

IV. Defining Regions

There are many ways to identify a region within a country: according to its administrative boundaries, whether it represents an electoral district, according to the space where people travel to work, according to the geographical features or instead economic functions, etc.

For analytical purposes, the OECD classifies regions as the first administrative tier of sub-national government (for example States in the United States, Provinces in Canada, or Régions in France). This classification is used by National Statistical Offices to collect information and it represents in many countries the framework for implementing regional policies.

While the number of regions (so called Territorial Level 2 or TL2 in the [OECD classification](#)) varies from country to country, the international comparability is ensured by the fact that these administrative regions are officially established in countries. No regions are defined in Luxembourg, while in Estonia only smaller than TL2 regions are defined and thus the 5 smaller regions (Territorial Level 3) are included in the interactive web tool. The well-being topics and indicators are shown for the 395 regions (Table 1).

The OECD publication *Regions at a Glance?* (OECD, 2016) also documents, when possible, well-being in smaller administrative regions (2 197 regions) and in the 281 metropolitan areas (functional urban areas with more than 500 000 population).

While the regional classification is being extended to non-OECD countries, the regional well-being indicators are currently available only for the 34 OECD countries.

Table 1: Number of regions in OECD countries

Country	Territorial level 2 (number of regions)
Australia	States/territories (8)
Austria	Bundesländer (9)
Belgium	Régions (3)
Canada	Provinces and territories (13)
Chile	Regions (15)
Czech Republic	Oblasti (8)
Denmark	Regioner (5)
Estonia	Groups of maakond (5, TL3)
Finland	Suuralueet (5)
France	Régions (22)
Germany	Länder (16)
Greece	Regions - Perifereies (13)
Hungary	Planning statistical regions (7)
Iceland	Regions (2)
Ireland	Groups regional authority regions (2)
Israel	Districts (6)
Italy	Regioni (21)
Japan	Groups of prefectures (10)
Korea	Regions (7)
Luxembourg	State (1)

Mexico	Estados (32)
Netherlands	Provinces (12)
New Zealand	Regional councils (14)
Norway	Landsdeler (7)
Poland	Vojewodztwa (16)
Portugal	Comissaoes de coordenação e des. regional + regioes autonomas (7)
Slovak Republic	Zoskupenia krajov (4)
Slovenia	Kohezijske regije (2)
Spain	Comunidades autonomas (19)
Sweden	Riksomraden (8)
Switzerland	Grandes regions (7)
Turkey	Regions (26)
United Kingdom	Regions and countries (12)
United States	States and the District of Columbia (51)