

Regional Outlook 2011: Building Resilient Regions for Stronger Economies

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Update

Update on recent developments in OECD countries:

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Australia

- The Department previously in charge of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Local Government was reformed into the Department of Infrastructure and Transport and the Department of Regional Australia, Regional Development and Local Government.
- On 21 June 2011, the Government announced the establishment of an independent Expert Panel to consult with stakeholder groups and the community on the level of support for constitutional recognition of local government. Submissions to the Panel closed on 4 November 2011 and the Panel is expected to report to the Australian Government in December 2011.
- The Council of Australian Governments (COAG) is the main intergovernmental forum in Australia for the development and implementation of inter-jurisdictional policy. It is composed of the Prime Minister (as its Chair), State Premiers, Territory Chief Ministers and the President of the Australian Local Government Association (ALGA). At its 31st meeting on 19 August 2011 for example, COAG announced the signing of three new intergovernmental agreements on transport regulation.

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France

- Following the adoption of the Law on Grand Paris (3 June 2010) and the decree of 24 June 2011, the legal framework has been set up for territorial development contracts (*contrats de développement territorial*, CDT), which provide a new vertical collaboration tool for developing strategic economic territories of the capital region.
- Since the adoption of Grenelle 2 in 2010, around half of implementation decrees have been published or are in the process of being published.

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Korea

- With the government's National Strategy for Green Growth to 2050 and the adoption of Korea's Five-year Plan for Low-carbon, Green Growth (2009-2013), high levels of energy consumption and greenhouse gas emissions are perceived as a key challenge.
- Korea's Urban Vision for 2020 is providing the urban policy framework.
- Policy co-ordination at regional level is provided through Province Comprehensive Plans, Metropolitan Area Plans, Urban Master Plans and Urban Management Plans.

UK

- Since the government's announcement in Vince Cable's and Eric Pickles' letter to local authorities and business leaders in June 2010 that Regional Development Agencies (RDA) are to cease operation by March 2012, Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEP) are being created as partnerships between the private sector and civic leaders at the level of the "real" functional economy to set economic priorities and create the right environment for business and growth. LEPs are expected to focus on: planning and housing, transport and infrastructure, employment and enterprise, low carbon economy, tourism – as well as close collaboration with universities and support for small business. Competencies for LEPs are still being determined as the new arrangements evolve.
- The government's Regional Growth Fund (RGF) is a GBP 1.4 billion fund supporting projects that can create jobs, are based in areas dependent on the public sector and are supported by private sector investment. Grants of GBP 95 million will be distributed to small businesses via the regional networks of banks, with no financial profit from the administration of the schemes.
- The Rural Development Programme for England (RDPE) is being managed by the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA). The current seven-year programme (2007-2013) is jointly funded by DEFRA and the EU's European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD).