

# France

## Recent policy developments

- A law to promote metropolitan governance was adopted in December 2013, creating new governance structures for the top three metropolitan areas (around Paris, Lyon and Aix-Marseille), as well as for 11 other urban areas of more than 400 000 inhabitants on a voluntary basis. They will be granted greater responsibilities in certain fields, such as economic development, housing, environment, roads and social action.
- Regional government competencies and structures are also being revisited in the framework of the Act III of decentralisation. A draft law devolves additional responsibilities to regions in economic development, subsidies to enterprises, employment and youth policy. Moreover, regions may be granted responsibilities for professional training and apprenticeship. The competencies of the intermediate level, *départements*, may be modified, and mergers among them and among regions considered.
- The City Policy (*Politique de la ville*), the Law on City Programming and Urban Cohesion, was adopted in early 2014. This provides for new urban contracts, the abolition of “multi-zoning” approaches to avoid the dispersion of financial resources, the promotion of multi-level governance, of the participation of inhabitants and “territorialisation of public policies”.
- A new generation of state-region planning contracts 2014-2020 is under way.

Government structure	Municipal-level governments*	Intermediate-level governments	Regional or state-level governments
Unitary	36 700	101	27

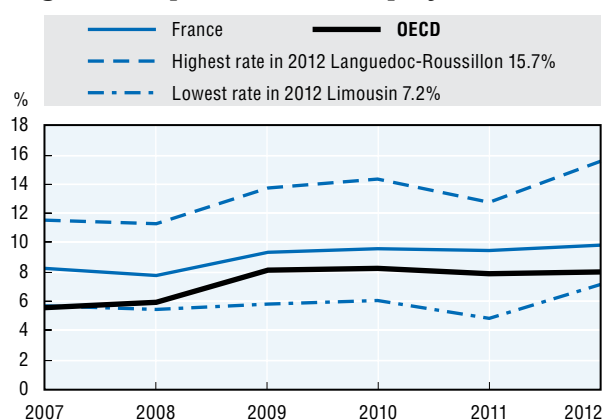
\* Local government figures include local authorities from Corsica and the five overseas departments and regions.

Regional development policy	
Lead ministry(ies) or committees	Inter-Ministerial Delegation for Spatial Planning and Regional Attractiveness (DATAR); currently under the Ministry of Housing and Equal Territorial Rights; Ministry of Administrative Reform, Decentralisation and Civil Service
Regional development framework	The Framework Law on Regional Planning and Sustainable Development (1995, modified 1999) highlights the need to define a better balance between rural and urban areas and to encourage local governments to come together to develop “territorial development projects”.

Urban development policy	
Lead ministry(ies) or committees	Inter-Ministerial Delegation for Spatial Planning and Regional Attractiveness (DATAR); Ministry of Housing and Equal Territorial Rights (Deputy Minister for Cities); Inter-Ministerial Committee on Cities; Ministry of Administrative Reform, Decentralisation and Civil Service (in charge of the 2013 Law on Metropolitan Areas)
Urban policy framework or strategy	City Policy ( <i>Politique de la ville</i> )

Rural development policy	
Lead ministry(ies) or committees	Inter-Ministerial Delegation for Spatial Planning and Regional Attractiveness (DATAR); Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries (MAP); Ministry of Administrative Reform, Decentralisation and Civil Service
Rural policy framework or strategy	The National Plan for Rural Development and the Rural Revitalisation Act (2005) focus on reinforcing the appeal of rural areas through economic development, employment, housing and public services. A 2006 decree set new criteria to define “rural regeneration zones” and provides new social and fiscal support.

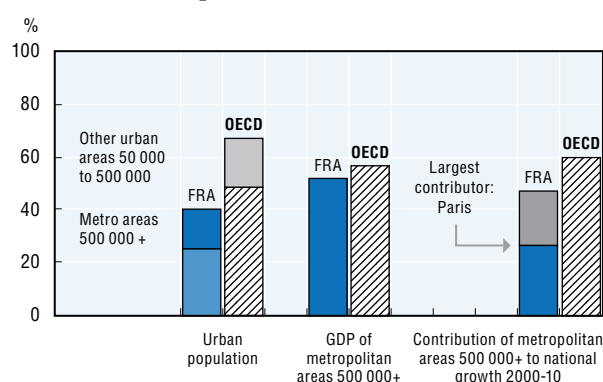
### Regional disparities in unemployment trends



In 2012, the unemployment rate varied from 7.2% in the Limousin region to 15.7% in Languedoc-Roussillon, where the youth unemployment rate reached 38%, or 16 percentage points higher than the OECD average.

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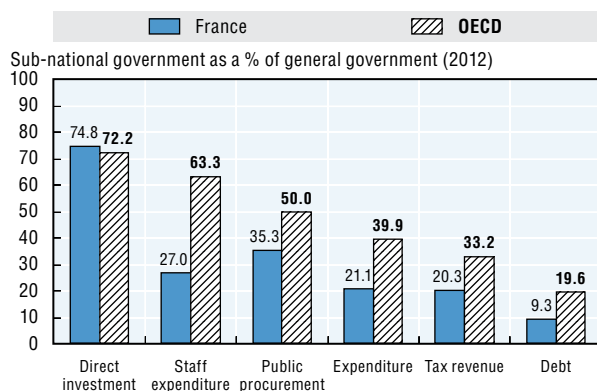
### The importance of urban areas



In France, 65% of the population lives in cities of different sizes. The share of the population in metropolitan areas (urban areas with more than 500 000 inhabitants) is 40%, compared to 49% in the OECD area.

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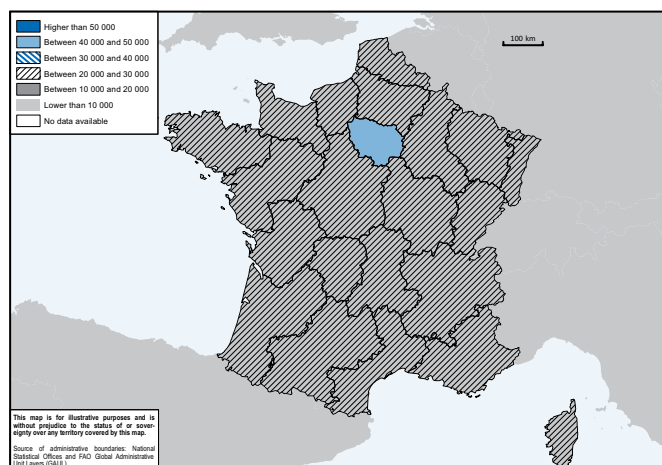
### The role of sub-national governments in public finance



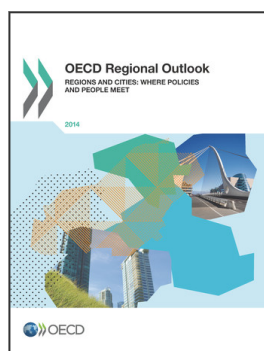
Social protection and general services expenses are the two largest spending items for SNGs in France: they represent 35% of sub-national expenditure, compared to 26% for the OECD.

StatLink <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/888933107788>

### Regional differences in GDP per capita levels



France had the 10<sup>th</sup> largest regional disparities in GDP per capita in OECD countries in 2010. In the previous decade, regional growth varied from +3.1% per year in Corsica to -0.7% in Champagne-Ardenne.



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