

Fact Sheet 2: Regional Level

Planning level

Regional

Planning system of the Republic of Latvia

Planning level	Planning instrument	Scale
NATIONAL (STATE)	The Model for Growth of Latvia: Human Being in the First Place	Nationwide
	Sustainable Development Strategy of Latvia	Nationwide
	National Development Plan	Nationwide
	Maritime Spatial Plan	The sea and the terrestrial part that is functionally interlinked with the sea
REGIONAL (PLANNING REGIONS)	Sustainable Development Strategy of a Planning Region	Territory of the Planning Region
LOCAL (LOCAL GOVERNMENTS)	Planning Region Development Programme	Territory of the Planning Region
	Sustainable Development Strategy of a Local Government	Territory of the local government
	Local Government Development Programme	Territory of the local government
	Local Government Spatial Plan	Territory of the local government
	Local Plan	A part of the territory of the local government
ALL	Detailed Plan	Typically deals with land unit(s)
	Thematic Plans	Any

Type of plan

Vidzeme Planning Region Sustainable Development Strategy 2030



Facts

Legal basis

- The Regional Development Law (adopted by the *Saeima* on 21 March 2002; entered into force on 23 April 2002) outlines the basic principles of regional development, defines the planning regions, details the competences of the planning regions and Planning Region Development Councils, and other aspects.
- Development Planning System Law (adopted by the *Saeima* on 8 May 2008; entered into force on 1 January 2009). Section 12, Paragraph 7 defines the competences and tasks of the planning region.
- Spatial Development Planning Law (adopted by the *Saeima* on 13 October 2011; entered into force on 1 December 2011). Chapter IV describes spatial planning on the regional level.
- Cabinet Regulations No. 402 (adopted by the Cabinet of Ministers on 16 July 2013; entered into force on 2 August 2013) on the spatial development planning documents of planning regions outlines the contents of regional planning documents and the procedures for their preparation.

Competences

- According to the Spatial Development Planning Law, Section 11, the planning region is responsible for preparing and approving the sustainable development strategy and coordinating and monitoring its implementation.

Binding force

- The sustainable development strategy of a planning region is approved by a decision of the Planning Region Development Council (Spatial Development Planning Law, Section 18, Paragraph 3).
- The strategy is a development management instrument of the planning region. All local authorities located within the planning region are jointly responsible for its implementation. The strategy must be taken into account when preparing other regional planning documents and local planning documents.

Tasks and content

- The sustainable development strategy of a planning region is a long-term spatial development planning document specifying the vision for the long-term development, strategic objectives and priorities of the planning region, and the spatial development perspective in text and graphic form (Spatial Development Planning Law, Section 18, Paragraph 1).

Process, duration, participation

- The Planning Region Development Council makes a decision to prepare a new Sustainable Development Strategy, appoints a Development Manager and determines a work programme, outlining the envisaged planning process, timeframe, and public engagement activities.
- The minimum requirements for public engagement include organising a public consultation process that lasts at least 30 days.
- The decision to prepare the Vidzeme Planning Region Sustainable Development Strategy 2030 was taken in June 2012. The decision outlines the main public engagement activities, including organising thematic working groups, opportunities to submit suggestions online, and a public consultation process.
- The draft version of the strategy was ready in the autumn of 2014. The public consultation process took place in November and December 2014.
- Based on the results of the public consultation process, the draft strategy was improved and submitted for review to the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Regional Development.
- The Vidzeme Planning Region Development Council approved the Strategy on 27 June 2015.

