

11. GOVERNANCE OF INFRASTRUCTURE

Long-term strategic vision for sustainable infrastructure

Developing a long-term strategic vision for infrastructure helps governments identify and address infrastructure service needs in a timely and coherent manner. As the OECD Recommendation on the Governance of Infrastructure highlights, long-term strategic visions should be aligned with long-term policy objectives, including commitments on environmental protection, climate change mitigation, human rights, social inclusion, gender equality and regional development.

Most OECD countries have become aware of the need for coherence between long-term infrastructure plans and broader sustainable development objectives, in light of commitments made under the Sustainable Development Goals of Agenda 2030. Most surveyed OECD countries (22 out of 30, or 73%) have aligned their long-term infrastructure plan with environmental and climate action policies (Table 11.1). In 20 of these, the aim is to invest in key projects enabling the implementation of broader sustainability initiatives (67%), followed by adapting existing infrastructure to improve environmental performance, and identifying cross-sector synergies to reduce negative environmental impacts (17 each, or 57%). Fewer have adopted resource efficiency targets in the construction and operation of infrastructure (12 countries, or 40%) or research and development to promote environmentally friendly infrastructure (10 countries, or 33%) (Figure 11.2).

Other less commonly integrated policy objectives include land use and spatial planning instruments and regional development plans (15 countries each, or 50%), inclusion and gender mainstreaming (8 out of 30, or 27%), and human rights (5, or 17%) (Table 11.1). This limits governments' capacity to monitor how infrastructure affects specific population groups.

Infrastructure investment and delivery will play a prominent role in the recovery from the COVID-19 crisis. With good governance, infrastructure investments could contribute to a sustainable rebound, building infrastructure capacity in the short term and strengthening resilience and achieving multiple objectives in the long term. Although the latest data were collected in January 2021, with the pandemic still unfolding, 21 OECD countries (70% of the 30 surveyed) had already adopted an economic stimulus or recovery package. Of these, over three-quarters see infrastructure playing a key role in the recovery (Table 11.1). For instance, in Chile, Costa Rica, Hungary, Ireland, New Zealand and Slovenia, 30% or more of the economic stimulus package has been allocated to investments in infrastructure.

Methodology and definitions

Data are drawn from the 2020 OECD Survey of Infrastructure Governance and the 2018 OECD Survey of Capital Budgeting and Infrastructure Governance. The two surveys are not identical but used similar

questions for the time trends. The 2020 survey was conducted in January 2021, with responses from 30 OECD countries and Costa Rica. The 2018 survey was conducted in early 2018, with responses from 26 OECD countries. Respondents were predominantly senior officials in central/federal ministries of infrastructure, public works and finance, as well as in infrastructure agencies and other line ministries.

Infrastructure governance relates to the interactions between government institutions internally, and with private sector users and citizens. It encompasses a range of processes, tools and norms of interaction, decision making and monitoring used by governments and their counterparts providing infrastructure services.

A long-term national infrastructure plan refers to a politically sanctioned document that sets out concrete action in terms of infrastructure services to society over the long term. This might go beyond a normal political mandate period. Designing the vision requires a process to distil complex and multi-faceted infrastructure issues, cutting across multiple actors, sectors and interests, into a coherent set of decisions with long-term impact, including projects and processes. The process should be anchored in central agencies (chief executive, ministry of finance or similar) and have substantial input from policy departments, sub-national governments, civil society and business stakeholders.

Further reading

OECD (2020), "Public procurement and infrastructure governance: Initial policy responses to the coronavirus (Covid-19) crisis", *OECD Policy Responses to Coronavirus (COVID-19)*, OECD Publishing, Paris, <https://doi.org/10.1787/c0ab0a96-en>.

OECD (2017), *Getting Infrastructure Right: A Framework for Better Governance*, OECD Publishing, Paris, <https://doi.org/10.1787/9789264272453-en>.

Figure notes

Data for 2020 refer to the infrastructure plans currently in force. Austria, Costa Rica, Mexico, New Zealand and Portugal reported ongoing efforts to update or replace their current plan. The 2020 data for Chile, Colombia, Germany, Latvia, Portugal and Spain refer to the transport sector and those of Turkey refer to the transport and health sectors. 2020 data for Belgium are based on responses from Flanders only. The Czech Republic's 2018 data are based on sectoral plans while the 2020 data are based on an overall plan. 2020 data for Australia, Denmark, France, Israel, the Netherlands, Poland and Sweden are not available.

11.1. 2018 data for Belgium, Canada, Colombia, Costa Rica, Finland, Iceland, Korea, Latvia, Lithuania and the United States are not available. As of April 2021, the EU COVID-19 stimulus packages are still being approved.

