

**Support to the implementation
capacity of sustainable green
development in the European Arctic
Northern Sparsely Populated Areas
(NSPA)**

POLICY AND MULTI-LEVEL GOVERNANCE
QUESTIONNAIRE



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Introduction

About the Project

This Project is implemented by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) in cooperation with the European Commission's Directorate-General for Structural Reform Support (DG REFORM) and funded by the European Union's (EU) Technical Support Instrument (TSI) 2022.

The Northern Sparsely Populated Areas (NSPA) of Finland, Sweden and Norway, which form part of Europe's gateway to the Arctic, are becoming increasingly important to the geopolitical and economic interests of these countries and the EU. The changing climate, developments in bio economy, access to hydrocarbon, minerals and other natural resources are redefining these regions along with the potential brought by the opening of new shipping sea routes between Europe, North America and Asia. However, the NSPA also face territorial development challenges because of their particular geographic features and location: low population density and a harsh climate, an ageing population and demographic imbalances, remoteness, long distances from markets and high-cost land transport, and low productivity growth. The NSPA have a fragile environment, while their economy is largely dependent on raw material assets. These specific conditions, harshened by the COVID-19 pandemic, hinder the economic growth and well-being of the NSPA regions. This lack of critical mass of people, competence and capital coupled with the lack of administrative capacity to coordinate sectoral policies constitute structural barriers for the realisation of both NSPA and national ambitions in terms of sustainable development, the European Green Deal and the EU's integrated Arctic policy.

In this framework, the Project aims at: (i) Enhancing multi-level coordination in NSPA regions for implementing investment projects for the green and digital transitions; (ii) Improving the NSPA regions' capacity to design and implement policies, and manage EU and national programmes and projects.

Scope and objective of the questionnaire

The objective of this questionnaire is to collect key data and information on the main socio-economic trends, challenges, and policy responses in the NSPA regions. The answers to this questionnaire will constitute the starting point of the analysis conducted by the OECD Secretariat. The questionnaire serves both as a basis for the background report, as well as the missions to the NSPA regions organised within the project.

Process and deadline

This basic questionnaire contains a set of sometimes very generic questions so as to be able to be adequately adapted to each national review. These questions, that may appear trivial in certain cases (and for which an indication of an accessible and up-dated information source will be sufficient as an answer), will deserve in others a more in depth explanation. In the process of completing this questionnaire you may attach any useful information that you deem relevant including reports (preferably in English) concerning one of the topic mentioned in the questionnaire; maps, graphs, charts that you find relevant to illustrate the main arguments and; links to Internet sites that could be helpful to the OECD analysis. Please respond individually to each question and, where information is missing, please specify the reasons. We thank you greatly for your contributions.

It is requested that the questionnaire be returned by 24th February 2023.

Contacts

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Toolkit for Answering the Questionnaire

Drafting and presentation

- Provide all tables and graphs in unlocked Excel format and indicate source and year.
- Provide maps in PDF format and indicate source and year.
- For all data provided, specify all sources and exact dates.
- Whenever possible provide data in the form of time series (over several years), if it appears relevant to analyse trends
- Provide a chart or a graph whenever this can illustrate or help to understand more clearly the text.
- Indicate name of programmes/projects in the original language and in English/French.

Other necessary information

- Provide a bibliography (English or French) with complete references (author, title, date, form [book, article, Internet link]...)
- Procure any useful documents (English/French), also in electronic form, if available such as :
- Main laws/regulations concerning administrative, fiscal, territorial and municipal organisation.
- Any other relevant document: policy statements on administrative or fiscal reform...
- Provide a list of useful websites (English/French) with Internet addresses, including at least all official websites presenting information relevant for the review topics.
- Once the background report is issued, ensure that it is up-dated when necessary (new laws or programmes, new sets of data published...).

QUESTIONNAIRE

Strategic priorities

1. Please provide your assessment of the mega-trends indicated in the Table below and their effects on your region.

Mega-trends	Description current and future trends	Opportunities	Risks/ challenges
Population ageing and migration			
Global shifts in production and resources scarcity (global value chains)			
Climate change, environmental pressures and green transition			
Technological innovation (e.g. digitalisation, automation, decentralised energy)			

2. How have you adapted to these changes?

3. How do you integrate these mega-trends into your national and regional strategic planning and decision-making?

4. Please specify if there have been any other important trends identified in your region guiding the policy discussions.

5. In your view list: (i) the most relevant factors that have been responsible for improving economic growth in your region during the last decade; and (ii) the most important bottlenecks hindering growth in your region.

6. Have there been any specific policy initiatives that have been successful in improving the economic output of your region or alternatively have there been any policies that have failed to improve competitiveness? Are these programs national or specific to the region?

7. What are the main policy objectives in your region over the short, medium and long term: economic, social, environmental or other (one of these or all)?

8. Please attach and provide an overview of the current strategic vision and development priorities of your region as defined in national and regional strategic documents, including EU programming (e.g. Partnership Agreement eco system for the current (2021-2027) programming period / ESIF strategic intervention at national level and in your region, Smart Specialisation Strategy, etc.).

EU's Arctic Strategy

In your opinion

9. Why should the EU be engaged in the Arctic?

10. What is the impact of the EU on the Arctic?

11. How will the EU enhance its role in the Arctic?

12. The EU pushes for oil, coal and gas to stay in the ground, including in Arctic regions. We witness however soaring energy prices, greater demand. Is this goal realistic?

13. How to make the extraction and use of rare raw materials from the Arctic more sustainable?

Rural / Urban approach

14. Is there a standard definition at national and/or regional level of “urban areas” and/or “rural areas”? If so, please specify and provide the parameters these definitions are based on (e.g., population density, sector specialization, local accessibility, etc.), and why have you adopted such parameters?

15. Provide a few comments on the main trends in urban/rural development over the past 10 years, and the expected trends for the near future (including your strategic objectives).

16. What are the main challenges specific for urban and rural areas in your region? (e.g. infrastructure; labour market mobility; housing; industrial decline; out-migration and ageing; remoteness; knowledge/education; innovation; environment; etc.)?

