

**Latvia implements concrete steps for enhancing policy coherence through inclusive policy processes.** The steps, described in the country's 2018 Voluntary National Review (VNR), include: (i) developing policies on the basis of an initial impact assessment and early public participation; (ii) an online consultation open to all stakeholders, including individuals, NGOs, other government entities and the private sector; (iii) a conciliation meeting in cases of continued disagreement between stakeholders and ministries; (iv) a meeting of the Cabinet of Ministers Committee in case no compromise was found in the conciliation meeting, where the Committee hears both sides, makes a political decision on the proposal and sends it to the Government Cabinet; and (v) a final decision at a session of the Cabinet where stakeholders have the right to be heard (Government of Latvia, 2018<sub>[1]</sub>).

**Short-, medium- and long-term planning documents promote policy coherence and integration by considering all three dimensions of sustainable development** (see Figure 1. Latvia's planning document hierarchy). Latvia's national sustainable development goals are defined in the country's Sustainable Development Strategy *Latvia2030* and operationalised through seven-year national development plans and sectoral policy strategies and plans. In the framework of a mapping process, the government linked each of the 169 SDG targets to performance indicators defined in *Latvia2030*, the National Development Plan 2014-2020 and other strategic documents to assess policy coverage and coherence. In 2017, the Cross-Sectoral Coordination Centre of Latvia – the country's SDG focal point – conducted a survey among a broad range of stakeholders to assess progress on achieving the goals set out in the National Development Plan and *Latvia2030*. Beyond the SDGs, these goals include additional country-specific priorities such as facilitating natural population growth, reducing emigration and promoting Latvian civic awareness (Government of Latvia, 2018<sub>[1]</sub>). The seven-year National Development Plan identifies the necessary investments for the defined goals and breaks them down according to sources, including the national budget, EU funds, and other investment from abroad, co-financing by local governments and the private sector. Regular ex-ante assessments and ex-post evaluations analysing progress on policy outcomes allow the government to adjust spending and rank ministry annual budget requests according to their impact (Government of Latvia, 2018<sub>[1]</sub>).

**A monitoring and reporting system assesses progress towards achieving the SDGs and national sustainable development goals to foster policy coherence.** The implementation of the 2030 Agenda and the promotion of integrated policy planning across all government levels, sectors and dimensions of sustainable development is monitored by the Government's National Development Council and the Parliament's Sustainable Development Committee. The Central Statistical Bureau of Latvia – the main institution for collecting and publishing national statistics – collects data on the 55 national targets (of which 44 are also SDG targets) set out in *Latvia2030* and the 96 indicators defined in the National Development Plan 2014-2020. Every two years, the Government submits a report on the implementation of the Sustainable Development Strategy and the National Development Plan to Parliament. In accordance with the National Action Plan for Open Government, Latvia is currently working on improving free access to public data, citizen participation, and awareness raising through various initiatives, including the open data portal [data.gov.lv](http://data.gov.lv). In addition, Latvia included a comprehensive overview of SDG-related data in the annex of its 2018 Voluntary National Review (Government of Latvia, 2018<sub>[1]</sub>; 2018<sub>[3]</sub>).