Duration of validity

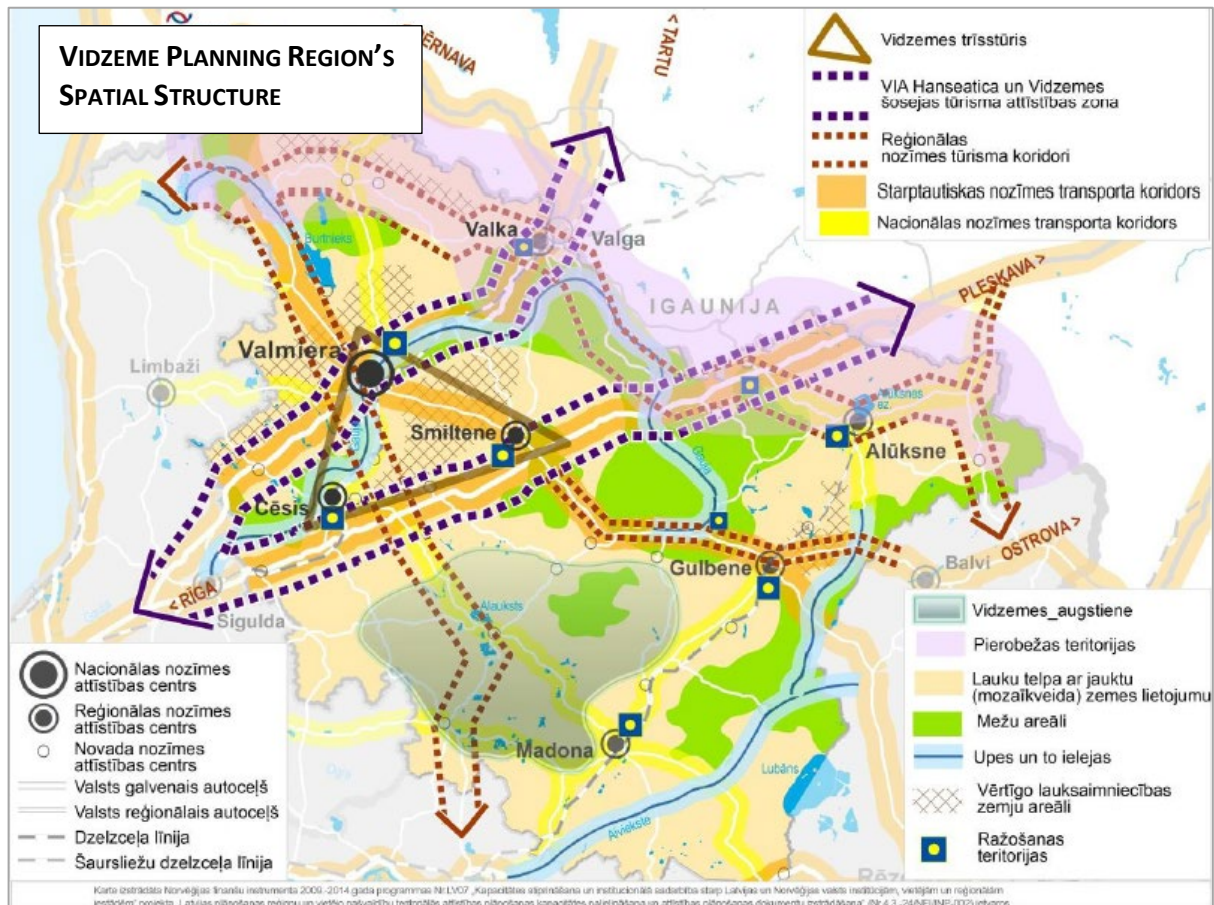
- The Sustainable Development Strategy of a Planning Region is typically valid for the long term – up to 25 years. The current planning document (first approved in 2015) is valid until 2030.

Details of the plan

The Vidzeme Planning Region Sustainable Development Strategy 2030 includes three sections: (1) a strategic part, (2) the spatial development perspective, and (3) the implementation and monitoring procedure. The strategic part outlines the Vidzeme region's economic specialisation, the main drivers of development, development scenarios, the vision for 2030, and strategic objectives and long-term priorities. The Vidzeme Planning Region defines an overall objective and three long-term objectives to be achieved by 2030: (1) improve the residents' quality of life, (2) increase the region's economic competitiveness, and (3) improve the accessibility and attractiveness of the region. Each objective is further linked to two long-term priorities:

- IAS1 High-quality, accessible education
- IAS2 Social security and health
- IAS3 Sustainable entrepreneurship and environment for innovation
- IAS4 Sustainable economy
- IAS5 Accessibility of the region
- IAS6 Attractiveness of places

The spatial development perspective outlines the region's principles for spatial development, the spatial structure, and long-term changes (until 2030). The perspective focuses on three main spatial structures: (1) the distribution of the population and development centres (or urbanised areas), (2) rural areas, and (3) areas of common development interests among different municipalities. When defining development perspectives for rural areas, the strategy looks at various spatial aspects, including agricultural land, forests, nature and cultural heritage areas, tourism development areas, waterbodies, transport infrastructure, and others.



The implementation and monitoring procedure outlines (i) the overall governance structures responsible for implementing the strategy and (ii) the monitoring and evaluation system. The latter includes a list of development indicators with their base values to be monitored.

Characteristics

Location of the area

- The Vidzeme Planning Region Sustainable Development Strategy 2030 deals with the territory of the Vidzeme Planning Region. The Vidzeme Planning Region is located in the northeastern part of Latvia. It covers almost a third (19,770 km² or 30.6%) of the entire territory of Latvia. Since the administrative-territorial reform of 1 July 2021, the territory of the Vidzeme planning region encompasses 11 municipalities: Alūksne (*Alūksne*), Cēsis (*Cēsis*), Gulbene, Limbazi (*Limbaži*), Madona, Ogre, Saulkrasti, Smiltene, Valmiera, Valka, and Varakļani (*Varakļāni*). Previously, it encompassed 26 municipalities.

Initial situation

- The strategy takes into account the regional and spatial development policy documents of the EU and Latvia (Sustainable Development Strategy of Latvia: Latvija 2030, National Development Plan 2020, Regional Policy Guidelines, and Europe 2020). The future vision for the region is aligned with the national development objectives and priorities as well as those of the EU and Baltic Sea region.
- The strategy builds on the previously developed regional planning documents (e.g. Vidzeme Planning Region Development Programme 2007-2014 and long-term development scenarios). The strategic objectives are also aligned with the long-term strategies of the local municipalities within the planning region.

Particularities of the procedure and/or contents

- After the administrative-territorial reform in 2021, the strategy was updated to reflect the territorial changes.

Notes and links

Vidzeme Planning Region Sustainable Development Strategy 2030 (in Latvian):

http://jauna.vidzeme.lv/upload/VIDZEMES_PLANOSANAS_REGIONA_ILGTSPEJIGAS_ATTISTIBAS_STRATEGIJA.pdf

Website of the Vidzeme Planning Region (in English): http://www.vidzeme.lv/en/about_vidzeme