17. Which are the policy tools and financial mechanisms that promote rural development? Do certain areas receive priority attention? (e.g. support to SMEs and clustering in rural areas). Have these policies contributed to improving rural standards of living or employment?

Regional economy

General

18. What are the areas of comparative advantage in your region? Do you have mappings that show the location of areas of industrial specialisation and other measures of cluster and prominent industrial sectors?

19. What is the weight of economic and productive sectors in your region in terms of employment and local GDP? How can land tenure and production methods be characterised? Do you pursue any economic diversification?

20. Please provide an overview of recent performance, trends and opportunities in relevant economic sectors. For instance, tourism, renewable energy, agro-food and others you deem relevant. Please indicate if certain sectors were more affected by the Covid 19 pandemic and/or the large aggression of Ukraine by Russia than others.

21. In your view, list the (i) most relevant factors that have been responsible for improving economic growth in your region during the last decade; and, (ii) the most important bottlenecks hindering growth in your region. Please list up to 5 factors for each.

22. Have you developed local value chains in your region? If, so how and what do they look like?

23. What are the main goods and services exported by the region and what are the main markets? How are local products marketed? Are there typical products or products with a high level of quality?
24. How do the region and municipalities support clusters, if they do? (What type of strategies and instruments are used?).
25. Which policies have been implemented to enhance rural amenities (natural and historical)? Specify the institutions involved including goals, budgets and measures.
26. Give a brief overview of nature conservation policies (goal, measures, role of province and local governments, organisations that are responsible for these policies, policy effects, obstacles, and solutions). What is the contribution of these policies to enhance economic growth?
27. What policies have helped to attract people and firms in your region? What is the impact of these measures?
28. Please describe the use of EU funds in your region and any lessons learned from evaluation of those policies financed through such funds.

Innovation

29. Please describe the Regional Innovation System in the region, making reference to the key actors, institutions and firms.
30. What are the most important national and regional innovation-related policies? Please describe the policies and instruments, and how the sub-national level may or may not play a role.
31. What are the most common enabling factors and bottlenecks to enhance innovation in the region?
32. What are the main successes in terms of policies to support innovation systems? What are the most important barriers in your region to support innovation? (e.g. interactions with governments, research centres, universities, SMEs, etc.). Are there policies in place to overcome these barriers and promote linkages between them? Do you have measures of the level of such interaction and changes over time?
33. How is information on innovations made available to (rural) firms?
34. Do you have a breakout of national spending by region(s) with respect to innovation and higher education policy? (e.g., public R&D in higher education institutions, public R&D research centres, flows of funds from other important innovation policies).

Smart Specialisation

35. How did you identify priorities areas in your smart specialisation strategy? What methodology did you use?
36. Who are the key actors involved in the region's smart specialisation strategy?
37. What are the differences and similarities between your smart specialisation strategy and other regions in your country or NSPA? Are there further opportunities for cross-regional / (cross-border) collaboration on smart specialisation? (e.g. NSPA and beyond).

SMEs and entrepreneurship

38. Please identify the top three challenges and opportunities in regards to growth and competitiveness of SMEs in your region.
39. What are bottlenecks and inefficiencies in existing networks or clusters in the region as well as beyond it (cross-regional/cross-border)? Do they work towards a common goal?

40. How do you provide targeted support for entrepreneurship/SMEs? What are the main gaps/challenges in the entrepreneurial eco-system of your region?
41. Please describe the business parks, knowledge centres, incubators, pilots and test-beds in the region (size, tasks, private/publicly owned, outputs etc.). Please also make reference to what you think inhibits them from scaling up or becoming established, if applicable.
42. What are the main regulatory barriers for the private sector (regional, local, national), if any.
43. How does the private sector (SME's) work with the government for internationalisation/ access to main markets?
44. What measure does the region put in place to maximise the benefits of inward investment (large-scale infrastructure, local procurement etc.)?
45. Are there barriers that business face in access to finance? Does the Region play any role in overcoming those barriers? Please identify relevant funding streams for SMEs and the ways which they can be combined or not.

Infrastructure, Accessibility and Connectivity

General

46. In your view, what are the main physical infrastructure requirements in areas outside cities, including smaller cities and rural areas (roads, broadband, heating networks, etc.)?
47. What have been the on-going and most important recently completed infrastructure projects in the region?
48. What are the major examples of public-private partnerships in public investment projects? What has been the evaluation of such partnerships so far?
49. What is the role of the national vs. regional vs. local governments in financing infrastructure projects? Is the private sector involved? If yes, in which way (e.g., public-private partnerships, etc.)?
50. Who are the main public actors in infrastructure development, at regional and local level? How does coordination work within the region and with central governmental bodies? what are the major obstacles?
51. What is the role of the EU in financing infrastructure projects?

Transport

52. What are the main routes of transport in your region? How do they differ between goods and people? What are the key bottlenecks affecting the performance of the freight transport and logistics to other regions? (including NSRF)? Is there a strategy for addressing them?
53. What are the major public investment projects in terms of inter-regional and intra-regional transport? Is it about a national policy or a policy specific to the region? Was there any priority given to improve first internal connectivity or external connectivity or both simultaneously?
54. What is the average commuting time (of workers) in the region? And what are the main commuting zones in the region?

Digitalisation

55. How can digitalisation help mitigate depopulation in your region?
56. What strategies or investments are needed to make the most of benefits of digitalisation for rural areas?

57. What are the major public investment projects in terms of ICT? Was this a national policy or a policy specific to the region?

58. Are there any ongoing or future plans to expand the coverage of education, elderly and social care, and/or healthcare services via digital means? What are the main challenges and barriers faced by these plans (e.g. legislations and regulations, technology management and payment methods, or culture, funding and governance issues)?

59. Are there available estimates on the percentage of the population living outside cities that lacks digital skills? Please provide (a link to) related statistical information disaggregated by region, gender, age and educational background, if available.

60. Please describe any policies or programmes specifically aimed at bridging digital skill gaps for education and health professionals.

