

# Strengthening strategic planning and the role of PlanAPP in Portugal

OECD Public Governance Policy Papers

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# Abstract

This Policy Paper provides an analysis of the new the Portuguese Competence Centre for Planning, Policy and Foresight in Public Administration (PlanAPP) and its functions in Portugal, focusing on strategic planning and networking activities. It analyses the role of PlanAPP in aligning and harmonising the strategic planning process and in ensuring evidence-informed, inclusive and co-ordinated strategic planning, particularly through RePLAN, Portugal's Public Administration Planning and Foresight Services Network. The paper makes recommendations to help Portugal effectively implement the competency centre model, consolidate its strategic planning process, better define and co-ordinate high-level priorities, and set a path to achieve them effectively and coherently.

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# Executive Summary

Like many OECD countries, Portugal must address national priorities such as enhancing productivity and reducing inequalities as well as long-term challenges such as the digital and green transitions – all within an environment characterised by disruptive crises, such as COVID-19 and Russia’s war of aggression in Ukraine. To this end, the Portuguese government has developed institutional capacities and public governance mechanisms to respond to these complex issues and enhance policymaking and planning. In particular, Portugal has implemented a new Competence Centre for Planning, Policy and Foresight in Public Administration (PlanAPP) at the centre of government. This paper will explore PlanAPP’s role in strategic steering and networking, including its capacity to help align and harmonise the strategic planning process in Portugal and to promote evidence-informed and inclusive strategic planning.

PlanAPP aims to play a key role in steering and co-ordinating the Portuguese strategic planning process, complementing the strategic planning functions of several units, both at the centre of government and elsewhere, and in particular in the Prime Minister’s Office, the Ministry of the Presidency and the State Secretary for Planning, and the Ministry of Finance. In this fragmented institutional context, PlanAPP’s role consists of enhancing the co-ordination and steering of strategic planning processes and the alignment of strategic documents; preparing, or ensuring the preparations of, specific strategic documents, and supporting the development of strategic planning capabilities across the administration. While PlanAPP’s activities are based on a mandate defined by Decree-Law, the lack of clear mandates for the different entities involved in strategic planning makes it difficult to prioritise and align national strategic objectives. To improve strategic planning, Portugal could consider developing an overall strategic planning process architecture with clear roles and responsibilities based on the current mapping of strategic planning processes.

Portugal’s long-term vision for policy development is based on several robust strategic documents, such as Portugal 2030, the Major Options and the government programme, but there is no overarching, binding framework for the government, leading to a lack of coherence, alignment, and hierarchy among strategies. The proliferation of strategic documents at the sectoral and cross-sectoral level, which also includes plans linked to EU commitments such as the National Stability Programme, creates challenges. Therefore, the role of PlanAPP is instrumental in aligning national and sectoral plans. Recently, efforts have been made to further align the Major Options, the government programme and other strategic documents. To strengthen the planning framework, Portugal could define and formalise the hierarchical relationship among plans, design detailed processes for the preparations of key strategic documents, and introduce standards and guidance for strategic documents to ensure consistency.

Strengthening the link between planning and budget would help Portugal address and fund key strategic priorities more effectively. Despite recent efforts, the alignment of the budget and planning process has proven challenging in Portugal, as in many OECD Member countries. This alignment is framed in the 2015 Budget Framing Law and should be articulated through the Major Options as outlined by the Constitution. PlanAPP has been working on linking the Major Options more closely to the budget. However, several barriers persist: for example, the prioritisation reflected in the Major Options is still too closely linked to funding availability, rather than helping identify priorities and allocate funds. Portugal could consider



bringing together systematically line Ministries, the MoF, and PlanAPP when developing strategies to foster a discussion of priorities, costing and the cost-effectiveness of measures, and increase the connection between high-level prioritisation and spending.

PlanAPP is also tasked with promoting and implementing evidence-informed and inclusive strategic planning. To this end, PlanAPP has developed RePLAN, the Public Administration Planning and Foresight Services Network, which aims to help structure and oversee intergovernmental networking for strategic alignment and policy coherence. PlanAPP has been acting as a knowledge broker between policy and scientific advice, involving government stakeholders and external stakeholders and using a wide range of sources of data and evidence. PlanAPP's role could be further strengthened as a knowledge broker by developing guidance and methodology on the use of evidence, mapping out the policy advisory bodies to create a more robust policy advisory system, and establishing a network on foresight and research across the administration.

