

## Reader's guide

### The organising framework

*Regions at a Glance 2013* addresses two questions:

- What progress have OECD regions made towards more sustainable development, compared to the past and compared with other regions?
- Which factors drive the competitive edge of regions, and what local resources could be better mobilised to increase national growth and people's well-being?

Addressing the first question can reveal the variety of regional economic structures and performance through the development and analysis of a broad range of indicators. Given the multidimensionality of regional development, it is necessary to find sound information comparable across countries on economic, social and environmental outcomes.

Answering the second question can inform the design of effective strategies to improve the contribution of regions to aggregate performance and can suggest policy interventions unlocking complementarities among efficiency, equity and environmental sustainability. Clearly, this second question is more challenging to answer, and regional statistics can provide only a partial assessment of the effects of policies. The publication *Regional Outlook 2014* integrates the statistics presented in this *Regions at a Glance* with analysis of institutional and policy determinants, going deeper into the assessment of causality links and policy evaluation.

The framework of *Regions at a Glance 2013* is organised along two dimensions. The first dimension reflects the OECD mission to encourage stronger, fairer and cleaner economies. The three chapters – “Regions as drivers for national competitiveness”, “Inclusion and equal access to quality services in regions”, and “Environmental sustainability in regions” – present indicators showcasing the key role of regions to strengthen these three interconnected pillars of socio-economic development. Similarly, even if containing a limited selection of indicators, Chapter 1 provides internationally comparable figures on the competitiveness, social inclusion and environmental sustainability of metropolitan areas.

The second dimension highlights three perspectives to measure regional economies in countries: the distribution of resources over space, the persistence of regional disparities over time, and the links between different regional characteristics and outcomes. More precisely:

- Distribution of resources over space is computed by looking at how much of a certain national variable is concentrated in a small number of regions and how much these regions contribute to the national change of that variable.
- Regional disparities are measured by the difference between the maximum and the minimum regional values in a country (regional range) or by the Gini index, which gives an indication of inequality among all regions.

- Links between common characteristics and outcomes are measured through correlations among different outcomes (for example, employment creation during the economic crisis, population outflows, etc.) and structural variables.

The following matrix provides some examples of indicators in *Regions at a Glance 2013* organised along the following dimensions: competitiveness, inclusion, and sustainability in the three columns and concentration of resources, persistence of disparities, and characteristics of regions in the rows.

	Regions as drivers for national competitiveness	Inclusion and equal access to quality services in regions	Environmental sustainability in regions
Concentration of resources and contribution to growth	Regional contribution to national economic growth	Concentration of elderly population in regions	Concentration of environmental patents in regions
Regional disparities and mobilisation of unused resources	Regional disparities in tertiary education	Gini index of regional household income	Regional range of carbon emissions per capita
Characteristics of regions on common outcomes	Regional patterns of co-patenting	Regional youth unemployment	Growth of urban land in OECD regions

The allocation of indicators to one or another cell is not always straightforward, as objectives may overlap or complementarities arise. For example, regional data on ageing populations provide information both on the competitiveness of regions in terms of future production and on social inclusion in terms of provision of specific services. Similarly, regional patent activities in green technologies measure the capacity of governments and industry to create new business values and, at the same time, proxy investment made to meet environmental improvements.

## Choice of indicators

*OECD Regions at a Glance 2013* includes 35 indicators selected from the *OECD Regional Database*. What appears is a larger selection of subnational statistics that refer to economic structure and competitiveness compared to subnational indicators of social inclusion and environmental conditions. However, a continuous attempt to improve the international comparison of regional conditions of equity and environmental sustainability is made and this edition presents six indicators available at the subnational level for the first time.

The 14 indicators referring to the metropolitan areas (Chapter 1) are presented for the first time and are estimated values computed with different techniques as specified in Annex C.

The indicators on revenues, expenditure, investment and debt of subnational governments are derived from the General Government Data of the System of the National Accounts.

## Geographic areas utilised

This publication features data from regions within each of the 34 OECD member countries and, when available, from Brazil, China, Colombia, India, the Russian Federation and South Africa. Regions are classified on two territorial levels reflecting the administrative organisation of countries. OECD large (TL2) regions represent the first administrative tier of subnational government; for example, the Aquitaine region in France. OECD small (TL3) regions are contained in a TL2 region. For example, the TL2 region of Aquitaine encompasses five TL3 regions: Dordogne, Gironde, Landes, Lot-et-Garonne

and Pyrénées-Atlantiques. Labour-market indicators in Canada are presented for groups of TL3 regions, labelled as non-official grids (NOG).

