

United States

Recent policy developments

- There are efforts for greater co-ordination and integration of policies for regional development at the federal level, through White House-led councils and task forces (e.g. White House Rural Council, Partnership for Sustainable Communities, etc.).
- This more integrated policy approach has been supported by budget guideline requests to several departments to clarify the “place-based” dimension of their work.
- Regional economic development approaches in several ministries and agencies have increasingly emphasised regional innovation clusters generally, as well as in specific sectors, such as energy and manufacturing.
- Disaster recovery has been a particular focus of several federal departments focused on serving distressed areas.
- Under the White House’s Neighbourhood Revitalisation Initiative, promise zones are tools to attract private investment, create jobs and improve affordable housing.

Government structure	Municipal-level governments*	Intermediate-level governments	Regional or state-level governments
Federation	35 879	3 031	50

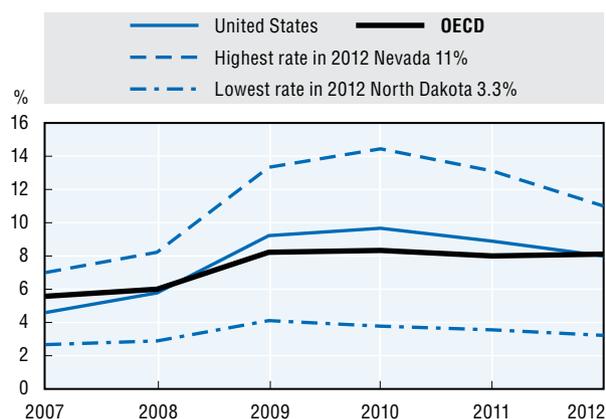
* The municipal level here comprises only general-purpose entities, i.e. municipalities, towns and townships. Special purpose entities, i.e. special districts and independent school districts such as school boards (51 146 entities in 2012) are excluded.

Regional development policy	
Lead ministry(ies) or committees	Department of Commerce (Economic Development Administration)
Regional development framework	There is no over-arching law or strategy document. The mandate is to serve economically distressed areas through regional strategy development and public investments that support regional competitiveness.

Urban development policy	
Lead ministry(ies) or committees	Department of Housing and Urban Development
Urban policy framework or strategy	There is no over-arching law or strategy document. The mandate is to create strong, sustainable, inclusive communities and quality affordable homes for all.

Rural development policy	
Lead ministry(ies) or committees	Department of Agriculture; White House Rural Council
Rural policy framework or strategy	There is no over-arching law or strategy document.

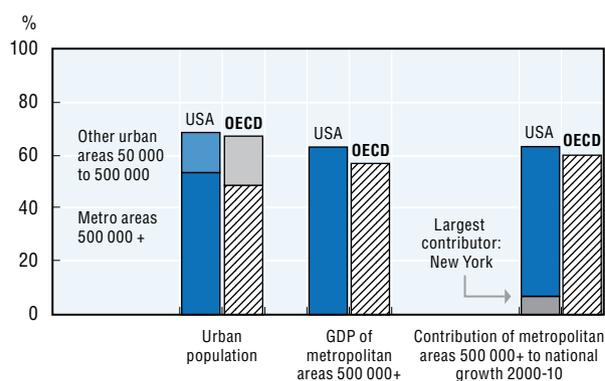
Regional disparities in unemployment trends



In recent years, the unemployment rate has soared in some states such as Nevada (11%), and the youth unemployment rate has reached 23% in South Carolina.

StatLink <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/888933109042>

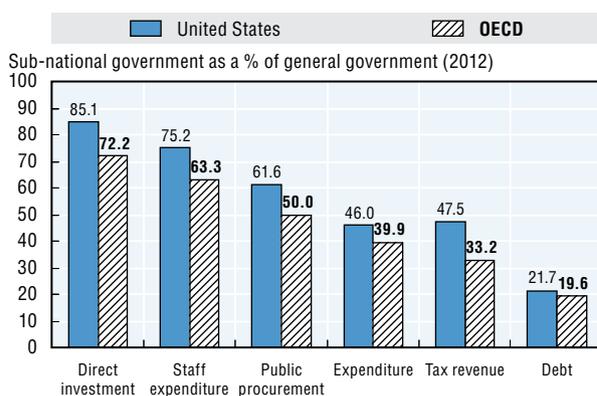
The importance of urban areas



In the United States, 68% of the population lives in cities of different sizes: the share of population in metropolitan areas (urban areas with more than 500 000 inhabitants) is 53%, compared to 49% in the OECD area.

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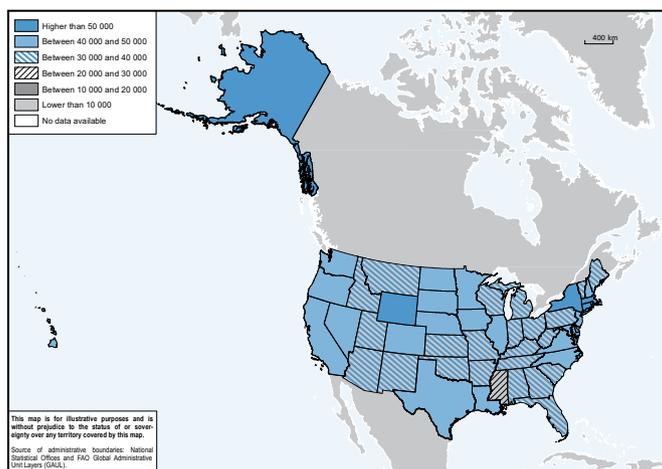
The role of sub-national governments in public finance



Education and health are the two largest spending items for SNGs in the United States: together they represent 54% of sub-national expenditure, compared to 44% in the OECD area.

StatLink <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/888933109080>

Regional differences in GDP per capita levels



The United States had the largest regional disparities in GDP per capita in OECD countries in 2010. In the previous decade regional growth was as diverse as +5.3% annually in Wyoming and -1.4% in Michigan.