In addition, RePLAN is tasked with mobilising and aligning the whole-of-government on strategic planning, and has started to organise interministerial meetings. RePLAN can be instrumental in fostering the exchange of best practices and training among policymakers; in mobilising, aligning, and sharing strategic priorities, documents and methodologies; and in increasing capabilities across the public administration. To foster effective internal networking, the government could create a limited number of ministerial working groups on strategic priorities for which PlanAPP and RePLAN could serve as the secretariat. These groups could be modelled on the working group for the preparations of the Major Options to ensure buy-in and systematise the process.

Finally, REPLAN could support the growing culture in Portugal encouraging the participation of citizens and civil society in policymaking. Recent planning exercises involved meetings with citizens, open hearings, and opportunities for written contributions. However, these processes have not sufficiently met people's expectations for participation, with only 4 in 10 Portuguese perceiving that their opinions would be considered in a public consultation. Portugal could consider creating a centre for citizen engagement in the centre of government to set standards and promote public participation principles and practices; develop citizen participation mechanisms, such as national dialogues; and expand the role of RePLAN in designing participation mechanisms and embedding citizen engagement in strategic planning, particularly on crosscutting priorities such as climate change.

# 1 The development of PlanAPP

Addressing multi-faceted crises and long-term priorities requires robust whole-of-government strategic and co-ordination mechanisms, as well as good design, implementation, and evaluation of policies. In particular, centres of government are uniquely placed to align the machinery of government around strategic multi-faceted crises priorities, as well as prioritise high-level objectives and design policy responses across government. Strengthening the capacity of the centre has thus emerged as a crucial factor in meeting broader political and crosscutting commitments.

Portugal has recently established PlanAPP, using a Competency Centre model already used for other governance areas in the country, for instance JurisAPP for legal matters. PlanAPP's objectives include the co-ordination and steering of strategic planning processes, the alignment of strategic documents, the preparations of specific strategic documents including the Major Options and the National Reform Programme, and support the development of capabilities on strategic planning across the administration (Government of Portugal, 2021<sup>[1]</sup>). As part of the development of PlanAPP, Portugal has also created a network for strategic planning across the administration, RePLAN.

By supporting effective policy development and strategic planning, PlanAPP can help the country address current and new challenges, as well as reinforcing trust. It is utterly timely as the recent *OECD Economic Surveys: Portugal* highlights that recent crises have an impact on economic recovery and on policy outputs in the long-term, including increasing poverty and inequality levels. Ensuring an inclusive recovery will require establishing an effective strategic framework, as well as tackling new financial risks, and addressing long-term challenges (OECD, 2023<sup>[2]</sup>).

To better play its role and develop its activities, PlanAPP has identified together with the OECD, two main areas of opportunity, particularly:

- How to align and harmonise the strategic planning process in Portugal, looking at the role and instruments of PlanAPP in strategic alignment and in steering and co-ordinating the strategic planning process, the hierarchy of strategic documents and the link between the budget and strategic planning.
- How to use PlanAPP and RePLAN as tools for evidence-informed and inclusive strategic planning, harnessing evidence and insight from civil society and non-governmental stakeholders, developing an internal network on strategic activities in the administration and engaging citizens and non-government stakeholders to support developing an evidence base for strategic planning.

This paper will help provide insights and an international perspective on these challenges, studying the experiences and practices of OECD member countries, assessing how relevant they are for PlanAPP and exploring options for PlanAPP to strengthen its role, instruments and capabilities in the strategic planning process, including through RePLAN. More broadly, it aims to support Portugal in better defining and aligning its priorities and setting a path to achieve them effectively and coherently.

