



THE STATE OF NATIONAL URBAN POLICY IN JAPAN

Name of national urban policy	<i>National Spatial Strategy</i>
Date of national urban policy	2015
Explicit or partial	Partial
Legal status (e.g. act of the legislature, executive order, administrative guidance, etc.)	National spatial plan
Previous/secondary policies	<i>Urban Renaissance Special Measures Law</i> (2002, revised 2016); <i>FutureCity Initiative</i> (2011)
Stage of development	Implementation
How developed (e.g. through a participatory/stakeholder process, or act of parliament, etc.)	No information available
Implementing body	Cabinet Office; Ministry of Land, Infrastructure, Transport and Tourism
Government system	Centralised
Type of national urban agency	General national planning authority
Implementation mechanism (e.g. committee, involvement of multiple agencies, national-local co-ordination)	Through participation of civil society and private sector stakeholders

Current national urban policy

National Spatial Strategy (2015) includes objectives for cities and metropolitan regions. The key elements of its basic national land concept are promoting regional revitalisation; supporting multi-layered, resilient, compact and networked structures; and correcting excessive concentration in Tokyo and positioning it as a metropolitan region. Specific objectives include:

1. fostering unique local communities;
2. developing vigorous metropolitan regions; and
3. enhancing global interactions and attracting foreign investment to increase growth (Japan Ministry of Land, Infrastructure, Transport and Tourism, 2015).

The *National Spatial Strategy* provides long-term principles for land development drawn from the *Grand Design for National Spatial Development* (Japan Ministry of Land, Infrastructure, Transport and Tourism, 2014), as well as the policies and measures needed for the appropriate ministries to realise these principles (OECD, 2015).

In addition to the spatial strategy, a number of other national-level policies inform urban development, many of which focus on building sustainable, attractive and competitive cities; compact city policies; efficient transport systems; private sector participation; and mitigating environmental impacts, ageing societies and disaster management (OECD, 2015). These include the *Urban Renaissance Special Measures Law*, which was enacted in 2002 to enhance urban functions and improve the living environment and competitiveness of urban areas (OECD 2015; Prime Minister of Japan, 2004). In 2016, it was revised to enhance international competitiveness and the disaster resilience of urban areas and to make cities in rural areas which have problems such as population decline and ageing societies more attractive. The *FutureCity Initiative* (2011) also focuses on the livability and sustainable development of cities (Dodson et al., 2015).

Areas covered by current urban policy

Sector	Sectoral representation in the <i>National Spatial Strategy</i>
Economic development	Extensive
Spatial structure	Extensive
Human development	Moderate
Environmental sustainability	Extensive
Climate resilience	Moderate

Specific issues covered by current national urban policy

The 2015 *National Spatial Strategy* includes the following characteristics:

Criteria for national urban policies	Appears in the policy
Responds to population dynamics	X
Promotes a territorial approach (in particular urban-rural linkages)	X
Addresses the urban systems (from large to medium and small cities) and the connectivity among cities	X
Prepares for infrastructure and services in cities (including public space)	X
Promotes urban land-use efficiency	X
Enhances environmental sustainability and resilience to climate change	X
Develops effective urban governance systems (horizontal co-ordination and vertical alignment)	
Promotes effective municipal finance systems	
Supports partnership and co-operation between urban actors	X
Safeguards inclusiveness and participation in the process and outcomes (inequity, segregation, safety, etc.)	X
Ensures robust and comparable urban scale data	

Bibliography

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