



**FIFTH NATIONAL OPEN GOVERNMENT PARTNERSHIP ACTION
PLAN OF LATVIA**

2022–2025

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Abbreviations

EU Recovery Fund	– EU Recovery and Resilience Facility
Recovery Fund Plan	– European Union Recovery and Resilience Facility Plan in Latvia
EC	– European Commission
MoE	– Ministry of Economics
EU	– European Union
Delna	– association Transparency International Latvia Delna
MoF	– Ministry of Finance
MoI	– Ministry of the Interior
Initiative “Public Participation – Key to the Future of Democracy”	– Initiative <i>Sabiedrības līdzdalība – atslēga demokrātijas nākotnei</i> [Public Participation – Key to the Future of Democracy] implemented by the State Chancellery in cooperation with the association Civic Alliance – Latvia and the Citizens Foundation Iceland, EEA Financial Mechanism Cabinet (mk.gov.lv)
MoES	– Ministry of Education and Science
PMB	– Procurement Monitoring Bureau
MoC	– Ministry of Culture
Cohesion Policy programme	– European Union Cohesion Policy programme 2021–2027
NYCL	– association National Youth Council of Latvia
LALRG	– Latvian Association of Local and Regional Governments
CAL	– association Civic Alliance – Latvia
MoW	– Ministry of Welfare
Memorandum Council	– the Council for the Implementation of the Cooperation Memorandum between Non-governmental Organisations and the Cabinet
Cabinet	– Cabinet
NDP2027	– National Development Plan 2021–2027
NGOs	– non-governmental organisations
OGP	– Open Government Partnership
OECD	– Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
CSCC	– Cross-Sectoral Coordination Centre
Providus	– association Centre for Public Policy PROVIDUS
CA	– Court Administration
DLA Portal	– Unified Portal for the Development and Coordination of Draft Legal Acts tapportals.mk.gov.lv
MoJ	– Ministry of Justice
SIF	– Society Integration Foundation
MoEPRD	– Ministry of Environmental Protection and Regional Development
LSPA	– Latvian School of Public Administration
SC	– State Chancellery
SLS	– State Land Service

Summary

The Fifth National Open Government Partnership Action Plan of Latvia 2022–2025 (hereinafter – the Plan) has been developed to promote openness and public accountability of State and local government authorities, and also public participation. The measures outlined in the Plan shall be implemented in various sectors and shall be carried out by State and local government authorities, both on their own and in cooperation with the non-governmental sector and sectoral representatives.

The State Chancellery is the State authority responsible for Latvia's membership in the Open Government Partnership, i.e. the OGP, and for the coordination of open government initiatives in Latvia. The OGP is an open government movement established in 2011 by 75 governments and civil society organisations globally.¹ The Memorandum Council oversees the implementation of the Plan by ensuring monitoring of the execution of the Plan and hearing the opinion of NGOs on the progress in the fulfilment of each commitment. Once a year, the issue shall be examined at a meeting of the Memorandum Council.

The Plan is an intersectoral policy planning document the development of which is guided by Latvia's membership in the OGP. The State Chancellery involved State administration institutions, NGOs, and also other authorities and organisations representing the interests of local governments in the preparation of the Plan.

The OGP principles of co-creation and participation and also other OGP requirements have been complied with in the development of the Plan². The Plan complies with Cabinet Regulation No. 737 of 2 December 2014, Regulations Regarding Drafting of Development Planning Documents and Impact Assessment Thereof, insofar as it is not in contradiction with the OGP requirements. For the development of the Plan, the Foundation for Public Participation in cooperation with the SC established a co-creation platform Atvertalatvija.manabalss.lv.

Drafting of the Plan

- The drafting of the Plan started on 28 April 2021 with the discussion of its objectives and strategy directions in the Memorandum Council.³

- The next step in the development of the Plan was a consultative survey or the collection of ideas from general population and civil society on the platform Atvertalatvija.manabalss.lv (see Figure 1) created for such purpose.

- In addition, several State authorities and associations, i.e. the Corruption Prevention and Combating Bureau, the PMB, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and Delna, submitted proposals for measures under the Plan.

- On 9 July 2021, a joint discussion took place on the directions for action of the Plan. Following this discussion, two working groups were set up to draft the Plan.

¹ More information on the Open Government Partnership can be found on its website: www.opengovpartnership.org

² OGP National Handbook – Rules and Guidance for Participants (2021); OGP Participation and Co-Creation Standards www.opengovpartnership.org

³ More information available on the website of the Cabinet: www.mk.gov.lv/lv/nevalstisko-organizaciju-un-ministru-kabineta-sadarbibas-memoranda-istenosanas-padome

- The coordination process of the draft Plan was arranged on the DLA Portal and also Atvertalatvija.manabalss.lv platform.

Figure 1

Drafting of the Plan based on the ideas submitted by general population on the co-creation platform Atvertalatvija.manabalss.lv

The OGP requires that open government plans identify problems to be solved and measures to be taken in co-creation with general population and NGOs. The co-creation platform Atvertalatvija.manabalss.lv was set up with the support of the OGP Secretariat and, from 25 May 2021 to 29 June 2021, general population submitted their ideas and voted on the ideas submitted by others.

In total, **104 ideas** were received from the general population. The ideas were voted on a total of **5044 times**. A total of 85 000 users had noticed the widget for the provision of ideas.

A summary of ideas submitted by general population can be found on **Atvertalatvija.manabalss.lv**.

The ideas received were examined and discussed in working groups. The working groups voted on ideas, jointly identifying which were of particular relevance to a broader public and could be pursued.

Some of the ideas proposed by general population and used in the drafting of the Plan:

Hearing out of citizens' suggestions on local government development, more frequent meetings with general population and associations	Provision of information by State or local government authorities to general population on the approval and implementation of their proposals	Practical explanations of services. Explanations of government decisions
Opportunities of the public to participate in the work of their local governments – short and simple surveys, consultative formats	Work on accessibility and comprehensibility of public data. Not only – open data	Hackathons and workshops led by professionals and focused on solving actual problems at community level
Drafting of a list of immovable properties owned by State and local governments	Making public and creating public datasets that focus on increasing the opportunities for citizens	Speaking a more lucid language. Simplification of complicated subjects in consultation with communication and content experts. Emphasising of benefits for the society

Objectives of the Plan

The objective of the Plan is to promote meaningful and effective **public participation** in the development of informed and quality decisions and **openness and transparency** in the work of State authorities in the public interest.

Open and understandable decisions and the decision-making process thereof are one of the incentives for public trust in public governance and the legitimacy of decisions in a modern democracy. Sufficient and clear information from State authorities leaves an impact on public satisfaction with the work of State authorities, their understanding of the processes taking place in the country and their trust in the country.

The measures outlined in the Plan contribute to compliance with internationally defined **values of open government** and factors that build **trust in public governance**.

In order to ensure that open government initiatives are effective and improve public trust, such initiatives must be sufficiently inclusive from the perspective of the public and involve the entire public administration, i.e. not only the State administration institutions subordinated to the Cabinet but also local governments, independent institutions, and all three State powers. Open government should thus be extended to all levels of the relationship between the public and the State, gradually **advancing towards an Open State**.⁴

Open Government – Contribution to Building Trust

One of the objectives of this Plan is to build trust in State administration authorities in the long term through the implementation of the measures contained therein and to contribute to the achievement of the strategic objective of NDP2027, i.e. **building social trust**, which includes both trust in State administration authorities and greater mutual trust of various groups of society.

The Plan contributes to the fulfilment of the tasks under the **NDP2027** direction for action “Rule of Law and Governance”, i.e. on the rule of law and strengthening democratic governance (Task 426) and on smart, efficient, and open governance, using new methods and digital opportunities, providing understandable and accessible information by administration, enabling people to participate in policy-making, and achieving balanced representation of social groups (Task 428). The Plan also contributes to the fulfilment of the task under the direction for action “Cohesion” with regard to self-organisation of the society, enhancing skills and opportunities for cooperation and participation (Task 407) (see Annex 1 also for the NDP2027 indicators supported by the Plan).

Compared to other EU countries, public trust in State administration authorities in Latvia is rather low. The pandemic has also shown that it is important to build up long-term trust of general population. Comparing the data from the Eurobarometer survey of 2019 to 2021, around 33 % of the population in Latvia rather distrust than trust State administration. In 2020, Latvia was ranked the 22nd out of 27 EU Member States under this indicator⁵. At the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, there was no “cushion of trust” which made it difficult to

⁴ The Open State concept is further described in the OECD Council Recommendation on Open Government adopted on 14 December 2017 <https://legalinstruments.oecd.org/en/instruments/OECD-LEGAL-0438>

⁵ Standard Eurobarometer 93 (2020), Standard Eurobarometer 95 (2021), Standard Eurobarometer 90.3 and 91.5 (2019). Question: QA6a.6

enforce decisions taken during the pandemic and to rely on the government's political course⁶. Surveys conducted in Latvia during the COVID-19 pandemic show that in April 2020 70.6 % of the Latvian population trusted the information provided by the State administration authorities of Latvia, while in September 2020 only 50.7 % trusted such information⁷.

The trust of the Latvian people in their ability to influence decisions is problematically low. According to data from the Eurobarometer survey of spring 2021, only 28 % of people in Latvia believe that their opinion can make a difference in their country, while 71 % do not believe that their vote makes a difference. Latvia is ranked the last in the EU under this indicator⁸. In comparison, in 2019, 30 % of respondents agreed with another statement, i.e. 'My vote matters in the EU', (Latvia was ranked the third from bottom in the EU)⁹. The objective of the tasks under the Plan is to improve public perception of their ability to influence action policy, thereby contributing to the achievement of NDP Progress Indicator 418.

The current situation shows that a number of groups within society do not feel sufficiently heard. In future, low-income people, non-citizens, ethnic minorities, young adults, local government population (including those living in peripheral regions), residents of Kurzeme and Latgale regions, senior citizens and those who do not use the digital environment should be more actively involved in decision-making processes. The Plan particularly highlights the involvement of and reaching out to young people. It is also envisaged to highlight the subject of participation among young people, and also the Guidelines for the Development of Children, Youth, and Family 2021–2027 and the recommendations developed by the Ministry of Education and Science in 2021 "Development of Youth Work Systems in Combined Local Governments" shall be taken into account.

Public attitudes towards the State are shaped by individuals' personal experiences, whether positive or negative. Positive experiences that motivate individual initiative should be encouraged in future. Research shows that experience is an important element in building trust. Individual initiative in civil society and the economy is also a resource for national development¹⁰. It is therefore important to encourage motivation to take action which is determined by the individual's experience of interacting with the surrounding environment, including with public authorities. The annual State administration customer satisfaction surveys conducted by the State Chancellery also show a trend towards a more critical attitude towards State administration in general, while personal interactions with specific State institutions are frequently positive. The State Social Insurance Agency, the State Revenue Service, local government councils and institutions, and the State Emergency Medical Service are among the institutions that most frequently are mentioned in the 2020 survey as good service providers to citizens¹¹.

⁶ RSU Researchers' Breakfast. Results of the national research programme project "Life with COVID-19" <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=r6NmR46b1zc>

⁷ Informative report Regarding the Results Achieved under the national research programme "Mitigation of Consequences of COVID-19" (examined by the Cabinet on 8 April 2021)

⁸ Standard Eurobarometer 95 – Spring 2021

⁹ Standard Eurobarometer 91 – Spring 2019

¹⁰ Interim results of the research carried out within the framework of the national research programme "Latvian Heritage and Future Challenges for the Country's Sustainability" <https://lzp.gov.lv/programmas/valsts-petijumu-programmas/latvijas-mantojums-un-nakotnes-izaicinajumi-valsts-ilgtspējai/istenotie-projekti/>; Riga Stradiņš University prof. Dr. sc. inf. Sergejs Kruks' analysis of three national development plans and four policy documents on integration, cohesion, and civil society

¹¹ <https://www.mk.gov.lv/lv/petijumi>

The trust crisis represents a challenge for the contemporary world and affects other countries too. The proportion of the global population dissatisfied with democracy reached 57.5 % in 2019, the highest level in 25 years, and researchers attribute this to economic and political crises, corruption scandals¹². The gap between elites and the nation is growing: the educated, wealthy part of society trusts the government more than the majority of the society. During the COVID-19 pandemic, mistrust in public governance was accompanied by personal and social dimensions of mistrust, for example, fear of loss of employment, illness, climate change, cybersecurity. The society has less trust in government leaders and more in business leaders and experts, for example, in health sector. However, in several countries (Switzerland, Denmark, Norway, the Netherlands, and Luxembourg) the opposite trend has been observed: public satisfaction with democracy has increased¹³.

In 2021, the OECD launched the OECD Trust Survey in cooperation with its Member States in which Latvia is also participating. The OECD Trust Survey will explore both the level of trust and the factors that can increase trust, and also the extent to which public expectations are not being adequately addressed. The OECD has previously carried out a survey on trust in government institutions in Korea and Finland¹⁴. Such a survey was carried out in 20 other countries at the end of 2021. The results of the OECD Survey are expected in 2022, including an international peer review, recommendations, and an international trust indicator.

At national level in Latvia, social mistrust is being studied within the framework of the Memorandum Council in 2021–2022. In October 2021, the Memorandum Council presented an analysis of the European Social Survey data on social trust in Latvia. The focus is on the causes of mistrust and the socio-demographic characteristics of the population with low trust and recommendations are made to State authorities. In 2022, the Memorandum Council will work together, most likely in a think-tank format, in order to find creative solutions to reduce the critical causes of mistrust and eliminate its consequences (this task is included in the Memorandum Council's work plan for 2021–2023). Research on trust carried out within the framework of national research programmes will be taken into account in further work¹⁵.

¹² Foa, R.S., Klassen, A., Slade, M., Rand, A. and R. Collins. 2020. The Global Satisfaction with Democracy Report 2020. Cambridge, United Kingdom: Centre for the Future of Democracy

¹³ Edelman Trust Barometer 2021

¹⁴ OECD/KDI (2018), Understanding the Drivers of Trust in Government Institutions in Korea, OECD Publishing, Paris. OECD (2021), Drivers of Trust in Public Institutions in Finland

¹⁵ For example, <https://lzp.gov.lv/project/politiskas-uzticesanas-psihologiska-modela-iztrade-un-parbaude/>

A vision for Open Government

Open government involves a high-quality and regular dialogue and partnership between State authorities and the society to jointly identify and address societal challenges.

People working in State authorities have a sense of mission to work in the public interest and of accountability to the public for their decisions and actions.

As public communication improves, people are becoming more aware of the work of State authorities in the public interest and thus become increasingly involved themselves.

Civil society and the public are meaningfully and purposefully heard on major societal issues. State administration is modern, fair, and reliable.

Decisions taken by the State are democratically debated, traceable, and understandable. Data published by State institutions are understandable and accessible, helping to create new products and research, increasing openness and improving the accountability culture.

An active civil society, people, and representatives of different sectors influence government decisions in a targeted way and engage in the solution of major societal issues. The values of mutual assistance, justice, and fairness are prevalent in society. Mutual trust of various groups of society is growing. There is growing confidence in people's ability to influence decisions and to engage in work for a common public good.

Directions for Action and Measures of the Plan

The plan sets out a package of measures along **three directions for action**:

1. Meaningful and effective public participation in informed and quality decision-making
2. Openness and transparency in the work of State authorities in the public interest
3. Openness of local governments and opportunities of the public to participate in the work of their local government

Over the next four years, the measures provided for in the Plan will help to develop civil dialogue and involvement of a broader public, strengthening public trust in their ability to influence developments in Latvia and creating more opportunities to be active in civil society, promote modern communication, access to official information, data-based solutions, and openness of datasets available in the country.

In order to promote mutual trust, all directions for action include measures to enable more active and broader involvement of NGOs and experts in the work of public sector, including in explaining current issues to the society (for example, public health, the Green Deal, volunteering, disinformation), helping to raise public awareness and trust in the solutions offered by the government.

There are various tools to promote public trust. One way is to involve, over the coming years, public and sectoral representatives in the process of carrying out reforms funded within the scope of the Recovery Fund Plan and making investments of the Cohesion Policy programme, and to ensure transparency of these reforms and investments in order to raise public awareness of the activities implemented and their results. The involvement of representatives of society will ensure that the results to be achieved meet the needs of various groups of society and the implementation of high-quality and smart measures.

EU investment in the amount of EUR 10.44 billion is planned in the period of 2021–2027 in Latvia¹⁶. The society needs to see the difference made by EU-funded projects and have the assurance that the funds are being spent effectively. In August 2021, at the meeting with the Memorandum Council, the Prime Minister A. K. Kariņš called for a meaningful public consultation with regard to the receipt of aid within the Cohesion Policy programme in the fields under the responsibility of the authorities.

The EU Recovery Fund covers all EU countries and the role of the society in its monitoring and transparency has been raised in many countries. In Italy and Portugal, non-governmental organisations intend to engage in the process of implementing the EU Recovery Fund plans. A coalition of NGOs and professionals for openness in EU spending, i.e. the Open Spending EU Coalition, has been set up¹⁷. Member States need to ensure adequate and effective internal control systems in the process of implementing the EU Recovery Fund plans¹⁸. The basic requirements of an internal control system include procedures aimed at providing information to the society and ensuring the participation of representatives of society¹⁹.

