

LATVIA'S OPEN GOVERNMENT NATIONAL ACTION PLAN 2022-2025

MID-TERM ASSESSMENT



State Chancellery
Riga 2024

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Abbreviations

Term	Abbreviation
Central Finance and Contracting Agency	CLFA
Central Statistical Bureau of Latvia	CSP
The European Union	EU
European Union Recovery and Resilience Facility, Recovery Fund	RRF, AF
Ministry of Finance	FM
Procurement Monitoring Bureau	PMB
Ministry of Education and Science	MoES
Corruption Prevention and Combating Bureau	KNAB
Latvia's 5th National Open Government Action Plan 2022-2025	Plan
Civic Alliance of Latvia	LPA
Latvian Association of Local and Regional Governments	LAS
State Employment Agency	NVA
Non-governmental organisation, civil society organisation	NGOs, CSOs
Society "Centre for Public Policy PROVIDUS"	PROVIDUS
Centre for Disease Prevention and Control	IPCPC
Single portal for drafting and harmonising legislation	TAP Portal; https://tapportals.mk.gov.lv
School of Public Administration	VAS
State Revenue Service	SRS
State Land Service	VZD
Government Action Plan for the Implementation of the Declaration on the Intended Activities of the Cabinet of Ministers headed by Evika Siliņa	Government Action Plan
State Revenue Service	SRS
State Social Insurance Agency	SSIA
Ministry of Environmental Protection and Regional Development	MoEPRD
State Joint Stock Company "State Real Estate"	SRE

Introduction

Latvia's Fifth National Open Government Action Plan 2022-2025 (hereinafter – the Plan) is a policy planning document containing measures to promote open government in **three directions**:

- public participation in decision-making,
- transparency of the work of state institutions, and
- openness of local governments.

The overall objective of the plan is to promote public trust in state institutions and social trust through these measures. The plan consists of a total of **26 measures**. They are the responsibility of the state administration institutions, as well as other co-responsible institutions and organisations. The plan contains a number of cross-cutting measures, i.e. they are comprehensive, target all sectors and are therefore the responsibility of all ministries.

This is a mid-term report on the implementation of the Plan in the first two years - 2022 and 2023.

The aim of the mid-term report is to provide comprehensive information on the progress made in 2022-2023, assessing the performance of each measure, with a view to highlighting the main achievements and drawing conclusions, highlighting challenges and outstanding measures.

To prepare the report, at the beginning of 2024, the following state institutions provided the State Chancellery with information on the implementation of the plan in 2022 and 2023: Ministry of Defence, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Economics, Ministry of the Interior, Ministry of Finance (including the State Revenue Service), Ministry of Education and Science (including the Agency for International Programmes for Youth), Ministry of Culture, Ministry of Welfare, Ministry of Transport, Ministry of Justice (including the State Land Service, Court Administration), the official publisher of the Republic of Latvia "Latvijas Vēstnesis" (LV portal www.lvportals.lv), Ministry of Health, Ministry of Environmental Protection and Regional Development, Ministry of Agriculture, Society Integration Fund, School of Public Administration, National Electronic Media Council, Saeima of the Republic of Latvia. Information was also gathered in the State Chancellery, which is itself the responsible institution for several measures of the Plan.

The following non-governmental organisations also provided information: the Latvian Civic Alliance, public policy think tank PROVIDUS, Latvian Youth Council, "Sabiedrība par atklātību – Delna" / Transparency International LATVIA and the Latvian Association of Local and Regional Governments.

The mid-term *report also includes a section dedicated to the Four-Year Rules Refresh*. Obligation to carry it out is provided by the *Open Government Partnership* (hereinafter – OGP) in the OGP National Handbook¹. By End June 2024, Latvia (the State Chancellery) must send information on the additions to the Plan to the OGP Secretariat.

¹ www.opengovpartnership.org/documents/ogp-national-handbook-rules-and-guidance-for-participants-2024

Progress in implementation: an overview

Implementation status of each measure (data as of April 2024)

Completed or substantial progress in 2022-2023 (ongoing without delay)	Some progress in 2022-2023	Implementation has not started or no information is available (more action expected in 2024-2025)
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Commitment 1: Strengthen the framework for public participation and raise awareness of effective participatory processes		
1.1. Framework document on public participation and civic dialogue		
1.2. Improvement of public participation regulation – procedure for public participation; other changes to the regulatory framework		
1.3. Training activities "Effective and meaningful public participation"		
1.4. Participation Good Practice afternoons		
1.5. Digital platform for public participation		
Commitment 2: Promote opportunities for public participation, including the involvement of young people and NGOs		
2.1. Communication activities on participation opportunities in public administration		
2.2. Communication activities on participation in sectors and municipalities		
2.3. NGO Day		
2.4. Youth participation skills in decision-making in Latvia and Europe, Youth Parliament, participation in the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities		
2.5. Spreading the principles of participatory budgeting into schools		
Commitment 3: Strengthen public representation and dialogue with the public in decision-making processes in every sector		
3.1. Strengthening the representation of sectoral cooperation partners and maintaining a regular dialogue		
<u>3.2. Effective and contemporary public participation approaches for the development of balanced and high-quality decisions in every sector:</u>		
a) reaching out to the general public and different target groups		
b) empowering society itself to address challenges and discussing decisions together, including the use of innovative participatory approaches		
c) informing citizens about the taking into account their proposals		
d) participation in the digital environment (digitally organised events on sectoral policy topics, online consultations, discussion platforms)		
e) offering opportunities for public participation in the TAP portal		
f) proactively informing and explaining decisions to the public, involving industry experts, NGOs and institutional communication professionals		
3.3. Transparency and public engagement in reforms and investments financed by the Recovery Fund and the Cohesion Policy funds		
3.4. Educational seminars for civil society on the use of the TAP portal		
3.5. Creation of a model for deliberative discussions, initial discussions and further development of deliberative forms		
3.6. Activity-Based NGO Classification		

Commitment 4: The state communicates with the public in clear and understandable language, explains decisions and complex topics, emphasizing benefits

4.1. a) Training "Understandable and simple language in public administration – effective communication with the public"

4.1. b) Methodological materials through communication with the public (collects, distributes to ministries and VAS training)

4.2. Enforcing accessibility principles and requirements in public administration communication with the public

4.3. Sectoral Open Government Dialogues - "Understandable of the complexity. Understand the benefits of society and get involved!"

4.4. Active and inclusive communication with citizens and communication of information to the public in a modern and understandable way

Commitment 5: Promote the availability and comprehensibility of data by empowering citizens to use it and develop data-driven solutions

5.1. Promoting and explaining data and tools of public interest, including open data, promoting their comprehensibility and wider use, cross-sectoral analysis and data-driven solutions

5.2. Promoting examples of open data use and skills

5.3. Public availability of five categories of data

a) facilitated access to information on real estate owned by the State and local governments

evaluations and work on the publication of the following data in the form of open data:

Declarations by public officials

Remuneration and personal accounting system data

State and local government budget expenditure data

facilitate public access to information on media ownership;

Commitment 6: Promote openness and citizen engagement and participation in municipalities

6.1. Bringing openness standards into practice in municipalities

6.2. Regular exchange of experience of employees of local governments, including on issues of public participation

6.3. Strengthening the participation of the local population through the following measures, integrating participation as part of decision-making:

a) Increased use of the participative budget

b) quick, simple surveys

c) Establishment and transparent functioning of citizens' councils

d) more frequent meetings of associations located in the territory of the local government with managers and deputies

e) listening to citizens' recommendations on achieving the local government's strategic directions and on the problems to be solved in the local government

f) Inclusive citizen engagement with a focus on outlying areas and their inhabitants

g) Continuation of work on guidelines for drawing up binding regulations on local government budgets and amendments thereto in order to improve the availability of information on local government budgets

Direction of Action 1: Meaningful and effective public participation in the development of sound and high-quality decisions

Commitment 1: Strengthen the framework for public participation and raise awareness of effective public participation

Executive summary

The State Chancellery has the primary responsibility for the implementation of the measures included in Action Axis 1. The necessary actions have been initiated for the implementation of the measures included in the Axis of Action, however, taking into account both the interconnectedness of the measures and their subordination in certain situations, as well as the limited human resources, it is expected that more significant progress will be made in the remaining period of the implementation of the Plan. The State Chancellery continues to maintain the need to discuss the further implementation of social and civil dialogue (the measure is included in the Action Plan of the Government led by Evika Siliņa). The changes to the regulatory framework for ensuring public involvement, promoted by the State Chancellery, were discussed with stakeholders during the reporting period and are in the process of harmonisation, which is planned to be concluded in the first half of 2024. Consequently, it will then be possible to start preparing training activities, ensuring that the content is in line with the current legal framework. The afternoons of participatory good practices have taken place on a regular basis, providing an opportunity to share practical experience in providing opportunities for participation in an informal atmosphere.

1.1. Framework document on public participation and civil dialogue, including a vision for increasing participation opportunities in the digital environment

In **2024, the State Chancellery will organise a think tank² on the future of civil and social dialogue** as part of the activities³ foreseen in the Open Government and Governmental Action Plan. It is planned to discuss with stakeholders the actual implementation of civil and social dialogue in practice in the best possible way, ensuring the balance and better representation of the interests of different groups of society, and to agree on a common understanding.

Following the interest representation activities of the Civic Alliance of Latvia, the 2024 State budget supported the strengthening of the Council for the Implementation of the Memorandum of Cooperation between the Cabinet of Ministers and NGOs as a platform for civil dialogue, allocating EUR 200 000 per year between 2024 and 2026. The State Chancellery intends to entrust the functions of the secretariat of the Cabinet of Ministers and the NGO Memorandum of Cooperation Implementation Council to an NGO selected on the basis of a tender procedure.

Following civil society proposal made by the Civic Alliance - Latvia, the Declaration of the Government of Evika Siliņa included a political commitment to strengthen resilience, promote participation, recognise civil dialogue, and increase funding for public benefit initiatives and cohesion (points 2 and 22 of the declaration).⁴

Strengthening civil dialogue is included in programming documents such as the National Development Plan 2027, the Development Plan for a Cohesive and Civil Active Society 2022-2023, etc.

² A “think tank” or “domnīca” in Latvian is used throughout this report not to refer to a form of research institution, but to a format, platform for stakeholders to meet and debate a societal problem and suggest solutions.

³ Government Action Plan for the Implementation of the Declaration on the Intended Activities of the Cabinet of Ministers headed by Evika Siliņa, approved on 20.01.2024, available at: <https://likumi.lv/ta/id/349266-on-government-ricibas-plana-declarations-on-evikas-silinas-vadita-minister-cabinet-intended-to-work-systemosana>

⁴ Declaration on the intended activities of the Cabinet of Ministers headed by Evika Siliņa on 15 September 2023 www.mk.gov.lv/en/media/16704/download?attachment

Effective, inclusive and meaningful public participation and civil dialogue have also been included among the priority objectives in the 2024-2026 Work Plan of the Implementation Council of the Memorandum of Cooperation between Non-Governmental Organisations and the Cabinet of Ministers, approved in January 2024.

1.2. Improving the framework for public participation

In 2023, the State Chancellery started work on a new regulation on public participation. The draft Regulation [on Procedures for Public Participation in the Development Planning Process](#) is available on the TAP portal. In 2023, the new regulation was discussed with public representatives, including a public consultation on the TAP portal, a discussion with NGOs and the State Audit Office organised at the State Chancellery, and a presentation of the project to the Implementation Council of the Memorandum of Cooperation between Non-Governmental Organisations and the Cabinet of Ministers. In November 2023, an inter-institutional conciliation process was launched. The project is planned to be submitted to the Cabinet of Ministers for approval in 2024. The progress of the project has been protracted, as the Saeima is considering amendments to the Law on the Structure of State Administration, which would allow the new regulation to be clearly applied not only to policy planning documents, but also to legal acts.⁵

The Civic Alliance - Latvia together with other non-governmental organisations and the State Chancellery discussed in several meetings the challenges and possible improvements of the draft Regulation on Procedures for Public Participation in the Development Planning Process (23-TA-1199), as well as provided proposals and invited the State Chancellery to pay attention to several issues unresolved in the draft Regulation, as well as how certain provisions of the Regulation will be applied in practice.

The new framework for public participation aims to:

- clarifying the actions and responsibilities of the parties involved in the public participation process and providing that representatives of the public may encourage opportunities for participation;
- include opportunities to involve societal actors in the process of discussing reforms and other initiatives of public interest, as well as public funding;
- to determine the use of the TAP portal for ensuring participation in legislation and policy documents to be approved by the Cabinet of Ministers;
- establish clearer arrangements for informing about participation opportunities, providing feedback and publishing the results of participation;
- clarify existing and include new forms of participation, including the use of innovative methods.

1.3. Training activities for public administration "Effective and meaningful public participation"

This measure provides that employees of the public administration may acquire the public participation process in the following trainings developed by the VAS:

- **e-course (mandatory minimum)** and
- **thematic workshops.**

In 2023, several meetings took place between the School of Public Administration and representatives of the State Chancellery on the **content of the e-course**. Given that the new public participation procedure is in the process of being developed and the content of the e-course should be developed accordingly, the development of the e-course has been postponed to 2024. **Thematic trainings** are not yet under preparation.

⁵ Draft Law amending the State Administration Structure Law No: 525/Lp14, available at: <https://titania.saeima.lv/>

The State Chancellery and VAS must continue to work on both e-course and thematic workshops in the next two years of the plan.

In 2022, the Cabinet of Ministers supported the European Union Recovery and Resilience Facility investment 'Open, transparent, fair and accountable public administration', which was an important step in making funding available for training of public administration employees (Recovery Fund funding).⁶

1.4. Public Participation Good Practice afternoons

Participatory Good Practice afternoons are regular experience and information exchange meetings organised by the State Chancellery, introducing them as a tradition. Participatory Good Practice afternoons are aimed at **employees of ministries and other public administration institutions working on public participation issues**. Their **aim** is to increase common understanding and regular sharing of good practices and challenges of ministries and institutions, ensuring public involvement.

The State Chancellery has organised such participatory afternoons.

Participation afternoon on 27 June 2022 | Agenda:

- Opening of the "Guidelines for Ensuring Public Participation in Public Administration"
- Presentation of successful examples of participation opportunities
- Experience stories of organising public participation (Ministry of Culture and Ministry of Health)

Participation afternoon on 1 March 2023 | Agenda:

On 1 March 2023, the State Chancellery organised a discussion entitled "Objective: Trust. Means: Public Participation". It was attended by Jānis Citakovskis, Director of the State Chancellery, Jānis Pleps, Senator of the Supreme Court and Docent of the University of Latvia, Līga Stafecka, Senior Researcher on Good Governance and Anti-Corruption Issues at PROVIDUS, Diāna Jakaite, Deputy State Secretary of the Ministry of Welfare, Ilze Saleniece, Deputy State Secretary of the Ministry of Education and Science, and Jekaterina Macuka, Director of the Data State Inspectorate. The discussion was moderated by well-known journalist Arnis Krauze.

Prior to the discussion, the State Chancellery informed about the lessons learned from the training sessions for citizens on participation opportunities and the results of the survey 'Participation in Latvia'. Video [recording](#) of the discussion is available on *the Youtube* channel of the Cabinet of Ministers.

Participation afternoon on 6 July 2023 | Agenda:

- Developing the new legal framework for public participation
- Youth engagement and the *Youth Test*
- Conversation on the involvement of the Latvian diaspora in the work of public administration
- Practice of participation in public administration

1.5. Digital platform for public participation

The measure of the plan is to evaluate the possibilities to develop and maintain a website that promotes public participation in solving various issues. The State Chancellery is the responsible institution for this activity and the NGO Civic Alliance - Latvia is co-responsible.

⁶ Investment 6.3.1.1i 'Open, transparent, fair and accountable public administration' under the reform and investment axis 6.3 'Modernisation of public administration' of the European Union Recovery and Resilience Facility Plan has been approved with an information report available at: https://tapportals.mk.gov.lv/legal_acts/2f644328-43ca-493b-abf6-a68374541181

The State Chancellery has assessed these possibilities in the context of the TAP portal. Since September 2021, the TAP portal has been operational and one of its tasks is to provide a participatory environment for public involvement in the project innovation process. The TAP portal covers projects that are being prepared for consideration by the Cabinet of Ministers, such as draft laws, Cabinet of Ministers regulations, various informative reports and policy planning documents. Information on participation opportunities in such projects can be found in the Public Participation section of the TAP portal.⁷ The State Chancellery is planning to develop opportunities for public participation in the TAP portal in the next development round of this portal. **Thus, the State Chancellery does not currently plan to develop other platforms.**

On 1 July 2022, as part of the Participation Week, PROVIDUS organised a discussion for public organisations entitled "Discussion on the Legislative Portal: What would be needed for a better public participation?" The recommendations were sent to the State Chancellery, which used them to significantly improve the usability of the TAP portal for those interested who do not work in the public administration on a daily basis.

⁷ https://tapportals.mk.gov.lv/public_participation

Commitment 2: Promote opportunities for public participation, including the involvement of young people and NGOs

Executive summary

The State Chancellery carries out activities to inform the public about the possibilities of participation in public administration on a regular basis. Public participation was the main theme for State Chancellery's led activities in conversation festival LAMPA and in the communication campaign "The Right Courses", as well as in the communication on government decisions the possibilities of public participation in public administration are highlighted. The Ministry of Education and Science drew young people's attention to the topic of participation through various activities, especially as part of the EU-level initiative "European Year of Youth". The line ministries also pay attention to communication with the public on a daily basis, however, decisions and their impact on different population groups are too often explained only after their adoption. Accordingly, more attention should be paid to informing about opportunities to participate in the decision-making process, thus ensuring a more active participation of citizens and increasing their trust. It is necessary to widen the accessibility of content provided by public administration to different groups of society with specific information perception needs by ensuring that all members of the public receive official information. The establishment of proactive interest representation registers in the Ministry of Agriculture and the Ministry of Transport should also be highlighted, which allows to ensure a higher level of transparency in the process of advancing the prepared decisions. There is a lack of information on the activities implemented by local governments to promote the involvement of citizens in their work. Every year in Latvia, the International NGO Day is celebrated, highlighting the contribution of non-governmental organisations to public administration and the provision of support to the population. The activities of the Youth Parliament have been renewed, which acquaints young people with the decision-making process in the Saeima. Activities implemented by NGO "Sabiedrība par atklātību – Delna" / Transparency International LATVIA to explain and practice the participation budget in schools have provided a successful basis for the introduction of the participation budget in local governments of Latvia from 2025.

2.1. Communication activities on participation opportunities in public administration

The State Chancellery carried out the following activities:

- In 2022, the LAMPA Conversation Festival organised a conversation on public participation at different levels of participation skills: [Participatory radio "More than just to hear"](#);
- At the end of 2022, the first part and in the first half of 2023, the second part of **the communication campaign "The right courses" on the basic principles of public participation** were implemented: [Get to know the possibilities of participation in public administration!](#) ;
- In 2023, **communication⁸ on the public participation method "Dialogue circles" was implemented in cooperation with the association "Latvian Rural Forum" and the Saeima**;
- the public is also informed about Cabinet regulations approved by the government to improve the capacity of non-governmental organisations in the decision-making process⁹;
- In 2023, in cooperation with the Ministry of Culture, **organised a discussion on civil dialogue** at the LAMPA Conversation Festival: [Discussion "Opportunities of civil dialogue - from small thoughts to big deeds"](#);

⁸ [Opening event of the negotiation cycle "Dialogue circles" ?? Cabinet of Ministers \(mk.gov.lv\), Latvian people's opinions on trust will be learned using the "Dialogue circles" method ?? Cabinet of Ministers \(mk.gov.lv\), Social trust in the state will be discussed at the Conference in the Saeima ?? Cabinet of Ministers \(mk.gov.lv\), Citizens and deputies will discuss opportunities to increase mutual trust in society ?? Cabinet of Ministers \(mk.gov.lv\), Dialogue circles on trust ?? Cabinet of Ministers \(mk.gov.lv\)](#)

⁹ www.mk.gov.lv/en/new/strengthen-nvo-speech-engage-civic-dialogue

- **Communication on the future new framework for participation has¹⁰ been ensured in 2023.**
- On average, once a week, the State Chancellery provides communication on opportunities for public participation on x.com <https://twitter.com/Lidzdaliba>.



