

# Fact Sheet for Planning Levels

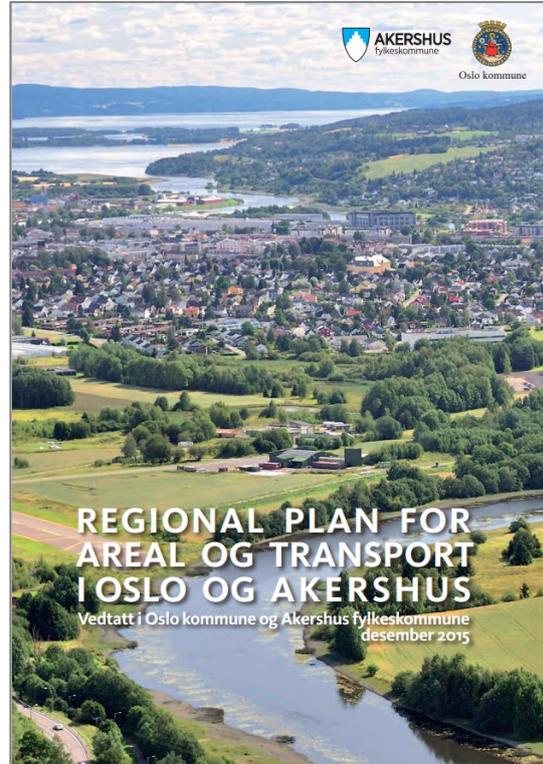
## Planning level

### Regional level

Planning system of Norway						
Planning level	Planning instrument	Content of plan	Legal basis	Policy maker	Legal impact	Scale
National level	National expectations regarding regional and municipal planning	Outline the Government's expectations for planning at the regional and municipal level.	The Planning and Building Act, section 6-1	The Government	not binding	Apply for the whole country
	Central government planning guidelines	Clarify goals and values on special topics of national importance, and how various interests and considerations are to be safeguarded and balanced in planning at municipal and regional level.	The Planning and Building Act, section 6-2	The Government	not binding	Can apply for both the whole country or parts of it.
	Central government planning provisions	Stipulate that within specified geographical areas, or throughout the whole country, specified building or construction projects cannot be implemented without the consent of the Government.	The Planning and Building Act, section 6-3	The Government	binding	Apply for the whole country.
	Central government land-use plans	Important state or regional development, construction or conservation projects (typically national roads or energy infrastructure).	The Planning and Building Act, section 6-4	The Government	binding	Apply for a concrete infrastructure project at local level.
	Regional planning strategy	Assessment of the most important challenges and development features in the region and a description of what plans that will be prepared in order to face them.	The Planning and Building Act, chapter 7	The county council	not binding	Applies for the county (or several counties, if they co-operate on producing it).
County level	Regional (master) plan	Topics relevant for the specific county or region. Either overall strategic, or they can apply more specifically to land use. Have to include a programme of action that shows how the plan is to be followed up.	The Planning and Building Act, chapter 8	The county council	not binding	Can apply for both the whole county or delimited parts of it. Can also apply for several counties, if they co-operate on producing it.
	Regional planning provision	Provide guidelines for land use, usually regarding one or several special topics. Shall ensure that municipalities do not adopt changes in land use that are contrary to a regional plan. Most commonly used to prohibit establishing larger retail trade businesses outside urban centres.	The Planning and Building Act, section 8-5	The county council	binding	Can apply for both the whole county or delimited parts of it.
Municipal level	Intermunicipal plan	Can contain all kinds of planning issues that are of significance to several municipalities.	The Planning and Building Act, chapter 9	The municipal councils involved	not binding	Applies for the area of the municipalities that co-operate on producing the plan.
	Municipal planning strategy	Assessment of the most important challenges and development features in the municipality and a description of what plans that will be prepared, revised or revoked in order to face them.	The Planning and Building Act, chapter 10	The municipal council	not binding	Applies for the whole municipality.
	Municipal master plan	Consist of a strategic social element with goals and strategies for how the municipality shall develop in the coming years, and the land-use element that describes what different areas can and cannot be used for. Shall include an implementation element that shows how the plan is to be followed up.	The Planning and Building Act, chapter 11	The municipal council	not binding (social element) binding (land-use element)	Applies for the whole municipality.
	Municipal sub-plan	Specific topics or areas of actively important for the municipality. Shall include an implementation element that states how the plan shall be followed up.	The Planning and Building Act, chapter 11	The municipal council	partly binding	Applies usually for the whole municipality.
	Area zoning plan	Describes, in more detail as the municipal master plan, what different areas can and cannot be used for.	The Planning and Building Act, chapter 12	The municipal council	binding	Applies for a certain (usually larger) area within the municipality.
	Detailed zoning plan	Describes, in more detail as the land-use element of the municipal master plan, what different areas can and cannot be used for.	The Planning and Building Act, chapter 12	The municipal council	binding	Applies for a certain (usually smaller) area within the municipality.