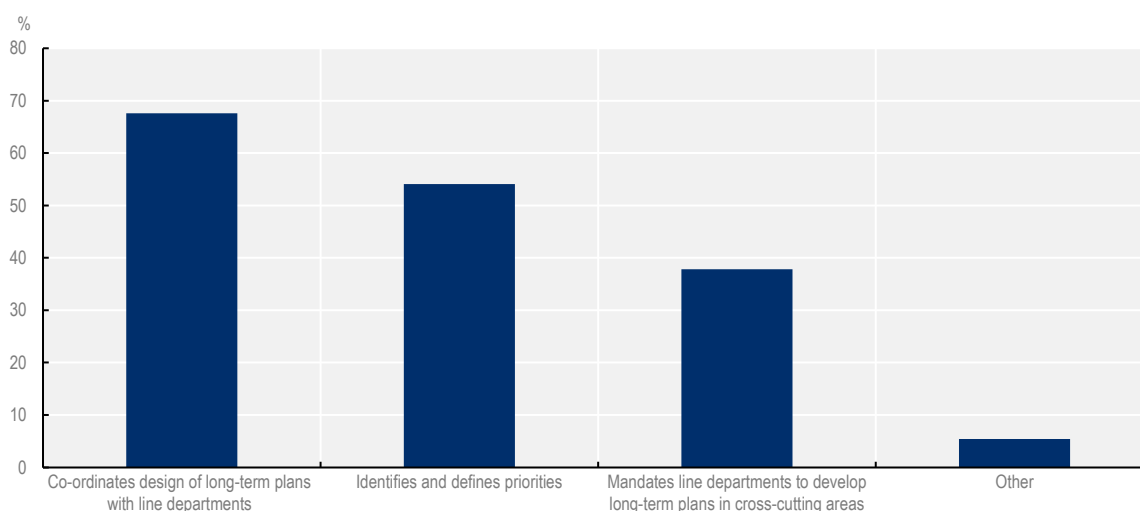
## 2 Strategic steering: PlanAPP as a lever to align and harmonise the strategic planning process in Portugal

Portugal has developed multiple key strategic documents with different time horizons and linked to different regulations and objectives as well as EU commitments, including, but not limited to: Portugal 2030 Strategy, the Major Options, the Government Programme, the National Reform Programme, the Stability Programme and the Recovery and Resilience Plan<sup>1</sup>. A clearer and more explicit articulation of these strategic planning documents instruments in Portugal would enable to focus government capabilities on a few policy priorities while further supporting strategic planning efforts and resources to help achieve Portugal's long-term ambitions. While a challenging endeavour, articulating strategic objectives across different timeframes is crucial to ensure plans promote synergies, provide a coherent vision for the country and are consistently implemented. The establishment of PlanAPP as a Competency Centre under the Minister of the Presidency aims to provide an institutional response to these challenges, especially in increasing strategic planning capabilities across the government and in helping the government steer and deliver on its high-level strategic priorities.

Strategic planning is one of the core functions played by PlanAPP, an institution located at the centre of government, and involves a number of entities at the centre (including the Prime Minister Office, the Minister of the Presidency, the General Secretariat of the Presidency of the Council of Ministers) and elsewhere (Ministry of Finance, line Ministries, other public agencies and non-government stakeholders) in Portugal. This setting with multiple entities working on strategic planning at the centre of government is not unique in OECD member countries. In an environment characterised by the increasing complexity and cross-cutting nature of policymaking, the centre of government<sup>2</sup> is uniquely situated to steer strategic plans and policy responses, ensure their consistencies and translate high-level strategic visions and election manifestos into national plans that inform policy priorities and work programmes and reflect a specific strategic vision for the future of the country (OECD, 2018<sub>[3]</sub>). As such, in the past decade, the centre has increasingly played a strategic and forward-looking role, including by positioning itself at the forefront of whole-of-government strategic planning (OECD, 2018<sub>[3]</sub>).

The 2017 Survey on the Organisations and Functions of the Centre of Government (OECD, 2018<sub>[3]</sub>) found that strategic planning was a sole centre of government responsibility in 57% of surveyed countries, a shared responsibility in 38% of cases, and attributed to a third party in only 5% of cases. Moreover, the role played by the centre in strategic planning and prioritisation is not monolithic: in most cases (68%), the centre plays more of a co-ordination and oversight role, rather than identifying and defining priorities (the case in 54% of respondents). In more than a third of countries (38%), this means ensuring or mandating line ministries to develop long-term plans (Figure 2.1).

**Figure 2.1. Role of the centre of government in priority setting and strategic alignment**



Source: OECD (2017<sup>[4]</sup>), “Survey on the organisation and functions of the centre of government”, OECD, Paris.

Whether the centre is steering the strategic planning process, or supporting it by collaborating jointly with other actors in the administration, the Centre’s value added is generally to act as a central leadership hub in order to facilitate co-ordination, collaboration and co-operation across the public administration, with the objective of securing a strong, coherent and collective strategic vision of where the country needs to go and how it will get there (Brown, Kohli and Mignotte, 2021<sup>[5]</sup>).

Portugal’s “Competency Centre” model on different functions within one of the structures of its centre of government (under the Minister of the Presidency) echoes these global trends, with the aim of increasing co-ordination and steering of activities from the centre, develop high-quality services and help expand capabilities in the public administration. Competency Centres have been established on legal services (JurisAPP) and on IT (AMA). The government established the most recent competency centre “PlanAPP” by Decree Law 21/2021 (*Centro de Competências de Planeamento, de Políticas e de Prospetiva da Administração Pública*), dedicated to strategic planning (PlanAPP, 2022<sup>[6]</sup>; Government of Portugal, 2021<sup>[11]</sup>).