61. Please describe any policies or programmes aimed at enhancing digital skills across vulnerable, under-represented or specific demographic groups (e.g. the youth, the elderly).

62. Is there quantitative or qualitative evidence that new digital technologies (e.g. blockchain, artificial intelligence) have offered opportunities for economic diversification in your region? (e.g. in areas outside cities beyond the agri-food sector?)

63. How do you assess the scope of “Smart initiatives” using digital technologies to improve the efficiency of basic services (e.g. waste collection, lighting or water management)?

Broadband Telecommunications

64. What percentage of population (national/regional and within the region urban/rural) has access to internet and broadband?

65. What are the challenges associated with access to broadband telecommunication services and infrastructures in your region? Is this different from other regions?

66. Please provide information on current national or regional broadband programmes, including the name and whether it has a spatial lens.

67. Are there municipal (as opposed to regional or national) broadband telecommunications networks in your region? Do national or sub-national legislation or regulations limit, or facilitate the ability of municipalities to provide accessible broadband networks? Please explain and provide supporting documents, if available.

68. Are there universal service obligations (USO) for broadband access? Do these USOs have requirements to target rural areas, or specific communities (based on income levels, or other demographics)?

69. Are there minimum accessibility requirements for new calls for tenders in the provision (or extension) of broadband networks and services in rural areas?

70. What is the minimum level of service requirement regarding the speed of telecommunications broadband in your country /region? What does the government do to encourage access to faster (30 mbps or more) broadband speeds in rural areas?

71. Are there price controls, subsidies, or initiatives to ensure the affordability of broadband services in wholesale markets? (Please provide supporting documents, if available.)

- Yes, there are price controls
- Yes, there are subsidies for households
- Yes, there are subsidies for entrepreneurs
- Yes, there are subsidies for SMEs

- Yes, there are subsidies for large firms
- No, there are no price controls or consumer subsidies, but there are other methods in place to ensure affordability
- No, there is no specific method in place to ensure affordability

Land use, Environment and Energy management

Land use

72. What is spatial planning and land use vision in the region based on population projections? How was this vision developed?

73. Please provide a land-use map of the region, indicating different national interests and zones dedicated to specific use.

74. Please describe if you phase specific challenges to provide land for construction or other uses in the region. Are there specific aspects of the regulatory framework that you would like to change?

75. What institution is responsible for strategic land use planning? What are the principles and statutory requirements for developing these strategic land use plans (e.g. community engagement, objectives they need to address)?

76. How is strategic land use planning integrated with other policy areas, in particular coordination with infrastructure planning and regional development?

77. What are the key conflicts and trade –offs related to land use planning, and how are these managed and resolved (e.g. environmental and economic interests)?

78. What are the major reforms and improvements that have been implemented to improve the operation of the land use planning system over the past 10 -15 years? Why were these reforms initiated?

Environmental performance

79. Please describe your strategy for reducing greenhouse gas emissions to the extent required to meet the 2030 EU burden-sharing target and the 2035 net-zero target. What are the contributions of the various measures already decided and of those envisaged to meeting these targets?

80. Can you provide data on regional CO2 emissions and planned goals for the region?

81. What are the main measures to reduce transport emissions, if any?

82. What measures are being taken or planned to reduce emissions in the agriculture- and energy sectors (energy includes residential and commercial heating)?

83. What do you estimate to be the investment requirements to support the green transition? To what extent does public financial support target investment that would not occur otherwise or leverage private investment?

84. To what extent are skills shortages a barrier to green innovation and the uptake of clean technology? Which skills are lacking?

85. What proportion of recovery spending was allocated to environment measures? Please give a breakdown of spending on the main measures.

Energy management

86. Can you describe main challenges and opportunities related to energy supply to the region? What are your current energy sources? Please indicate how much energy do you generate and how much is “imported”?

87. Please describe your plan to become carbon neutral, key milestones and challenges.
88. Do you have plans for future investments in renewable energy? Where are renewable energy plants currently located? What type of renewable input do they use to produce energy? Is the energy source located where the plan is?
89. Do you make use of smart grids? If so, what is your experience with it, are you seeking to expand them in the future?
90. Can you provide data on the anticipated energy need for the future as well as current supplying capacity?
91. Do you have sufficient, responsibilities and resources to manage future challenges to supply sufficient energy? If not, where are you seeking support?
92. Can you describe main challenges and opportunities related to the circular economy in your region? Can you please describe your plans to further develop it?

Demographic structure, Labour market, Skills, Service delivery

Demography

93. Please provide data on demographic structure and trends in your region
94. Are there any population projections for your region (e.g. also for urban and rural areas within your region?). Please provide future demographic scenarios for administrative and local labour markets.
95. Do you have specific data on demographic changes that go beyond data available through the national statistics agency?
96. Are there policies specifically directed towards specific age groups? (elderly, or working age, families? i.e. policies that promote the inclusion of retired people in the job market? (for instance, part-time jobs)
97. What is the ethnic structure of your region? Do immigration policies target specific groups of immigrants (skills)?
98. Did your region undertake any initiatives to attract population with a particular type of skill? If yes, please describe the measures undertaken as part of this policy. Was this a national policy or a policy specific to the region?
99. What assets, amenities, and opportunities need to be in place in order to attract these people? Have you already developed policies to address these issues?
100. How do you measure/ monitor quality of life and attractiveness in the region?
101. Please identify target population groups who you try to attract (e.g. young skilled people).

Labour market

102. Please provide data on trends in employment and labour market participation in your region
103. Which institutional actors are responsible for employment in the region? How do they coordinate policies, investment and services with the national government?
104. What are the policies to include the younger population in the labour market?
105. Are there policies in place to develop self-employment?
106. Are there social policies designed to include particular groups into the workforce? (e.g. the creation of nurseries to increase woman participation in the labour force)

107. What was the impact of Covid 19 and the Russian's aggression of Ukraine on the local labour market? Were some groups/ industries more affected than others? What has been the policy response to these issues?