## Type of plan

### Regional plan



## Facts: Regional plan for land use and transport in Oslo and Akershus

### Legal basis

Act of 27 June 2008 No. 71 relating to Planning and the Processing of Building Applications (the Planning and Building Act), chapter 8.

### Competencies

- As stated in chapter 8 of the Planning and Building Act, it is the 'regional planning authority' that prepares regional plans. The regional planning authority in Norway is the county. In this case, two 'counties' prepare the plan together, as the City of Oslo has the status of both a municipality and a county.
- Section 8-1 of the Act states that the King, de facto the government, may order the preparation of a regional plan for specific areas of activity, issues or geographical areas. This has to be seen as an exceptional case.

### Binding force

The plan is not legally binding, but both the state government, the City of Oslo, the former Akershus County and all its 22 municipalities must take the plan into account in their activities and in their own planning.

**Tasks and content**

- The plan aims to establish a more concentrated development pattern in the region, as well as greater efforts to improve the conditions for public transport, cyclists, and pedestrians. It shall contribute to achieving national goals regarding the climate, transport, agricultural areas, and biodiversity.
- The plan contains an introduction about the background for preparing it, an assessment of different development paths towards 2030, a map that shows the desired land use and transport structure at a strategic level, planning guidelines, and a comprehensive programme of action that describes how the plan is to be implemented.