This section will focus on areas of risk and opportunity to support, steer, and harmonise the planning framework in Portugal, with a specific focus on the following areas of analysis:

- Steering and supporting the whole-of-government strategic planning process, looking at the role of the centre and the support and interactions with line ministries;
- Prioritisation, hierarchy, and alignment of the planning framework for more efficient, effective and coherent government action;
- Linking strategic priorities with the budget process.

## **Steering and co-ordination in the strategic planning process – the role of the Centre of government**

While Centres of governments usually play a leading role in the whole-of-government strategic planning processes in OECD member countries, in practice, it has been observed that such leadership requires careful calibration. A delicate balance is needed to steer policy planning while giving space to line ministries to shape the substantive direction of policies. It is important to work toward a system where the Centre can

exert effective oversight, ensure the consistency of strategies with government priorities, provide support to line Ministries, and clarify lines of accountability. Line ministries also need to exercise leadership for the actions and policies for which they are responsible and accountable, within the overall framework of a shared or collective commitment. This balance has become increasingly difficult to achieve as Centres have often taken on a leading role in planning the post-Covid recovery. Indeed 76% of countries have designated the Centre as responsible for cross-government strategic planning to support the recovery, including in Portugal through the Prime Minister's Office (OECD, 2021<sup>[7]</sup>).

In the context of Portugal, where PlanAPP has been recently established and needs to launch and sustain efficient collaboration modes, assert its credibility and demonstrate its value added, it is thus paramount to clarify and solidify the role of the body in charge of strategic planning. It is equally important to identify the collaboration processes between PlanAPP and other entities involved in strategic planning and pinpoint what sustains, inhibits, and stabilizes the collaboration processes in order for strategic planning to function as an effective tool for government co-ordination and policy coherence.

This section will explore the role of PlanAPP among other units in charge of strategic planning within the Centre and in line ministries, discuss and further explore ways and mechanisms for PlanAPP to support line ministry and to steer the overall strategic planning process.

### ***Role of the centre of government and strategic units in the Portuguese strategic planning process***

*Portugal has a large number of units, both in the centre and elsewhere, with strategic planning functions*

The institutional context underpinning strategic planning at the centre of government is often subject to frequent institutional reconfigurations. Centres of government throughout OECD countries undergo recurrent institutional reforms, mergers, divisions, etc. Between 2012 and 2017, 70% of surveyed countries experience a change in the number and 64% in the type of units within the centre (OECD, 2018<sup>[3]</sup>). Portugal is no different, with for instance the overhaul of the Ministry of Planning, now a Secretary of State, and the reallocation of some of its functions to the Ministry of Presidency.

Change and flexibility are thus par for the course in most OECD countries and underpin the strategic planning framework. This reality must be considered when designing and reforming strategic planning tools and routines, to ensure they remain agile and resilient to possible changes in the institutional structure of the centre of government.

PlanAPP has been created by decree as one of the latest changes to the centre of government and to the overall government structure in Portugal with responsibilities on strategic planning that was set by a decree establishing PlanAPP (Government of Portugal, 2021<sup>[1]</sup>). As part of the Presidency of the Council of Ministers and responding to the Prime Minister, PlanAPP is mandated to ensure macro-co-ordination on strategic planning; reinforce the consistency and readability of national strategies; shape and steer the overall strategic planning process; reinforce and co-ordinate sectoral efforts; support and develop the capabilities of other Ministries. In addition to its own role, as reported by PlanAPP planning processes and activities are overseen and led by a variety of institutions and units, particularly:

- Prime Minister's Cabinet: it co-ordinates government action, providing strategic priorities and ensuring their delivery, and has direct responsibility for the EU portfolio;
- Ministry of the Presidency: it has direct responsibility over national planning, regional planning and public administration;
- Secretary of State for Planning: as part of the Presidency of the Council of Ministers, it supports the Prime Minister and Minister of Presidency in their planning roles. The secretary of state was previously a Ministry, and led the elaboration of the Portugal 2030 strategy.

