana or Silicon Valley—stepping into this vacuum, building links with the global economy independent of the nations that theoretically control them. For Ohmae, these changes raise practical, not ideological, issues: nation states should decentralize power and seek to serve as catalysts for the growth of region states, because this is the only sort of growth the global economy is likely to support. The usual free-market leap of faith lies at the heart of Ohmae's argument, but his ideas are provocative enough to appeal to readers struggling to understand the consequences of globalization. *Mary Carroll*

Review

Robert L. Bartley Editor, "The Wall Street Journal" Ken Ohmae has stamped his brand on the idea that the information age will have a big impact not only on business but on the shape of international politics. If the cold war is over and money flows around the globe beyond the reach of governments, who, indeed, needs the nation-state? A bold statement of a provocative thesis.

Walter Kiechel III A visionary should be able to do at least two things: see the future and explain it in a new way. With "The End of the Nation State: The Rise of Regional Economies," Ken Ohmae demonstrates once again that he is an authentic visionary.

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**Robert Johnson:**

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