Executive Summary

1. The mounting challenges and uncertainties amid the pandemic and the on-going China-US trade war have propelled the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) to rely on its domestic market. The “dual circulation” strategy and high-quality development initiative are for promoting technology innovation and enhancing the domestic market.

2. The economic area circling the Chengdu-Chongqing region has been earmarked as a newly designed economic growth engine for Western China and assigned a few tasks including deepening market-oriented reforms, supporting the “dual circulation” strategy and driving the country’s high-quality development.

3. The economic circle and previous Chengdu-Chongqing regional plans were established due to the regions’ favourable local conditions, including fast economic growth in recent years, abundant labour and natural resources, sound foundation and advanced progress in manufacturing industries, and critical location in terms of transportation and logistics in Western China.

4. To fulfil the new tasks, both the Chengdu and Chongqing governments made long-term plans to support their advanced industries, particularly for manufacturing and electronic information. Chengdu proposed to develop five sectors in advanced manufacturing and five in services, while Chongqing prioritises its pillar industries that produce smart products, automobiles and motorcycles, equipment and materials.

5. The two governments also announced supporting policies for upgrading infrastructure and attracting talents and investment. They also initiated inter-government cooperation platforms for the proposed economic circle such as building mutually beneficial transportation network and research and innovation parks, and formulating environmental regulations.
6. The economic circle is expected to become a significant economic growth engine for Western China and contribute to China’s dual circulation plan, mainly from the supply side. It will also strengthen Chengdu and Chongqing’s role in China’s open-up policies, such as the Belt and Road Initiative, particularly by upgrading transportation and logistics networks as well as forming industrial clusters.

7. Challenges for the economic circle are in the similarity of industrial structure and shortage of experts and talents. Although the establishment of a few special zones between the two cities are in progress, the two governments have yet to provide concrete policies to avoid competition in economic development, which may delay industrial growth and restructuring.
A New Regional Strategy for Western China

1.1 As China’s economy is facing mounting challenges and uncertainties amid the pandemic and the on-going China-US trade war, the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) seeks solutions from the domestic market. It announced the “dual circulation” strategy and high-quality development initiative that placed priorities on promoting technology innovation and enhancing the domestic market.

1.2 In early 2020, the CCP planned to develop a regional economic growth engine in the Chengdu-Chongqing area with the two core cities taking a lead in regional development and capitalising on their great potential in manufacturing, research and innovation, human capital and prosperous market. The development of the Chengdu-Chongqing Economic Circle (CCEC) not only would support the “dual circulation” strategy and high-quality development initiative, but also is targeted to become the fourth economic powerhouse following the Yangtze River Delta region, Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area and Beijing-Tianjin-Hebei region.

1.3 The CCEC aims to be an important and high-quality development pole in Western China, a commanding height of opening-up in the inland area, an economic centre with nationwide influences and a technological innovation hub. Its emphasis is on constructing transportation infrastructure, building modern industrial systems, optimising land and space use, protecting ecological environment, and improving institutional innovation.

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In particular, the Chengdu and Chongqing governments will be role models of regional cooperation for the rest of the country. They are also to work together to create a high-standard market system, foster a sound business environment, and support China’s Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) and the Western Region Land-Sea Trade Corridor.¹

China has paid particular attention to the important roles Chengdu and Chongqing have played in leading regional development. Before the CCEC was proposed, the central government put forward two regional plans in 2011 and 2016 respectively.² The two plans were to develop this region into an economic hub in the west, an important national foundation for advanced manufacturing, an opening-up centre in inner provinces and a demonstration area for urban-rural integrated development.

While the 2011 plan emphasised developing local economy through urbanisation, infrastructure construction and industrial structure upgrade, the 2016 plan was to work on building industrial foundations, promoting innovation and taking a lead in the regional opening-up to foreign trades.