In 2022 and 2023, the Ministry of Education and Science implemented activities to strengthen youth participation in public administration:

- Dissemination of information materials produced by youth organisations for young people on how to make election choices;
- organisation of a seminar for young people and those involved in public administration on ‘Getting into Youth Shoes’ on joint initiatives during the European Year of Youth;
- implementation of a social networking campaign (27 different types of entries FB, IG, TikTok, Youtube) to promote youth participation, telling about different opportunities for involvement;
- within the framework of the participation agreement concluded between the Ministry of Education and Science and the association ‘Latvian Youth Council’: (1) five informative events have been organised in different planning regions of Latvia on European youth goals and opportunities for youth participation at local, national and international level, involving a total of 169 participants; (2) organised one national event for 139 participants (young people, youth workers, state, municipal and NGO representatives) on the sustainability of the European Year of Youth; (3) Three publications on the impact and follow-up of the European Year of Youth have been published, including the creation and publication of a summary and evaluation of the main activities of the European Year of Youth in Latvia, including recommendations for the planning and implementation of youth policy in Latvia.

On 1 January 2023, the Transparency of Interest Representation Act entered into force. On 14 February 2024, the **Saeima in cooperation with PROVIDUS organised an educational seminar for Members on how the new law is compatible with the need to involve the widest possible public in the work of the Saeima. Recommendations on good cooperation practices with the public were also explained and distributed in writing to members of the Saeima.** <https://providus.lv/articles/plakats-society-lidzdalibas-laba-prakse-saeimai/>

¹⁰ www.mk.gov.lv/en/new/national-channel-inviting-participating-new-society-participation-regulation-definition

2.2. Communication activities on participation opportunities in sectors and municipalities

In 2022, the Ministry of Defence organised four seminars for leaders of local governments, educational institutions, institutions, companies and non-governmental organisations in Latvia's regions, representatives of religious organisations, representatives of regional media on issues relevant to Latvia's security and defence. In 2023, a comprehensive national defence regional seminar was organised in Kurzeme. In the 2022-2023 academic year, the Ministry of Defence visited Latvian secondary schools with a lecture on 'How do we protect Latvia?', visiting a total of 102 secondary education institutions and delivering 121 lectures. In the academic year 2023/2024, the series of lectures "How we protect Latvia" for elementary schools continued, more than 200 Latvian educational institutions applied for lectures. The Ministry of Defence's 'Safe Tent' festival LAMPA held discussions on defence industry topics and current events. In 2023, communication on the State Defence Service (SAD) was ensured, explaining to citizens the personal benefits of the service, the application, selection and admission procedures at random, and reactive communication was ensured by answering questions on the SAD. In order to thank for the support and contribution to the strengthening of the National Guard, each year the most supportive employers of Latvia are identified, i.e. companies, associations, local governments and educational institutions that support their employees who, in their free time, engage in the National Guard and provide support to the National Guard as a whole. Each year, a "Rupors" seminar is organised, in which representatives of the defence industry share their experience with local government public relations specialists on communication in times of crisis.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs has organised information events:

- seminars on development cooperation issues were organised for those interested in project competitions and seminars for entrepreneurs on initiatives for reconstruction measures in Ukraine, as well as the Ministry of Foreign Affairs participated in the preparation of video materials for the knowledge platform created by the Latvian Platform for Development Cooperation on various topics related to development cooperation;
- In the field of promotion of external economic relations, two seminars were organised for Latvian entrepreneurs on business environment and business opportunities in Australia, a workshop on possible cooperation between Latvian ICT sector companies and Ukraine in the field of telecommunications and technology in the context of the reconstruction of Ukraine, and a seminar on 'Responsible business method and practical implementation: the example of Poland';
- The Baltic Youth Forum "Promoting societal resilience" and the annual national level conference on the inclusion of Latvian youth in foreign policy were held at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs on the issues of international organisations and human rights;
- from 17 May to 15 November 2023, a process of preparation and implementation of the Latvian Presidency of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe ('the Presidency') took place with the involvement of civil society, including within the framework of the Presidency Working Group, where several civil society organisations (the Alliance for Cross-sectoral Sustainable Development, the Latvian Platform for Development Cooperation, the Civic Alliance of Latvia, etc.) were represented;
- Several events involving civil society organisations were organised in the framework of the Presidency, such as a breakfast discussion where the Parliamentary Secretary met with the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Guinea-Bissau and discussed women's rights and empowerment. The discussion was attended by the association "Centrs MARTA";
- Ondiaspora issues, 2022 kicked off discussions and preparations for a plan to work with the diaspora for 2024-2026, involving diaspora organisations. With the involvement of organisations representing

the diaspora in identifying the necessary actions and making proposals, the preparation of the plan was successfully concluded in 2023.¹¹

Experts of the Ministry of Economics in daily communication with NGOs, including in the framework of consultative councils and various working groups, have explained the opportunities for NGOs to engage in decision-making processes, have invited NGOs to engage in solving various issues, provide opinions and recommendations, as well as to participate in the improvement of the regulatory framework in order to promote the development of the Latvian economy. In 2022, **the Ministry of Economics carried out a survey to find out the views of Latvian entrepreneurs and social partners – business organisations, sectoral associations and citizens – on their participation in public consultations organised by the European Commission**, with the aim of understanding how to further promote public involvement in the discussion of planned EU policy initiatives. **The results of the survey were presented to line ministries with an invitation to communicate more actively with their cooperation partners**, to permanently post information on the topical EU public consultations under the Ministry's remit in the 'Event Calendar' section of the Ministry of Economics's website and to communicate on opportunities in social network accounts.

In order to raise awareness of the obligations of cooperation partners – employees of state and local government institutions – when drawing up technical regulations in the field of services, two educational seminars were organised in 2022. and in 2023, as well as two explanatory videos on the purpose of developing a technical regulation, as well as on the notification procedure in a step-by-step manner.

The Ministry of Education and Science constantly displays information on current events on the websites www.izm.gov.lv/en/event-kalendars and www.izm.gov.lv/en/news, as well as on social network accounts. The content is made available to a variety of audiences, including the visually impaired and the hard of hearing, for example, audio content and video content with subtitles, as well as content in light language – infographics and presentations on the decisions taken by the Ministry, explaining the benefits for society.

In 2022 and 2023, **the Ministry of Finance** published calls for participation in the development of sectoral policies of the MoF, inviting interested parties to participate in the policy-making process and in the establishment¹² of the regulation. The information published on the websites of the Central Finance and Contracting Agency, the State Treasury and the Procurement Monitoring Bureau for representatives of the public on how to participate in the development of the legal framework has been updated.

The Ministry of Transport informed the target groups and cooperation partners about the possibility to participate in the public consultation on topical issues in the sector on the website and social network accounts. Information on opportunities for public participation was also provided **in the form of competitions and surveys** at public events (e.g. conversation festival LAMPA, youth festival KOPUMS) and communication channels of the Ministry of Transport.

The Ministry of Justice, together with the Prison Administration and the Probation Service, **regularly invited citizens and NGOs to engage in voluntary work in correctional services**. An information campaign organised in 2022 entitled 'Error is human. Help too, 2023 – Become an opportunity for someone. The Ministry also **annually pays tribute to volunteers** working in correctional services with existing and former detainees, as well as promotes the role of volunteering in society, strengthening the overall public security by awarding the 'Man for Man' award.

The Ministry of Justice disseminated information from the State Chancellery on the **Law on Openness of Interest Representation** on social networks, as well as the possibility to participate in the workshop 'Application of the Law on Openness of Interest Representation – What and how to include in the systems?'

¹¹ Plan approved on 24.01.2024. See: <https://likumi.lv/ta/id/349324-plansdarbam-ar-diasporu-20242026-gadam>

¹² <https://www.fm.gov.lv/en/new/finansial-ministrija-invites-activi-engage-industry-policy-formation>

In 2022 and 2023, the Ministry of Justice participated in Shadow Day activities, [welcoming nine in 2022](#) and [27 shadows or pupils from all over Latvia in 2023](#). During the Shadow Day activities, young people were informed about the Ministry, its work and current events, the possibility to cooperate with the Ministry and job opportunities at the Ministry. In 2022 and 2023, **the management of the Ministry of Justice met regularly with representatives of NGOs from various fields**, such as the Foreign Investors' Council in Latvia, the Dardedze Centre, the Marta Centre, the Latvian Association of Certified Administrators of Insolvency Proceedings, the Public Law Institute, etc. Information on cooperation with the relevant non-governmental organisation and on the topics discussed during the meeting is reflected on the Ministry's website and in social network records.

The Ministry of Health regularly published information on the [website](#) and social network accounts on the possibilities of participation in the decision-making process, while the website of the Ministry of Health annually updates information on working groups, advisory councils, inter-sectoral commissions (www.vm.gov.lv/en/socies-lidzdaliba) in which public participation is ensured. Reports on public participation for the year are also published on the Ministry's website.

At the Ministry of Agriculture, the most important decisions on the sectors supervised by the MoA are taken after discussion with NGOs and representatives of the public in [the relevant sectors](#). **In autumn 2023, the Ministry of Agriculture established a Register of Interest Representation** to provide all interested individuals, entrepreneurs or organisations with equal opportunities to engage in interest representation and participate in initiating and developing decisions or proposing solutions. [The Register of Interest Representation of the Ministry of Agriculture](#) serves the purpose of providing the public with an opportunity to learn both about those issues on which individual private individuals, companies or organisations have an increased and systematic interest and provide proposals for the adoption or application of a decision, and to better understand the motivation of senior officials of the Ministry of Agriculture to take specific decisions on topical issues of the sectors under the responsibility of the Ministry.

The portal www.lvportals.lv of the Official Journal of Latvia ensures a constant flow of state and legal information and civic education content by preparing original publications and compiling information prepared by state institutions and NGOs **in a systematic way in one place**, including on the events organised by them and the opportunities for citizen participation. In 2022-2023, a total of 28 379 content items were published on the LV portal, including in the "Agenda" section 20 813 releases and audio-visual material produced by state and local governments and NGOs, which are used in the communication of social media accounts, mostly X and Instagram. Information on the portal can be selected by author and subject, e.g. Ministry of Education and Science, Agency for International Programmes for Youth, Civic Alliance - Latvia. As far as possible, news and publications on citizens' participation opportunities are being disseminated, for example, the LV portal informed on the State Chancellery's free-of-charge sessions "The Right Course" also advertised on *Facebook* (<https://lvportals.lv/norises/347911-apmacibas-par-lidzdalibu-valsts-politikas-veidosana-2023>).

2.3. NGO Day

In 2022, **the Civic Alliance of Latvia together with more than 50 organisations invited the Saeima to officially recognise the International Day of Non-Governmental Organisations** in Latvia. However, the Saeima did not accept the proposal. To celebrate International NGO Day, the Civic Alliance - Latvia, in cooperation with viktorina.lv, organised **an online brain game "The Democracy Quiz"**, inviting everyone interested to test their knowledge in the field of non-governmental sector and democracy. More than 60 teams took part in the quiz.

In 2022, the **Ministry of Foreign Affairs** published a greeting to non-governmental organisations in Latvian and English on NGO Day in social networks.¹³



In 2023, the Civic Alliance of Latvia organised **the International NGO Day celebration**, which included various events. Together with experts, civil servants and politicians, the game ‘Democracy 2084’ was played, after which experts from various fields participated in a discussion entitled ‘Searching for the superpowers of civic skills or a super-citizen’s recipe’, which could also be watched live on Civic Alliance - Latvia communication channels.

The State Chancellery prepares annual greetings on NGO Day. A video greeting from the then Prime Minister’s Advisor Hosams Abu Meri was prepared in 2023, the then Prime Minister Artūrs Krišjānis Kariņš addressed the NGO in a video greeting in 2023. In 2024, Prime Minister Evika Siliņa greeted the NGOs in a video greeting. A news item was published on the website of the Cabinet of Ministers in 2024.¹⁴

In 2024, the Civic Alliance - Latvia together with the Saeima organised a new initiative – **the Open Day of the Saeima Committees for representatives of the non-governmental sector**.

2.4. Youth skills for participation in decision-making in Latvia and at European level

In 2023, the Saeima of the Republic of Latvia renewed the project "Youth Parliament". The initiative will continue in 2024.

The Agency for International Programmes for Youth collected data on the number of young people aged 13-25 in the face-to-face and virtual activities of national youth organisations: 8 032 young people in 2022; In 2023, 6 163 young people were planned to be involved, 4 153 young people were involved (final data will be available after evaluation of the final reports). Number of young people aged 13-25 who participated in decision-making at international level: 234 young people in 2022; In 2023, 204 young people were planned to be involved, 132 young people were involved (final data will be available after evaluation of the final reports).

The **Ministry of Education and Science**, with the support of the **Agency for International Programmes for Youth**, implements a programme called “Contact”. The aim is to strengthen the development of the self-governments of educational institutions. In 2022, 127 school initiatives were approved in the “Contact” competition and 143 educational institutions participated in training, in 2023 - 93 school initiatives were approved and 119 educational institutions participated in training.

2.5. Spreading the principles of participatory budgeting in schools

¹³ <https://x.com/Arlietu/status/1498032186615861249?s=20>

¹⁴ <https://www.mk.gov.lv/lv/jaunums/27-februaris-starptautiska-nevalstisko-organizaciju-diena>

The NGO “Sabiedrība par atklātību – Delna” / Transparency International LATVIA (TI LATVIA) carried out school education on participative budgeting, which included the transfer of Delna’s experience and the dissemination of information materials. Within the framework of the activities implemented by "Delna", education of schools and local governments on the participative budget was realized, sharing the experience and teaching materials of "Delna", as well as other informative materials. The use of participative budgets and other civic engagement materials in lessons and beyond has laid the groundwork for promoting youth activity. The interdisciplinary nature of activities in teaching materials, combining economics, mathematics, arts, design and technology, as well as politics and other fields in the context of a participative budget, is an important contribution to the development of competence education in schools. In October 2023, a meeting took place with the Agency for International Youth Projects, where Delna shared materials and experiences on civic engagement.

In early 2023, Delna participated in the Participatory Budgeting Forum in Lithuania as part of the project ‘Participatory Budgeting as a tool for young people in the Baltic Sea Region to build an inclusive and active society’ (supported by the Nordic Council of Ministers) during an experience exchange visit to Lithuania and learned about the experience of young people (from 3 schools), as well as local governments and their residents in implementing the participative budget. In February 2023, Delna created a toolkit on participatory budgeting, in consultation with 4 schools – teachers and student self-governments – in the process of designing it. After consultations and improvements, it was sent to all (634) schools in Latvia.¹⁵

Between May 2023 and January 2024, as part of **the project ‘Citizens’ Participation of Students’** (supported by *the British Council* Representation in Latvia), Delna created a ‘Youth Participation’ section of the website, which brings together all educational materials developed by Delna, including those related to the participatory budget. In October, a message about the new section of the website was sent by e-mail to all schools in Latvia (634). The opportunity to engage in civic participation activities and try the participatory budgeting process has been offered to all schools in Latvia, 15 of which applied to participate in this phase of the project, both to the school community as a whole and directly to the pupils' self-governments through a competition of participatory budget ideas. From September to November 2023, Delna visited 15 schools (7 in Latgale, 5 in the Riga region, 1 in Kurzeme, 1 in Zemgale, 1 in Vidzeme), where she conducted classes on civic participation opportunities in the municipality, so that students could get to know the participatory budget mechanism, creating participatory budget ideas – a total of 110 participatory budget ideas (for the school, for the school’s surroundings). In the end, the ideas were presented, and in 5 schools the idea that received the highest number of students' votes was implemented through the whole participatory budgeting process. During the classes, the representatives of the municipality gave a presentation on the possibilities of participation in the municipality, which are laid down in the Local Government Law. In 5 more schools, more in-depth discussions have been held about the participatory budget in the municipality. In all schools, the participatory budget ideas created during the Delna visit have been passed on to the pupils' self-government to discuss their possible development, as well as the introduction of regular participatory budget practices in schools in general. Discussions with young people, teachers of 15 schools and representatives of municipalities concerned resulted in findings and recommendations for promotion of civic participation, including in relation to the participatory budget.¹⁶

¹⁵ Compilation of educational materials <https://delna.lv/lv/2023/04/18/kopsavilkums-lidzdalibas-budzets-ka-pilsoniska-aktivisma-forma>

¹⁶ <https://delna.lv/lv/2024/01/31/jauniesu-pilsoniskas-lidzdalibas-palielinasanai-svarigas-zinasanas-praktiska-pieredze-un-drosa-atverta-vide>

Commitment 3: Strengthen public participation and dialogue with the public in decision-making processes in every sector

Executive summary

Several ministries have updated information on the participation opportunities of interested non-governmental organisations on their websites. In general, ministries and other institutions are well aware of their NGO partners and involve them in the decision-making process, especially in consultative formats. Innovative methods of public engagement are also practiced: The Ministry of Finance, the Ministry of Health, the Ministry of Transport and the Register of Enterprises organised think tanks, the Ministry of Culture twice tried the deliberative method, with the support of the State Chancellery Innovation Laboratory organised sprints for the Ministry of Education and Science, the SRS and the SLS in solving topical issues, the State Chancellery organised dialogue circles on trust. The functionality of the TAP portal has also been used for public involvement. In 2022 and 2023, the State Chancellery, in cooperation with the Civic Alliance - Latvia, organised an internship introducing the opportunities of public representatives and NGOs on the TAP portal.

3.1. Strengthening the representation of sectoral cooperation partners and maintaining a regular dialogue

The cooperation partners of the Ministry of Defence in the non-governmental sector are organisations whose areas of activity are informing the public and promoting discussions on the issues of Latvia's security and defence policy, Latvia's membership in NATO, various issues of international relations and international security. The NGO carries out research on issues relevant to the defence sector, informs and educates the population about the military history of the country, as well as promotes the National Armed Forces. The most active cooperation partners in Latvia are the Latvian Officers' Association, the Latvian National Soldiers' Association, the Latvian National Partisan Association, the Latvian Riflemen's Association, Brāļu kapu komiteja, the Latvian Transatlantic Organisation, the Centre for East European Policy Studies, as well as the Civic Alliance – Latvia and the Latvian Hunters' Union. The Ministry of Defence has developed the Guidelines for Priority Supported Public Projects in the Defence Sector for 2022-2024 and the Project Application Form for the Receipt of Priority Supported Public Projects in the Defence Sector.

There is close cooperation between the **Ministry of Foreign Affairs** and civil society.

- Representatives of civil society are involved [in the Advisory Council on Development Cooperation Policy](#) (two meetings of the Advisory Council on Development Cooperation took place in 2022 and four meetings of the Advisory Council on Development Cooperation took place in 2023), and their views are included in the development cooperation policy planning documents (development cooperation policy (strategy) and annual development cooperation plans) drawn up by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, as well as in legislation and Latvia's positions and comments on policy proposals of the EU, the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) and the UN.
- The Ministry of Foreign Affairs organises development cooperation grant project competitions where civil society has the opportunity to obtain funding for their activities in Latvia's priority regions: the countries of the EU Eastern Partnership, as well as Central Asia and Africa. Each year, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs also co-finances approved CSO projects that have received funding from an international aid funder, such as the European Commission, within the framework of the co-financing grant project competition. Representatives of NGOs may also apply for the preliminary study project competition of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The close cooperation between the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and NGOs is confirmed by the annual support of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs for the representation of civil society interests in international organisations in the field of development

cooperation, as well as for the implementation of public information measures. Civil society organisations and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs regularly cooperate in organising events to educate the public and raise awareness about development cooperation and related areas.

- The Ministry of Foreign Affairs and civil society co-operation on EU issues is based on the renewed Protocol of Cooperation between the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and civil society "*On Cooperation on EU Matters*" signed on 11 February 2010.¹⁷ The aim of the Protocol is effective cooperation between the parties in order to promote direct exchange of information on EU matters within the competence of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, to coordinate actions in educating the public about opportunities to participate in the European Union decision-making process and to jointly implement projects for informing the public about European Union matters. The Protocol is open to accession by any NGO whose interests and activities are related to EU matters within the competence of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.
- So far, important initiatives have been jointly implemented in cooperation with civil society organisations, such as greater involvement of the non-governmental sector in the discussion of EU issues in all ministries, events of the *European Week*, awareness-raising of the views of Latvian citizens on EU topics, training seminars on EU issues and regular meetings before each European Council.
- Consultations have been held on national positions such as European Council meetings (3-4 times a year), General Affairs Council meetings (11 times a year) and other national positions. The most frequent participants are the Employers' Confederation of Latvia, the Free Trade Union Confederation of Latvia, the Latvian Civic Alliance, the Women's Cooperation Network, PROVIDUS, the Club House – Youth for a United Europe.
- Representatives of the public (LBAS, LDDK, Latvian Association of Local and Regional Governments) participate in meetings of senior officials on European Union issues (about 11 times a year). There were 11 meetings in 2022 and 9 in 2023.
- The Foreign Economic Policy Coordination Council meets regularly¹⁸.
- The Ministry of Foreign Affairs ensures the functioning of the Diaspora Advisory Council. Representatives of public administration, local governments, diaspora organisations, associations and foundations ('World Federation of Free Latvians', 'European Latvian Association', 'American Latvian Association', 'Latvian Association of Australia and New Zealand', 'Latvian National Association of Canada', 'Latvieši.com', movement #esiLV, etc.) participate in DKP meetings (in 2022 and 2023).
- A representative of the Latvian Council of Sworn Advocates and a representative of the Latvian Association of Sworn Auditors are included in the Sanctions Coordination Council, but representatives of the Finance Industry Association, the Employers' Confederation of Latvia, the Latvian Association of Local and Regional Governments, the Latvian Chamber of Commerce and Industry and the Latvian Insurers' Association participate in the Sanctions Coordination Council in an advisory capacity. The Sanctions Coordination Council met four times in 2022, and two times in 2023).