¹⁶ Infographics of the MoF: www.esfondi.lv/planosana-1

¹⁷ Open Spending EU Coalition www.open-spending.eu

¹⁸ Informative report “Regarding the Implementation of the Recovery and Resilience Facility Plan of Latvia” (examined by the Cabinet on 7 September 2021)

¹⁹ Cabinet Regulation No. 326 of 8 May 2012, Regulations Regarding the Internal Control System in Institutions of Direct Administration

Direction for Action 1: Meaningful and Effective Public Participation in Informed and Quality Decision-making

The **objectives to be achieved** under this direction for action over the next four years are as follows:

- 1) a shared vision for the future of public participation, its various methods and tools (including in the digital environment), and a modern legal framework for achieving this;
- 2) increased awareness and skills in public administration (including at national and local government level) for broader and more effective public participation and hearing out of the public in decision-making;
- 3) strengthened representation of society across sectors and in intersectoral issues, including an increased role for structured civil dialogue alongside social dialogue; public administration engages more with the public in its day-to-day work when addressing issues of public importance, using effective and modern participatory approaches;
- 4) civil dialogue on an equal footing with social dialogue is introduced.

Measures to be implemented within the scope of the direction for action

Commitment 1: Strengthening the framework for public participation and raising awareness of an effective participatory process						
Measure	Term of execution	Responsible authorities	Co-responsible authorities and other implementers	Funding sources thereof²⁰	Outputs and performance indicators thereof	
<p>1.1. Drafting of a framework document on public participation and civil dialogue, including a vision on increasing the opportunities for participation in the digital environment</p> <p>Strengthening the vision on how to promote civic actions and engagement in the solving of major societal issues. Definition of what manifests a regular and good-quality civil dialogue and how to establish such dialogue, definition of civil society. Agreement on the conditions and measures to promote participation in the digital environment, defining how digital opportunities can contribute to comprehensive and broader participation opportunities for the public. Identification of the changes required in the regulatory framework.</p>	Quarter IV of 2023	SC	MoC SIF CSCC Memorandum Council CAL Providus	Within the scope of the current budget Activities planned within the scope of the SSO 4.3.4 of the Cohesion Policy programme NDP2027 Task No. 428	Framework document developed in the process of co-creation Think tank on civil dialogue 2 public discussions Research	
<p>1.2. Improving the framework for public participation:</p> <p>a) Updating of Cabinet Regulation No. 970 of 25 August 2009, Procedures for the Public Participation in the Development Planning</p>	a) quarter IV of 2022 b) in 2022–2025	SC	Memorandum Council	Within the scope of the current budget	Drafting of a legal act	

²⁰ Detailed information provided in Annex 2 to this Plan “Indicative Financial Framework Required for the Implementation of the Plan”

	Process, including in accordance with the regulation on matters of the internal procedures and activities of the Cabinet adopted in 2021; b) if necessary, other changes to the regulatory framework					
1.3.	<p>Training events for public administration “Effective and meaningful public participation”</p> <p>Persons employed in State administration can learn about the public participation process in training developed by the LSPA (for example, in the form of workshops and e-learning) the content of which is based on the improved regulatory framework, the SC public participation guidelines, and best practices in Latvia and other countries.</p> <p>The training includes an e-course (compulsory minimum) and thematic workshops. The e-course can be conveniently repeated. One of the topics is the public participation process in the Unified Portal for the Development and Coordination of Draft Legal Acts.</p> <p>The training includes lectures, video training, methodological materials for organising participation, a test.</p> <p>The training is developed in cooperation with the SC Innovation Lab²¹ jointly with the LSPA training in respect of new methods, policies and formation of services, and also by involving</p>	Quarter I of LSPA 2023		SC MoJ Public participation coordinators in ministries ²² SC Innovation Lab Providus	Within the scope of the current budget Recovery Fund Plan measure 6.3.1.1.i “Open, transparent, fair, and accountable public administration and technical assistance means (for measures on public participation in the implementation of the Cohesion Policy programme)” NDP2027 Task No. 428	Development, testing, and initiation of a training course (for example, e-course) Training on site (up to 100 participants per year), e-course (2000 participants in total) Training completion certificates issued to participants Ministry officials responsible for drafting legal acts and policy planning documents and project managers of projects with a public interest have been invited to and have completed the course and have received a certificate Training has also been provided to local government employees

²¹ <https://inovacija.mk.gov.lv>

²² A list of the officials responsible for participation can be found at <https://www.mk.gov.lv/lv/kontakti>

	representatives of the non-governmental sector in the development of the training content					
1.4.	<p>Afternoons devoted to the good practices of participation</p> <p>Regular sharing of good practices and challenges of ministries and institutions will be organised in order to create a common understanding and to be informed of developments in State administration, thus ensuring public participation. This will stimulate broader participation, selection of appropriate forms of involvement, increasing the impact of public participation</p>	2022–2025	SC	LSPA Public participation coordinators in ministries	Within the scope of the current budget	Ministries share good practices with regard to the organisation of public participation Participation afternoons twice a year Upon invitation by the LSPA, ministries and institutions invite employees who ensure public participation
1.5.	<p>Digital platform for public participation</p>	2022–2025	SC	CAL	Additional funding from the State budget required	The possibility of developing and maintaining a public participation website is evaluated on the basis of the prototype created within the scope of the initiative “Public Participation – Key to the Future of Democracy” This can be a separate new website or integrated as a section within the existing website Guidelines and other aid instruments and practical advice on participation and openness are published on the website.