The earlier efforts did not significantly help the Chengdu-Chongqing region outperform other economic zones in its proximity, such as the City Cluster along the Middle Reaches of the Yangtze River. The two governments were too actively participating in the market and competing for resources to support local development to cooperate on driving regional development. The competition also gave rise to similar industrial structures.³

This new CCEC initiative is expected to make breakthroughs in strengthening inter-governmental cooperation with new institutional arrangements, developing


² The two plans are the Regional Plan for Chengdu-Chongqing Economic Area issued by the National Development Reform Commission in 2011 and the Development Plan for Chengdu-Chongqing City Cluster issued jointly by the National Development Reform Commission and Ministry of Housing and Urban-Rural Development in 2016.

complementary industrial chains, setting up development zones between the two cities and enhancing market connections with infrastructure construction. Challenges for the circle remain in the similarity in industrial structure and the shortage of experts and talents.

The CCEC: Local Conditions

2.1 The CCEC initiative and previous regional plans were drawn because of the favourable local conditions, including fast growth in recent years, abundant labour and natural resources, sound foundation and advanced progress in manufacturing, and its critical location in terms of transportation and logistics in Western China.

2.2 Chengdu is a sub-provincial city and capital of Sichuan province. It is located at the western edge of Sichuan Basin. It administrates 14,335 square kilometres, or 2.95% of the province, including an urban area of 3,639.8 square kilometres. The city has direct jurisdiction of 12 districts, five county-level cities, three counties and four development zones (kaifa qu) authorised by the central government.4

2.3 The local economy has developed rapidly in recent years with an average growth rate of 7.9% from 2015 to 2019 and only registering a slowdown in 2020 due to the pandemic (Figure 1). Its GDP (gross domestic product) tripled in the last 10 years to reach RMB1,771.67 billion in 2020.

2.4 Chengdu hosted a population of 16.58 million in 2019, including 12.34 million urban residents and 15 million registered people. Based on the residential population, the GDP per capita was about RMB103,386 and urbanisation rate was 74.41%.5 In the urban area, per capita disposable income was about RMB42,128 and consumption expenditure was RMB27,312; those for rural residents were RMB22,135 and RMB15,977 respectively.6

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5 Ibid.
6 Ibid.
2.5 Chongqing was once the second largest city in Sichuan province. It was promoted to China’s fourth municipality and directly administrated by the central government in 1997 due to its pivot role in the Three Gorges Dam Project and a trading hub at the upper Yangtze River.

2.6 The city administrates 38 county level jurisdictions on a land of 82,400 square kilometres, including 26 districts, eight counties and four minority autonomous counties. The central area of Chongqing comprises 21 districts occupying a land of 28,700 square kilometres, an area that is twice the size of Chengdu.\(^7\)

2.7 From 2010 to 2020, the local GDP increased from RMB806 billion to RMB2,500.28 billion. Its growth rate had stayed consistently at about six per cent in 2018 and 2019 but slowed down to 3.9% in 2020 (Figure 1).

2.8 Economic development in the two cities trends differently. First is in the industrial structure as shown by Figure 2. The secondary sector of the Chongqing economy still takes a large portion of total GDP and is always growing, while this sector in Chengdu has been shrinking in the past two years. Recently, the tertiary

sector of Chengdu largely overwhelmed its secondary sector and accounted for 65.72% of local GDP in 2020 (the number for Chongqing was 52.82%).

### FIGURE 2  GDP COMPOSITION OF CHENGDU AND CHONGQING, 2010 - 2020

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chongqing</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Chengdu</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primary</td>
<td>47%</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>Primary</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>45%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondary</td>
<td>48%</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>53%</td>
<td>Secondary</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>53%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tertiary</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>47%</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>Tertiary</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>31%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: CEIC.

2.9 Second is in the growth. Chongqing had grown more quickly than Chengdu between 2010 and 2017 (Figure 1). The margin enlarged after 2012 when Chongqing introduced electronic producers from eastern provinces. Since 2017, Chongqing’s economic growth cooled down as its automobile manufacturing sector has been declining, while Chengdu has been keeping its growth rate at around eight per cent for five years before the pandemic.

2.10 In 2019, there were 31.24 million residents in Chongqing, which was twice that of Chengdu. Urban residents comprised 66.8% (20.87 million), earning per capita disposable income of RMB37,939 and incurring a consumption expenditure of RMB25,785, both of which were about 10% less than those of Chengdu.

