

Regional Outlook 2019 CANADA

Regional Development Policy in Canada



General policy approach

Canada's six regional development agencies (RDAs) cover all regions of the country and since 2015 are part of the portfolio of the Innovation, Science and Economic Development Ministry. The RDAs engage with strategic partners at the regional level (including with provincial, territorial, municipal and indigenous governments) on an ongoing basis and across the federal government. The engagement of the RDAs ensures that regional perspectives are considered in national policy development.

In 2018, the RDAs were designated as one of four flagship national platforms to support the delivery of Canada's Innovation and Skills Plan. Through that role, the RDAs are working to support innovation-led and inclusive growth in all regions with policies that are nationally consistent but remain regionally tailored. In parallel, they maintain their established functions in helping communities to advance and diversify their regional economies.

Recent policy changes

- The RDAs were collectively named as one of four national flagship platforms to support the delivery of Canada's Innovation and Skills Plan. Reflecting this expanding role, they have received an additional investment of CAD 511 million over five years. This includes CAD 105 million for new nationally co-ordinated and regionally tailored support for women entrepreneurs, as part of the Women's Entrepreneurship Strategy.
- Major changes currently underway will streamline and simplify innovation programming across the RDAs to make them more client-centric and nationally consistent while remaining tailored to the specific needs of each region.
- The RDAs are developing regional growth strategies for their respective regions following broad consultations with regional stakeholders, including other levels of government. The regional growth strategies aim to develop a common vision and identify areas for co-operative actions that leverage regional advantages to deliver long-term prosperity. As of September 2018, two regions had already launched their strategies: the Atlantic Growth Strategy, launched in 2016, and the Prosperity and Growth Strategy for Northern Ontario in 2018.

Institutional arrangements to prepare for global megatrends

At the national level, Canada's Policy Horizons Canada, a centre-of-government unit, conducts scanning and foresight to anticipate emerging policy challenges and opportunities. That is, the unit monitors and explores social, economic, environmental and technological changes in Canada and across the world, and analyses how these changes may come together in the future. Its work supports medium-term policy development by the government of Canada, by helping federal organisations to take a comprehensive, longer term approach while dealing with their short-term priorities. The unit does not formally analyse regional dimensions, but some of its prior work has considered how trends might have different impacts across regions.

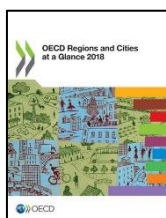
In addition, Canada established an Advisory Council on Economic Growth (2016) and six industry-led economic strategy tables (2017) to conduct long-term strategic thinking and planning with respect to emerging industry trends, and provide policy advice to the government.

Long-term regional planning is undertaken by each of Canada's RDAs, for all regions of the country. The RDAs are currently developing regional growth strategies, which are forward-looking, medium- to long-term plans for regional development.

Provinces and territories in Canada often produce their own forward-looking development and/or spatial plans. For example, the 30-year Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe is a sub-regional spatial development plan covering several municipalities and rural areas around western Lake Ontario. The plan sets tailored land-use and economic development objectives.

Looking for statistical information to complement this?

Take a look at our publication Regions and Cities at a Glance:



<https://oe.cd/pub/2n9>

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>.