TL3 regions have been classified as predominantly urban (PU), intermediate (IN), predominantly rural close to a city (PRC), and predominantly rural remote (PRR). Due to lack of information on the road network, the predominantly rural regions (PR) in Australia, Chile and Korea have not been classified whether remote or close to a city.

The statistical data for Israel are supplied by and under the responsibility of the relevant Israeli authorities. The use of such data by the OECD is without prejudice to the status of the Golan Heights, East Jerusalem and Israeli settlements in the West Bank under the terms of international law.

The data in Chapter 1 refer to the metropolitan areas (MA). Metropolitan areas are defined as the functional urban areas (FUA) with a population above 500 000. Functional urban areas have been identified in 29 OECD countries; the missing ones are Australia, Iceland, Israel, New Zealand and Turkey. The FUA of Luxembourg has a population below 500 000.

The data of Chapter 3 refer to subnational governments, as classified according to the General Government Data of the *OECD National Accounts*. Subnational governments are defined as the sum of states (relevant only for countries having a federal or quasi-federal system of government) and local (regional and local) governments.

Annex A includes details on the territorial grids of each country.

Australia (TL2):	TL2 regions of Australia
Australia (TL3):	TL3 regions of Australia
TL2:	Territorial level 2
TL3:	Territorial level 3
NOG:	Non-official grid
PR:	Predominantly rural (region)
PRC:	Predominantly rural (region) close to a city
PRR:	Predominantly rural remote (region)
PU:	Predominantly urban (region)
IN:	Intermediate (region)
FUA:	Functional urban areas
MA:	Metropolitan area (functional urban area with a population of more than 500 000)
SNG:	Subnational government

## Calculation of international means

For many indicators, an OECD total and an average are presented.

OECD#:	The sum of all the OECD regions where regional data are available (# number of countries included in the sum).
Total # countries:	The sum of all regions where regional data are available, including OECD and non-OECD countries.
OECD# average:	The weighted mean of the OECD regional values (# number of countries included in the average).
OECD# country average:	The unweighted mean of the country values (# number of countries included in the average).

## Further resources

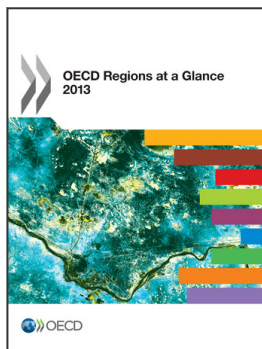
The website <http://rag.oecd.org> conveys the main messages of this publication by topic (jobs, health, population, innovation, etc.) using *data stories* to see the effects of local differences on national performance and individual welfare. The different topics are visualised through interactive graphs and maps with a short comment. Users can also find the *Regional eXplorer* and the *Metropolitan eXplorer* at this website, where users can select from all the indicators included in the *OECD Regional and Metropolitan Areas Databases* and display them in different linked dynamic views such as maps, time trends, histograms, pie charts and scatter plots. The website also provides access to the data underlying the indicators and to the OECD publications on regional and local statistics.

Finally, the website also includes country profiles for each of the 34 OECD countries on the main indicators presented in this publication so as to compare each country with the OECD area average or with another country.

The cut-off date for data included in the publication was July 2013. Due to the time lag of subnational statistics, the last available year is generally 2012 for demographic, labour market and subnational finance data; 2010 for regional GDP, innovation statistics and social statistics.

## Acronyms and abbreviations

<b>COFOG</b>	Classification of the Functions of Government
<b>CO<sub>2</sub></b>	Carbon dioxide
<b>GDP</b>	Gross domestic product
<b>KIS</b>	Knowledge-intensive services
<b>LFS</b>	Labour force survey
<b>NEET</b>	Adults neither employed nor in education or in training
<b>PCT</b>	Patent Cooperation Treaty
<b>PM<sub>10</sub></b>	Particulate matter (concentration of fine particles in the air)
<b>PPP</b>	Purchasing power parity
<b>R&amp;D</b>	Research and development



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