2.11 Although some Sichuan cities in the surrounding area may participate in the CCEC initiative, the government has yet to release their names. In this circle, five Sichuan cities lie between Chengdu and Chongqing, including Deyang, Meishan, Neijiang, Suining and Ziyang (Figure 3).

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8 Ibid.
2.12 Economic development in this region is unbalanced as shown by Figure 4. The surrounding cities may participate in the CCEC initiative by expanding supplementary and supportive sectors, providing labour sources and developing the local market.
Industrial Priorities in Chengdu and Chongqing

3.1 To fulfil the CCEC targets, both Chengdu and Chongqing governments propose long-term plans to support their advanced industries, particularly on manufacturing and electronic information. They also provide various resources, such as infrastructure and investment policies, for these plans.

Chengdu’s industrial plan

3.2 Working within the policy framework of Sichuan province, Chengdu has placed its economic priorities on five advanced manufacturing industries and five service industries recently. It also provides supportive resources such as infrastructure, investment and talents. In December 2020 and January 2021, Sichuan and Chengdu respectively announced their proposed 14th Five-Year Plans (FYPs). Both demonstrated their intention to participate in the CCEC initiative, including formulating industrial priorities and adopting policies in support of these plans such as attracting investment and talents.

3.3 Sichuan province plans to develop industrial clusters for its advanced and strategic industries. It intends to form significant international clusters via three industries (electronic information, equipment manufacturing, and food and beverage products) and national important clusters with four industries (new materials, energy and chemical, dental care and nuclear technology).

3.4 Chengdu and three Sichuan cities located in the CCEC region will provide support for fulfilling the provincial industrial priorities. The Sichuan government announced a Three-Year Co-development Scheme of Chengdu-Deyang-Meishan-Ziyang (2020-2022) and reemphasised it in its 14th FYP as an initiative to join the CCEC.9 The four cities in this scheme will cooperate and focus on developing local industrial clusters for equipment manufacturing and modern logistics for instance.

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3.5 Chengdu has slightly different industrial priorities from those of Sichuan. Since 2018, Chengdu has been restructuring economic sectors and supporting high-tech industries. It has an *Industries 5+5+1*\(^{10}\) plan where the first *five* means five advanced manufacturing industries, namely, electronic information, equipment manufacturing, medicine and health, new type of materials and green food.

3.6 The second *five* in the plan consists of conventions and exhibitions, financial services, modern logistics, culture and tourism, and consumer-oriented services, while the *one* in the plan refers to an open industrial system which supports the digital economy such as artificial intelligence, big data, 5G and clean energy.

3.7 In 2019, the turnover of Chengdu’s five advanced manufacturing industries reached RMB2 trillion.\(^{11}\) In the Government Work Report 2020, Chengdu estimated that the scale of its electronic information industry would bring in more than RMB1 trillion in 2020, followed by equipment manufacturing (RMB800 billion), and medicine and health (RMB500 billion).\(^{12}\) The government also expected fast growth in other prioritised industries (Figure 5).

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\(^{12}\) Data source: Chengdu Development and Reform Committee website, cddrc.chedu.gov.cn, accessed 5 January 2021.
3.8 Chengdu has been building infrastructures, including transportation network and logistics centres. Its aviation transportation hub is linked by 232 domestic routes and 126 international ones, ranking first in the middle and western regions.\(^\text{13}\) The Shuangliu Airport handled cargo throughput of 672,000 tons in 2019, sixth in ranking in China.

3.9 In addition, a new airport, Tianfu, is under construction to enhance Chengdu’s aviation capacity. Tianfu Airport, located in the southeast of Chengdu, is nearer to Chongqing than that of Shuangliu Airport. It is scheduled to be operational in 30 June 2021. The new airport will annually process cargo throughput of 700,000 tons and service 40 million passengers in 2025.\(^\text{14}\) Compared with Shuangliu, Tianfu will focus on international network, particularly on connecting with BRI countries in middle and northeast Asia. It will also contribute to the aviation economy and logistics industry in Chengdu’s East New Area.