The Ministry of Economics cooperates with more than 100 NGOs on various issues within the Ministry's remit. [The list of the most important cooperation partners](#) is published on the website of the Ministry of

¹⁷ Parties to the Protocol: the European Movement in Latvia; Club "House" –Youth for a United Europe; the Latvian Civic Alliance; Centre for Public Policy PROVIDUS; "ACC Tautskolas Europe", "Latvian Platform for Development Cooperation" (unites 28 organisations in the field of development cooperation); Latvian Association for Gender Equality (combining 75 organisations).

¹⁸ A collegial and coordinating institution at the ministerial level, the aim of which is to ensure co-operation between public administration institutions and other institutions in the development and implementation of successful foreign economic policy in order to increase the competitiveness of the Latvian economy. The Council consists of the Minister for Foreign Affairs, the Minister for Economics, the Minister for Transport, the Minister for Agriculture, representatives of the Chancery of the President and the Office of the Prime Minister, the Director of the IDAL, the Director General of the LDDK and the Chairman of the Board of the LCCI.

Economics, where everyone interested can not only get acquainted with the range of cooperation partners, but also see a contact person in the relevant field, who can be contacted if there is an interest in getting involved in solving the issues of the relevant field, improving the regulatory framework or implementing other cooperation projects. Information on all advisory councils operating under the auspices of the MoE is published on <https://www.em.gov.lv/lv/konsultativas-padomes>. In a separate section information is published on working groups, including the contact persons <https://www.em.gov.lv/lv/darba-grupas>.

Active cooperation between the MoE and various non-governmental organisations takes place within the framework of the “Warmer Living” initiative. It began on 25 February 2010, when the Ministry of Economics, representatives of non-governmental organisations and representatives of the financial sector signed the first Memorandum of Cooperation, agreeing on joint work to promote housing renovation, as well as launching the “Warmer Living” movement, bringing together representatives of house managers, manufacturers of construction materials, construction companies, the financial sector and public administration to achieve common goals. Four organisations joined the Memorandum of Cooperation between the Ministry of Economy, public administrations, non-governmental organisations and state-owned enterprises in 2022 and two more in 2023. More information on the ‘Warmer living’ movement can be found at <https://www.em.gov.lv/lv/dzivo-siltak>.

The involvement of civil society organisations and industry representatives is also ensured in the consultative body of the Central Statistical Bureau (CSB) in the Statistical Council. The Statistical Council consists of the Employers' Confederation of Latvia, the Latvian Association of Local and Regional Governments, the Latvian Chamber of Commerce and Industry, the Latvian Association of Statisticians, the Council of Higher Education, the Bank of Latvia and other public administration institutions. The by-laws of the Statistical Council are approved by the Ministry of Economics, and the tasks of the Secretariat are performed by the Central Statistical Bureau. The CSB also organises the work of various groups, involving also representatives of the society, for example, representatives of the Latvian Fuel Traders Association are also involved in the working group for the preparation of the energy balance of Latvia, the CSB cooperates with the Latvian Wood Industry Federation in the working group for the assessment of the GDP of the forestry sector, and representatives of the Latvian Hotel and Restaurant Association participate in the working group for the development of tourism statistics. The CSB also involves non-governmental organisations, such as the Association of Accountants and the Latvian Internet Association, as necessary, in the assessment of the needs of statistical users, data collection methods or draft forms.

Cooperation partners of the Ministry of Economics

On a daily basis, the Ministry cooperates with more than 100 non-governmental organisations on various issues within the Ministry's remit. The list of the most important cooperation partners is published on the Ministry's website www.em.gov.lv/lv/ekonomikas-ministrijas-sadarbibas-partneri. Anyone interested can not only get acquainted with the circle of cooperation partners, but also see a contact person in the relevant field, who can be contacted if they are interested in getting involved in solving issues in the relevant field, improving the regulatory framework or implementing other cooperation projects www.em.gov.lv/lv/sabiedribas-lidzdaliba.

The Ministry of Finance principles of communication, approved in 2019, define non-governmental organisations as one of the target groups (NGOs represent wider public opinion). The Ministry has permanent cooperation partners (mostly sectoral professional associations), social and cooperation partners of the government. One of the lines of communication of the Ministry is defined as follows: “Activate the Ministry's cooperation with non-governmental organisations in the process of decision-making and drafting legislation”. The Ministry is open to dialogue with non-governmental organisations on their constructive proposals. Extensive information on participation opportunities in the Ministry is easily available on [the MoF's website](#).

In 2022, within the framework of the Ministry, the MoF carried out the identification and compilation of non-governmental organisations and cooperation partners, as well as their contact persons, in a single register, which is planned to be updated at least once a year. On a daily basis, the MoF cooperates with civil society, involving it in working groups, drafting regulations and other issues that are relevant to the specific situation. In 2022 and 2023, an internal and external survey on cooperation was conducted.

The Ministry of Finance organised eight meetings in 2022 and two meetings of the Budget and Tax Sub-Council of the National Tripartite Cooperation Council (NTSP) in 2023, with the participation of representatives of social cooperation partners and trade unions, the SRS, line ministries, the State Social Insurance Agency, the Interdepartmental Coordination Centre and Latvijas Banka. During the meetings, the issues of taxation, budget, shadow economy restriction were discussed, as well as the proposals of the draft Cabinet declaration and the government action plan were examined.

In 2023, 18 meetings of the Tax Policy Improvement Coordination Group were held, in which social and cooperation partners of the government participated, as well as representatives of other ministries, the SRS, the Bank of Latvia and other institutions participated in some of these meetings. At these meetings, current and potential future tax policy issues were discussed.

Regular cooperation took place with the Internal Audit Board, which includes NGO representatives, and the professional association "Institute of Internal Auditors". The coordination of measures to protect the EU's financial interests ensures the work of the Coordination Board for the Protection of the EU's Financial Interests, which is composed of representatives of NGOs – the Society for Transparency – Delna.

The activities and development of **the State Revenue Service** are planned in close cooperation with the representatives of the sectors involved in the work of the four SRS Permanent Advisory Councils (development, taxation, excise and customs) (5 meetings of Advisory Councils were held in 2022 and 4 in 2023). In order to fight tax evasion and "envelope wages" together, to promote fair competition, as well as to interest the merchants themselves to show initiative and understanding to arrange tax compliance issues in their sector, the SRS has concluded 31 agreements with sectoral associations on cooperation. Once a year, the SRS conducts a sector and company NGO survey on the quality of cooperation with the SRS. SRS officials and experts regularly participate with presentations and lectures in conferences, seminars, webinars and other public events organised by various institutions, industry associations, associations and other cooperation partners in accordance with their competence (on taxation, movement of excisable goods and customs issues, as well as informing about the latest SRS services (for example, tax payer rating) and measures to reduce administrative burden). Cooperation with industry associations continued in 2023: 18 SRS seminars were organised in the field of both taxation and customs. Seminars for LCCI members have been held (according to the jointly developed seminar plan), seminars/trainings for members of other associations have been organised. The SRS regularly organises an online meeting with the Association of Accountants on topical topics and issues raised by the association (7 meetings took place in 2022 and 2023).

The Central Finance and Contracting Agency participated in various forums and discussions related to the contribution of EU funds or other foreign financial instruments to strengthening cooperation with NGOs and promoting participation.

The Procurement Monitoring Bureau organised meetings and exchanges of views with contracting authorities and authorities involved in the monitoring of procurements on topical and problematic issues related to public procurement. (2 such meetings were held with contracting authorities in 2022, 7 in 2023). The PMB cooperated with other organisations (e.g. Latvian Social Entrepreneurship Association, PROVIDUS, Delna) in the provision of various activities.

The Lotteries and Gambling Supervision Inspection held meetings with representatives of the lottery and gambling industry, the Latvian Gaming Business Association and the Latvian interactive gambling society on a quarterly basis.

The Ministry of Culture maintained a continuous and regular dialogue with interested and active members of civil society in the areas of its competence through a sector-specific advisory council, which usually includes professionals in the fields, representatives of non-governmental organisations and state institutions. The Ministry of Culture implements cooperation:

1) in the councils of **13** different **cultural fields** (architecture, libraries, dance, design, films, museums, cultural education, literature and book publishing, music, event organizers and event producers, theatre, visual arts, archives),

2) in three advisory councils covering **the themes of social cohesion** (the Monitoring Council for the Implementation of the Guidelines for the Development of a Cohesive and Civic-Active Society 2021-2027, the Advisory Council for the Promotion of Roma Participation and the Advisory Council for Representatives of National Minority Non-Governmental Organisations); and

3) **the Media** Advisory Council. Sectoral cooperation partners are included in working groups for solving and developing specific issues or they are consulted.

Information on participation opportunities in the sector has been updated on the [website](#) of the **Ministry of Welfare**.

The Ministry of Education and Science, when drawing up policies and planning their implementation, regularly organised negotiations with social and cooperation partners both inviting them to participate at the beginning of the policy development process, for example, in working groups, and in the approbation of the developed solutions, for example, visits (meetings) to local governments have taken place at different stages of the process of reorganisation of the school network. Partners were involved both in the legislative alignment process and were invited to participate in various formats such as panels, fora, councils (e.g. the Education for All Advisory Council).

In the Road Traffic Safety Council of the Ministry of Transport experts, sector specialists, NGO representatives discussed the improvement of the road traffic safety. Cross-sectoral issues were discussed in this **Council's think tanks (innovative working groups)**. Council meetings are broadcast live. In turn, the **Mobility Equality and Accessibility Advisory Board** provided advice in the process of policy-making on equality of mobility and accessibility of persons, facilitated cooperation between NGOs representing the target groups and the transport sector and other parties involved in passenger transport. A [register of interest representation has been established on the website of the Ministry of Transport](#) in order to ensure fair and equal opportunities for all interested individuals and entrepreneurs to engage in interest representation by participating in the initiation, development of decisions or offering solutions.

On the website of the Ministry of Justice, in the section [Public Participation](#), an updated [list of cooperation partners](#) is published, where contacts to ensure participation are indicated, and in the section [Working groups and councils](#), contacts for communication on participation and other issues with working groups and councils established at the Ministry are indicated.

On the [website](#) of the **Ministry of Health**, information is updated annually on working groups, advisory councils and inter-sectoral commissions in which public participation is ensured. Reports of previous years have also been published on the website of the Ministry of Health, where information on public participation in the respective year is available. In 2022 and 2023, the Ministry of Health continued its cooperation with various non-governmental organisations, facilitating their participation in decision-making, involving them in consultations, working groups and drafting legislation. The Health Sector Strategic Board, which is a consultative and coordinating body, has been regularly consulted. In addition to this, there are 12 other advisory councils that deal with sector-specific issues, such as the Pharmaceutical Advisory Council, the

National Immunisation Council, the Mother and Child Health Advisory Council, etc. The Ministry of Health of the non-governmental sectors is constantly involved in solving planning documents, regulatory framework and various issues important for the sector. At the same time, the annual negotiations between the Ministry of Health and the Latvian Association of Local and Regional Governments were organised during the reporting period.

In 2022, the Ministry of Health signed the Digital Health Cooperation Memorandum with institutions representing the health and ICT sectors and established [the Digital Health Council](#) to ensure a common understanding and vision of national priorities for digital health among all parties involved in digital health and to improve the quality, accessibility and convenience of health services by introducing new digital solutions in healthcare.

Five Advisory Councils (Agriculture Advisory Council, Food Industry Council, Fisheries Advisory Council, Forest Advisory Council and Animal Protection and Welfare Advisory Council) have been established **within the Ministry of Agriculture**. In the consultative councils, the Ministry's management and experts, together with sectoral NGOs, discuss decisions before they are adopted by the MoA and the Cabinet of Ministers. If necessary, the MoA regularly communicates and cooperates with other NGOs, for example, hunters, environmental protection NGOs, etc.

In the areas of food and feed safety, food hygiene and quality, animal health, veterinary medicines safety, animal welfare and protection, 24 inter-institutional working groups have been set up, consisting of representatives of 50 NGOs representing the sector. The working groups examine current issues and analyse the prospective situation in the field of competence, form Latvia's opinion on draft EU documents and participate in the preparation of draft laws and regulations of Latvia.

Discussing budget priorities with NGOs

In 2023, for the first time, ministries published their announced budget priorities (priority measures) to improve sectorial cooperation representation opportunities for sectorial NGOs. Similarly, in July 2023, the Council for the Implementation of the Memorandum of Cooperation between NGOs-CoM Non-governmental Organisations and the Cabinet of Ministers discussed the broader involvement of NGOs in state budget formation processes, agreeing to devote a special session to these issues in spring 2024, where the best practices of 2023 and ways to better involve NGOs in budget formation would be discussed.

3.2. Efficient and up-to-date public participation approaches are used to develop sound and high-quality decisions in every sector

a) reaching out to the general public and different target groups

In 2022-2023, **the Ministry of Defence ensured active communication on the State Defence Service**, explaining to citizens the personal benefits of the service, the application, selection and admission procedures at random, as well as reactive communication by answering questions. There was direct communication **on comprehensive national defence** (regional seminars, a game on how to act in a crisis situation) and also on **the school project 'How we protect Latvia'**, as the majority of Latvian students were addressed. The Slido app was also used to involve young people in the project by creating a **questionnaire for students on current affairs in the defence sector**. Cooperation with Latvian think tanks and NGOs is carried out in both Latvian and foreign-oriented projects.

The permanent working group of the Administrative Procedure Law of the Ministry of Justice consists of representatives from the Administrative District Court, the Administrative Regional Court, the Department of Administrative Cases of the Supreme Court, the Latvian Chamber of Commerce and Industry, the Consumer Rights Protection Centre, the Office of Citizenship and Migration Affairs, the Riga City Council, the State Revenue Service and the Ministry of Justice, and, if necessary, also representatives from other institutions are

invited. The working group discusses topical issues in the field of administrative procedure, as well as possible amendments to the Administrative Procedure Law, ensuring public participation.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs ensures that the public is informed about European Union matters. In Latvia, 31 European Union Information Points (EUIPs) are located in the Central libraries, where the necessary information can be obtained. Twice a year, an informative publication “Latvia’s interests in the European Union” is published in cooperation with the Latvian Society of Political Scientists.¹⁹ Each year the Ministry of Foreign Affairs organises a forum of European Union information providers for the general public.²⁰

In February and March 2022, information was provided to Latvian nationals and Ukrainian nationals in the context of the war in Ukraine. The information was published on *the Facebook* account of the Consular Department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs has provided information on the geopolitical and strategic importance of the *Global Gateway* initiative promoted by the European Commission and has promoted applications from the private sector (civil society organisations and entrepreneurs) for involvement in *the governance structures of the Global Gateway* strategy at the level of the European Union. On 29 September, *the Global Gateway* EU-Central Asia Investment Forum took place, in which a significant number of Latvian entrepreneurs participated.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs addressed a wide range of issues at the LAMPA conversation festival: 1 - 2 July 2022: discussion "No safety talks should be done", discussion "Western concepts: are they still working?" 9 - 10 June 2023, a discussion on “The jungle of the information space: who should be able to feel safe and free there?”, discussion on “Diplomacy and foreign policy in times of crisis”, discussion- game with an introduction on “The right answer: a State governed by the rule of law?”. Organised interactive discussion on trafficking in human beings “Unnoticed people: how to recognise trafficking in human beings”. In the Human Security Tent, a discussion took place on “How do sanctions affect each and every one of us?”. Live broadcasts were available for all discussions.

Every year, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, in cooperation with the Ministry of the Interior, the NGO “Shelter-Safe House” and the Centre “Marta”, as well as other cooperation partners, organises information campaigns to mark the European Union Day against Trafficking in Human Beings, the main aim of which is to attract public attention to the issues of trafficking in human beings. In 2022, the Ministries of Foreign Affairs launched and continued in 2023 an information campaign entitled “Do not allow yourself to be exploited” or “Work abroad. Critically assess tempting offers”. The campaign’s informative materials with messages on labour exploitation and information on opportunities to seek help were distributed on websites and social networks across Latvia with the support of the Latvian Association of Local and Regional Governments and the State Employment Agency. The informative video was shown on screens in public transport in Riga, on the trains of the company “Pasažieru vilciens”, in Riga International Airport and in customer service centres of the Office of Citizenship and Migration Affairs.

The “Travel safely” campaign “Summer trips – let it be!” took place in 2022 with the aim of providing recommendations for Latvians to travel safely outside the country, and in 2023 “Travel safely, travel excitingly!”, where, as part of the campaign, consular officials held talks at Riga Airport with airport visitors on the basic principles of safe travel and handouts were distributed on the emergency phone and the “Travel safely” application. There were also the winter “Travel Safe” information campaign in 2022 “Before you go abroad, be aware of risks and #Travel Safe!” and 2023 “Think about risks, prepare and enjoy a journey without worries”. The video of the campaign was shown on the screens of the customer service centres of Riga International Airport, Riga Coach Terminal, Vīvi passenger trains and OCMA. The video of the 2023 campaign has been shown on screens in Riga.

¹⁹ www.mfa.gov.lv/lv/zurnals-latvijas-intereses-eiropas-savieniba

²⁰ <https://www.mfa.gov.lv/lv/jaunums/ikgadeja-es-informacijas-sniedzēju-foruma-dalībnieki-diskute-par-izaicinajumiem-energetikas-joma-un-atbalstu-ukrainai>

In 2022, **the Ministry of Finance** organised the *Accounting Forum*, where policy makers discussed with experts in the field of accounting, representatives of companies, industries and other associations. Two meetings of the Advisory Board on Customs Policy have been organised in 2022 and also two meetings of the Advisory Board on Customs Policy in 2023. The Council is composed of NGOs (Latvian Logistics Association, Latvian Railways, Latvian National Association of Freight Forwarders and Logistics, Employers' Confederation of Latvia, Association of Road Carriers "Latvijas auto" and industry experts) and representatives from Riga Technical University, the Ministry of Transport and the State Revenue Service. Members of the Council were involved in solving various sectoral issues, in the process of drafting regulatory enactments and informed about topical issues in the sector, including EU legislation.

Two meetings of the Audit Advisory Board have been organised from 2022 to 2023. The Council consists of representatives of NGOs (the Foreign Investors' Council in Latvia, the Latvian Association of Sworn Auditors, the Employers' Confederation of Latvia), as well as a representative from Riga Technical University, the Riga Stock Exchange, the Bank of Latvia and the Ministry of Justice. The members of the Council were involved in solving various issues in the audit sector and were informed about the most topical issues in the sector.

b) Empowering society itself to address challenges and discussing decisions together, including the use of innovative participatory approaches

In 2023, **the State Chancellery, in cooperation** with the association 'Latvian Rural Forum', organised conversations with people across Latvia on trust using²¹the dialogue circle method. Dialogue circles on the topic of trust took place in 20 places in Latvia – villages, parishes and cities – in cooperation with local communities, local action groups, associations, entrepreneurs, educational institutions and local governments. From 6 September to 4 October 2023, 26 rounds of dialogue took place in Latvia, with more than 200 participants representing people of different ages, genders and nationalities. The conclusions of the conversations were presented at the conference "Trust in society and trust in state institutions in Latvia", which took place on 27 October 2023 in the Saeima (Parliament).

The Ministry of Finance, in cooperation with the School of Public Administration, ensured the operation of the innovation think tank "What model of auditor supervision contributes to maintaining the stability of the financial system and protects the public interest" within 6 months from October 2021 to March 2022, using the innovation workshop and design thinking as a method. As a result, several prototypes have been developed for the improvement of the supervision model of sworn auditors. The innovation workshop was attended by representatives of the Ministry of Finance, the Latvian Association of Sworn Auditors, several Latvian universities and other stakeholders, in total more than 30 professionals in the field.

In autumn 2022, within the framework of the programme (hackathon) "Communications Re:Vision" of the Ministry of Finance and the Innovation Centre of the University of Latvia, five groups of students sought innovative ideas for communication approaches that could be used to address young people about the service provided by public administration in the public interest (quality control of the audit service). The project has resulted in a series of lectures tailored to young audiences, involving industry representatives.²² In January 2023, the final presentations of the teams took place, including several ideas on communication models with the youth audience to explain complex issues, including using the interactive game tool.