						On the website, the public may access information on participation opportunities and the website has built-in interaction features
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Commitment 2: Promoting opportunities for public participation, including the involvement of young adults and NGOs

Measure	Term of execution	Responsible authorities	Co-responsible authorities and other implementers	Funding and sources thereof	Outputs and performance indicators thereof
<p>2.1. Communication activities on opportunities for participation in State administration</p> <p>Purposeful activities to inform society are carried out under the leadership of the SC to raise awareness on the types of participation and forms of public involvement. At least one activity is targeted at young adults and organised jointly with the MoES</p>	2022–2025	SC	MoES Organisations representing the interests of young adults (for example, NYCL) <i>VSIA Latvijas Vēstnesis</i> [State limited liability company <i>Latvijas Vēstnesis</i>]	Within the scope of the current budget	<p>Regular communication on opportunities for participation in public administration</p> <p>Four communication activities, preferably once a year (audio, video or printed materials, and also unified messages about the DLA Portal and participation opportunities which are distributed through social networks, websites, www.lvportals.lv, etc.) The activity for young adults is organised in the form of exchange of ideas with the active involvement of young adults</p>

2.2.	<p>Communication activities on participation opportunities in sectors and local governments</p> <p>Ministries explain to their target groups and partners and also local governments explain to their residents and NGOs how one can participate in their work and decision-making processes, emphasising the benefits of participation and, where appropriate, using unified messages and materials applicable to State administration as a whole</p>	2022–2025	All ministries Measure is implemented in cooperation with the communication departments of the ministries	Local governments MoEPRD (provision of explanatory information to local governments) LALRG Providus (support in the preparation of explanatory information to local governments)	Within the scope of the current budget	Each ministry and local government shall, at least once a year, distribute video, audio or printed materials on opportunities for participation in their work to target groups of the sector or local government as appropriate (where necessary, using the materials and messages prepared under measure 2.1 of this commitment) Explanatory information for local governments
2.3.	<p>NGO Day</p> <p>Every year on the NGO Day, the sectors, in cooperation with the SC, organise events to inform civil society of sectoral developments and opportunities for cooperation and participation</p>	2022–2025 (once a year)	SC All ministries	CAL	Within the scope of the current budget	State administration participates in the World NGO Day which is celebrated both in Latvia and worldwide on 27 February and presents opportunities for participation Press release Four events organised in State administration
2.4.	<p>Participation skills of young adults for involvement in decision-making in Latvia and at European level, including restoration of <i>Jauniešu Saeima</i> [Youth Parliament] and strengthening the participation of young adults</p>	2022–2025	<i>Saeima</i> of the Republic of Latvia LALRG MoES (Agency for International Programmes for Youth)		Within the scope of the current budget	Number of events, including meetings Number of young adults involved Feedback from young adults involved

	in the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities ²³					
2.5.	Introduction of participatory budgeting principles at schools , including self-governments, encouraging young adults to obtain a range of skills related to developing ideas, financial literacy, and taking responsibility for the environment		MoES (Agency for International Programmes for Youth) Delna	Local governments	Within the scope of the current budget	Education of schools about participatory budgeting, transfer of the experience of Delna, and distribution of informative materials prepared within the scope of other projects (it is planned to distribute informative materials in all schools across Latvia) Transfer of experience to the MoES and the Agency for International Programmes for Youth Idea contests for self-governance bodies of educatees (100 schools per year) Promoting the activity of young adults, competency-based education

²³ <https://www.lps.lv/lv/starptautiska-sadarbiba/ep-vietejo-un-regionalo-pasvaldibu-kongress>

Commitment 3: Strengthening the representation of society and dialogue with society in decision-making processes in every sector

Measure	Term of execution	Responsible authorities	Co-responsible authorities and other implementers	Funding and sources thereof	Outputs and performance indicators thereof
<p>3.1. Strengthening the representation of sectoral cooperation partners and maintaining a regular dialogue</p> <p>Ministries identify and improve the range of their cooperation partners – civil society organisations, social partners, experts, sectoral representatives, and also other organisations and individuals in the fields of activity and target groups of the ministry.</p> <p>Ministries define the ways in which they maintain a regular dialogue with their cooperation partners which includes opportunities for participation in various work formats of the ministry.</p> <p>Information on opportunities for participation in the work of the ministry is easily accessible.</p> <p>Interested NGOs and other representatives of society can, without restrictions, become cooperation partners and participate in the sector’s dialogue with society</p>	<p>Quarter IV of 2022</p>	<p>All ministries and institutions Public participation coordinators in ministries SC (monitoring)</p>		<p>Additional funding from the State budget required</p>	<p>Description prepared by the ministry about the cooperation partners and opportunities for public participation in the sector, including opportunities for new cooperation partners to apply (publicly accessible information on the website of each ministry)</p> <p>As part of the annual survey on public participation²⁴, ministries provide data to the SC on the implementation of this measure (the SC both collects quantitative data and uses qualitative data collection methods)</p>
<p>3.2. Effective and modern approaches to public participation are used in every</p>	<p>2022–2025 (measures are</p>	<p>All ministries SC (monitoring)</p>	<p>Independent experts or NGOs</p>	<p>Additional funding from</p>	<p>As part of the annual survey on public participation²⁵,</p>

²⁴ The SC questionnaire for ministries on cooperation of State administration authorities with NGOs in the performance of State administration functions will be supplemented

²⁵ The SC questionnaire for ministries on cooperation of State administration authorities with NGOs in the performance of State administration functions will be supplemented

	sector to make informed and high-quality decisions:	implemented independently; reports are submitted once a year)			the State budget required	ministries provide data to the SC on the implementation of this measure Public activity indicators Based on the results of the survey submitted by the ministries and the data retrieved from the DLA Portal, the SC every year publishes a report on participation in the previous year Both the data and the conclusions of the SC report are discussed at participation afternoons twice a year
	a) reaching out to a broader public and various target groups;					
	b) provision of opportunities to society itself to solve problems and joint discussion of decisions, including the use of innovative participatory approaches (co-creation, design thinking, hackathons ²⁶ , think tanks, citizens' panel ²⁷ , deliberative methods, idea labs, etc.;					
	c) provision of information to society on the implementation of their proposals;					
	d) participation in the digital environment (digitally organised dialogues on sectoral policy topics, online consultation, discussion platforms);					
	e) provision of opportunities for public participation on the DLA Portal;					
	f) proactive provision of information to public on decisions and clarification thereof, involving sectoral experts, NGOs, and institutional communication specialists					
3.3.	Transparency and public involvement in the effective implementation, transparent and accountable monitoring					