Education and Skills

108. What are the priorities and key areas that require improvement to enhance competitiveness and productivity in the region in terms of skills and education?

109. Have there been any specific policies aimed at improving human capital development? If yes was this a national policy or a policy specific to the region?

110. Have efforts focused on 'developing' human capital (e.g. focus on primary and secondary schooling) or in 'recycling' human capital (e.g. training adults and vocational training)? Or on both?

111. Did your region develop any incentives to retain human capital in the region? Did the private sector or academic institutions play an important role in this process?

112. What is the role of the regional government and municipalities with respect to education and training (early childhood, primary education, secondary education, vocational training and higher education)? Please identify if there are any differences from other regions.

113. Please describe the main private and public Higher Educational Institutions in the region making reference to their size (in terms of students) their areas of specialization and their location? How has their role evolved in the last decade?

114. What policies are in place to encourage training and workforce participation for adults?

115. How does the private sector in the region work with universities to provide employment opportunities for graduates and align the supply of education to industry needs?

116. Please describe the most important policies related to vocational training. Are those policies devised and managed at the local, regional or national level? How is the private sector involved in the vocation training system? (e.g. how do local training providers understand industry needs, does industry participate in shaping training courses, and do students undertake work placements)

Service Delivery

117. Are there gaps in service delivery (e.g. healthcare, education or elderly services, etc.) within your Region? If yes please describe.

118. Have specific policies been implemented to maintain or develop public services in your region? If so, present a brief overview of aims, method and financing and indicate the first results achieved.

119. What are the measures that your region put in place to improve access and efficiency of public service delivery (joint service centres/one-stop shops, use of e-technologies).

120. Is e-government used as an instrument of public service delivery? Through generic regional/local portals? Specify types. Through specific programmes/projects (tele-medicine, tele-education)? Please give an overview and examples.

121. Is there quantitative or qualitative evidence of improvements in the provision of services such as social care, education or healthcare in rural areas brought about by the implementation of digital services?

122. Are policies to improve access and efficiency of service delivery part of a national strategy or are they designed on a case-by-case basis? Where do you currently see the biggest need for an overarching national (or NSPA cross-border) strategy to improve the delivery of public services? (e.g. regulating joint service centres/one-stop shops, use of e-education and telehealth)?

123. Are there any national-level policies for attracting skilled workers or service professionals such as teachers, doctors and nurses to rural areas facing staff shortages? What incentives work for attracting

service professionals such as doctors and teachers to rural areas experiencing depopulation? What are the main barriers to distance learning and telehealth in rural areas?

Recent economic developments

Russian invasion of Ukraine

124. What do you expect to be the economic effects on your country/region of Russia's invasion of Ukraine assuming that severe sanctions on Russia are long lasting? What would be the impact of Russia cutting off gas supplies? How many Ukrainians and Russians have arrived in your country /region since the onset of the war? What are the possible economic consequences of their inflow?

125. What impact, if any, do you expect the Russian invasion of Ukraine to have on the green economic transition? Will it slow the move away from coal and peat energy sources? Will it accelerate the electrification of industrial heat processes that currently use gas?

126. What impact, if any, the Russian invasion had, is having, will have on cross-border and other international cooperation programmes and projects (national or financed by the EU) in your region?

COVID-19

127. What effect is COVID-19 expected to have on economic activity this year and next? Which sectors are most adversely affected?

128. To what extent will greater telework be a feature of the new post-pandemic normal in your region? Can you provide data on teleworking and territorial trends due to teleworking in your region?

Institutional Organisation and Multilevel-Governance

Institutional context and distribution of responsibilities across government levels

129. Please provide a list of functions and responsibilities held by your region and the municipalities within it

130. Please present key differences between your region and other regions in terms of competences, fiscal and financial powers etc.

131. Please describe the key challenges (capacity problems) and opportunities (increased autonomy) from your region perspective.

132. Can you describe the main goals of your regional development strategy (e.g., competitiveness, growth promotion, equity), and the main features (who designed it?; how does it align with national development plan(s)?; who is accountable for delivery?; how are outcomes monitored and evaluated?)

Territorial distribution of resources, expenditure and transfers

Revenues

133. Please provide a breakdown of funding sources (own sources, national level, EU level)

134. What is the degree of autonomy of your region in deciding about revenues, especially compared to other regions? In terms of tax revenue, please specify the degree of autonomy of the subregional levels in setting their own taxes (0-no autonomy; 1-possibility to set the rate inside a given range; 2 possibility to freely set the rate and/or the tax base; 3- possibility to independently design the tax)

135. What are the main transfers from the central government? Describe the nature of the transfers. How much do they weight in subnational finance? What spending restrictions do the funds have?
136. Please describe the typical timeline/ sequence for obtaining a national/EU grant. Please provide a description of the main steps, who is responsible, and how the region is involved.
137. What are the main EU funds and programs that you have utilised to support development in your region? Please provide key documents and evaluations of these funds.
138. What are the main goals and challenges in terms of implementing and accessing (EU and national) funds to support regional development?
139. What changes would you like to see in the next EU programming period to prioritise Island economies?

Expenditure

140. What is the budget profile of your region and key areas of expenditure?
141. Indicate the degree of autonomy your region in deciding the allocation of their resources.
142. Is there an ex ante control of public expenditure (particularly for investments)? If yes what does it apply to? What are the criteria utilized? Does it have a prioritization system? Does it compel investments to be aligned to development plans?
143. Indicate any planned policy changes concerning public expenditures.

Territorial fiscal equalisation

144. National level: Is there a national equalisation system aimed at reducing regional fiscal disparities? How does it work? Indicate population ratios. Which are the main fiscal instruments used for equalisation purposes (shared taxes, specific grants, unconditional grants etc.)?

