

# CARDIFF, United Kingdom

## Overview of Cardiff



## Cardiff Metropolitan Area



Source: Based on the OECD definition of functional urban areas. Own illustration.

## Cardiff's administrative structure

The city of Cardiff is the capital of Wales. The metropolitan area of Cardiff is part of the Cardiff Capital Region, and consists of five local governments, with the city of Cardiff functioning as the core area.

## Key figures

	Population (2014)	Unemployment rate (2013)	GVA growth rate (2013) (Cardiff only)	GDP per capita (2013)
Cardiff Metropolitan Area	954 181	9.5%	4.10%	USD 31 470
United Kingdom	64 596 800	7.6%	4.11%	USD 36 582

## Challenges for Cardiff's resilience

- *Global competition in need of skilled workers while integration of lower skilled labour is critical*

The challenges of sustaining its current growth include ensuring the availability of skilled workers and ensuring quality of life that will attract and retain them. Wages below the UK average in Cardiff in general are a drag on the attraction and retention of skilled labour and graduates from Cardiff's universities. Despite strong growth in jobs in financial and business services, attracting high-wage service jobs has been a challenge. Cardiff is competing with other economic centres for high-paying service jobs, such as London. Furthermore, the need to integrate low-skilled workers into the economy is growing, since demand for unskilled employees is falling except in the retail and hospitality sectors.

- *Building a compact city with a growing inflow of population*

Strong employment growth has increased the need for housing in the city. However, Cardiff has only limited space for new housing and may experience a shortage in housing. Approximately 41% of the city's area is protected from urban development to preserve green spaces and most brownfield land has already been developed. Meanwhile, the River Taff and the coastal plain is subject to the risk of flooding, and tidal and fluvial land limits the space available for housing. New construction in the city needs to take into account the impact of climate change and compact city development. To accommodate this demand, more compact forms of urban development are called for.

- *Social disparity in a growing city*

While economy in Cardiff grows, socio-economic disparities among citizens have increased in recent decades. The generalised deprivation index, assessing health, crime and access to services, shows that 7 of the 10 lowest-ranking “super output” areas in Wales are located in Cardiff. The coastal zone of Cardiff and the Vale of Glamorgan attract prosperous population, and the more disadvantaged valleys of South Wales. With the construction of new flats and office buildings, low-income housing areas are gentrifying, driving up property prices and forcing lower income groups out of the city.

## ***Elements for building resilience in Cardiff***

### **Economy**

- *The city attracts investment in its key business sectors and workforce*, notably through the creation of an “enterprise zone” in central Cardiff that offers relief on business taxes; and by involving Cardiff University in the city’s development.

### **Society**

- *Meeting the demand for affordable housing* by planning for well-designed, connected and sustainable communities through the Corporate Development Plan (2014).

### **Environment**

- *A public transport network has been developed to increase access to jobs*. The so-called “Metro project” aims to improve cross-regional connectivity and to provide better-quality transport.

### **Institutions**

- *The city’s mid-term vision – Corporate Plan 2015-2017-* shows the targets of Cardiff of becoming “Europe’s most liveable capital city”.
- *Policy coordination for more efficient land-use planning in the Cardiff metro region has been explored*, with the creation of the Cardiff Capital Region Board (2013) which brings together *representatives* from the public and private sectors on an advisory board. A new project, City Region Exchange, aims to bundle the region’s capacities and promote engagement between the city and the region.

## ***Conclusions***

- Cardiff has put forward a strategy to improve the horizontal co-ordination of policies with adjacent municipalities in the Cardiff Capital Region. In particular concerning housing and transportation services, this strategy facilitates better access to public transit and jobs, and helps to mitigate the pressure on the housing market within the city of Cardiff as people living in neighbouring communities can access jobs within the city more easily.
- The closer integration of policies across the Cardiff Capitol Region also improves the attractiveness of the region for business and for younger people to remain in the area, but also to address some of the social inequalities in the area. The better integration of transportation options helps lower income groups to have access to jobs across a larger area as well as younger people to settle in affordable areas and commute to their job location.
- Further encouraging the capacity building of marginalised groups through close co-operation with the local community to improve access to employment opportunities could be pursued.