²⁶ Hackathon – a marathon of ideas where a group of experts work together to develop a solution to a problem. The term originated in the context of the development of new technological solutions in the field of IT

²⁷ Citizens' panel (also known as citizens' assembly) – a group of people consisting of 500 up to several thousand people with socio-demographically different background that deliberates on important issues and proposes the best solution for society. www.involve.org.uk/resources/methods/citizens-panel

of reforms and investments financed under the Recovery Plan and the Cohesion Policy programme:						
a) involvement of representatives of society (associations, foundations, experts) in the effective planning and implementation of reforms or investments under the Recovery Fund Plan. They shall also be involved in informative measures on the results of the implemented projects and their relevance for society. The responsible authorities (depending on the scope and profile of the investment) are also invited to evaluate the involvement of associations and foundations in the reform and investment and, where possible, to designate associations and foundations as project applicants;	2022–2025	All authorities responsible for the implementation of the Recovery Fund Plan (MoE, MoF, MoI, MoES, MoC, MoW, MoT, MoJ, SC, MoH, MoEPRD, MoA, LSPA, SIF, FIU)			Within the scope of the current budget	Depending on the scope and profile of the investment, the sectoral dialogue with NGOs defines how involvement in supervision takes place and reinforces which organisations will participate and in what ways If a project supervisory council is set up, NGOs are invited to participate Involvement of the Memorandum Council in the development of the criteria and methodology and regular reporting of the results to the Memorandum Council (once a year)
b) in accordance with the call made by Prime Minister A. K. Kariņš at the meeting of the Memorandum Council ²⁸ on 26 August 2021 to ensure meaningful public consultation (associations and foundations working in the field) with	2022–2025	All authorities which are responsible for receiving aid within the scope			Within the scope of the current budget	Ministries provide information on the implementation of this measure both as part of the annual survey on public

²⁸ Minutes of the Extraordinary Meeting of the Council for the Implementation of the Cooperation Memorandum between Non-governmental Organisations and the Cabinet of 26 August 2021, available on the website of the Cabinet at <https://www.mk.gov.lv/lv/media/10858/download>, and Resolution No. 2021-1.1.1/50-50 of the Prime Minister of 7 September 2021

	regard to the receipt of aid within the Cohesion Policy programme in the fields under the responsibility of the authorities To designate associations and foundations (depending on the nature of the investment) as project applicants so that the NGO sector can also implement the Cohesion Policy programme activities		of the Cohesion Policy programme (MoF, MoE, MoES, MoC, MoW, MoT, MoJ, MoH, MoI, SC)			participation ²⁹ and upon request to the SC as the Secretariat of the Memorandum Council
3.4.	Educational seminars for civil society on how to use the DLA Portal	2022–2025	SC	CAL Providus (involvement in the development of the training content)	Within the scope of the current budget	Three seminars
3.5.	Formation of the deliberative discussion model, initial discussions, and further development of deliberative forms	2022–2025	SC	Providus	Within the scope of the current budget	Methodology and standard budget drafting Initial deliberative discussions based on the methodology and standard budget have been organised Involvement of the following groups in the discussions: low-income people, foreigners, people with lower levels of education, young adults, local government population
3.6.	Creation of a classification of NGOs according to the field of activity thereof, enabling the identification of organisations	2023–2025	MoJ MoF (SRS)	CAL Providus	Additional funding from	A publicly available NGO classifier has been developed and

²⁹ The SC questionnaire for ministries on cooperation of State administration authorities with NGOs in the performance of State administration functions will be supplemented

	in various fields or representing certain target groups				the State budget required	implemented for use by State administration, the NGO sector, journalists, etc. Defined fields and a possibility to classify and search for NGOs according to the field of activity thereof
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Direction for Action 2: Openness and Transparency in the Work of State Authorities in the Public Interest

The **objectives to be achieved** under this direction for action over the next four years are as follows:

- 1) increased capacity of the country to communicate information in a more lucid and clearly understandable language for the public, more extensive clarification of decisions and benefits for society therefrom;
- 2) greater openness of the sectors as regards their work for the public good, active and modern communication;
- 3) public awareness and use of information and data generated by State authorities, including open data, has increased, promoting data-based solutions and cooperation in State administration.

The MoJ will continue its efforts to promote the distribution of information on the beneficial owners of legal persons and broader use of this information by the public (for example, in research).

As part of the Plan, it is planned to promote public access to information on immovable properties owned by the State and local governments. The SLS and CA will assess the possibilities to indicate more clearly the specific owner in the database of the State Unified Computerised Land Register and the data publication and e-services portal www.kadastrs.lv (the specific scope shall be determined in the assessment).

The PMB will promote and communicate the information available on public procurements, thus encouraging openness of public procurements which is a key area of open government as it is linked to fair use of public funds.

Measures to be implemented within the scope of the direction for action

Commitment 4: Lucid and clear communication between the State and public, clarification of decisions and complicated topics by highlighting the benefits						
Measure	Term of execution	Responsible authorities	Co-responsible authorities and other implementers	Funding and sources thereof	Outputs and performance indicators thereof	
<p>4.1. a) Training cycle “Clear and simple language in State administration – effective communication with the public”</p> <p>Under the guidance of experts, persons employed in State administration in the course of practical training acquire such language skills that help to communicate with the public in a simple manner, clearly, and concisely, and also acquire reasoning and explanatory skills.</p> <p>The training covers the acquisition of skills for explaining major societal issues, preparation of policy documents, informative reports, letters, written and oral communication in a simple, understandable manner, organisation of such events (including online) that are aimed at provision of information to the public.</p> <p>The training is provided to employees of various profiles assigned by State</p>	Quarter IV of 2023	LSPA	<p>The measure is implemented in cooperation with content and linguistic experts, taking into account the current practices in customer-oriented State administration and simple language training</p> <p>SC MoEPRD LALRG</p>	<p>Measure 6.3.1.2.i of the Recovery Fund Plan “Professionalisation of public administration and strengthening of administrative capacity, technical assistance means for the implementation of the Cohesion Policy programme”</p> <p>NDP2027 Task No. 428</p>	<p>Improved communication skills in State administration with regard to clear and simple communication</p> <p>Training cycle at the LSPA for the employees of all ministries, SC, and local governments (at least two (or more, if funded) per institution, also participating in measure 4.3)</p>	