Intergovernmental co-operation and local governance

145. What public entities are in charge of promoting regional development (i.e. agencies, committees, task forces) (Nationally, Sub-nationally)?
146. What kind of horizontal forms of co-operation between administrations/public agencies exist in your country and region, and what policy fields do they cover? What are the corresponding institutional/organisational mechanisms (special bodies like inter-departmental committees or commissions, tax or expenditure sharing, integrated territorial plan, policy proofing etc.)? What are the most frequent obstacles for the region to participate? How are they responding to special needs of the region?
147. Do you have co-operations (also cross-border) with other regions or municipalities? If so, what do they look like and how are they organised?
148. Please describe the forms of cooperation, the objectives of these co-operations and the challenges and benefits you see in these co-operations.
149. Please provide information on your country's Rural Development Plan. Supply a brief overview of aims, method and financial mechanisms.
150. Vertical co-operation: what mechanisms are there for sub-national levels of government to interact and cooperate with the central level (e.g., national-provincial contracts, provincial/ local contracts, tripartite agreements involving all three levels...)?
151. What are the most frequent obstacles for effective vertical co-ordination across levels of government (e.g., overlapping competencies, weak enforcement of co-ordination mechanisms, lack of knowledge/capacity at different levels, etc.)? Please illustrate with examples

152. Are there and programs to improve the skills and capabilities of civil servants at the regional and and municipal level?

153. Are local public services provided in house (directly by the public administration), by a third party (private or state-owned company), or through public-private partnerships?

Local participation

154. What are the main institutional channels at the regional and local level to enhance the participation of citizens voicing their concerns and decision-making (both formal and informal)?

155. Does your region have a strategy to increase citizen participation in decision-making?

Annex A. Extended focus on Institutional Organisation and Multi-level Governance

This Annex, which expands the section on institutional organisation and multi-level governance outlined in the main part of the document, aims to gather additional in-depth information on the distribution of responsibilities, powers and resources in each NSPA region (and countries). The main goal is to investigate how policies can be adjusted to the regions' needs and how good implementation can be ensured.

Part I. Multi-level governance framework and reforms

General Information

1. Please indicate the dates of elections of subnational governments:
 - Date of last elections: regional level: ; municipal level:
 - Date of next elections: regional level: ; municipal level:
2. Please list the main laws related to subnational governments (regions and municipalities). Indicate the date of adoption (and last amendments) and provide a short summary of their contents.

Multilevel Governance Reforms

3. Please describe the recent multilevel governance reforms using the guidelines provided in the tables below.

Territorial reforms

When?	Year began in the past, year completed, still on going, year planned?
What?	Merging municipalities, fostering inter-municipal cooperation, encouraging better metropolitan governance, creating or abolishing regional/intermediary bodies, other?
Why?	What were/are the main reasons?
How?	Voluntary or not? Incentives or not? Uniformly applied across country?
Results?	What results achieved?
Other comments?	

Institutional reforms

Type of institutional reform			
Political decentralisation / recentralisation (transfers of powers)	Year began, year completed, still on going, year planned?	What:	Results achieved:
Administrative decentralisation / recentralisation (transfers of responsibilities and associated staff)	Year began, year completed, still on going, year planned?	What:	Results achieved:
Fiscal decentralisation / recentralisation (transfers of fiscal resources)	Year began, year completed, still on going, year planned?	What:	Results achieved:
Other comments?			

Territorial organisation and cooperation

4. Please provide details on the number of municipal administrative entities (not self-governing), their responsibilities, their funding and political status (elected or appointed representative, local councilors? etc.)

5. Are mechanisms for horizontal cooperation between regions developed?

Yes No Partially is developing is regressing

If relevant, please provide more details.

6. Are mechanisms for horizontal cooperation between municipalities developed?

Yes No Partially is developing is regressing

7. If particularly relevant, please provide more details such as the number of inter-municipal cooperation structures, their legal status (public or private), their purpose (single or multiple functions), the main areas of activity (social, infrastructure, education, etc.), the way they are funded (subsidies from municipal or national budgets, own source taxes, user charges etc.), etc.?

8. Can we say that inter-municipal cooperation is developing in the country?

Yes No

– If yes, please explain why:

– If yes, does this development result from governmental policies? Yes No

– If yes, please describe governmental policies (incentives, compulsory or optional schemes, etc.):

9. Please list state deconcentrated entities in the table below.

Year:	Level (municipal,	Number of entities	Main functions*
-------	-------------------	--------------------	-----------------

	regional)		
Name			
Name			
Name			

*The main functions of deconcentrated entities can comprise, among others:

- coordination of state territorial administration
- subnational government activities oversight (administrative supervision)
- subnational government financial oversight
- public order
- multi-level coordination
- representation

10. Please provide more detailed information on state deconcentrated entities:

Responsibilities of subnational governments in the NSPA regions

11. Please also fill in the table below. You can put a X in the corresponding line; you may tick several boxes on the same line as often responsibilities are shared and specify benefits or services.

Main responsibility sectors and sub-sectors	Central government	Regions	Municipalities
1. General public services (administration)			
Administrative services (marriage, birth, etc.)			
Public buildings and facilities (town houses, etc.)			
Administration and operation of general services (non-assigned to specific functions)			
Basic research activities (non-assigned to specific areas)			
2. Public order, safety and defence			
Police			
Firefighting			
Civil protection & emergency services			
Road traffic control / Traffic signs and lights			
Defence (military and civil)			
3. Economic affairs / Transports			
Road networks and facilities (highways, national, regional, local)			
parking			
Railway networks and facilities (national, regional, local)			
Airports (international, national, local)			
Ports (sea and fishing, inland waterways)			
Public transport (road)			
Public transport (railways, tramway)			
Special transport services (e.g. pupil and student transport)			
Employment policies / services			
Support to local enterprises and entrepreneurship			
Agriculture, rural development, irrigation			
Telecommunications / IT			
Manufacturing and construction			
Mining			
Tourism			
Commerce			
Energy (electricity, gas, etc.)			
4. Environment protection			