3.10 The railway transportation in Chengdu is also critical. Chengdu has the largest railway container depot in Asia. The China-Europe Railway Express (Chengdu) has been serving 26 foreign cities with over 5,000 operations since 2013. Its annual product value of import and export reached RMB125 billion in 2019.\(^\text{15}\)

3.11 Chengdu is building its high-speed railway network, which connects with other Chinese cities in hours, including Chongqing (one hour), Wuhan (four hours), Xi’an (four hours), Beijing (eight hours), Guangzhou (eight hours) and Shanghai (12 hours). By 2022, travellers using Chengdu’s highway network will only take three hours to reach Chongqing, eight hours to neighbouring capital cities (Guiyang, Kunming and Xi’an) and 20 hours to China’s coastal areas (Beijing, Shanghai and Guangzhou).\(^\text{16}\)

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3.12 The local government has also announced a variety of preferential policies to offer financial, land, labour and start-up support. For example, it awards up to RMB10 million to financial organisations that provide loans, bonds and financial leasing products to unlisted integrated circuit companies.17

3.13 Chengdu has attracted a large amount of investment and talents recently. A total of RMB678.5 billion in investment flowed to Chengdu in 2019 to fund 411 major projects.18 In 2018, Chengdu utilised FDI (foreign direct investment) of $12.28 billion, or about nine per cent of the national total. Funding mainly came from Hong Kong (57.59%), the United States (11.82%) and Singapore (5.83%).19

3.14 Chengdu’s talent schemes in 2018 had attracted over 300,000 young talents, of which 80% were younger than 30 years old.20 Chengdu was seventh in the 2019 talent attraction ranking among 100 Chinese metropolitans.21

Chongqing’s industrial plan

3.15 Chongqing’s two pillar industries are automobile manufacturing and electronic information. The local government has supported the two industries, as well as other important ones, by making industrial plans, developing infrastructure, attracting investment and talents, and supporting research and innovation.

3.16 Chongqing has been a city of heavy industry since the state was founded in 1949. It once was China’s largest base for producing conventional military weapons. In the 1980s, local military manufacturing plants were converted for civilian use and many of them shifted to produce automobiles and motorcycles.

19 Data source: Chengdu Statistics Yearbook 2019, p. 244.
3.17 After 1985, Chongqing opened its doors to Japanese automobile companies and participated in joint ventures; its automobile production has since increased sharply to become a local economic engine. In the 1990s, Chongqing rose to the fifth place amongst China’s automobile manufacturing bases and in 2014, it took top spot in terms of outputs. In the 2000s, Chongqing further adjusted its industrial structure by introducing electronic information enterprises, such as Hewlett-Packard and Hon Hai Precision Industry, which both produce laptops.

3.18 Chongqing’s electronic information industry has grown exponentially and now replaces the automobile industry as the top pillar of Chongqing’s economy (Figure 6). Its output took up 16.6% of the secondary sector of the local economy in 2019. It produced over 64 million laptops and 174 million mobile phones, which translate to the city producing one third of the laptops and one tenth of the mobile phones globally.

3.19 To support the local pillar industries, the Chongqing government unveiled a plan to promote high-quality development of its manufacturing industry (2019-2022). The

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**FIGURE 6  OUTPUT OF CHONGQING’S TWO PILLAR INDUSTRIES**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Electronic Information (billion RMB)</th>
<th>Automobile Manufacture (billion RMB)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>293.5</td>
<td>297</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td>368.4</td>
<td>384.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2015</td>
<td>407.6</td>
<td>500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2016</td>
<td>539.1</td>
<td>638.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2017</td>
<td>572.5</td>
<td>742.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2018</td>
<td>473.5</td>
<td>473.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2019</td>
<td>454.1</td>
<td>848.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Chongqing Statistics Bureau.