On 17 November 2023, a Memorandum of Cooperation between the Ministry of Finance and the Latvian Association of Sworn Auditors was signed, implementing one of the problem solutions (prototypes) developed as a result of the work of the MoF think tank "What model of auditor supervision contributes to maintaining the stability of the financial system and protects the public interest?". The memorandum includes general

²¹ <https://www.mk.gov.lv/lv/dialoga-apli>

²² <https://www.fm.gov.lv/lv/vienkarsi-par-sarezgito>

principles of cooperation and innovative solutions for monitoring the quality of the audit service, as well as promoting public participation.

The Road Traffic Safety Council of the Ministry of Transport established a think tank too. As part of the think tank, regular meetings are held remotely, during which topical issues are discussed.

A design sprint was organised for the **State Real Estate Cadastre** in order to develop the methodology for cadastral evaluation with the support of the State Audit Office Innovation Laboratory,²³ which also involves non-governmental organisations. Design sprints were also conducted by the State Revenue Service in 2023,²⁴ discussing the importance of understandable communication in customer service and the Ministry of Education and Science,²⁵ which aimed to develop a higher education standard.

In the field of the Enterprise Register of the Republic of Latvia, a think tank has been organised during the process of drafting legal acts.

The Ministry of Health organised think tanks with leading experts in the field and representatives of professional associations in developing a plan to improve the organisation of mental health care for 2023-2025. Think tanks for the development of the new family doctor practice model have also been implemented.

The Ministry of Culture in cooperation with the PROVIDUS think tank has organised **two deliberative democracy events (using deliberative methods to involve the public)**:

- 2022 – "What to do to increase the use of content produced by Latvian journalists by the inhabitants of Latgale?";
- 2023 – "How to make Latvian society more cohesive and civically active?".

c) informing citizens about taking into account of their proposals

Representing the interests of the Civic Alliance - Latvia, insists that public administration communication with the public and public consultation of legal acts or policy planning documents must involve the target groups of the public or organisations representing the target group that will be directly affected by the relevant legal act, and ensure the conduct of the meeting, accessibility and comprehensibility of information related to the public consultation in the format necessary and most appropriate for the direct target group, using different methods and information channels to reach the target audience.

The Civic Alliance - Latvia in direct communication in its communication channels is working on the transfer of information to the public in a modern and understandable way. The Civic Alliance - Latvia regularly asks the target audience for feedback to learn how to improve communication.

d) participation in the digital environment (online consultation, discussion platforms, etc.)

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs uses the possibility to connect remotely in consultations on national positions for meetings of the European Council and the General Affairs Council. The Diaspora Advisory Council and its working groups, taking into account the participants residing and working outside Latvia, always meet in a hybrid form – in person and online. Workshops are also organised, such as an online seminar on the reconstruction of Ukraine on 29 November 2023 entitled Latvia's involvement in the reconstruction of Ukraine: past experience and future.

Meetings of the permanent working group of the Law on Administrative Liability established by the Ministry of Justice are held online with the participation of representatives of the association "Latvian Lawyers' Union", the association "Latvian Employers' Confederation" and the association "Latvian Chamber of Commerce and Industry".

²³ <https://www.mk.gov.lv/lv/jaunums/valsts-kancelejas-inovacijas-laboratorija-veidos-kadastralas-vertesanas-metodiku>

²⁴ <https://www.mk.gov.lv/lv/jaunums/vid-koprade-ar-klientiem-atklaj-vienkarsas-valodas-nozimi-lietojamu-pakalpojumu-veidosana>

²⁵ <https://www.mk.gov.lv/lv/jaunums/valsts-kancelejas-inovacijas-laboratorija-izstrada-augstakas-izglitibas-standartu>

In 2022 and 2023, the working group on improving the application of coercive measures of a correctional nature included a wide range of members of the public: *Adventure Therapy Latvia*, the association "Latvian Samaritan Association", SIA "Pusaudžu un Youth Psychotherapy Centre", SIA "Children's and Teenagers' Resources Centre", the association "RESILIENCES CENTRS", the association "Latvian SOS Children's Villages Association" and the foundation "C Modulis". Given the wide range of participants, the meetings were organised in an online format.

In November 2022, the **Ministry of Finance, in cooperation with the State Revenue Service**, conducted a survey on the new Accounting Law, which entered into force on 1 January 2022, and on Cabinet Regulations issued under the delegation provided for in the Accounting Law. With the help of the survey, the opinion and experience of respondents in working with the new Accounting Law and Cabinet regulations were clarified. The assessment of respondents is important both for the Ministry of Finance, which forms the accounting policy in Latvia, and for the State Revenue Service, which applies the norms of the law and provides support in daily work with it. Information channels such as the website of the State Revenue Service (www.vid.gov.lv) and social networks were used to disseminate the survey. The Ministry of Finance shared information on the progress of the survey on its *Facebook* account.

A working group was set up within the Ministry of Finance to develop draft legislation necessary for the implementation of the Sustainability Directive 2022/2464/EU. During the drafting process, the representatives of the Ministry of Justice, the Bank of Latvia, the State Chancellery, the State Revenue Service, the Association of Foreign Accountants of the Republic of Latvia, the Association of Accountants of the Republic of Latvia, the Latvian Association of Sworn Auditors, the Association of the Latvian Financial Sector, the Latvian Corporate Social Responsibility Platform, who were involved in the working group meetings, assessed the provisions of Directive 2022/2464/EU in force and expressed their opinion on the regulation to be included in the draft law at the working group meetings or in electronic coordination of opinions. The Working Party reached agreement on all issues. 17 online meetings of the Working Group took place in 2023.

e) Provision of opportunities for public participation in the TAP portal

The sectoral ministries use the functionality of the TAP portal to organise opportunities for public participation. Public consultation is the most widely used form of participation, but consultations are also held. In general, the ministries point out that various possibilities for the involvement of public representatives are combined in the process of drafting legal acts, for example, by discussing issues in consultative formats. Consequently, the level of activity in the public consultation organised on the TAP portal is low. In 2023, the Ministry of Agriculture submitted more than 100 projects to the TAP portal for public participation, representing around 50% of the legislation drafted by the Ministry as a whole. **At the Ministry of Economics**, all legal acts directed to the Cabinet of Ministers are initially promulgated in a public consultation open to any member of the public. Draft legal acts are coordinated with non-governmental organisations that are competent for the issue of the relevant legal act or play an important role in the implementation of the legal act. National positions on EU legislative proposals are also coordinated with independent cooperation partners and sectoral associations. Information on EU legislative proposals within the competence of the Ministry of Economics, on which an opinion can be given, is available on the website of the Ministry of Economics under the heading 'Current EU proposals'.²⁶ In the opinion of the State Chancellery, it is also desirable to communicate on the institution's website and social networks regarding the possibilities of making proposals in the public consultation, thus ensuring wider public awareness of the upcoming changes, even if no concrete proposals for improvement of the project are received. For example, information on participation opportunities in decision-making processes (public consultation and public consultation) is regularly published on the website of the Ministry of Health and on the Ministry's social network accounts.

²⁶<https://www.em.gov.lv/lv/katalogs/aktualie-es-priekslikumi>

f) Proactively informing and explaining decisions to the public, involving industry experts, NGOs and institutional communication professionals

The line ministries and the State Chancellery regularly inform the public about draft laws and regulations being drawn up and the decisions taken by the government, explaining the content and application of laws and regulations.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs continuously prepares and disseminates to the general public, in the form of infographics and other formats, information on Latvia's participation in international missions and operations, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs' budget for 2022 and 2023, EU-UK relations, the *recognition of Latvia's²⁷ independence de iure*, visual informative materials prepared for Twitter and Facebook to inform the public about Latvia's support for Ukraine,²⁸ travel warnings on changes in entry conditions or on the security situation at various foreign destinations, published on *the Ministry of Foreign Affairs' Facebook* account, the 'Travel Safe' application and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs' website.²⁹ In July 2022, a visual on document security during travel was published,³⁰ in August 2022, visuals on the types of assistance Latvian nationals can receive from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and on what travellers need to take care of themselves³¹ were published, in November 2022, a visual on 'Learn what to consider if you are going to attend the FIFA World Cup 2022 in Qatar'.³²

In January 2023, representatives of the Consular Department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs participated in a discussion on how the COVID-19 pandemic changed tourist behaviour and demand *in the opinion ring at the international tourism exhibition Balttour*. In February 2023, an interview with Delfi.lv on "What to do if you are in trouble abroad" was given to inform the public³³ on Latvian Television "What help can Latvian nationals get when travelling abroad".³⁴ In March 2023, a visual 'Tips for school holidays with children'³⁵ was published. In May 2023, a visual 'Check your luggage before traveling'³⁶ was published. The campaign also included an interview with radio Skonto³⁷. Published in August 2023 a visual on the possibilities of assistance in the representations of EU Member States.³⁸

In 2023, as part of the OECD study on access to housing in Latvia, the Ministry of Economics organised discussions/webinars on the future functioning of the Housing Access Fund, in which representatives of the banking sector, real estate developers and local governments also participated.

Representatives of the **Ministry of Agriculture** participate in seminars organised by various organisations, explaining current issues in the application of regulatory enactments, for example, in the Latvian Society of Winegrowers and Winegrowers (2 seminars 2023. in 2012 and 2 seminars in 2022) provides information on current developments in wine and spirits production and labelling, the seminar organised by the Bakers' Association provides a presentation on current developments in the field of labelling, the corporate social responsibility strategy and its integrity in the business, the event organised by LIDL Latvia provides a presentation on issues of donation and reduction of food waste, explains food hygiene requirements to representatives of fishing associations, Rimi Latvia and the Food for Latvia NGO Forum discusses food donation issues, a seminar on sustainable nutrition organised within the framework of the European Economic Area

²⁷ <https://www.mfa.gov.lv/lv/infografikas>

²⁸ <https://x.com/Arlietu/status/1512321094971273218?s=20>, <https://x.com/Arlietu/status/1517549774194581506?s=20>, <https://x.com/Arlietu/status/1518551300367171584?s=20>

²⁹ <https://www.mfa.gov.lv/lv/valstu-vai-teritoriju-saraksts-kuram-ir-celojumu-bridinajumi>

³⁰ <https://www.facebook.com/photo/?fbid=365984129047190&set=a.157954386516833>

³¹ <https://www.facebook.com/photo/?fbid=377084394603830&set=pcb.377084637937139> and

<https://www.facebook.com/photo/?fbid=377084484603821&set=pcb.377084637937139>

³² <https://www.facebook.com/photo/?fbid=439905368321732&set=a.157954386516833>

³³ <https://www.facebook.com/ltvzinatv/videos/1038482630874959>

³⁴ <https://www.facebook.com/Delfi.lv/videos/1282135669400715>

³⁵ <https://www.facebook.com/photo/?fbid=522442953401306&set=a.157954386516833>

³⁶ <https://www.facebook.com/photo/?fbid=551059120539689&set=a.157954386516833>

³⁷ https://radioskonto.lv/radio-skonto-zinas-par-svarigako-kas-jaievero-dodoties-celojuma/?fbclid=IwAR3MVp4V7xAV_nHW58y5yffHx4TxRND0UXfsGsDfOxz5HgEwxetfy4giLX4

³⁸ <https://www.facebook.com/photo/?fbid=682910060540881&set=a.215849590580266>

and Norway Grants programme 'Research and Education', and provides a presentation on the importance of understanding expiry dates in relation to the consumption of food products and reduction of food waste. As well as various events, the contribution of the agricultural sector to the economy of Latvia and the preservation of the countryside is promoted to a wider audience in Latvia, for example, 'Taste of the Municipality' (<https://novadagarsa.lv>), annual competitions 'Sower', 'Great Catch', 'Golden Cone', etc.

3.3. Transparency and civic engagement in reforms and investments financed by the Recovery Fund and the Cohesion Policy funds

a) Public representatives (associations, foundations, experts) shall be involved in the effective planning and implementation of reforms or investments implemented under the Recovery Fund Plan. They shall also be involved in information activities on the results of the implemented projects and their importance for the public.

The Ministry of Finance indicated that the criteria for evaluating project applications for AF projects should be included in Cabinet Regulations or informative reports on the implementation of AF reforms and investments. Accordingly, the responsible line ministries should comply with the conditions for public participation laid down in the [Rules of Procedures of the Cabinet](#).

The Ministry of Finance issued *Guidelines for drafting an information report or a Cabinet Regulation on implementing the reform or investment of the European Union Recovery and Resilience Facility plan*.³⁹ These guidelines invite line ministries and the State Chancellery to involve civil society (associations and foundations), as well as the sector's main cooperation and social partners in the process of defining the conditions for implementing the investment, in order to reduce the risk of investment delays. This is to be done during the process of development of the relevant information report or Cabinet Regulation (conducting a consultation).

When drafting legislation for the implementation of support programmes, **the Ministry of Economics** ensured the widest possible involvement of the public and industry representatives. At the same time, information on all support programmes under the 2021-2027 programming period under the EU Funds and the Recovery Fund is available on the website of the Ministry of Economics under the heading 'EU and Funds'.⁴⁰ In order to ensure timely public awareness of the planned programmes, the Ministry of Economics organised four regional forums for entrepreneurs in 2022 and also in 2023 to inform about the planned support programmes and their start-up schedules. Other public educational events (seminars, webinars, visits to enterprises) have been organised together with the Investment and Development Agency of Latvia and Altum, as well as participation in events organised by the largest organisations representing entrepreneurs (LTRK, LDDK), industry associations and associations has been ensured. On social platform *Facebook* ministry created a special account "Support for Entrepreneurs",⁴¹ where information about available support for entrepreneurs is provided, communication with the public is also carried out, providing answers to letters, etc. In turn, active communication about the available support for promoting energy efficiency and strengthening energy independence is implemented in the *Facebook* account "Living warmer"⁴² and on the page of the competition "The most energy-efficient building in Latvia".⁴³ Active communication in social networks on the implementation of the support programmes developed by the ministry is also implemented by the IDAL and *Altum*.

³⁹<https://www.esfondi.lv/normativie-akti-un-dokumenti/atveselosanas-fonds-main/vadlinijas-informativa-zinojuma-vai-ministru-kabineta-noteikumu-izstradei-par-eiropas-savienibas-atveselosanas-un-noturibas-mehanismu-plana-reformas-vai-iestipinajumiem>

⁴⁰ www.em.gov.lv/en/es-un-fondi.

⁴¹ <https://www.facebook.com/atbalstsuznemejiem>

⁴² <https://www.facebook.com/dzivosiltak/>

⁴³ <https://www.facebook.com/energoefektivaka.eka.Latvija>

Within the framework of investment 2.3.1.3i “Self-accompanied training of ICT specialists” implemented by the Ministry of Education and Science, several discussions were organised together with non-governmental organisations of the sector in order to define the needs of the sector and the best solutions for solving problem situations when commencing the development of the draft Cabinet Regulation on the conditions for implementing the investment. Social partners and non-governmental organisations were involved in the public consultation on the draft Cabinet Regulation. In the further process of drafting Cabinet Regulations, taking into account the received proposals and objections to the project improvements, it is also planned to organise meetings with representatives of the industry to define the best solutions. In the information report of investment 2.3.1.4.i “Development of the approach to individual learning accounts” implemented by SEDA and MoES, social partners and NGOs were already defined as consultative partners involved in the discussion and development of project implementation activities. An inter-institutional working group, including social partners and NGOs, has been set up in February 2024 to involve the sector in defining the approach and developing appropriate solutions.

The Ministry of Welfare has ensured the involvement of public representatives (including associations and foundations) in the development of the conditions for the implementation of investments in the Recovery and Resilience Facility Plan (hereinafter – RRF Plan), implementing the public participation process. In 2022 and 2023, the Cabinet of Ministers approved the conditions for the implementation of all five AF investments under the responsibility of the Ministry of Agriculture for a total of seven measures. In accordance with the legislation regulating public participation, the representatives of the society use the opportunity to participate in the development and coordination of draft conditions for the implementation of investments of the RF, providing their opinion and following the progress of the documents.

In order to prepare an appropriate offer, targeted stakeholder consultations have been carried out in the development of the framework for the implementation of individual RFF investments. For example, discussions took place with associations and foundations representing the interests of people with disabilities (NGOs *Sustento un Apeirons*) in the development of the conditions for the implementation of phases 1 and 2 of investment 3.1.2.1.i ‘Promotion of access to public services and employment for people with disabilities’. 3.1.2.1i. In the framework of the implementation of the second stage measure ‘Support measures for people with disabilities to ensure accessibility of the housing environment’, NGOs representing the interests of persons with disabilities are also involved in the composition of the target group’s compliance assessment committee in order to assess the compliance of the target group and housing with the criteria developed for granting aid.

The Ministry of Justice has ensured cooperation with NGOs within the framework of the Recovery Fund Plan project "Academy of Justice". A discussion took place with NGOs *Delna*, *PROVIDUS*, *Apeirons*, *Baltic Human Rights Society*, *Sustento* (as observers) on the necessary training topics for those working in the justice system. In relation to the recently raised issue of domestic violence, it was found necessary to organise training on topics that would implement an approach to the needs of victims of violence in the judicial system. Including these topics in training programmes would strengthen the competences of judges and prosecutors in recognising different forms of violence, especially in cases of domestic violence, where the dynamics of the relationship between a victim and a perpetrator tend to be misleading. Training for judges would provide an opportunity to prevent repeated victimisation of the victim within the framework of criminal proceedings, as well as to develop a common vision and understanding of violence among judicial institutions in order to promote restoration of justice and reduce the feeling of impunity of perpetrators of violence. As a result, three potential service providers were addressed: training centre MKB, association ‘Skalbes’ and centre ‘Marta’. As a result of the request for quotation, a contract was concluded with the service provider Centre "Marta", which provides training "Access to justice for the needs of the victim of violence". In 2024, it is planned to contact the associations "Safe House" and "I want to help refugees" and the NGO "Baltic Region Fund".

The Ministry of Transport has set up a monitoring committee for the implementation of the FA projects, with the participation of project implementers and industry experts. The project implementation is also

coordinated within the Working Group on Greening the Public Transport System of the Riga Metropolitan Area established by the MoU.

Investment 4.1.1.3.i of the Recovery Fund Plan implemented by the Ministry of Health. “Support for strengthening the health infrastructure of secondary outpatient service providers to ensure a comprehensive sustainable integrated health service, reduce the spread of infectious diseases, ensure epidemiological requirements”, experts of the association “Apeirons” were involved in the project selection in 2023, informing all beneficiaries about recommendations for environmental accessibility solutions in medical institutions. Beneficiaries using Recovery Fund support to improve environmental accessibility consulted experts from Apeirons on an individual basis to provide the most appropriate solutions for different patient groups.

The Society Integration Foundation under the reform and investment 6.3 (the “Rule of Law” component) of the European Union Recovery and Resilience Facility plan "Modernisation of public administration" reforms 6.3.1. ‘Modernisation of public administration’ 6.3.1.4.i. Within the framework of the investment ‘Development of non-governmental organisations in social security representation and monitoring of public interests’, an open call for project applications ‘Monitoring of public interests on the use of foreign investments and state budget funding’⁴⁴ and ‘Representation of the interests of the most vulnerable groups of society in the field of social security’ was implemented in 2023.⁴⁵ The implementation of the projects has started. The aim of the projects is to ensure the supervision and observance of public interests in the use of foreign investment and state budget financing and to strengthen the representation of the interests of the most vulnerable groups of society in the field of social security in the civil dialogue with public administration and decision-makers, starting from the planning and implementation of significant investment projects of national scale and ending with the implementation of local government development projects and initiatives to ensure the welfare of the population and the development of the national economy.

b) to ensure meaningful consultation of the public (associations and foundations working in the relevant field) regarding the receipt of support within the framework of the Cohesion Policy programme in the areas under the responsibility of the institutions⁴⁶

Issues related to the implementation of EU funds are approved, reviewed and monitored by the Monitoring Committee for EU funds of the 2021-2027 programming period, which ensures open and broad partnership in accordance with Article 8 of Regulation (EU) 2021/1060 of the European Parliament and of the Council, including: NGOs, social and cooperation partners. It is possible to apply/refuse to participate in the Monitoring Committee during the whole programming period, both as voting members and as advisors. In parallel, six collegial consultative subcommittees have been set up in the Monitoring Committee, in line with the political objectives of the 2021-2027 programming period. Subcommittees shall examine (1) the criteria for evaluation of project applications to be decided in the monitoring committee, (2) issues of evaluation of EU funds (3) and other issues. Within the subcommittee, the broadest possible partnership is also ensured, with the possibility to apply/opt-out from the subcommittee throughout the programming period.