<p>or local government institutions who use the knowledge in the communication of the institution with the public;</p>					
<p>b) Methodological materials for more effective communication of the State administration with the public Persons employed in State administration whose work involves interaction with people and who prepare documents of public interest (for example, policies, laws and regulations, institutional performance reports, responses to citizens, chairing working groups) are supported to communicate effectively and use uniform methodological materials in their work</p>	<p>Quarter IV of 2024</p>	<p>LSPA</p>	<p>SC Measure is implemented in cooperation with the communication departments of the ministries</p>		<p>Information on methodological materials such as <i>Politikas veidošanas rokasgrāmata</i> [Policy-making Handbook], <i>Normatīvo aktu projektu izstrādes rokasgrāmata</i> [Handbook for Drafting Laws and Regulations], <i>Vēstulju rakstīšanas vadlīnijas</i> [Guidelines for Writing Letters], the Handbook on Effective Resistance to Information Manipulation and Disinformation developed by the State Chancellery (to be completed in the first half of 2022), other methodological materials related to information space security measures, <i>Vieglās valodas vadlīnijas valsts pārvaldei</i> [Simple Language Guidelines for State Administration] and other useful materials are distributed in an aggregated form</p>

						Information is distributed to sectoral ministries and LSPA training participants
4.2.	<p>Implementation of accessibility principles and requirements in communication of the State administration with the public</p> <p>It is intended to facilitate access to information and consultations of State institutions of direct administration and local governments, including on the services provided, and perception of decisions for persons with functional limitations.</p> <p>The measure supports the implementation of the principles of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities in Latvia, including the strengthening of the principle of universal design, and the implementation of the requirements of the accessibility directives³⁰</p>	2022–2025	All ministries and local governments	State Administration Innovation Lab led by the State Chancellery NGOs and professionals working in the field	Within the scope of the current budget and Recovery Fund Plan measure 6.3.1.3.i “Development of the innovation ecosystem of public administration” NDP2027 Task No. 428	Measures to implement accessibility principles and requirements
4.3.	<p>Sectoral open government dialogues – “Clearly on complex issues. Understand the public benefits and get involved!”</p> <p>Each sector chooses a topical issue that is important for further</p>	2023–2025	All ministries and institutions SC	VSIA <i>Latvijas Vēstnesis</i> (lvportals.lv) Other internet-based media used by a broader public or target audience	Additional funding from the State budget required	13 sectoral projects One SC project (14 in total) Creation of public communication activities, for example, in the form of audio, video or printed

³⁰ Directive (EU) 2019/882 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 17 April 2019 on the accessibility requirements for products and services www.lm.gov.lv/lv/pieklustamibas-direktiva-0; Directive (EU) 2016/2102 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 26 October 2016 on the accessibility of the websites and mobile applications of public sector bodies; see also the MoW informative bulletin and website accessibility guidelines

	<p>explanation to the public and is essential for the sustainable development of Latvia.</p> <p>The projects are led by the employees of the ministry (institution) trained within the scope of measure 4.1.</p> <p>Two ambassadors are selected for each project – a leading representative of the ministry and a civil society representative or expert selected by the sectoral advisory council, and they jointly explain the issue to the public.</p> <p>Open government dialogues: explanations on the LV portal and involvement of other mass media – as part of its communication activities, www.lvportals.lv produces a series of explanations on topical issues in the sectors, promoting open governance</p>			are also involved in communication activities		<p>materials, depending on the context</p> <p>One article at lvportals.lv on each project (14 in total)</p> <p>Several activities in the digital environment (in total, at least three)</p>
4.4.	<p>Active and inclusive communication with the population and communication of information to the public in a modern and understandable manner</p> <p>Over the next four years, ministries and institutions are actively communicating on topics of public interest, explaining the substance and benefits, and making documents easily accessible.</p>	2022–2025	All ministries and institutions	<p>VSIA <i>Latvijas Vēstnesis</i> (lvportals.lv)</p> <p>SIF</p> <p>CAL</p>	Within the scope of the current budget	<p>State administration institutions provide explanatory information on the latest developments in their respective field of activity (draft laws and regulations, policy documents, informative reports, investment projects implemented, new solutions on e-environment, commissioned research)</p>

	Establishment of cooperation with NGOs to communicate with the population					Number of NGOs involved in communication with the public Use of automated e-mail delivery systems for the provision of information to the public
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Commitment 5: Promotion of data accessibility and clarity, increasing the opportunities for use thereof by the public and creation of data-based solutions

Measure	Time period	Responsible authorities	Co-responsible authorities and other implementers	Funding and sources thereof	Outputs and performance indicators thereof
<p>5.1. Promotion and explanation of data and tools of intersectoral societal relevance, including open data, encouraging their comprehensibility and more widespread use, intersectoral analysis, and data-based solutions</p> <p>Ministries and institutions subordinate thereto identify the data relevant to the public interest and important for public disclosure and ensure availability thereof on their websites or publish them, upon request, in the form of open data.</p> <p>Ministries and institutions subordinate thereto promote and explain to the public the databases, data compilations, platforms, support tools, digital tools,</p>	2022–2025	All ministries and institutions which are subordinate thereto MoEPRD (methodological support)	MoJ (according to its competence in the field of freedom of information, provision of support in identifying data of public interest) LSPA (as part of the development of digital skills) Mass media	Within the scope of the current budget Recovery Fund Plan measure 2.3.2.2.i “Development of State and local government digital transformation skills and capabilities”	Improved access to data relevant to freedom of information New data visualisations and data-based solutions developed Events organised for the purpose of data promotion (hackathons, events for skilful presentation of data (storytelling involving data), practical workshops) Communication activities to promote existing data and tools Training and publicly available virtual courses