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plan proposes to develop industrial clusters and boost innovation capacities for producing smart products, automobiles and motorcycles, equipment and materials. It aims to generate industrial output values of RMB670 billion in 2020 and RMB750 billion in 2022.\(^{24}\)

3.20 The local government is also taking steps to build a transportation network, like Chengdu, to attract FDI and talents for industrial development and restructuring. First, the government plans to strengthen the local aviation network to connect to Chengdu and other regions. It also aims to enhance connections with Asian cities such as Singapore, Bangkok, Deli and Tokyo; build a new airport by 2035; and upgrade its secondary airports located outside of its main urban area. For example, after 30 years of construction, the Jiangbei Airport had 366 passenger routes (including 95 international ones) and a processed cargo throughput of 410,000 tons in 2019.\(^{25}\)

3.21 Besides building air transport, the government has worked on roads and rail construction. A few high-speed railways will link Chongqing with neighbouring capital cities including Chengdu, Xi’an, Zhengzhou and Kunming, while some new, conventional railways will help Chongqing participate in the BRI project by increasing its cargo capacity. In addition, Chongqing will strengthen its water transport along Yangzi River and upgrade this channel with ports coordination. It proposes to increase its waterway cargo capacity to 220 million tons per year in 2022.\(^{26}\)

3.22 Second, the local government will invite and lead investment in a few prioritised manufacturing industries such as those producing automobiles, computers, communication equipment, general purpose machinery, special purpose machinery, electronical machinery and apparatus, and non-metallic mineral products.


3.23 In 2018, for example, the top five industries that took the lion’s share of investment were for producing automobiles (17.9%), computers, communication and other electronic equipment (12.8%), electrical machinery and apparatus (6.5%), non-metallic mineral products (6.3%) and supply of electric power and heat power (6.3%). Ten sectors took up 71% of the total industrial investment (Figure 7).

3.24 Third, Chongqing has policies in place to attract talents, particularly for the pillar industries. For example, the Yingcai Scheme aims to invite scientists, scholars and entrepreneurs to lead local research and innovation and help develop important industries such as the high-tech sector. In the last five years, the local population has grown by about 266,000 annually (Figure 8). In 2019, Chongqing was 11th in talent attraction ranking among 100 Chinese metropolitans, four places behind Chengdu.27

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Opportunities and Challenges of the CCEC

4.1 Strongly supported by the state, the CCEC will foster a significant economic engine that drives the growth of Western China and contributes to the “dual circulation” strategy. Chengdu and Chongqing may model their development plans after those in other strategic regions, such as Beijing and Shanghai, which have different advantages in location and industries.

4.2 This regional strategy will strengthen the role of Chengdu and Chongqing in China’s open-up policies, such as the BRI, particularly by their upgraded transportation and logistics network, and industrial clusters. Challenges for the CCEC are in the similarity of industrial priorities and the shortage of experts and talents, which may delay its industrial growth and restructuring.

4.3 On the positive side, with the enhanced transportation network, the CCEC will become a gateway for international trade in Western China. The China-Europe Railway Express, an important foundation of the BRI, is shipping products made in China’s western provinces to Central Asia and further to Europe. Trains start from both Chongqing and Chengdu on this line. Chongqing will also be the starting point of China’s Western Region Land-Sea Corridor where railways go through.
southwestern provinces to Beibuwan Port in Guangxi province and Yangpu Port in Hainan province to connect to Southeast Asia.

4.4 The local governments have set up some preliminary cooperation platforms to build mutually beneficial transportation and logistics network so as to support market activities and further achieve industrial goals and regional co-development. Since March 2020, the two governments have held joint conferences for facilitating administrative cooperation and drawing up a detailed outline for the CCEC. They have also signed cooperation agreements and proposed 35 important tasks in seven aspects (Table 1). Their first initiative was in infrastructure construction such as building regional highways and regulating environmental issues.

### TABLE 1 PROGRESS OF THE CHENGDU-CHONGQING COOPERATION IN LATE 2020

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Plan</th>
<th>Project and Progress</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Inter-provincial public transportation</td>
<td>Launch more than 10 bus lines before end 2020 and 21 cooperation projects in transportation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Industry</td>
<td>Sign agreements to promote industrial internet, automobiles and energy industries, and economic operation monitor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Development Zone</td>
<td>Establish a digital economy and innovation pilot zone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Land and Space</td>
<td>Set up working methods for planning the CCEC land and space outline</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ecological environment regulation</td>
<td>Endorse agreements on cooperation in air monitoring and regulation; and accelerate the construction of ecological system along cross-provincial rivers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reform and Innovation</td>
<td>Formulate a working plan for the Cooperative Opening-up Demonstration Area of Sichuan-Chongqing Free Trade Zone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shared Public Service</td>
<td>Streamline pension insurance transfer and direct reimbursement of medical treatment in other places, and facilitating <em>hukou</em> transfers</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.5 At the end of 2020, Chongqing and Chengdu governments integrated the CCEC with their 14th FYPs. Chongqing’s FYP emphasised cooperation with Chengdu on upgrading the regional transportation network, building complementary industries, enhancing environment protection, and providing shared and mutually recognised public services.²⁸ Chengdu planned to develop its eastern area, such as the Eastern New Zone and Huaizhou New City, to geographically develop towards Chongqing. In these areas, Chengdu will work on industrial clusters, technological innovation and channels for foreign markets.²⁹