In order to ensure cooperation with partners, including from the NGO sector, observing the partnership principle in the implementation and monitoring of EU funding and foreign financial assistance, as well as in decision-making on amendments to the EU funds programme, approval of project application criteria, and other investment implementation and evaluation issues:

- 26.01.2023. The Ministry of Finance organised the first meeting of the Monitoring Committee for the 2021-2027 programming period of the EU funds, during which significant decisions were taken to start investments in the economy of the new programming period as soon as possible (including the

⁴⁴www.sif.gov.lv/lv/konkurss-sabiedribas-interesu-uzraudziba-par-arvalstu-investiciju-un-valsts-budzeta-finansejuma-izlietojumu

⁴⁵www.sif.gov.lv/lv/konkurss-sabiedribas-vismazak-aizsargato-grupu-interesu-parstavnieciba-socialas-drosibas-joma

⁴⁶ In accordance with the invitation made by Prime Minister Kariņš at the meeting of the Memorandum Council on 26 August 2021 at the extraordinary meeting of the Council for the Implementation of the Memorandum of Cooperation between Non-Governmental Organisations and the Cabinet of Ministers on 26 August 2021. Minutes of the meeting (available [at www.mk.gov.lv/en/media/10858/download](http://www.mk.gov.lv/en/media/10858/download)) and Resolution No 2021-1.1.1./50-50 of the Prime Minister of 7 September 2021.

approval of the common project application selection methodology, the common selection criteria, as well as the first evaluation criteria for investment competition projects, the EU fund evaluation plan);

- On 3 November 2023, the second meeting of the Monitoring Committee for the 2021-2027 programming period of EU funds was organised, with discussions with partners, incl. NGOs, on topical issues for the 2021-2027 programming period;
- on 6 December 2023, a meeting of the Monitoring Committee for the 2021-2027 programming period of EU funds was organised on topical issues in the final phase of the programming period;
- In 2023, a total of 36 subcommittee meetings were organised in all six policy objectives, with cooperation partners, including: NGO's, project application evaluation criteria and other materials have been discussed;
- In 2023, active participation of partners in the monitoring committee in the form of written procedures was ensured within the framework of both EU fund programming periods, reviewing and approving the criteria for the selection of project applications, amendments to the EU fund programming documents, and the implementation report for the 2014-2020 programming period. In total, 23 written procedures for the 2021-2027 programming period of EU funds and 5 written procedures for the 2014-2020 programming period of EU funds have been organised;
- The decision of the Cabinet of Ministers on the implementation of the second period of the Swiss cooperation programme, taken on the initiative of the MoF, instructs line ministries to ensure public participation, including by informing or involving non-governmental organisations and social partners active in the relevant sectors, also consulting the Non-Governmental Organisations and the Council for the Implementation of the Memorandum of Cooperation of the Cabinet of Ministers, when drawing up the application of the first and second rounds of the programme and the conditions for the implementation of the programme.

The Ministry of Finance ensured the involvement of the Prime Minister's resolutions on the meaningful involvement of associations and foundations working in the relevant field in the drafting of the Cabinet Regulation on the implementation of the specific aid objectives (hereinafter – SAM), including the above-mentioned condition in Methodology No 3.1 developed by the Ministry of Finance. 'Methodology for the selection of project applications for the European Regional Development Fund, the European Social Fund Plus,⁴⁷the Cohesion Fund and the Just Transition Fund for 2021-2027', as well as the MoF's internal procedure for verifying the Cabinet Regulation on the implementation of the SAM and the information included in the annotations thereto drawn up by the responsible authorities, thereby also gaining assurance as to the implementation of the aforementioned Prime Minister's resolution. Similarly, the involvement of non-governmental organisations and cooperation partners in the monitoring of investments made within the framework of the AF and Cohesion Policy programmes is ensured through informative reports on topical issues of EU funds prepared by the Ministry of Finance, thus enabling non-governmental organisations and cooperation partners to provide their comments and proposals.

The Ministry of Welfare ensured the involvement of public representatives – associations and foundations working in the field of welfare – in the development of the conditions for the implementation of SAM measures for the 2021-2027 EU funds programming period. In 2023, the Cabinet of Ministers approved the conditions for the implementation of SAM measures for a total of 13 EU funds, in the development of which NGOs were involved. In accordance with the legislation governing public participation, members of the public take the opportunity to participate in the development and coordination of draft conditions for the implementation of SAM measures by giving their opinion and following the progress of documents.

⁴⁷ <https://www.esfondi.lv/normativie-akti-un-dokumenti/2021-2027-planosanas-periods/eiropas-reģionālas-attīstības-fonda-eiropas-sociālā-fonda-plus-kohezijas-fonda-un-taisnīgas-parkartosanas-fonda-projektu-iesniegumu-atlases-metodika-2021-2027-gadam>

In the development of certain conditions for the implementation of SAM measures, thematic discussions have also been organised with NGOs, representatives of the rights of potential project applicants and target groups and service providers in order to hear opinions and discuss more appropriate conditions for the specific investment (for example, in the development of the conditions for the implementation of measure 4.3.1.2. 'Improvement of the quality and accessibility of services by approximating the services provided (close to the family environment) by branches of State social care centres in the community', measure 4.4.1.1. 'Support for new approaches to the provision of community-based social services' and measure 4.3.6.4. 'Development and implementation of support instruments to strengthen family functionality', stage 1).

During the 2021-2027 EU funds planning period, associations and foundations may receive support as project applicants in several EU funds SAM measures managed by the MoW: Measure 4.3.4.2 'Support measures for the realisation of equal opportunities and rights in different areas of life for groups at risk of discrimination' (Cabinet Regulations in the drafting process), Measure 4.3.6.4 'Development and implementation of support instruments for strengthening family functionality', Phase 1 (Cabinet Regulations in the drafting process), Measure 4.3.5.1 'Increasing access to social services based on society' (Cabinet Regulations in the drafting process) and Measure 4.4.1.1 'Support for new approaches in the provision of social services based on society (innovation)' (Cabinet Regulation No 820 was approved on 19 December 2023). Within the framework of the abovementioned measures, such NGO project applications will be supported, in which the planned activities and planned support to the target group persons will comply with the Cabinet of Ministers regulations regarding the conditions for the implementation of the relevant programme.

The Ministry of Justice involved associations working in the relevant field in the development of the regulatory framework: 1) Cabinet Regulation project "European Union Cohesion Policy Programme 2021-2027 specific support objective 4.3.5 "Improve equal and timely access to quality, sustainable and affordable services; improving social protection systems, including access to social protection; improving the accessibility, efficiency and resilience of long-term care services" in the development of the measure 4.3.5.5 "Access to justice implementing rules" in 2023. The Council of Certified Mediators took part. The Council contributed to the formulation of needs and necessary solutions; 2) The association "Latvian Social Business Association" (hereinafter - LSUA) was involved in the development of the measure 4.3.4.6 "Implementation regulations of the specific support objective 4.3.4 "Promoting active inclusion in order to promote equal opportunities, non-discrimination and active participation, as well as improving employability, especially for disadvantaged groups" of the Cabinet of Ministers Regulation No. 405 of 13 July 2023 "Improvement of rehabilitation services for probation clients and development of equity restoration approaches in order to promote active participation of probation clients in society processes and creating preconditions for their successful inclusion and employability". The State Probation Service addressed LSUA for involvement in the project, considering cooperation. The necessary support and information was received from representatives of the LSUA in the drafting of the legal act and in the clarification of the project activities; 3) Cabinet Regulation No 726 of 5 December 2023 laying down implementing rules for the specific support objective 4.3.4 'Promoting active inclusion to promote equal opportunities, non-discrimination and active participation, as well as improving employment, in particular for disadvantaged groups' of the European Union Cohesion Policy Programme 2021-2027, measure 4.3.4.7 'Ensuring preconditions for employment for prisoners by improving the effectiveness of the resocialisation system, promoting the inclusion, equal opportunities and active participation of former prisoners'. On the TAP portal on the Guidelines for Resocialisation Policy 2021-2027, as well as on Cabinet Regulations, NGOs had the opportunity to express themselves during public participation, which was not used by public representatives.

In 2024, **the Ministry of Health** plans to develop conditions for the involvement of NGOs in the implementation of health promotion and disease prevention measures within the framework of Measure 4.1.2 'Involvement of non-governmental organisations in the implementation of health promotion and disease prevention measures' of SAM 4.1.2. of the 2021-2027 programming period of EU funds.

EU fund supervisors

One of the supported projects ("EU fund supervisors") is directly related to the supervision of the European Union funds. within its framework, 7 Latvian organisations (PROVIDUS, the Latvian Social Entrepreneurship Association, the Alliance for Cross-sectoral Sustainable Development, the Latvian Society of the Blind, the Latvian Society for Quality, the Latvian Rural Forum and the German Union of Latvia) receive support for work in the supervisory boards of the EU funds, as well as develop proposals and methodologies for making the programming and use of the EU funds more transparent to the public.

3.4. Training seminars for civil society on the possibilities of using the TAP portal

The State Chancellery has organised two trainings in cooperation with the Civic Alliance – Latvia:

- 30 March 2022 'NGO opportunities on the TAP portal' ([video](#));
- 19 January 2024 "NGO Opportunities in the Public Environment of the TAP Portal" (video). <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GxUXa2WTawk&t=15s>

3.5. Creation of a deliberative discussions model, initial discussions and further development of deliberative forms

The Ministry of Culture, in cooperation with the think tank PROVIDUS, organised two public engagement events based on deliberative democracy methods:

- In 2022 | "What to do to increase the use of content produced by Latvian journalists by the inhabitants of Latgale?";
- In 2023 | "How to make Latvian society more cohesive and to promote civic activism?".

The report of the second deliberative event was used to draft the Ministry of Culture's Plan for the Development of a Cohesive and Civic-Active Society 2024-2027 (undergoing public consultation in 2024). This plan contains frequent feedback on the recommendations of the deliberative measure.⁴⁸

In 2022, PROVIDUS created information material on how to organise a deliberative event, which is available on the PROVIDUS website and is useful for any organisation that wants to use this citizen engagement method (<https://providus.lv/raksti/informativs-materials-ka-noorganizet-deliberativu-pasakumu>).

In order to further promote deliberative methods of citizen engagement, PROVIDUS organised an online seminar on 28 February 2023 entitled 'How can public authorities and NGOs reach out to representatives of groups of society that do not usually come for consultations?' As part of the seminar, PROVIDUS shared its experience of looking for a representative composition of participants for deliberative events. A total of 71 participants from various state and municipal institutions, as well as NGOs participated in the seminar.

In 2020, the OECD published **11 principles of good practice for deliberative processes in decision-making**,⁴⁹ while in 2023 the OECD established a database of deliberative processes.⁵⁰

Taking into account the accumulated Latvian and international experience and the approved international principles, 2024. – In 2025, work will be done on a model for deliberative discussions.

⁴⁸ Draft plan at TAP portal: https://tapportal.mk.gov.lv/legal_acts/43b7b616-9902-4008-96d7-e8082abc4973

⁴⁹ OECD (2020), Innovative Citizen Participation and New Democratic Institutions: Catching the Deliberative Wave, OECD Publishing, Paris, <https://doi.org/10.1787/339306da-en>; see - Good practice principles for deliberative processes for public decision making, page 118.

⁵⁰ OECD Deliberative Democracy Database. Available at: <https://www.oecd.org/gov/innovative-citizen-participation-and-new-democratic-institutions-339306da-en.htm>

3.6. Establishment of an Activity-Based NGO Classification allowing the identification of organisations in different fields or organisations representing specific target groups

On 22 February 2024, the Saeima adopted amendments to the Law on Associations and Foundations, which provide for **the mandatory obligation for associations and foundations to indicate their field of activity**. The requirement will enter into force on 1 July 2024.

Pursuant to those amendments to the Law on Associations and Foundations, the Cabinet of Ministers is yet to issue regulations on the classification of NGO activities by 30 June 2024.⁵¹ The Ministry of Justice continues its work on the establishment of the classification in consultation with the institutions involved (the Ministry of Finance, the State Revenue Service, the Enterprise Register), as well as with the non-governmental sector (PROVIDUS, the Civic Alliance - Latvia).

In August 2023, the Civic Alliance - Latvia held a discussion with representatives of associations and foundations on the draft Cabinet Regulation prepared by the Ministry of Justice on the “Scope of activities of associations and foundations”, summarising the organisations’ views on the draft Cabinet Regulation and submitting feedback to the Ministry of Justice.

⁵¹ <https://likumi.lv/ta/id/350312-grozijumi-biedribu-un-nodibinajumu-likuma>

Direction of Action 2: Openness and transparency of public authorities working in the public interest

Commitment 4: The state communicates with the public in clear and understandable language, explains decisions and complex topics, emphasizing advantages

Executive summary

In 2023, the Latvian School of Public Administration developed a training entitled “Understandable, easy and clear language in public administration – effective communication with the public”. In 2025, a joint public administration communication campaign will take place to promote openness and explain topical issues to the public. An improved legal framework on accessibility requirements will enter into force in 2025. With the new framework, the everyday life of people with disabilities will become more comfortable. The State Chancellery continues the development of the Unified Platform for State and Local Government websites, established in 2020, which sets common standards for websites also in the field of accessibility. This commitment focuses on more active and inclusive communication with citizens on a daily basis. The ministries have provided examples of their daily work, informing the public about current events in the sectors. Comprehensive information on different sectors is available on the www.lvportals.lv. The experience of the LV portal also shows that people are mostly interested in social and economic issues, such as pensions, salaries, taxation.

4.1. Training "Easily understood language in public administration – effective communication with the public"

An e-course “Easily understood language in Public Administration – Effective Communication with the Public” was developed at the Latvian School of Public Administration in 2023. It is available as of December 2023. The aim of the e-course is to improve the skills of public administration employees to communicate with the public.

E-course consists of 6 lectures (45 min.).

E-course lectures cover the following topics:

- trust-building communication in public administration,
- written communication;
- oral communication,
- speaking skills;
- skills to clarify and explain,
- easy language.

Those who have completed this e-course have the opportunity to acquire practical skills to improve written communication **in the workshop ‘Written Communication Workshop’**. **Every employee of the public administration whose duties include communication with the public is invited to take part in the e-course.** For example, 48 employees have applied for participation from the State Forest Service.

In 2024, the e-course needs to be acquired by representatives of all ministries who will be involved in the implementation of measure 4.3 (cross-sectoral activity) of this plan in 2025.

Methodological materials for more effective communication of public administration with the public

Handbook on effective resistance to information manipulation and disinformation issued

A State Chancellery handbook against disinformation and on effective resistance to information manipulation was issued in July 2022.⁵²

The Handbook consists of three chapters:

Chapter 1 explains how to recognize the Kremlin's most frequently used manipulation methods and techniques in the informative space, while offering illustrative examples of them.

Chapter 2 offers both the explanation of terms, the scale of the impact of threats to the information space, and practical recommendations for action at the level of individuals, institutions and the state.

Chapter 3 contains 51 of the Kremlin's most frequently used disinformation narrative against Latvia and rebuttals based on their science, facts and research.

The guide is primarily intended for people working in public administration and indirectly for any resident of Latvia. The handbook includes practical knowledge and recommendations to engage in the protection of the national information space and the strengthening of security.

The State Chancellery has made a digital version of the manual available to the general public. The manual is available in printed form in the public libraries of Latvia.

For more information visit: <https://www.mk.gov.lv/lv/rokasgramata-pret-dezinformaciju>

The easy language guidelines for public administration were developed in 2022, when several practical trainings for public administration communication specialists were also organised. The State Chancellery is gradually developing the availability of content in easy language on the mk.gov.lv website and social networks. The 2017 State Chancellery's **Guidelines for Letter Writing** are topical.

Information with methodological materials **is published on the intranet** of the **Ministry of Justice**, including, for example, Ministerial Order No 1-1/268 of 28 December 2023 On uniform principles for the writing of opinions and on the Ministry of Justice's portal for public communication legislation, which provides, inter alia, for uniform public communication by the Ministry of Justice on the TAP portal. Methodological materials and useful information on policy making, participation opportunities and evaluation, resistance to disinformation have been promoted to the employees of the **Ministry of Finance**.

The SRS and CFCA purposefully promote the skills and abilities of employees to communicate with the public:

- the SRS uses uniform methodological materials for communication with the public: guidelines for effective written communication with customers (approved by SRS Order No 5 of 10 January 2022), guidelines on the design of public communication materials of the State Revenue Service (approved by SRS Order No 155 of 17 June 2022), guidelines on the requirements for the development and presentation of documents and document derivatives and the establishment of electronic communication within the State Revenue Service (document approved by SRS Order No 306 of 16 November 2022), guidelines on the monitoring of electronic correspondence with customers (approved by SRS Order No 30 of 24 January 2023);
- SRS ensures regular monitoring of communication with customers by assessing compliance with the developed quality indicators;
- In the field of taxation, 210 internal control measures were carried out in 2022 and 212 internal control measures were carried out in 2023 on the compliance of electronic correspondence with customers with the requirements for the drawing up of documents and guidelines and the monitoring of the quality of

⁵² The title of the book in Latvian is "Rokasgrāmata pret dezinformāciju: atpazīt un pretoties".

telephone communications with customers, and the use of language appropriate to the target audience in electronic and telephone communications is also assessed;

- SRS organized training "Applied correspondence" on topical issues in preparation of documents, most frequently observed inaccuracies and mistakes, offering possible options for more effective communication.

The CFCA continuously uses internal communication channels to educate and inform its staff, as well as organises training sessions. In the training of new employees, special attention is paid to promoting the development of an open and civil society, while the employee also performs daily duties in the context of the functions of the CFCA. Regular quality control of CFCA services is ensured by organizing an annual customer survey, communication with customers is in constant focus.

4.2. Enforcing accessibility requirements in public administration communication with the public

In 2022, the **Ministry of Welfare**, in cooperation with the associations *Sustento* and *Apeirons*, created an information video with recommendations for creating an accessible environment.⁵³ (in the framework of ESF project No 10.1.2.0/18/TP/007 'Technical assistance for informing the public in the field of welfare (Phase 2)').

The Ministry of Welfare informed specialists related to construction, environmental planning and development, implementers of EU funds projects, employers, etc. about environmental accessibility requirements and good practices for ensuring them for people with functional impairments.

Information materials distributed to **municipal social services and social networks calling for applications to improve the accessibility of their place of residence free of charge**. This has been done in the framework of a project financed by the Recovery Fund, which aims to improve the quality of life of **268** people with functional impairments who use a technical aid in their daily life for mobility purposes, providing opportunities to, among other things, participate in public life, such as going to study, work.

The legal framework on accessibility has been improved by transposing the requirements of the EU directive that promotes the easy use of goods and services by people with functional limitations (the regulation will enter into force on 28 June 2025): Accessibility of Goods and Services Act (adopted on 16.03.2023); Amendments to the Public Procurement Law (adopted on 16 March 2023); Amendments to the Law on Procurement for Public Service Providers (adopted on 16 March 2023); Amendments to the Law on Conformity Assessment (adopted on 16 February 2023); Electronic Communications Law (adopted on 14 July 2022) Draft Cabinet Regulation on accessibility requirements for goods and services (draft [on the TAP portal](#)).⁵⁴

With the new framework, the everyday life of people with disabilities will become more comfortable. In particular, if a person has a limited sensory ability, the good or service will be able to be used through another sensory channel. For example, queueroom machines will have to provide information simultaneously in text and audio format (text-to-speech technology), the ability to increase letters and colour contrast (required for people with impaired vision), the device will allow the use of assistive technologies, including the insertion of personal headphones (important for people with impaired hearing), the height of the device will be suitable for people in a wheelchair, the device will have the ability to extend the transaction time (for people with impaired perception or mental impairment) and will warn the user in the form of both audio and text. Also, devices will have to be designed in such a way that they do not cause photosensitive attacks (required for people with epilepsy, autism). The benefit of such devices will be not only for people with disabilities, but, for

⁵³ The video is available at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Anfkt56rX8>. The link on the website of the Ministry of Welfare also leads to it: <https://www.lm.gov.lv/en/video-materials-about-closed-environment-formanu-10112022>.

⁵⁴ The new accessibility requirements will apply to the following groups of goods and services: computers, tablets, smartphones and their operating systems, self-service terminals. Also on e-books and their electronic readers, banking services, e-commerce (i.e. online shopping). The new requirements will also need to be adapted for public procurement, transport services, consumer terminal equipment for electronic communications services and electronic communications services, as well as for the 112 emergency call line.

example, for a person trying to hear travel information in a noisy train station, or a person with poor vision will be able to increase the text on the display.

Inter-ministerial work on accessibility in sectors:

Ministries update the accessibility statement annually on their websites. Its essence is to make sure that citizens with functional limitations are able to perceive and understand information on websites.

A 'light language' function will be developed for the website of the Ministry of Defence. Similarly, as a result of the Ministry's cooperation with the Latvian Library for the Blind and the Light Language Agency, the booklet 'How to deal with a crisis' has been 'translated' into light language in order to ensure the widest possible public understanding.