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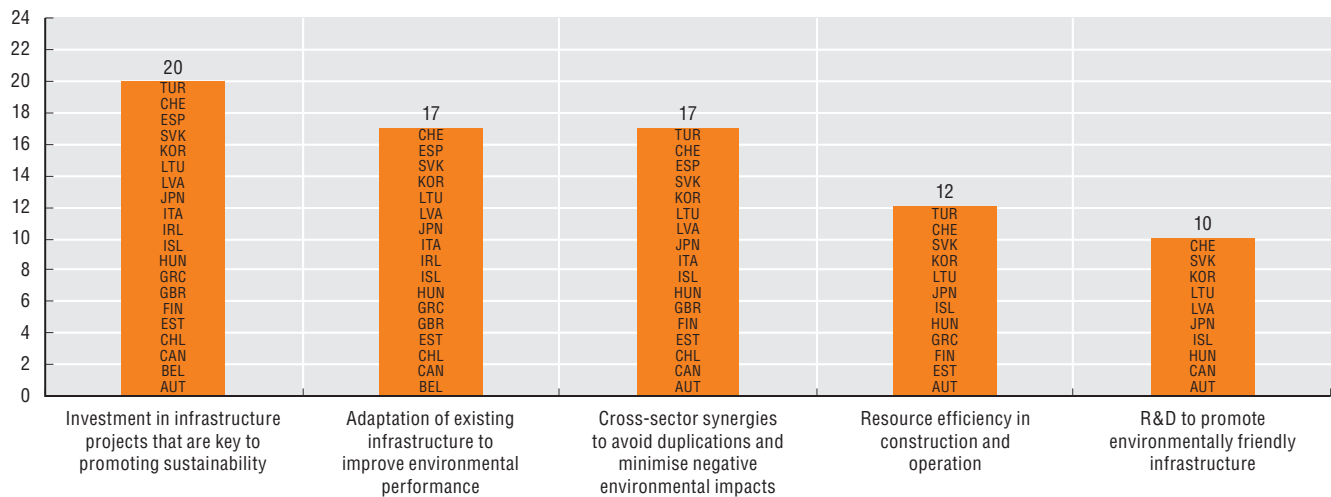
11.1. Development of a long-term strategic vision for sustainable infrastructure, 2018 and 2020

Country	The long-term infrastructure plan explicitly considers how to align the infrastructure strategic vision with other policies		Approval of economic stimulus or recovery packages (2021)	Inclusion of infrastructure investment commitments in economic stimulus or recovery packages (2021)
	2018 (overall or sectoral)	2020 (overall or sectoral)		
Australia	..	..	..	..
Austria	△▲	●△▲■	✓	✓
Belgium (Flanders)	..	●△▲◇	✓	✓
Canada	..	●▲■	✓	✓
Chile	▲	▲	✓	✓
Colombia	..	●	✓	✓
Czech Republic	△▲	×	×	×
Denmark	▲	..	..	..
Estonia	▲	●△▲◇	✓	✓
Finland	..	●▲◇	✓	×
France	●△▲	..	..	..
Germany	▲+	..	✓	✓
Greece	●△▲	△▲◇	×	..
Hungary	●△	●△▲□◇	×	..
Iceland	..	●▲■	✓	✓
Ireland	●△▲	●△▲◇	✓	✓
Israel	●△▲	..	..	..
Italy	..	●▲◇	×	..
Japan	..	△▲◇	✓	✓
Latvia	..	●△▲■◇	✓	✓
Lithuania	..	●△▲□■	×	..
Luxembourg	●△	●▲	✓	✓
Mexico	●△▲	●□■	✓	×
Netherlands	●△▲	..	..	..
New Zealand	×	×	✓	✓
Norway	▲	△▲◇	✓	×
Portugal	..	×	×	..
Republic of Korea	..	●△▲◇	×	..
Slovakia	..	●△▲□■◇	×	..
Slovenia	△	..	×	..
Spain	..	▲+	✓	✓
Sweden	▲	..	..	..
Switzerland	△	●△▲□◇	✓	×
Turkey	●	●△▲◇	✓	✓
United Kingdom	●△▲	●△▲■◇	✓	✓
United States	..	..	✓	✓
OECD Total				
✓ Yes			21	17
× No			9	4
▲ Environmental or climate action plans	15	22		
● National document setting strategic priorities	10	18		
△ Land use and spatial planning instruments	13	15		
◇ Regional development plans		15		
■ Inclusion and gender mainstreaming		8		
□ Human rights commitments		5		
+ Other	1	1		
× None	1	3		
.. Not available/Not applicable	15	9	6	15
Non-OECD countries				
Costa Rica	..	●△▲□■◇	×	..

Source: OECD (2018), Survey of Capital Budgeting and Infrastructure Governance; OECD (2020), Survey on the Governance of Infrastructure.

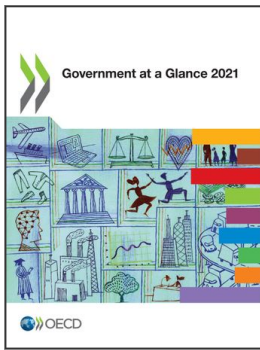
StatLink <https://doi.org/10.1787/888934258857>

11.2. Goals and targets in long-term plans among countries that reported alignment of their long-term infrastructure plan with environmental or climate action plans, 2020



Source: OECD (2020), Survey on the Governance of Infrastructure.

StatLink <https://doi.org/10.1787/888934258876>



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