

# Regional Outlook 2019

# LATVIA

## Regional Development Policy in Latvia



### General policy approach

The Ministry of Environmental Protection and Regional Development is the key ministry in charge of regional policy in Latvia. The Regional Development Co-ordination Council reviews and evaluates national development centres' (nine cities) development programme investment plans as well as other investments with a regional dimension. It consists of representatives from the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Regional Development, relevant line ministries and other stakeholders.

The main policy objectives and approaches are defined in the Regional Policy Guidelines 2013-19, a strategic document that is revised every seven years. The current version emphasises polycentric development as a key objective and highlights the importance of using a place-based approach that targets functional areas. It also encourages an increased role of regions and municipalities in promoting entrepreneurship.

The Regional Policy Guidelines also serve as a key document for urban policy and rural policy. Accordingly, no separate urban policy or rural policy strategy exists. As part of their role to define urban policy and rural policy, the Regional Policy Guidelines also define a hierarchical settlement structure and define a basket of public services that are supposed to be delivered at each level of settlement.

### Recent policy changes

- The process of developing new Regional Policy Guidelines began in 2018 and is expected to be completed in 2019.
- Land-use legislation is amended as necessary based on the current situation.

## Institutional arrangements to prepare for global megatrends

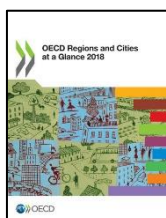
The Cross-Sectoral Co-ordination Centre is a long-term planning unit at the centre of government. It develops the two highest level plans for Latvia: the long-term National Sustainable Development Strategy and the medium-term National Development Plan, which contains several objectives related to the spatial development of Latvia (e.g. settlement structure, transport links, territorially balanced growth, etc.). The Cross-Sectoral Co-ordination Centre also monitors the implementation of the National Development Plan and checks that subordinate plans are in accordance with it. Furthermore, it ensures the mainstreaming of regional policy into other policy areas and planning documents.

Beyond strategic long-term plans at the national level, various medium-term and long-term plans are prepared at the regional and local levels. In particular, planning regions elaborate medium-term and long-term strategies. At the local level, all municipalities in Latvia elaborate general long-term development strategies. Their time horizon varies, up to a maximum of 25 years. Various forward-looking techniques are used through the planning process, including foresight assessments. All municipalities also elaborate medium-term development programmes with time horizons of up to seven years.

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## OECD Regional Outlook 2019: Leveraging Megatrends for Cities and Rural Areas

The 2019 edition of the *OECD Regional Outlook* examines the regional dimensions of global megatrends and their implications for the well-being of people living in different places. It discusses how place-based policies, public investment and multi-level governance reforms can respond to these megatrends to revive productivity growth, reduce inequalities, improve quality of life and increase sustainability.

Consult the full publication and the other country profiles on line: <https://oe.cd/pub/2vq>.