**Process, duration, participation**

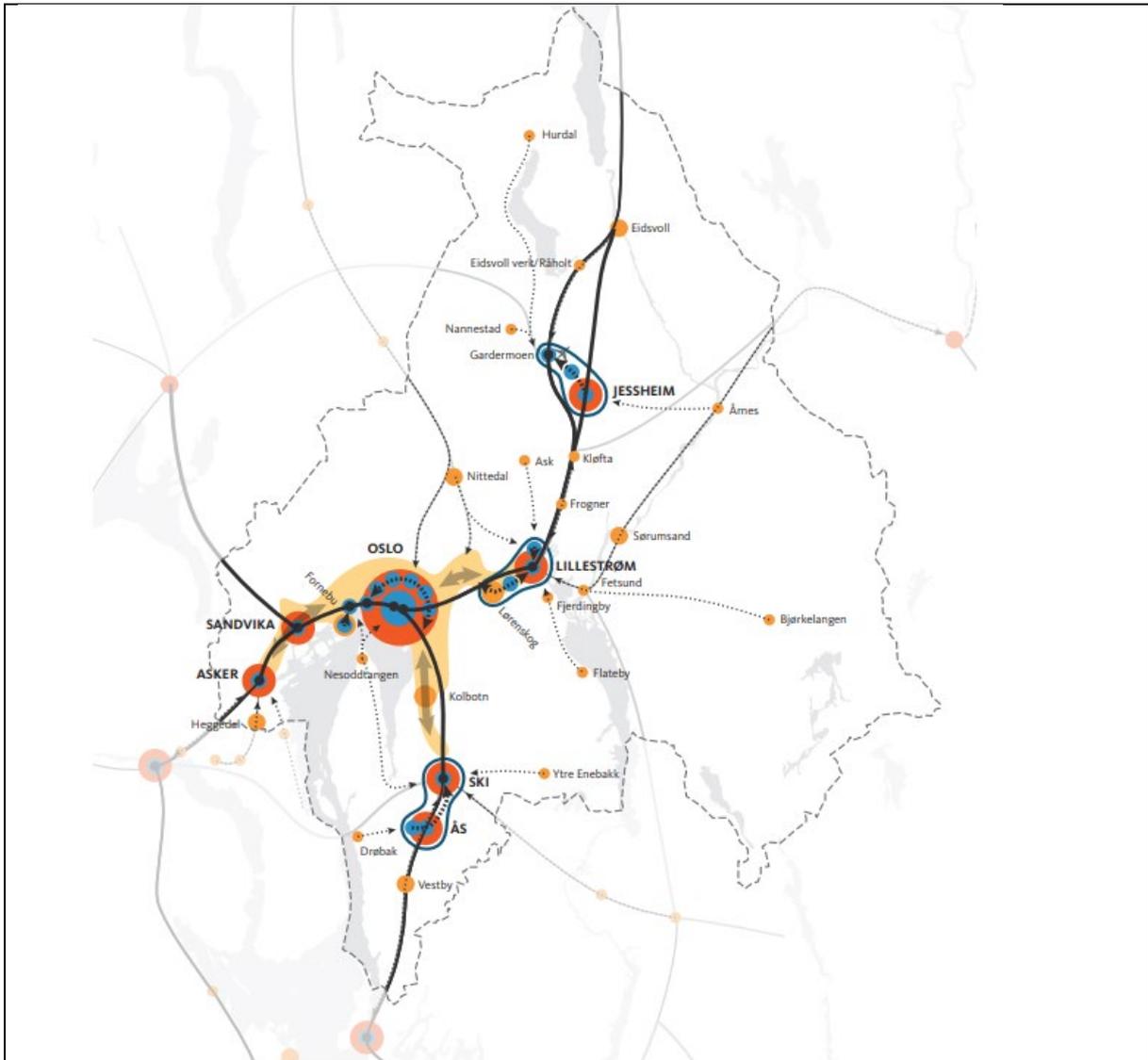
- In 2008, the government proposed to instruct the City of Oslo and the surrounding Akershus County to prepare a common regional plan in order to achieve a more coordinated land-use and transport policy in the capital region. Parliament supported that proposal. It was the Ministry of the Environment, at that time responsible for planning in Norway, that in 2009 initiated the planning process and established a political steering group.
- The government, the City of Oslo, Akershus County and the county's municipalities cooperated to prepare a planning strategy. In 2010 a series of dialogue meetings with all the municipalities were conducted, where challenges regarding land use and transport were discussed. In March 2011 the political steering group enacted a proposal for the planning strategy and the planning programme, which were circulated for comment and presented for public scrutiny. In June 2012 the planning programme was enacted by the Oslo city council and the Akershus county council. The planning process had been expected to last until autumn 2013. However, it was not until December 2015 that the plan could finally be adopted by the City of Oslo and the former County Council of Akershus.
- The planning process was characterised by the broad participation of the authorities involved. On the political level, a steering group and a reference group were established, as well as a coordination group, a reference group and a planning secretary at the administrative level. The groups comprised politicians and representatives of the administration from the municipalities and the county, representatives from the government and various state authorities, and from the region's most important transport service provider. Other actors were invited to conferences, seminars, workshops, and open meetings in different parts of the region.