In the digital map browser created by the CSB, a colour palette is available in the colour selection of the legend, which is also accessible (distinguishable) for persons with colour vision impairments.

The State Chancellery continues the development of the unified platform of State and local government websites established in 2020. Public administration websites are developed according to common standards within the project, including in the area of accessibility. The State Chancellery provides website administrators with good practice advice and advisory support on the use of functionality, including the administration of the site in such a way that it meets accessibility requirements.

The State Chancellery continues cooperation with sign language interpreters, providing sign language interpretation at press conferences and other events of public importance.

In order to explore the accessibility of cultural services, the **Ministry of Culture has commissioned a Study on Accessibility of Cultural Infrastructure and Services in Latvia in 2023.** The results of the study will be available in March 2024.

The Ministry of Transport has an Advisory Council on Mobility, Equality and Accessibility. It provides advice in the process of policy-making on equality of mobility and accessibility of persons, promotes cooperation between NGOs representing target groups and transport sector and other institutions involved in passenger transport. Council identifies challenges to the rights of individuals in ensuring mobility equality and makes proposals to address them

The following accessibility options have been provided on the website of the Ministry of Justice:

- move the cursor using only the keyboard;
- approximating the contents to 100%, 150% or 200%;
- change the contrast;
- use screen readers (including the latest versions of JAWS, NVDA and VoiceOver) on most websites;
- listen to written content;
- convert audio content into text;
- read content in easy-to-read language.

Every year, **the Ministry of Justice** carries out an evaluation of its website in order to get an idea of its user-friendliness for people with different needs. The notification includes information on communication in case of website deficiencies or other issues. The Ministry's website was last evaluated on 03/01/2023.

The **website of the Ministry of Health** was evaluated in 2023 (using the 'Guidelines for assessing the impact of compliance with accessibility requirements for institutional websites and justifying disproportionate burdens' prepared by the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Regional Development), concluding that the website partially complies with Cabinet Regulation No 445 of 14 July 2020 on the procedure for institutions to post information on the internet. The Ministry of Health intends to take measures to improve compliance with accessibility requirements, i.e. by publishing an image of the article on the website of the Ministry of Health www.vm.gov.lv, an alternative text will be added to each. On the other hand, the Ministry of Health

cannot change the colour design used on the MoH website www.vm.gov.lv (main page), as it has been built into the development of the MoH website.

The MoEPRD is consulted by experts from the Ministry of Welfare and the Ministry of Justice on the evaluation of the horizontal priority of equal opportunities, both by organising capacity-building measures to ensure, inter alia, the accessibility of the environment and information to the participants of the event, and by involving specialists in the events to inform the participants of the event about the application of the principles of equal opportunities in the context of the content of the particular event.⁵⁵

The Ministry of Agriculture and its institutions are regularly improving accessibility for members of the public, but serious work remains to be done on these issues in order to improve physical access to institutions for people with special needs.

4.3. Open Dialogues in Sectors Campaign "Complexity explained. Understand the benefits for you and get involved!"

Joint "Complexity explained" communication campaign will be implemented in 2025, taking into account the state budget funding allocated for this purpose.

In 2024, the State Chancellery collected the topics that are most relevant to the public in each sector. Joint "Complexity explained" communication in 2025 with line ministries and NGOs is under preparation.

4.4. Active and inclusive communication with citizens and communication of information to the public in a modern and understandable way

The Ministry of Defence communicates directly with the public at public events, explaining security issues. The cooperation partners of the Ministry of Defence in the non-governmental sector are organisations whose areas of activity are public information and promotion of discussions on the issues of Latvia's security and defence policy, Latvia's membership in NATO, various issues of international relations and international security. The NGO carries out research on issues relevant to the defence sector, informs and educates the population about the military history of the country, as well as promotes the National Armed Forces. Throughout the year, the Ministry of Defence continued to inform the public about security developments and action in crisis situations by promoting the booklet 'How to act in the event of a crisis' in order to promote public knowledge about action in crisis situations and inform about comprehensive national defence. News, interviews, opinion papers, photos, videos and other materials were published. Active communication was also ensured on the social media accounts of the defence sector in order to reach as many young people as possible on the SAD issue (*Facebook, Youtube, TikTok, Instagram*).

In its daily communication, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs informs the public about foreign policy priorities and topical issues. In communication with the public, the Ministry uses press conferences, meetings with certain groups of society, regular dialogue is maintained, as well as several thematic campaigns are implemented. In order to identify the characteristics of the target group and to promote understanding of diaspora organisations, the Ministry concluded a cooperation agreement with the Diaspora and Migration Research Centre of the Faculty of Social Sciences of the University of Latvia on the⁵⁶ conduct of research:

- **2022** – 'Involvement of Latvian professionals in diaspora diplomacy and the potential of network diplomacy' (involvement – leading diaspora organisations, people with experience in international

⁵⁵ When implementing measure 5.1.1.2 project No 5.1.1.2/1/23/l/001 'Improvement of the capacity of municipalities and planning regions' of specific support objective 5.1.1 'Promotion of integrated social, economic and environmental development of local areas and cultural heritage, tourism and safety in functional urban areas' of the EU cohesion policy programme 2021-2027 under the responsibility of the MoEPRD.

⁵⁶ Studies available at <https://www.diaspora.lu.lv/petijumi>

organisations and people planning to develop cooperation with diaspora professionals working in international organisations in Latvia); and “Economic Cooperation of the Latvian Diaspora” (involvement of entrepreneurs and high-level professionals of the Latvian diaspora);

- **2023:** ‘Study on Capacity and Needs of Diaspora Organisations’ (involvement – diaspora organisations, informal groups) and ‘Diaspora Media Study’ (involvement – diaspora media representatives).

The Ministry of Economics regularly informs the public by providing information to the mass media, actively participating in various electronic mass media broadcasts, on draft laws and regulations being drawn up and on decisions taken by the government, explaining the content and application of laws and regulations, including support programmes co-financed by the EU, as well as other issues within its competence.

The current information is available on Ministry’s website www.em.gov.lv and is published on social network accounts – **the MoE**, the information campaigns ‘Living Warmer’ and ‘Support for Entrepreneurs’ – currently **maintains 15 social network accounts**. At the same time, **automatic e-mail sending systems are used for the dissemination of up-to-date information** on energy efficiency, housing and construction policy issues, as well as on state and EU fund support programmes for entrepreneurs. Every year, the MoE organises **information events**, including in the regions, on policy issues within the MoE’s remit, as well as on support programmes for entrepreneurs and the general public.

In order to ensure **timely public awareness of the planned programmes**, the Ministry of Economics organised four regional forums for entrepreneurs in 2022 and 2023 to inform about the planned support programmes and their start-up schedules. Other public educational events (seminars, webinars, visits to enterprises) have also been organised together with the Investment and Development Agency of Latvia and Altum, as well as participation in events organised by the largest organisations representing entrepreneurs – LCCI, LDDK, as well as industry associations and associations has been ensured.

1 779 people (not employed by the Ministry) have signed up to receive weekly newsletters from the Ministry of Culture. **The Ministry’s news on social networks** has the following number of followers: *The Facebook* account has **10 888** followers, the X account has **4 476** followers, the Instagram account has **2 460** followers.

In order to reflect the progress made in the implementation of the minimum income level reform included in the RF plan, **the Ministry of Welfare** prepared and published **informative materials for the general public on raising the minimum income thresholds in social networks**.

In order to promote public awareness, understanding and support measures financed by the ESF (the aim of which is to create a wide range of services throughout Latvia so that children who currently live in social care centres could grow up in a family environment, children with functional disorders could receive social care and rehabilitation in their local government, to enable adults with mental disorders to live an independent life according to their possibilities, and so that they could choose to live independently and work a job suitable for themselves with the support of specialists), a number of informative measures were implemented during the reporting period: information campaign [Getting in the shoes of another](#), inclusive live events [Cinema evenings 2022](#) and [Cinema evenings 2023](#), [Forest Day in Ilūkste](#) and [Forest Day in Saldus municipality](#), youth creative work competition [Equality](#), social experiment [guided by a blind guide](#), [discussion " Society through the eyes of young people "](#) and discussions at the conversation festival [Lampa](#), created and sent to social service providers for further distribution in printed brochures "Course to inspire. Stories about strong people’, an educational test ‘When an apartment is more than a home. Do you know what a group house is?’.

For the purpose of promoting public awareness, understanding and support for social entrepreneurship measures financed by the ESF, **an educational test** “When profit is not the main thing. Do you know what social entrepreneurship is?”.

An **informative video** “Psychological support for families with children in crisis situations” was produced and distributed during the reporting period, in which the public is informed about psychological support instruments financed by the European Social Fund and provided by the Child Protection Centre (formerly the State Inspectorate for the Protection of Children’s Rights) for promotion purposes.

For the purposes of promoting public awareness and understanding of the support instruments of the State Employment Agency financed by the European Social Fund for the long-term unemployed and persons at risk of poverty, **an educational test** “Find out how much you know about state-organised training for jobseekers and people at risk of unemployment?” was published.⁵⁷

The Big Euro Contest (<https://eiroviktorina.lv>) is an annual competition to raise students’ awareness of the EU support in welfare sector.

The Ministry of Justice and its subordinate institutions regularly inform the public and partners about topical issues in the field of justice both on their websites and on social networks (Facebook, X, *Youtube*, *LinkedIn*), including draft legal acts, policy documents, informative reports, investment projects implemented, new solutions in the e-environment, as well as commissioned studies), as well as representatives of the Department of Justice participate in TV and radio programmes, explaining topical issues in the field. For example, in 2023, the Ministry participated in the conversation festival “LAMPA” in the discussion “Life as a Wheel of Happiness: Punish, re-educate or...love?”, speaking to experts and NGOs about children with antisocial behaviour. The MoJ also monitors social media posts and, if necessary, publishes and/or republishes topical issues of the sector's NGOs on topical issues for society.

The Ministry of Health and its subordinate institutions plan and implement active, inclusive public information on matters within their competence, publishing information both on the institutions’ websites and social network accounts, as well as on the websites www.esparveselibu.lv and <https://eveseliba.gov.lv>.

- In 2023, updated ‘Guidelines for municipalities on health promotion and disease prevention’ have been developed, which provide recommendations on how to promote citizen participation in the planning and organisation of health promotion policies and measures.
- The National Network of Healthy Local Governments **operates, where representatives of local governments are educated**, inter alia, on how to promote citizens' health literacy, how to build evidence-based effective communication news on public health issues.
- The **National Network of Health-Promoting Schools** operates, one of the foundations of which is the promotion of cooperation between educational institutions, students and their parents in the development and implementation of health-promoting policies in educational institutions.
- The NHS also provides citizens with a free information phone 80001234, e-health user support phone for residents (67803300), specialists (67803301), etc.

VSIA Latvijas Vēstnesis promotes public understanding of laws and regulations and public participation, as well as provides a unified state, civic and legal information platform. One part of this platform is the national and legal information and civic education **portal "People. Country. Law"** or LV portal (<http://www.lvportals.lv>).

The LV portal provides a constant flow of state and legal information, as well as civic education content, preparing original publications and compiling information prepared by state institutions and NGOs in a systematized way in one place. In the development of the content of the LV portal, attention is paid to issues of public participation.

Keyword publications [from civil society \(66](#) in 2023, including [39](#) publications produced on the LV portal) and [public participation](#) (89 content items, including [37](#) produced on the LV portal), compared to [42](#) and [114](#) in 2022 respectively).

In order to facilitate the exchange of ideas and discussion on civic participation issues, a series of interviews have been prepared on the LV portal, including with international experts, e.g. [Democratic Freedom can only exist under the pressure of civil society](#); [Low trust in public administration. How to change it?](#); [Electoral rights – a privilege that we do not value](#); [Engine of the Estonian administration: the publicly invisible part](#); [Public](#)

⁵⁷ https://jauns.lv/raksts/zinas/577809-tests-noskaidro-cik-daudz-zini-par-valsts-organizetajam-macibam-darba-mekletajiem-un-bezdarba-riskam-paklautiem-cilvekiem#google_vignette

[governance in the context of global crises; Finland’s good governance is based on stubborn consistency and a desire to catch up with its neighbours; This is not just background noise ; Openness is the most important ; Towards an Open State; Citizenship is not just an entry in a passport ; Why are we bitter?](#)

In 2022-2023, a total of **28 379 items of content were published on the LV portal under the following** content headings:

- Explanations of citizens’ rights and obligations in existing and future legislation (draft laws) – 389 publications in 2023 (416 in 2022);
- opinions (interviews, comments, exchange of ideas on the legal framework) – 106 publications in 2023 (111 in 2022);
- Developments (reflection of events of major national importance, current affairs of public authorities as well as challenges from a regulatory perspective) – 177 publications in 2023 (224 in 2022);
- **10 327 releases in 2023 (10 486 in 2022) on the agenda (communications** to the public by all institutions and bodies, as well as by NGOs of national importance, in a systematised way);
- **e-consultations** – 3 013 responses to citizens’ questions on the legal framework in specific life situations published in 2023 (3 035 in 2022);
- Judicial channel (content dedicated to the judicial system and its development): 33 publications in 2023 (62 in 2022).

The portal's explanatory content is developed in cooperation with public administration experts and organisations representing sectors and professions, such as the NGOs Civic Alliance - Latvia, “Sabiedrība par atklātību – Delna” / Transparency International LATVIA, public policy think tank PROVIDUS, the Finance Latvia Association, the Latvian Council of Sworn Notaries, the Latvian Bar Association, the Latvian Council of Sworn Bailiffs, etc. The publications are linked to the website of legal acts *likumi.lv*, providing the reader with the opportunity to immediately find the article, paragraph, annotation of the specific legal act, so that the information can be verified and make sure that the regulation has not changed over time.

When a new regulation enters into force, the portal generates an information message or explanation under [the heading ‘Entry into force’](#).

The content published on the portal is available on the social media accounts [X \(Twitter\)](#), [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#) of the LV portal .

According to *Google Analytics*, the LV portal reached **10 040 104** views in 2023 (11 **229 302** in 2022). According to *the Gemius Audience study*, the **average monthly** number of unique visitors to the LV portal reached **251 232** in 2023 (2022: **275 292**). According to *Google Analytics*, 39.52% (3,968,051) of views in 2023 were for explanations, **40.59%** (4,075,221) for e-consultations.

[Information to the public \(press releases, open letters\) prepared by public authorities and NGOs of national significance was published in the Agenda section](#), which accounted for 7.09% of LV portal views based on *Google Analytics* data in 2023 (or 712 178) and 913 288 in 2022.

The aim of the LV portal is to **publish reliable state information in one place**, to promote legal literacy and civic education of citizens by providing informative and explanatory content in various formats on current events in the work of state institutions, the legislative process, the current regulation and the structure of the state (including the Constitution and possibilities for citizen participation), also providing individual answers on the legal framework in specific life situations.

2023 Most popular press releases (views on LV Portal):

		Google Analytics (4) views 2023	Page Views, Gemius 2023
1.	The Constitutional Court	A case on a norm that prohibits the right to an old-age pension for persons who do not reside in Latvia at the time of claiming the pension is initiated	30557 / 28928

2.	Ministry of Welfare	Social developments in 2023	5814	6041
3.	Ministry of Finance	Extend the deadline for submission of the annual report for small enterprises	5131	4532
4.	Central Statistical Bureau of Latvia	In 2022, the average wage before taxes – EUR 1 373 per month	4419	4212
5.	Ministry of Welfare	This year, a coefficient of 1.0640 will be applied to the pension indexation	3964	3981
6.	National Police	This is the first time I've ever seen this movie.	3679	3690
7.	National Police	State Police Release on Missing Person and then Finding No Signs of Life	3330	3348
8.	Latvian State Roads	New average speed control radars will start operating	2502	2541
9.	Rural Support Service	Area payments can be applied for from 27 April	2458	2380
10.	National Police	State Police Release on Missing Person and then Finding No Signs of Life	2417	2471

Source: LV portal information provided in March 2024

When publishing current events on the SMD website, the State Forest Service drew attention to the way in which information was presented – texts are drafted, as far as possible, in plain language, in accordance with the principles of the structure of the direct text

- easy-to-understand heading,
- first paragraph with the most important information,
- other information;
- additional information.

The PSD publishes on social media platforms easy-to-understand information on current developments in the PSD, such as the end of the wolf hunting season, prohibitions during the forest fireproof period. **Regularly publishes preventive, citizen-friendly information** on, for example, collisions on the road with a forest animal, safety in the forest during hunting. Information is also published on external developments that may have an impact on public safety, such as storm damage, active forest fire. Calls have been published for citizens to get involved in solving the problem, for example, about Daugavpils forest burner, about reporting wolf attacks on pets.

Commitment 5: Promote the availability and comprehensibility of data by empowering citizens to use it and develop data-driven solutions

Executive summary

Sectoral data and information relevant to society can be found on the websites and social media accounts of ministries and subordinate institutions, as well as on statistics and data portals, such as the Open Data Portal [data.gov.lv](#) or the Official Statistics Portal [stat.gov.lv](#). However, little use is made of *LinkedIn*.

During the reporting period, the authorities published a significant number of new datasets on the Open Data Portal, in particular the SRS, the Enterprise Register and welfare sector institutions. Various visualisations and infographics have been developed, for example, on court work or public health issues. The data are explained in press releases, video tutorials, trainings and conversations with target audiences (municipalities, doctors, industry associations). Information provided at public events with industry representatives, representatives of local governments, conferences, hackathons.

The MoEPRD, the Patent Office, the CSB and the SLS have promoted the use of data in educational institutions. The Digital Academy of Public Administration started its work at the end of 2023 and is planning trainings on data analytics, open data usage, data-driven decision-making and data visualisation.

The SLS has led seminars on the use of its data, the MoEPRD has been a hackathon on cultural data. However, there is generally little information on the wider use of data and few examples of the use of open data. Among the datasets outlined in the plan, some progress has been observed in the SRE and the SRS, promoting the availability of information on real estate owned by the state and local governments, as well as work has been completed on issues regarding the publication of declaration data of public officials in the form of open data and on the public accessibility of media owners.

5.1 and 5.2 Promoting and explaining data and tools of public interest, including open data, promoting their comprehensibility and wider use, cross-sectoral analysis and data-driven solutions. Promoting examples of open data use and skills

Construction

The construction information system [bis.gov.lv](#) publishes data related to the construction and real estate sectors. The BVCO and the MoE explain the data in the BIS in their daily communication both on their own initiative and at their request.

Open data ensures transparency of construction and real estate processes, as well as of participants in these sectors. The dataset allows the public to follow these processes, e.g. participate in public consultations, report observed violations. Controlling authorities, on the other hand, are allowed to monitor these processes in a more detailed and simple way and to advise the actors involved. More than 40 different [open datasets have been published on the Open Data Portal](#).

Official statistics

Data on the official **statistics portal** [stat.gov.lv](#) maintained by the CSB are published both by the CSB and other institutions, thus data sets acquire additional value. Data from different sectors complement each other. For example, the sections **Social Inclusion and Gender Equality** cover **data from the CSB, the SPCC, the SSIA, the SEA and other institutions**. The sections contain short analytical texts in plain and intelligible language, data visualisations that help to capture the most important trends, as well as all the data used are available for download, contributing to a wider use of the data.

At the beginning of 2024, 106 [content units](#) are available on the official statistics portal [stat.gov.lv](#) maintained by the CSB, in which data from various institutions are explained and visualised. Data visualizations are updated with the latest available data automatically without manual work.

The [inflation calculator](#) on the thematic page of the CSB, [foreign trade of Latvia](#), [migration in Latvia](#), [regional climate change indicators promote the comprehensibility](#) and wider use of data.

By promoting pupils' data use habits, Skola 2030's teaching materials and Zvaigzne ABC's digital teaching materials include tasks that use the CSB's digital solutions (the official statistics portal and dedicated thematic pages).

The official statistics portal and thematic pages provide data on key social statistics topics such as gender equality, social inclusion, business structure, R&D, innovation. Small analytical descriptions of data have been prepared, links to data sources on the portal have been created, graphs have been added, thus providing information in a language understandable to data users.

Public Finances (Budget)

The Ministry of Finance has been successfully developing and promoting the interactive budget tool www.fm.gov.lv/en/interaktivais-budzets2022 for several years. Detailed structured explanations of the budget are available at www.fm.gov.lv/en/ministrija-budzets-1. The MoF regularly publishes comprehensive, analytical and explanatory press releases on budget implementation (<https://www.fm.gov.lv/en/kopbudzeta-execution>), as well as on the development of the most important economic indicators and the economy in general, supplemented with visual materials, and visual summaries of data developed by experts, such as www.fm.gov.lv/lv/ikmenesa-macroeconomics-and-kopbudzeta-view.