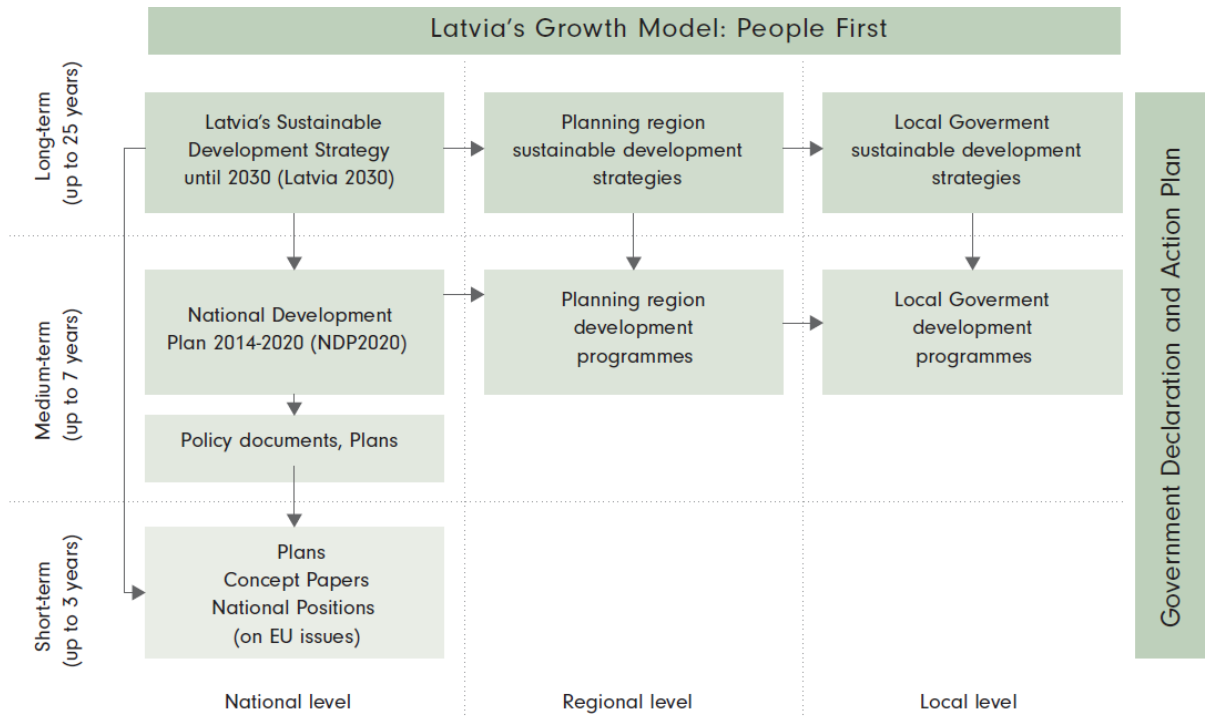
**Table 1. Institutional Mechanisms for PCSD in Latvia**