**Duration of validity**

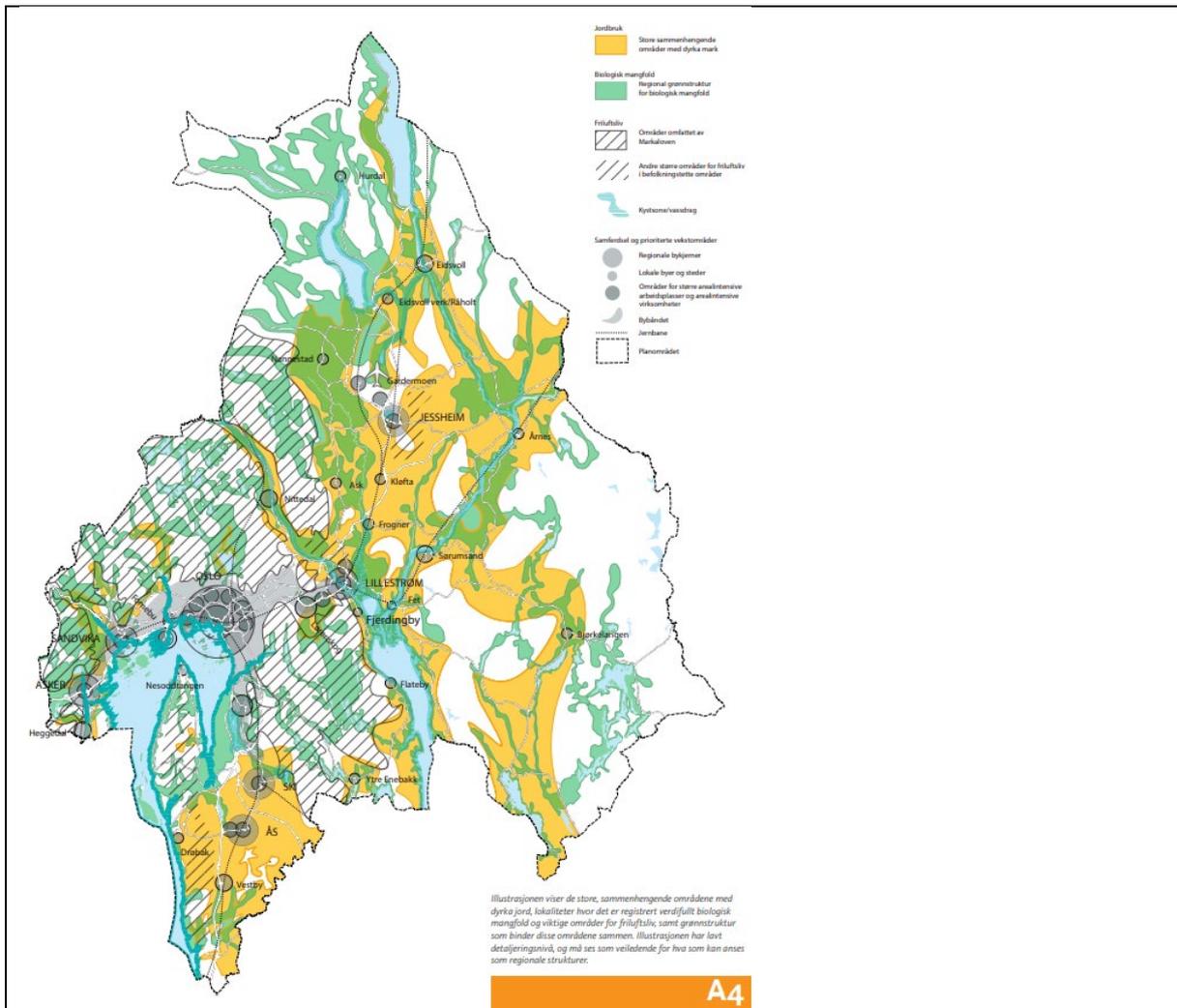
The plan will be in force until the new county council of Viken and the City of Oslo replaces it with a new plan. A new regional plan for land use and mobility, which is expected to replace this plan, is currently being drafted in a process expected to take until at least summer 2023.