The Treasury publishes the following datasets on the Open Data Portal:

- State budget implementation by institutions, budget programmes/sub-programmes and classification codes <https://data.gov.lv/dati/lv/dataset/State-budget-execution-by-set-budget-programme-and-classification-codes> every month,
- State budget implementation by budget programmes/sub-programmes and classification codes <https://data.gov.lv/dati/lv/dataset/State-budget-execution-by-budget-programme-and-classification-codes> on a quarterly basis,
- Local government budget expenditure/revenue/debt 2010. –2020
- Amount of local government liabilities [https://data.gov.lv/dati/lv/dataset/municipal authority-connection-amount](https://data.gov.lv/dati/lv/dataset/municipal_authority-connection-amount) once a year.

New open datasets for public authorities

In 2022-2023, the State Revenue Service posted 12 new datasets on the Open Data Portal.⁵⁸

To promote public access to open data, visual material was placed on SRS communication channels (Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn).⁵⁹

⁵⁸ 1. TIR carnets; 2. Import customs declarations for postal consignments with super-reduced dataset (H7); 3. Simplified import customs declaration for postal consignments; 4. List of taxpayers (traders); 5. the list of VAT groups; 6. Total amounts of taxes administered by the SRS paid by merchants in the previous three tax years. 7. Territorial division of corporate income tax according to the place of establishment of the employer; 8. Territorial division of personal income tax according to the place of establishment of the employer; 9. institutions registered with the State Revenue Service; 10. Territorial division of personal income tax according to the place of residence of the employee; 11. Receipts confirming the transaction; 12. Violations by public officials.

⁵⁹ 1. TIR carnets;
2. Import customs declarations for postal consignments with super-reduced dataset (H7);
3. Simplified import customs declaration for postal consignments;
4. List of taxpayers (traders);
5. the list of VAT groups;
6. Total amounts of taxes administered by the SRS paid by merchants in the previous three tax years.
7. Territorial division of corporate income tax according to the place of establishment of the employer;
8. Territorial division of personal income tax according to the place of establishment of the employer;

Publication of open data sometimes involves personal data, so an appropriate legal framework is needed. Amendments to the Law on Taxes and Duties (22-TA-3320) have **been prepared in order to publish the following data from the State Revenue Service in the form of open data:** the total amount of taxes (fees) administered by the SRS paid by taxpayers in the relevant quarter; information on legal persons available in the SRS Value Added Tax Taxable Persons Register; information available in the register of public benefit purpose organisations; Information included in the SRS Register of Taxpayers on the permanent representation of a non-resident (foreign merchant) in Latvia; information on employers (legal persons) whose average monthly wage is equal to or less than the national minimum monthly wage, and information on legal persons whose economic activity has been suspended.

Examples of data and visualisations on the SRS website: current sectoral statistics, occupational remuneration data, data characterising the cheque lottery.

Information on the EU Recovery Fund and EU Structural Funds programmes and their results is published on [the website www.esfondi.lv](http://www.esfondi.lv).

The Open Data Portal contains the following information on **projects** co-financed by EU funds **by sector and area:**

- the objectives of the projects,
- names,
- beneficiaries;
- the implementation period,
- the amount of funding,
- the places of implementation.

Data is updated once a day. The publisher is the CFCA.

Public procurement

Current information on public procurement data is available on the PMB website and the Open Data Portal: www.iub.gov.lv/en/opened-data ; <https://data.gov.lv/dati/lv/organization/iub>; www.iub.gov.lv/en/aktualie-procurement-data ; www.iub.gov.lv/en/statistics. On a daily basis, the PMB website, social media accounts *on Facebook and LinkedIn* communicate to promote this data. **At the end of 2023, work started on the new data visualisation tool, incorporating data analytics solutions.**

The Lotteries and Gambling Supervision Inspection conducted campaigns for communication activities on a tool such as **the Self-Refusal Register**.

In its opinions on draft legislation, the MoEPRD calls on line ministries to examine the possibility of opening new datasets (in different areas).

Year 2022

- **Culture Data Hackathon and Think Tank for Students;**
- Conference **Open Digital Transformation;**
- High-Level Expert Conference **Big Data and Open Data – Opportunities, Challenges and Solutions for the Data Economy.**

9. institutions registered with the State Revenue Service;

10. Territorial division of personal income tax according to the place of residence of the employee;

11. Receipts confirming the transaction;

12. Violations by public officials.

To promote public access to open data, visual material was placed on SRS communication channels (Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn).

Year 2023

- **Open Data Hackathon and Idea Generator 2023 Digital Wallet: secure identification and a wide range of services in Europe;**
- Conference **Open Data Sharing Interoperability Cybersecurity.**

By 2027, the Ministry of Culture will establish a common data ecosystem for cultural heritage, resulting in:

- Shared reference data solution for cultural heritage;
- 10 operators will have used cultural heritage data;⁶⁰
- 15 open datasets published.

The SSIA website regularly provides statistics on **pensions , state benefits and indemnities** (www.statistika-vsaa.lv). Data are obtained from the Welfare Information System LabIS and the *easyBI* environment is used to compile them.

Statistics on unemployment are regularly provided on the SEA website (<https://www.nva.gov.lv/en/unemployment-statistics>). Aggregated data can be downloaded and complemented by video and text information.

During the reporting period, **the Open Data Portal has expanded the scope of published data:**

- **Labour ministry has added 11 new datasets**
<https://data.gov.lv/dati/lv/dataset?q=labkl%C4%81j%C4%ABbas+Ministry>
- **DEVCO has published 12 new datasets**
<https://data.gov.lv/dati/lv/dataset?q=vesel%C4%ABbas+un+darbsp%C4%93ju&organization=veselibas-un-darbspeju-ekspertizes-arstu-valsts-komisija>
- **NVA has published 6 new datasets**
<https://data.gov.lv/dati/lv/dataset?q=nodarbin%C4%81t%C4%ABbas+valsts+a%C4%A3ent%C5%ABra&organization=nodarbinatibas-valsts-agentura>
- **State Social Insurance Agency has added 19 new data sets**
https://data.gov.lv/dati/lv/dataset?organization_limit=0&organization=valsts-socialas-apdrosinanas-agentura
- **State Labour Inspectorate published 6 new datasets**
<https://data.gov.lv/dati/lv/dataset?q=Valsts+darba+inspekcija&organization=valsts-darba-inspekcija>

Statistics section (for each transport sector) is available on the website of the Ministry of Transport.

During the reporting period, a working group **of the Ministry of Justice** worked to define what information of general interest should necessarily be published in the official gazette “Latvijas Vēstnesis” (general criteria defined).

The Ministry of Justice publishes the open data within its remit on [Latvian Open Data Portal](#), including information on it on its website. Data collections are also promoted on the institution’s website and social media accounts (e.g. www.tm.gov.lv/en/new/Justice-ministerial-genderlist-department-compiled-data-for-2023-year, [2024 entry in the institution’s Facebook account: www.facebook.com/Justice](#)).

State Probation Service informed the public about its performance in 2022 – 2023:

- **monthly activity report** on institution’s website “News” section (example: www.vpd.gov.lv/en/new/2023-year-December-State-Probate-service-stradaja-with-6637-customers);

⁶⁰ Measures 4.8-1.2 of the Implementation Plan 2023-2027 of the Digital Transformation Guidelines 2021-2027.

- **annual statistical reports** (example: www.vpd.gov.lv/en/2022annual-statistical-raditaji)
- Monthly publications on the institution's **social media accounts** on Facebook, X and *LinkedIn* (example: <https://www.facebook.com/share/p/JhQVfqXKXsTiRhMB/?mibextid=WC7FNe>);
- the institution's annual public report (example: www.vpd.gov.lv/en/media/1587/download?attachment).

Information is regularly updated on the Latvian Open Data Portal data.gov.lv, indicating current data in the most important fields of activity of the State Probation Service.

The State Language Centre:

In 2023, the traditional and extended **calendar of personal names**, which is available on the website of the State Language Centre, was also included in the Latvian Open Data Portal. Information on the publication of this data was communicated both on the Centre's website and on social media accounts. In 2023, an infographic with **language control statistics – applications received and checks carried out, types of administrative infringements, administrative infringement proceedings initiated, decisions imposing fines and decisions imposing warnings** – was published on the Centre's website and on the institution's social network accounts on *Facebook* and website X.

In 2022, **the Centre's website and the institution's social media accounts published information on new names in the calendar** – number of names and names added. An infographic on the **number of consultations provided by the Centre's public assistants has been published on the** institution's *Facebook* account. Each year the Centre's annual report is published on its website, as well as a review of the decisions of the Latvian Language Expert Commission, and an updated summary of the Latgalian written language consultations is maintained.

The Insolvency Control Service each year collects information on decisions taken in the previous year on the settlement of employees' claims and this information is placed on [the Latvian Open Data Portal](http://the.Latvian.Open.Data.Portal). The following information shall be provided: the number of employees paid out of the **employee claims guarantee fund**; the date of the declaration of insolvency proceedings; the date of submission of the application for satisfaction of claims; the amount granted from the resources of the employee claims guarantee fund (gross amount + amount of mandatory State social insurance contributions or employee's share); the date of the decision granting the employee's claims; time, days of examination of the application for the satisfaction of the employee's claims; and the amount recognised by the insolvency practitioner for the employee (net amount). On a monthly basis, the Insolvency Control Service publishes information on employees' claims satisfied and the insolvency proceedings deposit paid on the website and social network accounts, informing the public of the obligations and rights of each person in the insolvency proceedings and ensuring and promoting the availability and interpretation of data. In 2022, in addition to the above, information on complaints submitted and planned monitoring data were also published on the website.

The Insolvency Control Service has posted on its website, under Publications and Reports, information on what is available on the open data portal.

The Administration of the Maintenance Guarantee Fund publishes monthly **on its website data on applications for maintenance, maintenance paid and recovered**, restrictions applied and cross-border maintenance cases. After analysing the profile of the debtors of the Maintenance Guarantee Fund in 2022 and 2023, extracting data from other information systems and databases, the aggregated data are published in an infographic format on the institution's social networks (Facebook, 'X').

During the reporting years, public annual reports of the institution and official statistical data – official statistical reports and meta data – have been published on the website of the Prison Administration www.ievp.gov.lv.

The following datasets are published on the Open Data Portal:

- the evolution of the total number of prisoners;
- the disciplinary practice of detainees;
- employment of prisoners in the economic crew and workplaces of merchants;
- the proportion of inmates participating in educational programmes in the total number of students;
- Involvement of prisoners in resocialisation programmes;
- release of convicted persons;
- the proportion of prisoners participating in resocialisation programmes in relation to the total number of prisoners.

In accordance with Article 19 of the Statistics Law, as of 2024, the Authority will publish the following data on the Official Statistics Portal:

- number of prisoners;
- number of convicted persons;
- number of arrests;
- number of inmates employed (workers);
- the average monthly salary (after taxes and other deductions) received by prisoners employed in prison;
- the cost of maintaining one prisoner per day.

As of 2022, the Latvian Open Data Portal www.data.gov.lv contains data and information from **the State Land Service** free of charge. In order to explain the possibilities of using SLS data for commercial and non-commercial purposes, public information measures have been carried out during this period. **During Vidzeme Innovation Week 2022, the SLS hosted a seminar entitled 'Open Data for Business Start-up and Development of the State Land Service' and, in 2023, a seminar entitled 'Improvisation with Open Data – Added Value for Business?'**. In July 2022, during the conversation festival LAMPA event "Cooperation – submission, concessions or the way to a mutually beneficial result?", the festival visitors were presented and informed about the possibilities of using open data, an expert discussion was organised in 2022 entitled "Without data there is no border?!". With the story "Open=Stronger", the SLS participated in the public administration experience stories conference "Celmlauzis", in 2023 informed about the open data at the scientific and practical conference of the Latvian University of Biosciences and Technology "Earth Management and Geodesy" and the conference of the Institute of Geodesy and Geoinformatics of the University of Latvia "Geodynamics and Geospatial Research 2023: Topicalities, Opportunities and Challenges of the Sector". At the conference of the EU Committee on Cadastre, the SLS shared its experience in data opening, thinking about the public response and the use of open data. Presentations and conversations have been held with the Latvian Open Technology Association, the Latvian Information and Communications Technology Association, the Finance Industry Association, the Latvian Association of Surveyors, the Cooperation Council of Engineering Communications Holders.

In 2023, the **Court Administration** launched an anonymised **publication of prosecutorial decisions on the e-case portal**. The **Court Work Data Portal** <https://dati.ta.gov.lv> provides **aggregated information on the activities of district (city) courts and regional courts according to several criteria** (for example, cases received and adjudicated, duration of examination thereof, rulings).

Court performance indicators are based on actual accrued data from court activity accounting and registry systems. The data on the portal is presented in the form of analytical reports and reports, as well as an explanatory video guide on the data portal and the opportunities it offers.

Information on the data portal has been disseminated **on the social networks** of the Court Administration and, since it is also intended as **an aid to students of law study programmes**, has been sent to higher education institutions for further dissemination among students and/or for insertion in electronic form in the repositories of resources of higher education institutions. An explanatory [video](#) tutorial is also available.



Tiesu darba datu portāls

Portāla mērķis ir sniegt informāciju par tiesu darbu Latvijā, balstoties uz faktiskajiem uzkrātajiem datiem.

Portālā informācija ir apkopota no tiesu darbības uzskaites un reģistra sistēmām, savietojot to analītiskos pārskatos un atskaitēs, nodrošinot informāciju par dažādiem tiesu darba rādītājiem.

Saņemtās un izskatītās lietas	Lietu kustība	Lietu izskatīšanas ilgums
Nolēmumi	Pieteikumi	Notiesātās personas

In 2022, the Patent Office made **data on inventions, trademarks and designs available to everyone by structuring the data into databases**. The newly created databases have been **presented to 35 professionals**, databases have been mentioned and examples of searches have been shown in **16 lectures at various Latvian universities** (Riga, Rezekne, Valmiera, etc.) and **start-up events**. **Consulted at 3 international exhibitions – Tech Industry, Riga Food and Design Isle**. **Pupil training companies educated in 4 Junior Achievement Latvia** events. Public education activities continued in 2023 and a total of **40** events showcase examples and presentations for the use of the database, ranging from **introductory lectures** on the need to protect the intellectual property they create in schools to **lectures for the Furniture Manufacturers Association**. The Patent Office in cooperation with local governments **met with entrepreneurs** in Bauska and Liepāja, as well as within the framework of business incubators of **the Investment and Development Agency of Latvia**, various **faculties of Latvian universities, Junior Achievement Latvia** events and pre-accelerator programmes, LCCI. Information on patent databases is provided at international exhibitions *Riga Food, Riga Comm, Furniture and Design Isle, Tech Industry*.

The **Register of Enterprises of the Republic of Latvia** has released the following **17 new datasets**⁶¹ on the Latvian Open Data Portal.

During the reporting years, the Register of Enterprises has carried out communication activities on the institution's website www.ur.gov.lv, social networks *Facebook* and *X* and using other channels to promote institution's data and tools, for example:

2022 –2023. On Beneficial Owners and Application of Sanctions.⁶²

In the context of access to **information on sanctioned persons**:

⁶¹ Objectives and types of activities of legal entities; Reorganisations of legal entities; Extended legal entity dataset in relation to the data of branches of foreign merchants; Status of the national importance of legal entities; Means of security recorded in the files of rightholders; Group agreements and statements of decisive influence registered in the files of legal entities; Prohibitions of activity registered in the files of rightholders; Suspension/restoration of activities registered in the files of legal entities; The territory of denominational affiliation and activity registered in cases of religious organisations; Founding members of the arbitral tribunals; Registration of amendments to the Rules of Procedure of the Tribunals; Information on liquidation proceedings of legal entities; Equity and investment information; The area of land of the farm and its location; Date of adoption of the founding decision recorded in the file of the legal entity; Duration of the legal entity registered in the file of the legal entity; Extended legal entity dataset in relation to European Economic Interest Grouping data.

⁶²<https://web.facebook.com/watch/?v=340752584783604>;

<https://twitter.com/uznemumureg/status/1513532462978248704>; www.ur.gov.lv/en/news/aktualitates/aktuali-about-true-benefit-gains-plg-and-business-registra-attistibu-3a-zime; www.ur.gov.lv/en/news/actualities/justice-ministerium-latvija-ari-turpmak-informacija-about-true-benefit-gains-bus-public-accessible; <https://twitter.com/uznemumureg/status/1656653229659234304>

www.ur.gov.lv/lv/jaunumi/aktualitates/turpmak-zinas-par-sankciju-subjektiem-peejas-uznemumu-registra/

Number of members of political parties: www.ur.gov.lv/lv/jaunumi/aktualitates/politisko-partiju-biedruskaits-turpmak-brivpieeja ; <https://twitter.com/uznemumureg/status/1524009173981270017>

In cooperation with <https://lvportals.lv>, a textual and visual **explanation "How is free access to the current information of the Register of Enterprises useful?"** was prepared.⁶³

In cooperation with the Ministry of Finance, **it is possible for consumers to check a trader free of charge:** <https://twitter.com/uznemumureg/status/1546812674809516033>

Reģistrs atver jaunas 15 datu kopas Latvijas Atvērto datu portālā

📅 2023. gada 6. jūlijā 🔗 UR [Visi reģistri](#)

Uzņēmumu reģistrs (turpmāk – Reģistrs) atvēris jaunas 15 datu kopas Latvijas Atvērto datu portālā. Tādējādi šobrīd kopumā atvērto datu veidā Latvijas Atvērto datu portālā Reģistrs atvēris 25 datu kopas, tostarp Eiropas Komisijas definētās augstvērtīgās datu kopas.

Jaunās Reģistra atvērtās 15 datu kopas izriet no Latvijas atvērto datu stratēģijas, kuras ieviešanā līdzdarbojas arī Reģistrs. Stratēģija paredz valsts pārvaldē ieviest principu “atvērts pēc noklusējuma” jeb “atvērts ir viss, izņēmumi ir jāpamato”.

Source: [Register opens new 15 datasets on the Latvian Open Data Portal](#)

In 2022 and 2023, the Centre for Disease Prevention and Control published data visualisations (infographics) in an easily accessible form on **public health issues** such as the incidence of infectious diseases, population habits, mortality from various causes of death, morbidity rates, etc. <http://www.spkc.gov.lv/lv/statistikas-un-petijumu-datu-vizualizacijas>

At the request of the municipalities, the SPPC provided data and, in some cases, an in-depth analysis of the situation in the municipality (administrative area). In 2023, the SPPC **organised trainings** for representatives of municipalities on the use of data for municipal needs. In 2022, a lecture for seniors in Jūrmala municipality, several presentations in doctors' professional organisations and patient NGOs on various issues, including data and information related issues.

The information available in the **Health Statistics Database** has been supplemented and updated during the reporting period.

Results in the area of epidemiological safety

⁶³<https://lvportals.lv/skaidrojumi/341209-ka-noder-brivpieeja-aktualajai-uznemumu-registra-informacijai-2022>; <https://twitter.com/VestnesisLV/status/1528662950050922498>; <https://web.facebook.com/LVportals/videos/322892173179124>

New and updated previously available data visualisations on **communicable diseases** of greater importance to public health (<https://www.spkc.gov.lv/lv/infekcijas-slimibu-statistikas-vizualizacijas>).

Training for general practitioners and other medical practitioners to work in the digital environment. **Workshops and consultations** were organised to train vaccination authorities (medical practitioners) on the registration of vaccination facts and the ordering of vaccines through a digital solution. Training materials, seminar records and other necessary information were regularly sent to medical institutions and doctors' associations to facilitate the transition to work in the digital environment. The website provided access to information and the necessary training materials, as well as video recordings of the training.

Data from the epidemiological surveillance of communicable diseases. Monthly reports (Epidemiological bulletins) on infectious diseases subject to registration have been prepared and published, and the number of cases registered in Latvia during the respective period has been indicated: www.spkc.gov.lv/en/epidemiologijas-bileteni.

Monitoring data for influenza, COVID-19 and other acute upper respiratory tract infections. Weekly and annual informative analytical reports on acute upper respiratory tract infection, influenza and COVID-19 prevalence.

Vaccination monitoring data are published once a year, indicating the number of persons vaccinated, coverage and vaccination timeliness: <https://www.spkc.gov.lv/lv/infekcijas-slimibas-un-imunizacija>.

Digital tool for epidemiological investigation of infectious disease cases. A COVID-19 patient questionnaire has been developed and is available at <https://covid19sertifikats.lv> to ensure that persons infected with SARS-CoV-2 can provide information and receive recommendations online. **It is also planned to develop this tool to improve the effectiveness of epidemiological investigations of other infectious disease cases.**

Digital solution for reporting outbreaks of communicable diseases. A service has been developed on latvija.gov.lv portal for legal entities to inform about the established case of group diseases.