**PCSD Building Blocks**

Political commitment	In 2002, Latvia enacted its Sustainable Development Policy based on the 1992 Rio Declaration and its experience with balancing economic and social processes with environmental protection. Following a review of the European Union's Sustainable Development Policy in 2006, Latvia refined its national planning processes, allowing for broad consultation of stakeholders during the elaboration of the country's sustainable development vision <i>Latvia2030</i> . The document considers integrated planning across economic, social, ecological and cultural spheres as indispensable and strives to ensure inclusive policy making across all administrative levels and sectors. Accordingly, promoting policy coherence for sustainable development is a key principle of Latvia's development planning process as stated in its 2018 VNR.
Policy integration	Latvia's national sustainable development goals are defined in the country's Sustainable Development Strategy <i>Latvia2030</i> and operationalised through seven-year national development plans and sectoral policy strategies. Other key documents for sustainable development include <i>Latvia's Growth Model</i> , and the Government Declaration and Action Plan. In the framework of a mapping process, the government linked each of the 169 SDG targets to performance indicators defined in <i>Latvia2030</i> , the National Development Plan and other strategic documents to assess policy coverage and coherence. In 2017, the Cross-Sectoral Coordination Centre of Latvia – the country's SDG focal point – conducted a broad survey across all levels of government, the private sector, academia, media and civil society to assess progress on achieving the goals set out in the National Development Plan and <i>Latvia2030</i> . These goals are operationalised through the planning and budgeting, and include additional country-specific priorities such as facilitating natural population growth, reducing emigration and promoting Latvian civic awareness.
Intergenerational timeframe	To balance short- and long-term priorities, Latvia follows a three-tiered approach to policy planning. Short- and medium-term planning documents such as concept papers, policy documents, or the seven-year National Development Plan are developed in accordance with long-term strategies with a time horizon of up to 25 years such as <i>Latvia2030</i> .
Policy effects	The Government conducts bi-annual impact assessments. The assessments cover all sectoral policies included in the National Development Plan, including public health, inclusive education, inclusive employment and other areas and provide guidance for the planning of future policy. In 2009, Latvia introduced a legal obligation to conduct impact assessments for all draft legal acts. The analysis comprises impact on social groups and economic development and the budget, administrative burden, administrative costs and public participation in decision making.
Coordination	To ensure consensus on key development issues, the National Development Council – a collegial advisory authority chaired by the Prime Minister – ensures planning and evaluation of the country's long term development, initiates structural reforms to ensure the synchronicity of budget and policy planning, as well as coherence of national and local government policy. Since 2011, Latvia's Cross Sectoral Coordination Centre that reports to the Prime Minister is responsible for policy planning, ensures policy linkage with national and EU-financing and monitors implementation. The Centre fosters collaboration and joint action between institutions and ministries on the national development goals, including SDGs. In addition, it makes proposals on reforms and more efficient investments of financial resources in line with Latvia's development priorities to the Government and the Prime Minister. At present, the Centre is coordinating the multi-stakeholder process of developing the National Development Plan for 2021-2027. In 2014, the Latvian Parliament (Saeima) established the Sustainable Development Committee, a body tasked with parliamentary oversight of the framework for national strategic planning. The Committee inter alia monitors the implementation of Latvia's Sustainable Development Strategy and National Development Plan, the medium- and long-term impact of government policies, as well as the sustainability of the government's fiscal policy.
Local involvement	All of Latvia's local governments have adopted sustainable development strategies, setting out local development priorities and a long-term development vision against the background of the national Sustainable Development Strategy <i>Latvia2030</i> . The local strategies identify problems on the ground, define instruments for tackling these problems and localise solutions for economic, social and environmental issues in the SDG context.
Stakeholder participation	Latvia fosters broad stakeholder participation, including through an informal working group on the SDGs, continuous opportunities for engagement throughout the policy-making process, public consultations, advisory councils and other forums. Policy drafts are regularly published on ministry websites under the section "public participation". The Civic Alliance Latvia is the largest umbrella organisations that engages with the Government. Its member organisation, the Latvian Platform for Development Cooperation (LAPAS) fosters participation of civil society organisations in SDG-related policy processes.
Monitoring and reporting	The Implementation of the 2030 Agenda through national planning documents and the promotion of integrated policy planning across all government levels, sectors and dimensions of sustainable development is monitored by the Government's National Development Council and the Parliament's Sustainable Development Committee. The Central Statistical Bureau of Latvia – the main institution for collecting and publishing national statistics – collects data on the 55 national targets (of which 44 are also SDG targets) set out in <i>Latvia2030</i> and the 96 indicators defined in the National Development Plan. Every two years, the Government submits a report on the implementation <i>Latvia2030</i> and the National Development Plan to Parliament. In accordance with the National Action Plan for Open Government, Latvia is currently working on improving free access to public data, citizen participation, and awareness raising through various initiatives, including the open data portal <a href="http://data.gov.lv">data.gov.lv</a> . In addition, Latvia included a comprehensive overview of SDG-related data in its 2018 VNR.

Source: Government of Latvia (2007<sup>[4]</sup>; 2012<sup>[5]</sup>; 2018<sup>[1]</sup>; 2018<sup>[6]</sup>; 2018<sup>[3]</sup>); Saeima of the Republic of Latvia (2010<sup>[2]</sup>; 2016<sup>[7]</sup>); OECD (2018<sup>[8]</sup>; 2018<sup>[9]</sup>).

Figure 1. Latvia's planning document hierarchy



Source: Government of Latvia: (2018<sub>[1]</sub>).

## References

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