	<p>various thematic websites, etc. that they have developed.</p> <p>Ministries and institutions subordinate thereto proactively share their data and analysis to address societal challenges.</p> <p>Through the process quality support provided by the MoEPRD, ministries and institutions subordinate thereto, for example, create visualisations, distribute explanations to target groups, organise events to develop data-based solutions, for example, data hackathons, including in cooperation with mass media.</p> <p>Open data publishers carry out measures to promote data, regularly publish news about available data, organise hackathons, data contests, and other measures to promote data and develop data-based solutions.</p> <p>Such training is developed within the LSPA that familiarises State administration and general population with the existing data offer and teaches how to use the tools required for the analysis of such data</p>					
5.2.	<p>Promotion of examples for open data use and promotion of skills</p>	Once a year	MoEPRD in cooperation with the responsible institutions (depending on the selected datasets)	LSPA (digital skills)	Within the scope of the current budget Cohesion Policy Recovery Fund Plan measure 2.3.2.2.i “Development of	MoEPRD, jointly with the responsible institutions, promotes open data (including where to find and how to use such data) and encourages the use thereof Demonstration of the availability and practical

					State and local government digital transformation skills and capabilities”	use of open data in training events for various stakeholders (State administration, journalists, NGOs)
5.3.	Availability of data of public interest in specific areas:					
	a) improvement of access to information on immovable properties owned by the State and local governments;	2022–2025	MoJ (SLS and CA) MoF All ministries and institutions which are subordinate thereto	Providus Local governments	Within the scope of the current budget	The possibility of improving the display of information (more clearly indicating the specific owner) in the State Unified Computerised Land Register and on the data publication and e-services portal www.kadastrs.lv in respect of properties owned by a public entity is being evaluated (the specific scope to be determined in the evaluation) Explanations prepared for State institutions and local governments for publishing information on their immovable properties Improvement of the information available on the websites of State institutions on their immovable properties

	<p>b) assessments and work on the publication of such data in the form of open data will be continued:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • declarations of State officials; • data from the remuneration and personal records system for officials (employees) of State institutions of direct administration and other State and local government institutions; • data on the use of State and local government budgets in accordance with the defined budget areas (anonymised information on the use of budget funds by budget type, programme, sub-programme, function, and economic categories of expenditure) 	2022–2025	MoEPRD MoF (SRS) SC MoF		Within the scope of the current budget	Evaluations Open datasets
	c) promotion of public access to information on mass media ownership			NEMMC (information on electronic mass media) Mass media	Within the scope of the current budget	Data published by mass media or NEMMC

Direction for Action 3:
**Openness of Local Governments and Opportunities of the Public to
Participate in the Work of their Local Government**

The measures included under this direction for action shall be implemented at local government level. Such actions are generally based on the ideas received from the general population and also the matters discussed in the working groups. Each local government is invited to implement these measures, thus contributing to the achievement of the objectives defined in the Plan and to fostering greater public trust in public administration. Upon entry into force of the Plan, the SC and the MoEPRD shall organise an online information seminar for local governments.

Measures to be implemented within the scope of the direction for action

Commitment 6: Promotion of openness and public involvement and participation in local governments						
Measure		Time period	Responsible authorities	Co-responsible authorities and other implementers	Funding and sources thereof	Outputs and performance indicators thereof
6.1.	Implementation of openness standards in local governments, encouraging greater public awareness and involvement to improve life in their respective local government	Quarter IV of 2024	MoEPRD	All local governments LALRG Latvian Association of Large Cities Providus Delna Regional NGOs, NGO centres, regional associations, etc.	Within the scope of the current budget	Number of local governments familiar with the standard and planning to evaluate the possibility of its implementation (initial survey) Self-assessment survey of local governments Independent assessment of local governments on the implementation of public involvement (using qualitative data collection methods)
6.2.	Regular exchange of experience between local government employees, including on matters related to public participation	2022–2025	MoEPRD	LALRG SC Providus	Within the scope of the current budget	One meeting every year
6.3.	Strengthening the participation of the local government population by integrating it as part of decision-making:	2022–2025	MoEPRD (information and coordination role within the scope of competence) SC	All local governments LALRG Latvian Association of Large Cities	Additional funding from the State budget required	Created budget information system for local governments Self-assessment survey of local governments Independent evaluation of local governments
	a) increased use of participatory budget – development of a participatory budget information					

<p>system for use by local governments;</p> <p>b) quick, simple surveys and advisory activities in local governments;</p> <p>c) the establishment and transparent functioning of citizens' councils;</p> <p>d) more frequent meetings between associations in the territory of local governments and the senior employees and members of local governments;</p> <p>e) hearing out of public suggestions on how to achieve the strategic directions of the local government and on the problems to be solved in the local government;</p> <p>f) inclusive involvement of the public, paying attention to the so-called peripheral areas and their inhabitants;</p> <p>g) when developing guidelines for the drafting of binding regulations regarding local government budgets and amendments thereto, work to improve access to information</p>					<p>Sub-clause “b” indicator – annual survey implemented by local governments to monitor public needs on a regular basis (rather than only in the course of drafting development planning documents)</p> <p>Sub-clause “c” indicator – explanation by the MoEPRD³¹</p> <p>Sub-clause “g” indicator – recommendations prepared by the MoEPRD to local governments for the preparation of binding regulations on budgets to improve public access to information</p>
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³¹ After the adoption of the relevant legal framework (citizens' councils are provided for in the draft law Local Government Law, No. 976/Lp13, which is under consideration by the *Saeima* before the second reading)

on local government budgets was continued					
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