Digital solution for reporting infectious disease cases. A service has been developed on the e-health portal for medical practitioners and laboratories to inform about the detected infectious disease case or laboratory-determined infectious disease causative agents.

The **Ministry of Agriculture maintains** various convenient and useful **data systems for the agricultural sector**, e.g. Map of land parcels <https://karte.lad.gov.lv>; the LVM GEO Platform www.lvmgeo.lv; land melioration cadastre system www.melioracija.lv. In 2023, the MoA released **7** new open data sets in **the areas of plant protection, organic farming, food and veterinary, as well as tractor machinery surveillance** under the project "Development of information and communication technologies of the Ministry of Agriculture and its subordinate institutions (Stage 2)" implemented by the Ministry.

The **Rural Support Service** regularly updates information on its website and open data port on the following areas:

- rural register data;
- the amounts paid for area payments by type of aid;
- the areas approved by crop and type of aid;
- information on the beneficiaries of payments made by the Rural Support Service.

Two geospatial data services have been established – *Web Map Service* and *Web Feature Service*, www.lad.gov.lv/lv/lauku-registra-dati.

All registers maintained by the Food and Veterinary Service are available free of charge and in machine-readable format on the website of the Food and Veterinary Service <https://registri.pvd.gov.lv>. Information is constantly updated, e.g. inspection data relevant to the public are published (e.g. non-compliant products identified as a result of laboratory controls and reported to the EU Rapid Alert System). The data available in the public register are used in answering questions from various groups of the population (non-governmental sector, students, mass media), while inviting them to use the information available in the registers. On the basis of the information available in the registers, various audio-visual and printed information materials are produced periodically, for example, informing about the number of establishments, spectrum and frequency of inspections etc.

On the Latvian Open Data Portal, the State Technical Supervision Agency has added 5 datasets on tractor machinery at www.vtua.gov.lv/lv/jaunums/latvijas-atverto-datu-portala-atjaunoti-traktortehnikas-dati.

The Agency explains various technical tools and digital improvements in public communication, for example, on the agricultural sector e-services website www.vtua.gov.lv/lv/jaunums/ka-sakt-lietot-vtua-e-pakalpojumu. In communication with citizens, customer service specialists are educated about the digital transformation (digital tools) and the opportunities it offers, for example, to apply for a service without leaving the home, to get acquainted with the technical inspection schedules on the map.⁶⁴

The State Forest Service provides information on [the SMD website](#) and social media platforms on topics of public interest, including data and their explanation, for example, on the spruce bark beetle, on the flammable period of the forest. The SMD publishes information on updated publicly available data on social media, such as data.gov.lv or stat.gov.lv. Easy-to-understand video tutorials regularly explain the online use of the information system Forest State Register maintained by the SMD. The development of the Client Portal is underway, which will provide customers with a simpler and intuitively understandable use of the State Forest Register.

Fostering open data use skills

In 2023, the VAS established the Digital Academy of Public Administration, within the framework of which, as of 2024, it is planned to offer a wide range of trainings for employees of public administration and local governments to improve digital skills, including on data analytics, use of open data, data-based decision-making, data visualisation.

5.3. Availability of public interest data in selected areas

Following the invitation of PROVIDUS and based on the example of Estonia, the Government of Evika Siliņa envisages in the Action plan of the Cabinet to improve the set of socio-economic indicators describing different areas of municipal activities (e.g. governance, housing, education) by publishing them in a more visible way, which will facilitate their presentation and provide basic information for decision-making. For this purpose, the MoEPRD has attracted funding from *DG Reform*.

Information on Real Estate Owned by the State and Local Governments

In remaining time of this Plan, the Ministry of Finance plans to prepare an explanation for state institutions and local governments for the publication of information on their real estate.

In 2023, SJSC “State Real Estate” carried out activities for the implementation of this measure of this Plan. In accordance with its medium-term operational strategy, the SRE organised a procurement to determine the winner for the modernisation of the State Joint Stock Company “State Real Estate” information system. In April 2023, a contract was signed with SIA “BELAM-RĪGA” and in 2023 modernization works of SRE were started

⁶⁴ <https://projects.kartes.lv/vtua/?layers=1>

and carried out. In 2024, the modernisation of the project's SRE database for high-quality data acquisition and national real estate development planning will be completed.

Within the scope of its competence, the State Land Service has commenced the preparation of an assessment project on the possibility to improve the presentation of the current data of the State Real Estate Cadastre Information System on the portal www.kadastrs.lv, and **the Court Administration** has commenced an assessment of possible solutions. The evaluations prepared by the institutions are planned to be submitted to the Ministry of Justice for the preparation of a single evaluation.

Several ministries claimed information on real estate in each sector is available on the website of the relevant ministry. For example, information on the assets of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs is published on www.mfa.gov.lv/en/ipasumi, on the assets of the Ministry of Economics <https://www.em.gov.lv/en/ipasumi-1> etc.⁶⁵

Asset Declarations of Public Officials

On 25 February 2022, the SRS organised an **inter-institutional meeting** with representatives delegated by the Ministry of Justice, the KNAB and the Data State Inspectorate to discuss issues relating to the declaration of public officials, the infringement of the Law on the Prevention of Conflict of Interest in the Activities of Public Officials established in the activities of a public official, as well as the publication of lists of public officials in the form of open data in machine-readable form on the Latvian Open Data Portal and the compliance of publication with the General Data Protection Regulation and other legislation in force in the field of personal data processing and protection. **It was concluded at the meeting that the above data (including the declarations of a public official) should not be published in the form of open data and should not be subject to the "open by default" principle.**

On 25 February 2022, at an interinstitutional meeting, it was concluded and decided (aim of the State Data Inspectorate) that the data indicated in the declarations of public officials should not be published in the form of open data and that this information was sent to the MoEPRD.

In 2021 and 2022, the issue was also addressed at the level of **the Cabinet of Ministers** by looking at the information report 'On the implementation of the "Open by Default" principle'. Initially, at its meeting on 21 December 2021, the MoEPRD was given the task of providing that the data set 'Declaration data of public officials' will be opened after the relevant amendments to the regulatory framework have been made, and the MoEPRD was given the task of submitting amendments to the regulatory framework for consideration by the Cabinet of Ministers by 1 April 2022 in order to provide a legal basis for the opening of the data set 'Declaration data of public officials'. Subsequently, a decision was taken at the meeting of the Cabinet of Ministers on 14 July 2022 to cancel these tasks. The Cabinet of Ministers took note that the State Revenue Service data sets "Data on declarations of public officials" and "Data on infringements detected by public officials" will not be opened.

Work on this activity of the Plan – to assess whether public officials' declaration data should be published in the form of open data or not – has been completed and a decision has been taken not to publish this data in this form.

Remuneration and Number of State and Local Government Authorities Employees

The **State Chancellery** continues to publish two datasets at data.gov.lv:

- statistics on posts and employees;
- the distribution of posts according to the classification of the Catalogue of Posts.

⁶⁵ Information on immovable properties shall be published under the heading 'Properties', as provided for in Cabinet Regulation No 445 of 14 July 2020 on the procedure for institutions to post information on the internet.

Other datasets have not yet been published, but the evaluation is ongoing.

State and local government budget expenditure data

Interactive (national) budget data is published on the Open Data Portal.

The State Treasury ensures the availability of data on the open data portal "State budget implementation by institutions, budget programmes/sub-programmes and classification codes" on an annual basis, supplementing the data every month starting from 2018.

Municipal budget execution data is updated once a month and is available on the State Treasury website https://e2.kase.gov.lv/pub5.5_pasv/code/pub.php?module=pub, by selecting the desired period, municipality and form - overview of implementation of the basic budget.

Additional information on municipal budget revenues and expenses is available at RAIM.gov.lv.

On the availability of state and local government budget data, see also information in the section "Public finances (budget)" of this report, pp. 46-48.

Public access to media ownership information

The National Electronic Mass Media Council informs that **information on the ownership of electronic mass media is publicly available to everybody**. Registers such as "Public Media" (<https://www.neplp.lv/en/public-media>), "Commercial Television" (<https://www.neplp.lv/en/programmes-2>), "Commercial Radio" (www.neplp.lv/en/programmes-1), "Non-commercial Radio" (www.neplp.lv/en/non-commercial-radio) and "Services on demand" (www.neplp.lv/en/audiovisual-services-pec-request-registrs-0) are available in the "Media" section of the NEPLP website. Broadcasting authorisations published in the registers, as well as notices on the provision of on-demand audiovisual services and their annexes – **basic operating conditions where information on the owners of electronic media can be found**. Thus, the NEPLP provides publicly available information on owners/participants of electronic mass media.

Example of publicly available ownership information

(information about owner of the Latvian Television, at www.neplp.lv):

1.6. Informācija par īpašniekiem/dalībniekiem	
Fiziskai personai – vārds, uzvārds; juridiskai personai – nosaukums, reģistrācijas numurs	Piederošo kapitāldaļu skaits/īpatsvars
Sabiedrisko elektronisko plašsaziņas līdzekļu padome, reģ. Nr.40900037388	4837449/100%

Hence, work on this activity in the Plan – to ensure public access to media ownership information – has been completed.

Direction of Action 3: Openness of local governments and opportunities for citizens to participate in the work of their local government

Executive summary

Since the entry into force of the new Local Government Law the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Regional Development carries out important informative work, in particular, on citizen councils and participatory budgeting. The activities of the Ministry are supported by such non-governmental organisations as PROVIDUS and the Latvian Association of Local and Regional Governments (LALRG). On 22 February 2024, a meeting was held between the State Chancellery, the Ministry and the LALRG on promoting openness in local governments and implementing Action 3. To gather information on the work done by local governments, the State Chancellery has undertaken to implement direct communication with local governments, clarifying the practical experience of local governments in the implementation of participation opportunities, at the same time using the opportunity to draw attention to the importance of openness standards, promotion of participation, identification and implementation of the needs of the population for the promotion of better governance.

On 22 February 2024, a meeting was held between the State Chancellery, the Local Government Law the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Regional Development (MoEPRD) and the LALRG on the implementation of Section 3 of the Plan. It was concluded that the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Regional Development is carrying out important informative work after the entry into force of the new Local Government Law, in particular regarding the councils of the inhabitants and the participation budget.

At the meeting of the Monitoring Board of the Plan on 30 April 2024, the LALRG stressed that local governments have experience of participation and actively practice the involvement of citizens. At the meeting it was concluded that MoEPRD and SAO will address local governments directly and summarize this information.

Commitment 6: Promote openness and citizen engagement and participation in municipalities

6.1. Enforcing openness standards in municipalities by promoting greater awareness and engagement of citizens to improve life in their municipality

By letter No 1-132/10410 of 30 November 2021, the MoEPRD sent to all municipalities the guidelines drawn up by PROVIDUS in cooperation with the MoEPRD within the framework of the Active Population Fund project “Long-term solutions for better public consultation”.

“Openness standards: recommendations to local authorities for greater openness” are available for reading and downloading on PROVIDUS⁶⁶ and MoEPRD⁶⁷ official websites. The Ministry of Environmental Protection and Regional Development shall, as far as possible, inform the local government about the standards of openness within the framework of methodological work (workshops, consultations).

6.2. Experience exchanges among employees of local governments, including on public participation

The Ministry of Environmental Protection and Regional Development provides support to local governments in matters of public participation within the framework of methodological work.

⁶⁶ <https://providus.lv/raksti/atvertibas-standarti-ieteikumi-pasvaldibam-lielakas-atvertibas-nodrosinasanai>

⁶⁷ <https://www.varam.gov.lv/lv/atvertibas-standarti-ieteikumi-pasvaldibam-lielakas-atvertibas-nodrosinasanai>

Local governments discuss participatory budgets, citizen councils and communication with citizens

From June 2021 to April 2024, the LAS implemented the project “Promoting cooperation between local governments of Latvia and strengthening good governance” of the programme “Local Development, Poverty Reduction and Cultural Cooperation” of the European Economic Area Financial Mechanism 2014-2021 period.

Five networks of municipalities have been established within the project. Five seminars have been held in the Network "Cooperation with Citizens in Local Government", bringing together around 250 participants and discussing participatory budgets, citizen councils, as well as local government communication and cooperation with citizens in the digital environment. A pilot project “Inspiring practical guide for municipalities of the Population Council” has been developed. In turn, within the framework of the project activity ‘Measures to improve good governance in Latvian municipalities’, good governance coaches – lecturers – were selected to conduct training seminars for local politicians and local government employees in different regions of Latvia on the implementation of good governance principles in local governments, based on the experience gained in Norwegian municipalities. The project also developed good governance guidelines for local governments and an ethics self-assessment tool.

6.3. Strengthening the participation at local level through the following measures, integrating it as part of decision-making:

From June 2021 to April 2024, the **Latvian Association of Local and Regional Governments (LALRG)** implements the project “Promotion of Cooperation between Local Governments of Latvia and Strengthening Good Governance” within the framework of the European Economic Area Financial Mechanism 2014. - as part of the programme “Local Development, Poverty Reduction and Cultural Cooperation” for the 2021 period.

As part of the project activity ‘Measures to improve good governance in Latvian municipalities’, good governance trainers – lecturers – have been selected to conduct training seminars for local politicians and local government employees in different regions of Latvia, based on the experience gained in Norwegian municipalities. This activity is related to the implementation of la bas governance principles in municipalities. After the implementation of the project, the LALRG will summarize the achieved objectives and the methodological materials developed.

a) Increased use of the participatory budget

In 2023, the work done under draft RRF plan 2.1.1.1.i.0/1/23/I/VARAM/005 “Development and implementation of a sharing platform for participatory budget management”:

- a prototype of the public part of the Participatory Budget Information System module (hereinafter – TAPIS LBIS module) of the Territorial Development Planning Information System (hereinafter – TAPIS) has been developed, which is the basis for further development of the system itself (a system that will provide an opportunity for local governments to organise competitions for ideas for participatory budget projects, and for citizens to participate in these competitions);
- several working groups have been organised involving representatives of both local governments and NGOs, given that the functionality of the TAPIS LBIS module has a direct impact on all local governments (working groups with the participation of representatives of local governments and NGOs will continue to be organised in 2024 in order to introduce a solution that is as user-friendly as possible);
- work has begun on the development of the environment and public part of the TAPIS LBIS module administrator (business requirements have been prepared and change request for further development of the TAPIS LBIS module).

b) Fast, simple surveys and consultation activities in municipalities

No information on the implementation of the measure.

c) Establishment and transparent functioning of citizen councils

Following the adoption of the Law on Local Governments on 20 October 2022, PROVIDUS, in cooperation with the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Regional Development, developed **Guidelines for the establishment of citizen councils in local governments** available on the websites of PROVIDUS and the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Regional Development.⁶⁸ The Ministry of Environmental Protection and Regional Development shall inform the local government thereof within the framework of methodological work.

The website of the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Regional Development contains a **scheme of the process of establishing the council of citizens**. The Ministry has organised informative events for local governments on the Local Government Law and the public involvement tools included therein, as well as participated in events organised by other organisations on these issues and provided local governments and organisations representing them with answers to individual local government questions.

Events organised by the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Regional Development:

- 14.12.2022 conference “The contribution of European Union funds to the regional development of Latvia”(presentation “Decision-making in the municipality, including attraction of EU funds for citizen engagement in the work of the municipality”);⁶⁹
- Webinar on 22 February 2023 on the Law on Local Governments;⁷⁰
- 26.05.2023. Ministry in cooperation with PROVIDUS and the Council of Europe organised an international conference entitled on Good Governance in Local Governments (presentation on the New Local Government Law);⁷¹
- regional seminars for municipalities and planning regions within the framework of Measure 5.1.1.2 project No 5.1.1.2/1/23/I/001 ‘Improvement of the capacity of municipalities and planning regions’ of Specific Aid Objective 5.1.1 ‘Promotion of integrated social, economic and environmental development of local areas and cultural heritage, tourism and security in functional urban areas’ of the European Union Cohesion Policy Programme 2021-2027 implemented by the MoEPRD (presentation “Involvement of the public in the work of the municipality. Local Government Law”: 29.11.2023. Kuldīga | 13.12.2023 Rīga | 21.02.2024. Jelgava | 07.03.2024. Ilūkste | 27.03.2024. Smiltene).

The MoEPRD also participated in events organised by other organisations:

- 31.01.2023. As part of the “Solido” project organised by the Adazi District Neighbourhood Association and the “Solido” Think Tank, in cooperation with the Adazi District Municipality, an event entitled ‘Possibilities of public involvement in the work of the municipality. New Local Government Law’ (presentation of the Law on Local Governments. Involvement of the public in the work of the municipality);
- 06.03.2023. Meeting organised by the Latvian Youth Council in cooperation with the LALRG on current developments in the field of youth (presentation of the Law on Local Governments. Involvement of young people in the work of the municipality);

⁶⁸ <https://providus.lv/raksti/vadlinijas-iedzivotaju-padomju-veidosanai-pasvaldibas>

⁶⁹ <https://www.varam.gov.lv/lv/14122022-konference-eiropas-savienibas-fondu-ieguldijums-latvijas-reģionalaja-attistiba>

⁷⁰ <https://www.varam.gov.lv/lv/pasvaldibu-likums>

⁷¹ <https://www.varam.gov.lv/lv/jaunums/piecas-latvijas-pasvaldibas-sanem-eiropas-parvaldibas-izcilibas-zimi-par-sasnigumiem-labas-parvaldibas-istenosana>

- 31.05.2023. A seminar for NGO representatives organised by the Riga City Neighbourhood Centre of the Central Administration of Riga City Municipality (presentation of the Law on Local Governments. Involvement of the public in the work of the municipality);
- 15.06.2023. 6. Discussions and working groups organised within the framework of the Latvian Rural Communities Parliament;⁷²
- 11.11.2022, 25.11.2022 and 15.11.2023 Meetings organised by the LALPA on the application of the Law on Local Governments;
- 22.01.2024. A meeting organised by the LALRG on the application of the Law on Local Governments.⁷³

d) Meetings of NGOs located in the territory of the local government with senior employees and elected members of the local government

No information on the implementation of the measure.

e) Listening to citizens' recommendations on achieving the local government's strategic directions and on the problems to be solved in the local government

No information on the implementation of the measure.

f) Inclusive citizen engagement with a focus on outlying areas and their inhabitants

No information on the implementation of the measure.

g) In developing guidelines on the development of binding regulations on local government budgets and amendments thereto, work has continued to improve the availability of information on local government budgets

In order to facilitate and promote the work of local governments, the MoEPRD has developed a methodological material [Guidelines for the successful preparation of binding local government budget regulations](#), which is intended for local government development planning, finance specialists, politicians and other stakeholders.

⁷² https://www.dropbox.com/s/s1uvlrnte8rwtvy/6LLKP-programma-20230614drukaiA3_v2.pdf?e=1&dl=0

⁷³ <https://www.lps.lv/lv/tiesraides-videoarhivs/videoarhivs/974-pasvaldibu-juristu-tiksanas-ar-varam-par-pasvaldibu-likumu>

Oversight Council

By order of the Director of the State Chancellery of 7 June 2022, the Oversight council was established for the implementation of Latvia's Fifth National Open Government Action Plan 2022 – 2025. The responsible institutions identified in the Plan, including all ministries, other state institutions, as well as non-governmental organisations are represented in the Oversight council.

In 2024, it is planned to update the composition of the Oversight council due to personnel changes.

To date, 4 meetings of the Oversight council have taken place:

- 5 October 2022;
- 21 March 2023;
- 1 December 2023;
- 30 April 2024.⁷⁴

⁷⁴ Composition of the Council and minutes of its meetings: <https://www.mk.gov.lv/lv/atverta-parvaldiba#uzraudzibas-padome>

Four-Year Rules Refresh

In accordance with the provisions of the Open Government Partnership Handbook, Member States may establish two- or four-year action plans. Latvia opted for a four-year action plan. In such a case, a *mandatory refresh* is required when the two-year mark is reached.

In the update process, the country may decide to modify the commitments (e.g. to include a new performance indicator) or to include new commitments according to the current situation and needs.

The *refreshed action plan* must be submitted to the Open Government Partnership Support Unit 6 months after the two-year mark, i.e. by 28 June of this year.⁷⁵

At the meeting of the Oversight council on 30 April 2024, a discussion took place on topical issues that could be included in the update/*refresh* document. Following proposals were made:

- training on high-value data sets for public bodies;
- examples of data use cases;
- the development of a new open data strategy;
- availability of comparative socio-economic data about municipalities.

In 2024, the State Chancellery will publish information on the process of updating the plan on the OGP Plan website at www.mk.gov.lv/en/atverta-valdiba.

⁷⁵ www.opengovpartnership.org/documents/ogp-national-handbook-rules-and-guidance-for-participants-2024, Chapter 2.3. Four-Year Rules Refresh.