COLOMBIA

Overview

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| Population *(specify date)* and territory | 52.156.254 (2023), 1.136.616,142 |
| Administrative structure *(unitary/federal)* | Unitary country |
| Regional or state-level governments *(number)* | 32 departments and Bogotá (capital district) |
| Intermediate-level governments *(number)* | -- |
| Municipal-level governments *(number)* | 1.121 (1.102 municipalities, 18 non-municipalised areas, 1 island) |
| Share of subnational government in total expenditure/revenues (2021) | 33.2% of total expenditure  42.9% of total revenues  [Source: [Subnational governments in OECD countries: key data, 2023 edition](https://stats.oecd.org/Index.aspx?DataSetCode=SNGF)] |
| Key regional development challenges | * Large and persistent inequalities in economic performance and well-being between regions. (i.e. strong concentration of poverty on the Caribbean and Pacific coasts, strong concentration of GDP in the Andean region) * Inequalities in access to basic public services * Inequalities in access, use and appropriation of ICTs * Regional disparities in the distribution and quality of transport infrastructure * Disparities in fiscal capacities (tax incomes – own revenue) * Vertical disparities between subnational governments’ (SNG) revenue and expenditure responsibilities. * Disparities in institutional capabilities SNG central administrations |
| Objectives of regional policy | * Planning and promotion of economic and social development (Constitution) * Equitable socio-economic growth of the country's regions for the benefit of all territorial entities (Law 1454 of 2011) * Increase in quality levels of services provided by SNG (education, health insurance, public health, water and sanitation). * Regional Convergencies in terms of social conditions and public infrastructure. * Improvements in land registry policy (cadastre) and financial instruments to promote economic benefits from land use exploitation |
| Legal/institutional framework for regional policy | * Colombian Constitution, Title XI (chapter 1, 2, 3 and 4) * Organic Law of Territorial Planning (Law 1454 of 2011) * Local and regional association initiatives: Metropolitan areas regimen (Law 1625 of 2013) and *Ley de regiones* (Law 1962 de 2019) * Law 2056 of 2020 and decree 1821 of 2020 (Royalties) |
| Budget allocated to regional development (i.e., amount) and fiscal equalisation mechanisms between jurisdictions (if any) | * Biennial royalty budget (SGR for its acronym in Spanish) * Intergovernmental grant system (SGP for its acronym in Spanish) |
| National regional development policy framework | * National Development Plan 2022-2026 |
| Urban policy framework | * National Development Plan 2022-2026 * *Sistema de ciudades*[[1]](#footnote-2) * Policy of the System of Cities (CONPES 3819 de 2014) * Urban Policy Review OCDE, MVCT, DNP, 2022 |
| Rural policy framework | * National Development Plan 2022-2026 * CONPES 4001 de 2020: ICT rural access policy * Comprehensive Rural Reform (Peace agreement[[2]](#footnote-3)) * Development Programs with Territorial Focus (PDET for its acronym in Spanish) * Ley 2183 de 2022 (National policy for agricultural inputs[[3]](#footnote-4)) |
| Major regional policy tools (e.g., funds, plans, policy initiatives, institutional agreements, etc.) | * Departmental and municipal development plans |
| Policy co-ordination tools at national level | * Council of Ministers * Inter-institutional commissions |
| Multi-level governance mechanisms between national and subnational levels (e.g., institutional agreements, Committees, etc.) | * National Council for Economic and Social Policy (CONPES) * Land Renewal Agency (ART for its acronym in spanish) * Multipurpose Cadastre (Document CONPES 3958) * Decentralization Mission (Decree 1665 of 2021) [[4]](#footnote-5) |
| Policy co-ordination tools at regional level | * CONPES documents * Territorial pacts (Law 1450 of 2011)[[5]](#footnote-6) |
| Evaluation and monitoring tools | * Monitoring and control strategy for the efficient use of national grand system (Intergovernmental grant system) (Decree 028 of 2008) * Measuring of municipal performance Index[[6]](#footnote-7) * Measuring of departmental performance Index * Project Execution Management and Monitoring System of the General Royalty System (GESPROY- SGR for its acronym in Spanish) |
| Future orientations of regional policy | * National Development Plan 2022-2026 (in progress) * Peace agreement * Comprehensive Rural Reform (in progress) Update of the city/regional convergence policy (planned by 2024) |

Recent policy developments

Colombia’s National Development Plan 2022-2026 includes measures and actions aimed to transform and strengthen the technical capacity of subnational governments. In particular, the National government wants to develop a model of differential decentralization that allows the promotion of territorial autonomy. Also, it seeks to advance in a policy to build and improve territorial planning from a new management approach under the following principles: i) protection of water and environmental justice, ii) Human security and social justice, iii) the right to food, iv) productive transformation and climate action, and v) regional convergence

To promote strategic investment projects, the government will aim to align the general budget of the nation, intergovernmental grant system, and the general system of royalties. In this way, the National government will prioritise historically marginalised territories, the municipalities with high levels of informality and of rurality, and allows the full enjoyment of rights of the inhabitants in each of the territories.

In addition to the above, several policies and governance mechanisms have already been implemented in the last two decades to promote and address regional capacities and local development. For instance, the promotion of local and regional association initiatives, policy frameworks to promote national cities development (such as *Sistema de Ciudades*), the regulation of multipurpose cadastre orientated to promote local development and to endorse economic benefits from land use exploitation.

Colombia's Decentralisation Mission, established in 2021, is working to propose reforms to promote subnational development and reduce regional inequality. The mission's key areas of focus include:

1. Competencies throughout government levels
2. Sources and uses of revenues for local development
3. Institutional architecture and modernization of public administration
4. Open government and citizen participation
5. Decentralisation and indigenous territories

Also, since the signing of the peace agreement, Colombia has been implementing rural development policies through the Development Programs with a Territorial Focus (PDET) and advancing towards comprehensive rural reform and the strengthening of agricultural policies (Ley 2183 de 2022).

Finally, Colombia has worked to promote and strengthen digital enablers to improve access, use and appropriation of ICTs in a digitally secure environment. In 2021, Law 2108 was issued, declaring Internet access as an essential public service, and public policies have been formulated to promote Internet access and use in the most remote areas of the country. Later, in 2022, the National Data Infrastructure Plan and its governance model were issued in order to promote the use and exploitation of data; in addition, a new Digital Government Policy was developed, and guidelines were defined to strengthen the governance of digital security, as well as risk management and response to cyber incidents.

1. For more information: <https://www.dnp.gov.co/programas/vivienda-agua-y-desarrollo-urbano/desarrollo-urbano/Paginas/sistema-de-ciudades.aspx> [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
2. For more information: <https://www.jep.gov.co/Documents/Acuerdo%20Final/Acuerdo%20Final%20Firmado.pdf> [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
3. For more information: <https://www.leyex.info/documents/leyes/42af2ea68a0ca3fcec69298aa47fc51c.htm> [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
4. For more information: <https://misiondescentralizacion.dnp.gov.co/Paginas/index.aspx> [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
5. For more information: <https://pactosterritoriales.dnp.gov.co/Paginas/home.aspx> [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
6. Source: <https://portalterritorial.dnp.gov.co/AdmInfoTerritorial/MenuInfoTerrEstMDM> [↑](#footnote-ref-7)