Parks & green areas			
Nature preservation			
Noise and vibration abatement			
Air pollution			
Soil and groundwater protection			
Climate protection			
Waste management (collection, treatment and disposal of waste)			
Sewerage (waste water management)			
Street cleaning			
5. Housing and community amenities			
Drinking water distribution			
Public lighting			
Urban heating			
Housing (subsidies)			
Housing (Construction/renovation)			
Housing (Management)			
Urban and land use planning			
Urbanism			
6. Health			
Pharmaceutical and medical products			
General and specialised medical services and paramedical services (e.g. dental care)			
Primary healthcare (medical centres)			
Hospital services (general and specialist)			
Preventative healthcare			
Public health services			
7. Culture, recreation and religion			
Sports and recreation			
Libraries			
Museums			
Cultural activities (theatres, exhibition halls, zoos, botanical gardens, etc.)			
Cultural heritage/monuments			
Media/ Broadcasting and publishing services			
Religious affairs			
8. Education			
Pre-primary education			
Primary education			
Secondary education			
Higher education (universities, other tertiary education institutions)			
Vocational education / training			
Special education			
Research & Development			
9. Social Welfare			
Social care for children and youth			
Support services for families			
Elderly			
Disabled people			
Social exclusion / poverty (benefits and policies)			
Immigrants			
Integration of foreigners			
Social welfare centres			
Housing subsidies/benefits			
Unemployment subsidies/benefits			

NB: With regard to COFOG classification, two functions have been merged: public order and safety and defence.

Part II. Subnational Government Finance

This section aims to collect disaggregated fiscal data for the regional level and the municipal level as well as other local public actors linked to subnational governments, such as local public companies and municipal associations.

Fiscal Framework and Fiscal Discipline at Subnational Level

Fiscal framework

12. Please indicate the name and date of the key regulations governing the financing of subnational governments (relevant constitutional or statutory obligations for subnational governments' fiscal policy).

13. Have significant reforms of subnational finance been undertaken recently?

No

Yes – If yes, please specify which type of reforms:

- Subnational taxes system: own-source or tax sharing arrangements. Please specify.
- Grants system. Please specify.
- Equalisation mechanisms. Please specify.
- Budgetary and borrowing framework. Please specify.
- Others:

14. Are significant reforms of subnational finance planned and/or to be launched shortly?

No

Yes – If yes, please specify which type of reforms:

- Subnational taxes system: own-source or tax sharing arrangements. Please specify.
- Grants system. please specify.
- Equalisation mechanisms. Please specify.
- Budgetary and borrowing framework. Please specify.
- Others:

Budget balance rules

15. Are there budget balance rules governing subnational government in the country?

No, there are no particular budget balance rules

Yes. – If yes, please:

- a. Indicate the key regulation related to budget balance objectives e.g. Fiscal Responsibility Law (name and date of adoption of the law)
- b. Briefly describe the budget balance rules and indicate if budget balance rules protect sub-national capital spending (type golden-rule).
- c. Indicate whether the balance is required on a yearly basis or on average over a given period? Please provide more details if relevant.
- d. Indicate whether numerical budget balance rules have been designed (deficit or surplus ceiling or targets in nominal or as % of GDP)? Yes No - If yes, please specify.

16. Are there any other direct rules aimed at controlling subnational government spending in the country (e.g. expenditure ceilings, expenditure growth rate, other, limitations set for only some categories of expenditure e.g. current or for all expenditure, etc.)?

Subnational government expenditure and investment

Changes in investment

17. Which are the two or three areas in which subnational governments invest the most at the moment?

Education infrastructure? Please provide details if possible e.g. primary schools, secondary schools, universities, adult vocational training centres, etc.

Health infrastructure? Please provide details if possible e.g. hospitals, local health centres, specialised medical and paramedical service centres, maternity centres, etc.

Environment infrastructure? Please provide details if possible e.g. climate change, renewable energy, waste management, water management, pollution abatement, etc.

Social infrastructures? Please provide details if possible e.g. retirement homes for elderly persons, social centres, nurseries, institutions for disabled persons etc.

Transports? Please provide details if possible e.g. highways, secondary roads, railways networks, urban transports, etc.

Housing? Please provide details if possible e.g. social / affordable housing

Telecommunication / Information technologies? Please provide details if possible e.g. high speed networks and fibre networks in urban and rural areas; e-government systems.

Sport, recreation and culture? Please provide details if possible e.g. stadiums, theatres, museums, libraries, heritage/monuments, etc.

Construction and improvement of public buildings e.g. town and regional councils, administrative service centers.

Community amenities? Please provide details if possible e.g. public heating, street lighting.

Others? Please provide details if possible.

18. Could you please indicate which factors impacted the most direct investment changes over the last 5 years and more recently (last 1 or 2 years)?

List of possible factors (non-exhaustive):

- *Macro-economic and social conditions e.g. economic crisis or recovery, job market, etc.*
- *Prices changes e.g. inflation, energy and commodities costs, etc.*
- *Central government austerity measures imposed to subnational government e.g. spending cuts, budgetary constraints, borrowing restrictions*
- *Change on borrowing market: relaxation of borrowing rules, diversification of lenders, and access to bonds' market, etc.*
- *Subnational revenue situation (improvement or deterioration resulting from tax revenue decrease, cuts in grants, etc.)*
- *New transfers of spending/investment responsibilities from the central to subnational governments*
- *New law or regulation affecting some particular investment areas*
- *Necessity to conform to standards, norms and targets (international, European, national), e.g. in the environment sector*
- *Particular punctual or exceptional "events" such as natural disaster, major cultural or sporting event, etc.*
- *Post or pre-electoral period for subnational government*
- *Impact of EU structural and investment funds (for EU countries) or international funding/support from the donor community*
- *Financial conditions for external funding (e.g. interest rates, banking and capital market situation, etc.)*
- *Launching or progress of a national major infrastructure project*

19. Is there an increased use of external financing (loans or bonds) for investment?

Yes No – If Yes or No, please provide further details.

