

Independent Reporting Mechanism

Latvia Co-Creation Brief
2025

Open
Government
Partnership



Independent
Reporting
Mechanism

Overview

This brief from the OGP's Independent Reporting Mechanism (IRM) supports the co-creation process and design of Latvia's sixth action plan. It provides an overview of OGP processes in the country and presents recommendations based on collective and country specific IRM findings. The co-creation brief draws from prior IRM reports for [Latvia](#), the [OGP National Handbook](#), [OGP Participation and Co-Creation Standards](#), and IRM guidance on [the minimum requirements](#). Section 1 offers guidance for OGP processes and co-creation and Section 2 for commitment design. Government and civil society can determine the extent to which this brief is used to shape the next action plan's trajectory and content.

Supported by the Council of the Memorandum and steered by Latvia's current multi-stakeholder forum, the Supervisory Council, the country's OGP process has become [increasingly participatory](#), better reflecting citizen policy priorities. Latvia was among the first OGP members to undertake a [four-year action plan](#), ensuring that commitments were linked to broader state strategies where possible. However, there is room for strengthening the inclusivity of the OGP process through identifying and engaging civil society stakeholders that have traditionally been underrepresented or less likely to take part in participatory processes.

For the next co-creation process, Latvia could consider the following recommendations:

- Ensure OGP minimum requirements for participation and co-creation are met
- Assign clear ownership for commitments to ministries and state bodies
- Include new stakeholder groups in the action plan co-creation process

Section I: Action Plan Co-Creation

The following recommendations present opportunities for national reformers to strengthen OGP institutions and processes in the country.

Recommendation 1. Ensure OGP minimum requirements for participation and co-creation are met

Latvia's sixth action plan will be the first Latvian action plan assessed against the updated [Participation and Co-Creation Standards](#) that came into force on 1 January 2022. In designing the co-creation for Latvia's sixth action plan, the MSF and POC are encouraged to ensure that the co-creation process includes:

- A space for ongoing dialogue and collaboration between government, civil society and other non-governmental stakeholders (Standard 1). At a minimum, stakeholders should ensure that the multistakeholder space for dialogue meets every six months and information on the space is publicly available.
- Open, accessible and timely information about activities and progress within a member's participation in OGP (Standard 2). At a minimum, stakeholders should ensure that a public OGP website dedicated to Latvia's participation in OGP is maintained and includes the country's latest action plan. Additionally, stakeholders should ensure that a publicly available document repository on the OGP online website which provides access to documents related to the OGP process is maintained and updated twice a year and includes information and evidence of the co-creation process and implementation of commitments.

Furthermore, the MSF and POC are encouraged to ensure that:

- Inclusive and informed opportunities for public participation during co-creation of the action plan are provided. At a minimum, stakeholders should ensure that the co-creation timeline and an overview of opportunities to participate are published on the OGP website or webpage. Additionally, stakeholders should conduct at least one outreach activity with stakeholders to raise awareness of the OGP process and opportunities to get involved in the development of the action plan. Finally, stakeholders should ensure that the multi-stakeholder forum develops a mechanism to gather inputs from a range of stakeholders during an appropriate period of time for the chosen mechanism.
- The MSF documents and reports back or publishes written feedback to stakeholders on how their contributions were considered during the development of the action plan. At a minimum, stakeholder contributions should be documented and reasoned response should be provided to stakeholders during the development of the action plan.

If Latvia does not meet the minimum requirements for OGP's Participation and Co-Creation Standards, it could be found acting contrary to OGP process.

Recommendation 2. Assign clear ownership for commitments to ministries and state bodies

Past [Latvian action plans](#) have often not specified one ministry or state body as the lead institution when it comes to commitment implementation, but rather assigned implementation responsibilities to 'all ministries'. While involving multiple ministries can strengthen commitment ambition and early results, lacking a clear institutional lead can complicate decision making and stall commitment implementation.

During co-creation of the sixth action plan, the multi-stakeholder forum (MSF) is encouraged to ensure that commitments included in the final national action plan have clear ownership among state institutions. For example, for cross-cutting policy initiatives that involve many ministries or state bodies, stakeholders are encouraged to designate one institution as the lead to ensure discrete responsibilities are outlined, improving the coordination of commitment implementation.

Recommendation 3. Include new stakeholder groups in the action plan co-creation process

Latvia's OGP process has been relatively inclusive, with many and diverse civil society organizations being represented in the MSF and participating in the co-creation process. However, including fresh perspectives in the OGP process ensures that commitments included in the final action plan accurately reflect civil society priorities in the country.

To include new perspectives in the co-creation of Latvia's sixth action plan, the POC and the MSF could conduct outreach to stakeholder groups that have not participated or have been underrepresented in previous OGP processes. Priority could be given to groups who may face higher barriers to inclusion, such as people with disabilities, youth, ethnic minorities, newly arrived migrants and the gender rights and LGBTQ+ communities. To identify priority communities to talk to, the MSF could partner with [Civic Alliance Latvia](#), the largest CSO umbrella organization in Latvia. In engaging these communities, the POC and MSF are encouraged to work directly with CSOs such as [Manabalss](#) to identify and implement novel ways for the government to conduct outreach to non-governmental stakeholders. An example of using diverse outreach methods in co-creating an OGP action plan is [Finland](#), which collected input for commitments for the 2023-2027 National Action Plan at events such as the national CSO Academy, dedicated interviews with underrepresented organizations across Finland and online surveys.

