

Regional Outlook 2019

SPAIN

Regional Development Policy in Spain



General policy approach

Regional development is mainly a responsibility of the autonomous communities (regions). However, the central government offers a general framework for financing regional development in the context of the Association Agreement Spain-EU. The Spanish government has additional measures, notably the Inter-territorial Compensation Fund and the Regional Incentives Programme, that are measures to finance development projects in less developed regions. In terms of urban policy, the Spanish Strategy on Local Urban Sustainability focuses on: the urban and territorial development dimension; urban planning instruments; accessibility, mobility and transport; urban governance; housing; and climate change. The regions have exclusive competences in rural development matters. Regional rural development programmes are implemented under EU regulations. The National Ministry, in co-operation with the regions, develops the National Framework of Rural Development (NFRD) that establishes the minimum requirements to be met.

Recent policy changes

- Investment priorities have been gradually shifting away from infrastructure towards climate change and innovation.
- One of the main innovations in the EU programming period 2014-20 is the significant increase in activities in urban areas.
- The Commission for the Reform of Public Administrations (CORA) process was launched in 2012 to address administrative streamlining, simplification of legislation and procedures, and to avoid duplication between central state and autonomous communities (AC). The CORA proposals focus on duplications between the central government and the ACs. Of the 217 proposals presented in the reform, 118 relate to eliminating duplications at the national level and between national and subnational levels.
- The Law on the Streamlining and Sustainability of Local Governments aims at streamlining the services offered by the local public sector and to increase the responsibilities granted to provinces. As a result, provinces can be in charge of co-ordinating specific municipal minimum services to municipalities with less than 20 000 inhabitants.
- The approval of the Spanish Urban Agenda is planned for 2019. It is expected to provide an assessment of the urban and rural conditions along ten different dimensions and provide priority objectives for each of the dimensions. Furthermore, it will incorporate a monitoring and evaluation framework and an action plan that will be defined through a public participation process.

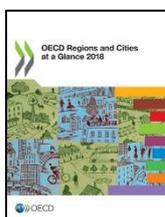
Institutional arrangements to prepare for global megatrends

The Spanish government emphasises the importance of multi-level governance and co-operation across levels of government to prepare for the challenges of the future. For this reason, several steps are currently being taken to improve co-ordination instruments. This includes the activities of the 27 most important sectoral conferences that co-ordinate the work of the central government and the 17 regional ministries. Furthermore, several other steps are being taken, including the creation of sectoral commissions and working groups that contribute to the work of the sectoral conferences, as well as the formalisation of agreements on the best use of the human, material and financial resources of each administration.

Spain does not develop a strategic spatial plan or long-term regional development plan at the national level. However, the 2030 Industrial Strategy and the Internationalisation Strategy of the Spanish Economy 2017-27 are two long-term economic development strategies that are important for regional development policy. Furthermore, the Strategy to Counter Demographic Challenges is expected to be approved in 2019 and will include forward-looking dimensions that are important for regional policy.

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>.