20. How would you qualify the importance of Public-Private Partnerships (PPP) investments at subnational level up to now?
 Important Moderate Marginal Inexistent. Please provide details if relevant.
21. Is there an increased use of PPP arrangements to finance investment in the country?
 Yes No, a decrease No, stable PPPs are not existent – If Yes or No, please provide further details (e.g. explaining the increase in PPP projects).
22. Are there any bodies responsible for coordinating public investment across the different levels of government (platforms for intergovernmental dialogue, etc.)?
 Yes No - If yes, please provide further details.
23. Does the country have formal horizontal cooperation mechanisms or incentives between subnational governments to co-ordinate public investment?
 No mechanisms
 Formal horizontal co-ordination mechanisms at the municipal level
 Formal horizontal co-ordination mechanisms at the municipal level and other subnational levels (state, regions).

Subnational government revenues

General overview concerning subnational revenues

24. Which category of subnational government revenue has changed the most over the recent years (taxes, grants, user fees, etc.) and in what directions (increase, decrease, stable)? Could you please provide the main reasons for changes?

<i>Put a X in the square and provide further details in the cell</i>	Increase	Stable	Decrease	Main reasons for changes
Tax revenue	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Grants and subsidies	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Tariffs and fees	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Revenue from assets	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

Focus on grants and subsidies (inter-governmental transfers)

Grants are transfers receivable by government units from other resident or non-resident government units or international organisations¹. Grants allocated to subnational governments come most often from central

¹ Grants and subsidies can be divided into two main categories: current/operating grants vs capital/investment grants. Current grants are those made for purposes of current expenditure, while capital grants involve the acquisition of assets and are assumed to be spent on capital expenditures. It should be noted that budget support grants tend to be current grants, while project grants tend to be capital grants. A distinction can also be made between unconditional/general/non-earmarked transfers vs earmarked (assigned conditional) transfers: an earmarked grant is a grant that is given under the condition that it can only be used for a specific purpose while non-earmarked grants can be spent as if they were the receiving subnational government's own (non-earmarked) tax revenues (OECD taxonomy of grants). Non-earmarked grants can be general purpose grants or block-grants and are often based on distribution formulas.

government but they can come also from other subnational governments, from the European Union (EU structural and cohesion funds and other EU subsidies) and from foreign governments and international organisations. They are combined with subsidies.

25. Using the table below, please indicate the main financial transfers that are allocated to local governments by the central government, and their main characteristics, indicating whether grants are:

- dedicated to operating or investment expenditures, or others (e.g. special funds, equalization, etc.);
- General (unconditional and non-earmarked transfers with a certain freedom to use them) or earmarked (assigned conditional transfers ie with few room for maneuver for subnational government in using them);
- Allocation mechanisms between local governments (distribution formulas/calculation or distribution at the discretion of the central government);
- Level of predictability of those transfers (high, medium or low).

Name	Source of the transfers (central/ state government)	Operating / Investment/ Other	General / Earmarked (indicate the purpose)	Distribution criteria / Calculation mechanisms	Predictability (high / medium / low)
<i>E.g. Education endowment</i>	<i>e.g. Central government</i>	<i>Operating</i>	<i>Earmarked (payment of teachers' salaries)</i>	<i>Demographic, geographic, socio-economic and tax criteria</i>	<i>High</i>

(Add additional rows if necessary)

26. Please also answer to the following questions:

- Are grants allocated to subnational governments on a formula basis established in statute, or are allocations made by the donor government in an *ad hoc* and less transparent basis?
- For earmarked or categorical grants is there a *matching* requirement for the recipient government, e.g. for every 100 euros of grant, the recipient government must spend 50 euros of their own-raised resources on the earmarked governmental function?
- Could you please explain the different compared shares of current and capital grants?
- Are international grants particularly significant in the country e.g. European Structural and Investment Funds, international aid, etc.? Can you estimate the share of international grants and subsidies in total subnational government revenues? % or Insignificant Low Moderate Significant Very large

Focus on tax revenues

27. It is proposed to indicate in the table below the main sub-national governments taxes, be it either shared tax revenues or own-source tax revenues (or "autonomous")

Shared taxes are national taxes shared between the central government and subnational governments, and redistributed to the latter as tax revenues and not as grants (even if grants are made from specific national taxes). Rates are defined nationally and tax receipts are redistributed according to allocation

criteria which are defined by the State (generally by the Parliament) with more or less possibility for SNGs to intervene.

An own-source tax is a tax on which sub-national governments have a certain leeway over tax base or tax rates. The ability to act on rates and bases may be also regulated and restricted, reducing subnational government taxing power (imposition of caps, exemptions imposed by the central government, etc.). Local surtaxes (or surcharges) on national taxes such as PIT, CIT or VAT may be also considered as an own-source tax if subnational governments have some power on the rate of the surtax.

One challenge is to determine whether the tax is shared or own-source and therefore level of tax autonomy.

Own-source taxes

Tax name	Recipient	Tax base	Scope to set tax rates or tax base: total, restricted, no leeway*	Weight in subnational governments total tax revenue (%)	Weight in subnational governments total revenues (%)	Administration in charge of tax collection
<i>E.g. Property tax</i>	<i>(regions /municipalities)</i>	<i>Land and buildings</i>	<i>Total freedom.</i>		<i>20%</i>	<i>E.g. local government (municipalities)</i>

(Add additional rows if necessary)

* Please provide further details if needed.

Shared taxes

Tax name	Recipient	Tax base	Sharing arrangements*	Leeway over tax rates or tax base: (no leeway; small leeway, large)**	Weight in subnational government total tax revenue (%)	Weight in subnational government total revenues (%)	Administration in charge of tax collection (central, state or local government)
<i>E.g. Personal income tax</i>	<i>regions /municipalities</i>	<i>Personal income</i>	<i>e.g. Regions: 25% of the receipt Municipalities: 60% of the receipt</i>	<i>No leeway.</i>	<i>Regions: 20% Municipalities: 40%</i>	<i>Regions: 5% Municipalities: 15%</i>	<i>e.g Central government</i>

(Add additional rows if necessary)

* Please provide further details on sharing arrangements if needed:

** Please provide further details on subnational government’s room for maneuver if needed:

28. Do subnational governments have the power to create new regional or municipal taxes?

No Yes – If yes, please provide details, in particular in what specific areas?