It may be beneficial to reach out to local-level stakeholder groups and organizations to ensure broad representation. The POC and MSF could invite the [Latvian Association of Local and Regional Governments](#) to participate in the consultations. As an association uniting Latvian cities and municipalities, its participation could ensure wide uptake of commitments pertaining to local and regional governments.

Section II: Action Plan Design

The following recommendations offer policy areas for national actors to consider in the next action plan. They may represent opportunities for new commitments to address issues of national importance or to advance existing reforms.

Area 1. Deepen participatory democracy

Latvia has increasingly been introducing participatory democracy policies in its policymaking. In October 2024, the Latvian Cabinet of Ministers [approved](#) new public participation legislation, which includes extending public participation beyond traditional methods to include formats such as workshops and deliberative methods. The sixth action plan provides opportunity to ensure that citizens influence decision making by deepening participatory democracy approaches in the country. Evidence [suggests](#) that deliberative approaches can depolarize difficult or politicized decisions. In a country where trust in government [remains](#) significantly below the OECD average, at 29%, representative deliberative models can also help rebuild trust in government.

In the sixth action plan, the POC and MSF could consider commitments:

- Piloting deliberative democracy methods such as citizens' assemblies in the public sector. Priority could be given to prevalent or divisive topics in public discourse. Stakeholders are encouraged to establish rules for how deliberative processes will interact with constitutional, legislative and regulatory processes, such as clarifying when they will occur and how they will inform final decisions. [Ireland's citizen assemblies](#) have supported policy changes in topics such as abortion reform and marriage equality, while [Paris](#) has institutionalized a permanent citizens' assembly, contributing to policy solutions for topics such as [homelessness](#) and [climate-friendly urban development](#).
- Enhancing citizen engagement opportunities through the National Dialogues model. First implemented in Latvia in 2023, [Dialogue Circles](#) could be continued in thematic areas suggested by citizens and civil society, using feedback from the [2025 iteration](#) to further strengthen the process. The POC and MSF could conduct online outreach to collect recommendations for thematic areas, like the month-long survey [organized](#) by CSO Manabalss to gather citizen input for commitments during the co-creation of the fifth action plan. When designing the Dialogue Circles, the MSF is encouraged to specify concrete ways with which feedback collected by the Dialogue Circles can be included in the country's policy making, using lessons learned from [Finland's initiative](#) to strengthen their national dialogue initiative by using Dialogues input in policy-making.
- Creating a specialized citizen participation team or network to support the implementation of participatory and deliberative methods in public-sector decision making. The team would help ensure that institutions follow participation guidelines, maintain institutional knowledge and increase the quality of participatory and deliberative mechanisms in Latvia. France's [Interministerial Center on Citizen Participation](#), which offers interdepartmental support, advice and expertise dedicated to citizen participation, could serve as an example for Latvia.

Area 2. Strengthen participatory budgeting in municipalities

Starting in 2025, local municipalities in Latvia have to [introduce](#) participatory budgeting in their territory. Participatory budgeting allows citizens to be actively involved in decision-making, prioritizing projects and initiatives that address their community's needs. It also supports enhanced transparency and accountability at the local level. According to data from spring of 2024, 59% of Latvians [trust](#) local governments. However, less than half of those surveyed believe that if a local government made a decision that affected the local community, this community would have the opportunity to express its opinion on the issue.

To increase opportunities for citizen engagement in local-level decision making and strengthen citizens' trust in local government, the sixth action plan could include a commitment to strengthen participatory budgeting in municipalities. As the process of participatory budgeting requires citizen participation, a commitment could include awareness-raising activities as well as trainings on the process of participatory budgeting: how to prepare a participatory budgeting proposal, how to advocate for it, and how to collaborate with municipal specialists. Particular attention could be paid to municipalities that have had weak public participation to date.

While the new law stipulates that municipalities [must allocate](#) 0.5% of average annual personal income and real estate tax revenues for the last three years to participatory budgeting, a commitment could encourage municipalities to allocate a larger amount to the process. Furthermore, to ensure accountability and transparency in the process, stakeholders could include a commitment including CSOs and citizens in monitoring allocation of funds in local participatory budgeting processes. In designing a participatory budgeting commitment, stakeholders could draw from [lessons learned](#) from [Lithuania's participatory budgeting](#) at the local level.

Area 3. Introduce an Open Data strategy

Latvia has consistently included open data commitments in previous OGP action plans, ranging from the creation of an [open data portal](#) to publishing [public procurement open data](#). According to the 2023 Open Data Maturity Index, Latvia [has](#) strong open data policy frameworks and governance, but open data policy implementation could be strengthened. Additionally, while open data awareness is high, the impact of open data on society could be reinforced. At the same time the [OECD's 2023 Open, Useful and Re-usable Data Index](#) ranked Latvia among the lowest performers among countries measured.

In the sixth action plan, the MSF could consider including a commitment introducing a whole-of-government open data strategy for Latvia. Such open data strategies have been adopted by [Ireland](#) and [Germany](#). The data strategy should include a clear policy framework including data standards, a data inventory, usage guidelines and accountability and oversight mechanisms. The POC and MSF are encouraged to include civil society and non-governmental experts in drafting the open data strategy.

The brief was reviewed by IRM senior staff for consistency, accuracy, and with a view to maximize the context-relevance and actionability of the recommendations. Where appropriate, external reviewers or members of the IRM International Experts Panel (IEP) review briefs.