

## The future of main streets, high streets and town centres

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A new OECD project to support the development of thriving community centres in all places



### What's the issue?

Beyond their economic impacts and role in local tax bases, main streets, high streets and town centres are important markers of local identity, culture and historical legacies. They serve as gathering places for socialising and entertainment and help give communities life and vitality. Accordingly, ensuring they continue to thrive and serve as community gathering points and economic hubs is a priority for many local development leaders.

COVID-19 significantly impacted these places, in many cases accelerating trends that were already taking root, such as the expansion of e-commerce and remote working. In the face of high rates of vacancies, decreased footfall, and shifts in consumer spending patterns, as well as depopulation in some places, policymakers at all levels, as well as private sector leaders and third sector organisations, are looking for new and innovative solutions to help these places thrive.

This new international project aims to support them in this endeavour by taking stock of policy frameworks across places, identifying promising and innovative approaches, and creating an international peer network.

### Potential topics

#### Policy framework



Institutions (national, local, private and third sector)



Financing (public and private)



Measurement and evaluation

#### Factors for thriving places



Economic vitality



Placemaking and experiences



Marketing and attraction



Mix of uses, goods and services

#### Adapting to transitions



Sustainability



Digitalisation

### What this project can offer

- **Survey and analysis of policy frameworks** across countries and regions
- **Place-based studies**, building on the expertise of international peer reviewers
- **Capacity building and peer learning events** (virtual and in-person)
- **Thematic research**, including policy recommendations and best practices