Focus on tariffs and fees

This category includes revenues coming from the sales of public goods and services which are charged. In turn, these charges or fees help finance a number of local public services and facilities in a number of areas: water treatment and distribution, collection and treatment of waste, sporting facilities and activities, cultural activities and facilities, public transport, car parks, school meals, energy, nursing homes, etc. They also comprise the payment for administrative services.

29. Can you provide the main areas where subnational governments can benefit from tariffs and fees (e.g. water charges, waste fees, market charges, parking charges, etc)?

30. Do you see significant changes concerning tariffs/user charges and fees over the recent years?

Yes

No If relevant, please explain these changes (new regulations or new charges for public services, increase or decrease in tariffs for some public services or categories of users, etc.).

Focus on revenues from property assets

Property income comprises revenue from financial assets (interests on deposits and investments, dividends, loans, etc.) and those from non-financial assets, such as land and sub-soil assets. More specifically, property income is made of different sources including interest, dividends and rent.

31. Can you provide the main sub-categories of property assets which provide resources to subnational government? Can you assess the autonomy of subnational government regarding these resources?

32. Do you see significant changes concerning revenues from property assets over the recent years?

Yes No If relevant, please explain these changes:

List of possible factors (non-exhaustive):

- *new regulations,*
- *economic/financial crisis,*
- *new prices e.g. of natural resources,*
- *situation of the capital or real estate markets,*
- *privatisations,*
- *housing reforms,*
- *share-holding policies*

Subnational government borrowing

33. Are subnational governments allowed to engage in medium and long-term borrowing? Please indicate if rules are different for the regions and the municipalities?

Yes, they have access both to credit market (loans) and to capital markets (bonds).

Yes, but they can access only credit market (loans). Issuing bonds is forbidden.

Yes, but they can borrow only from specific lender institutions:

- domestic public institutions (public banks, Treasury, etc.): Please specify.
- international public development banks: Please specify.
- others. Please specify.

No, borrowing is strictly forbidden.

34. What are the limits on subnational borrowing? Please indicate if rules are different for the regions and the municipalities?

Subnational governments have no limits on borrowing

Subnational governments have non-binding borrowing constraints

Subnational governments have binding borrowing constraints

35. Does a system of credit rating of subnational governments exist in the country? If yes, is it a public or private system or a mixed system? Is it mandatory or not? Is it targeted at all types of subnational governments or restricted to some categories only?

36. Please specify in the table below the main regulatory framework for subnational governments' borrowing by level of subnational governments (regions and municipalities):

Does a "Golden Rule" apply* ? (Y/N)	Does access to borrowing need prior approval?* * (Y/N)	Is there a cap on debt stock (Y/N)** * (Y/N)	Is there a cap on debt service (Y/N)** * (Y/N)	Is there a cap on the issue of new borrowing (Y/N)** * (Y/N)	Is borrowing abroad prohibited? (Y/N)
Yes	No	Yes (60% of income under the budget of the current year)	Yes 15% of income under the budget of the current year	No	

* The Golden Rule means that borrowing (long-term) is only allowed for financing investment expenditures.
 ** If a prior authorisation is needed for borrowing, please provide further details (is it needed for all types of borrowing or only for issuing bonds borrowing? Is it needed for all types of subnational governments or only some categories e.g. small municipalities? Which supervisory authority is in charge? etc.).
 ***If limits on borrowing and debt and debt service levels exist, please describe the limits.

37. Do other prudential rules for subnational borrowing exist in the country (e.g. foreign currency loans, borrowing outside the domestic market, derivatives, etc.)?

38. Do borrowing rules vary according to the type of subnational governments for the same category e.g. between large and small cities, urban/ rural municipalities or other criteria of differentiation?

39. Does central government guarantee subnational government debt?

- No, there is no debt
- In general no, but there have been exceptional cases
- Yes, but only on a case-by-case basis
- Yes

40. Have there been recent changes (since the 2008-2009 global crisis) in the regulatory framework governing subnational government borrowing? \

- Yes – If yes, please describe the changes.
- No

41. Are there specialised institutions, banks or Funds dedicated to subnational government financing?

- Yes – If yes, please provide details.
- No

42. Are subnational government allowed to finance their investments by issuing debt on the capital markets?
- Yes, but bonds financing is not widespread. Explain why.
- Yes, bonds financing is well developed at national level. Explain why.
- No, direct access to capital market is forbidden. Explain why.
43. Does access to capital market need prior approval by the supervisory authority?
- Yes
- No - Please specify.
44. Have you seen a new or increased interest for subnational bonds issuing in recent years?
- Yes – If yes, could you please explain why (impact of the crisis, new legislation, banking sector difficulties, cost of borrowing, pros and cons of bonds financing, etc.).
- No.
45. Do green bonds exist in the country at subnational level?
- Yes – If yes, please specify and provide data and examples if particularly relevant.
- No

Fiscal Disparities and Equalisation Systems

46. Are fiscal disparities considered as significant in the Arctic Region? How are they defined (in terms of revenues, costs/charges, others?) and measured in the country? If possible, you could give some quantitative evidence of the main fiscal disparities when available.
47. Are there equalisation mechanisms for subnational governments in the country?
- Yes, there is an explicit equalisation system
- Yes, but equalisation mechanisms are implicit
- Yes, but they are insignificant
- No – If no, is it planned to introduce an equalisation system in the near future? Yes No - If yes, Why and what types of equalisation mechanisms will be established?
48. If yes, what are the main features of the equalisation system?
- Vertical equalisation Horizontal equalisation Both vertical and horizontal
- Mainly achieved through taxes Mainly achieved through grants Mainly achieved through specific equalisation grants Achieved through a mix of these resources
- Mainly an equalisation of revenues Mainly an equalisation of charges/costs Both.
49. Is this equalisation system considered today as effective in reducing fiscal disparities across subnational governments?
- Yes

No

Mixed opinion.

50. Is this equalisation system being challenged at the moment?

Yes

No. Please specify.

51. Are there any plans to reform this equalisation system in the near future?

Yes – If yes, what are the main plans?

No