**Details of the plan**

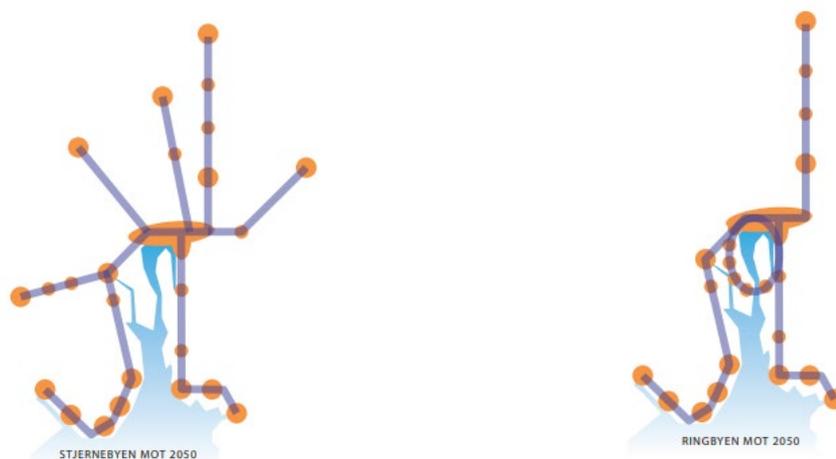
Source for the following details of the plan: Regional plan for land use and transport in Oslo and Akershus, adopted by The Oslo City Council and the Akershus County Council in December 2015.



Detail 1: Overview of the centre and main transport structure in Oslo and Akershus.



Detail 2: This illustration shows large contiguous, partly overlapping, areas for agriculture (yellow), valuable biodiversity (green), and outdoor recreation (hatched), as well as urban areas (grey) and ocean/freshwater (blue).



Detail 3: Two alternative development paths for the region towards 2050: the 'star city' on the left, which would entail a more balanced development throughout the whole region along the main transport corridors, and the 'ring city' on the right, which would entail more concentrated development in and near Oslo.

## Characteristics

### Location of the area

The capital of Oslo and the surrounding former Akershus County are located in the southeast of Norway, around the northern part of the Oslo fjord.

### Initial situation

The Oslo metropolitan area has for some years been not only the fastest growing region in Norway, but even one of the fastest growing metropolitan areas in Europe. This growth did not come without challenges for the transport system, caused by considerable urban sprawl. The coordination of planning and land use between Oslo and the surrounding municipalities has not been as good as it should have been.

### Particularities of the procedure and/or contents

- Usually, it is the county itself that decides which plans to prepare. In this unusual case, it was the government and national parliament that instructed the City of Oslo and Akershus County to prepare the plan.
- The plan defines prioritised growth areas where 80–90% of new dwellings and jobs shall be localised, thereby preventing further urban sprawl. In these areas further development is regarded as more important than the protection of, for instance, agricultural land. On the other hand, the plan also defines 'green borders' that clearly divide areas for development from areas for nature protection and recreation.
- The map showing the growth areas and the transport structure, shown here as detail 1, has been a model for similar plans in many other urban areas in the country.

## Notes and links

- The plan can be downloaded (in Norwegian) from Viken County's website: <https://viken.no/f/p1/ib1949fd3-e553-4dd7-9505-4a2519ba6d00/regional-plan-for-areal-og-transport-i-oslo-og-akershus.pdf>
- More information about planning in Viken County can be found on the following website, which is in Norwegian, but in the upper right corner it is possible to click on 'Language/språk' and choose 'english/engelsk' from the pull-down menu. The text on the website will then be translated by Google Translate: <https://viken.no/tjenester/planlegging/>
- Information about regional plans (in English) can be found on the government's website: [https://www.regjeringen.no/en/topics/plan-bygg-og-eiendom/plan\\_bygningsloven/planning/introduction-to-the-planning-system-and-the-processes/regional-planning-functions/id2836145/?expand=factbox2888276](https://www.regjeringen.no/en/topics/plan-bygg-og-eiendom/plan_bygningsloven/planning/introduction-to-the-planning-system-and-the-processes/regional-planning-functions/id2836145/?expand=factbox2888276)