4.6 As Chongqing and Chengdu upgraded local transportation and economic cooperation, the CCEC would further integrate with the Yangtze River economic belt and connect to cities in the river’s middle and lower reaches. Hence, through the CCEC, Chinese cities including Chongqing and Chengdu and others along the Yangtze River will have more interaction with Europe, and central Asian and Southeast Asian countries. Against the background of the COVID-19 pandemic, railways provide a relatively more stable way of complementing marine transportation affected and delayed due to labour and container shortage.

4.7 However, the two governments have yet to provide concrete policies to avoid competition in economic development, despite their plans for constructing special zones between the two cities. The two cities proposed four new zones to work around the similarity of industrial priorities, such as building industrial clusters and strengthening research and innovation (Table 2). Two of these zones were set up with general plans and the other two are still in preparation. These zones plan to upgrade ground transportation, set up industrial parks for prioritised industries, promote technique innovation, cooperate on environment regulation and so on.

4.8 The lack of experts and talents is also a grave issue for the two cities even though the thriving population in Sichuan and nearby provinces promise an abundant supply of labour. Local innovation experts remain at a low level compared with that of other Chinese cities. In 2018, for example, Chengdu had 18,822 researchers working in

98 R&D institutions while Chongqing had 5,954 persons in 30 institutions. In comparison, the numbers for Beijing were 73,000 and 292 respectively.  

**TABLE 2  PLANS ON ESTABLISHING NEW ZONES BETWEEN CHENGDU AND CHONGQING**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Participants from Sichuan</th>
<th>Participants from Chongqing</th>
<th>Progress</th>
<th>Main industries</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chuanyu Gaozhu New Zone</td>
<td>Gaotan town</td>
<td>Cizhu town and Dawan town,</td>
<td>A General Plan announced in January 2021</td>
<td>Automobile manufacture, electronic information, aviation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>and Tantong town,</td>
<td>and Yubei district</td>
<td></td>
<td>manufacture and tourism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Guang’an city</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sui-Tong Advance Zone for</td>
<td>Suining city</td>
<td>Tongnan district</td>
<td>A General Plan announced in December 2020</td>
<td>Lithium battery manufacture, new material and electronic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chuanyu Integrated</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>information</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Development</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chuannan-Yuxi Pilot Zone</td>
<td>Zigong, Luzhou,</td>
<td>Jiangjin, Yongchuan,</td>
<td>Conducted joint conferences in December 2020 and March 2021</td>
<td>High-tech agriculture</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>for Integrated Development</td>
<td>Neijiang and Yibin cities</td>
<td>Yongchang, Qijiang, Dazu</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>and Tongliang cities</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wan-Da-Kai Demonstration</td>
<td>Dazhou city</td>
<td>Wanzhou district and</td>
<td>Conducted joint conferences in December 2020 and March 2021</td>
<td>New material manufacture and agriculture products</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zone for Integrated</td>
<td></td>
<td>Kaizhou district</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Development</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Source: Data collected by author.

4.9 The shortage of higher education institutions that can supply young talents to the CCEC region, especially to Chongqing, is a factor. In 2018, there were 65 regular institutions of higher education in Chongqing, while Chengdu had 57 and Beijing had 92. Hence, while the CCEC region has distinctive advantages in the high-tech industry, it may not be able to transform into China’s Western Silicon Valley in the short term. Their advanced industries may remain at the manufacturing stage and innovation capability may stay at a relatively low level.

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30 Data source: statistics bureaus of Chongqing, Chengdu and Beijing.

31 Ibid.