Considering the number of important players involved in strategic activities, co-ordination across them appears paramount to ensure strategic alignment and a common vision in all key strategic documents. Co-ordination across bodies in Portugal is largely indexed to specific strategic documents. For instance, actors involved in the elaboration of the 2022 NRP (Mission Unit – Recover Fund; Agency for Development and Cohesion; Ministry of Finance; PlanApp; Directorate General for European Affairs) set up an informal working group to discuss the tenor of the document, timelines and allocation of responsibilities. Exchanges held in the context of this project highlighted the quality of informal relations between units with a mandate related to strategies. In other words, while working groups might form specifically to elaborate or monitor a strategy, the constellation of units involved in strategic activities has been lacking a formalised and systematic forum for sustained collaboration around strategic planning that PlanAPP can potentially support. In particular, RePLAN could provide an institutional channel to establish formal collaboration on strategic planning between the different planning units in Portugal, both located at the centre of government and entities that are not at the centre.

PlanAPP has been provided an explicit mandate on strategic planning through the Decree-Law 21/2021 and particularly its article 2 that includes defining the strategic lines, priorities, and objectives of public policies, maintaining the coherence of sectoral plans with transversal planning documents, issuing reports/opinions on sectoral plans, monitoring implementation, evaluating the implementation of public policies, planning instruments and the results obtained, and elaborating prospective and foresight studies. A number of its activities echo those performed by strategic units at the centre of government, for instance the Government Strategy Department in Finland (Box 2.1).

### **Box 2.1. The Government Strategy Department in Finland**

The Government Strategy Department in Finland (GSD) is located in the Prime Minister office and performs strategic co-ordination and planning activities for the whole-of-government. The GSD was established in 2018 and can be considered as a technical rather than political unit. It carries out wide functions: strategic co-ordination and alignment, preparations and monitoring of the government programme, its operationalisation into an action plan, co-ordinating government work on research and foresight, the monitoring and delivery of key government long-term priorities (Agenda 2030), and the oversight and support of Ministerial working group on government priorities for which it usually plays the role of Secretariat. These activities are reflected in the structure of the GSD with dedicated team working on each of these topics. The GSD actively engages with line Ministries on strategic topics and is co-ordinating a number of interministerial working groups and networks, including on foresight, research, and key government priorities. The GSD can also be called to present a government report or topic to the Parliament, which helps establish more sustained dialogue on strategic issues and documents.

Source: (Government of Finland, 2022<sup>[8]</sup>).

However, government stakeholders repeatedly highlighted the lack of clear mandates for the different players on the design, implementation and monitoring of strategies as a major challenge for setting and prioritizing national strategic objectives. In an effort to mitigate the potential risks linked to the institutional model underpinning strategic planning in Portugal, the Government should be particularly vigilant about the risk of duplication, overlap and gaps linked to unclear mandates and the lack of a common understanding on the roles and responsibilities in strategic planning.

Based on its mandate, PlanAPP can support further outlining, consolidating and co-ordinating the strategic planning process across these multiple entities existing in Portugal. PlanAPP can also leverage the newly established Public Administration Planning and Foresight Services Network (RePLAN) to further engage and co-ordinate strategic planning entities. With this objective in mind, PlanAPP has started to carry out a first mapping of government bodies with a mandate related to strategic planning. In this regard, the Government could envisage carrying out a full functional review of units with a planning related mandate. This exercise would likely include the following activities and could be led by the Presidency of the Council of Ministers with the support of PlanAPP:

- Develop a comprehensive inventory/ mapping of government bodies with a mandate related to strategic planning;
- Identify key co-ordination instruments between them;
- Focus on the elimination of duplication, the consolidation of similar services and missions, and the merger of similar functions/units from different ministries/institutions.

Functional reviews of this type come with two main implementation risks: firstly they can generate instability due to potential changes in mandates, secondly they might blur lines of accountability if existing strategic documents have allocated responsibilities to specific institutions. To mitigate these risks, criteria for review should balance the risks of instability with the potential need to rationalize the planning architecture.

In Portugal, a number of planning units were identified in other ministries as follows:

- GPEARI (Planning, Strategy, Evaluation and International Relations office) – Ministry of Finance;
- GEP (Strategy and Planning Office) – Ministry of Labour, Solidarity and Social Security;
- GEE (Strategy and Studies Office) – Ministry of Economy and the Sea;
- GPP (Planning, Policies and General Administration Office) – Ministry of Agriculture and Food;
- GEPAC (Strategy, Planning and Assessment Office for Culture) – Ministry of Culture.

However, government's stakeholders highlighted that other line ministries do not have such planning entities, departments or units<sup>3</sup>. PlanApp has a crucial role to play in assessing institutional gaps, identifying suitable interlocutors and units in those cases, engaging in a dialogue with them to raise their strategic planning role, capabilities and profile, and involving them in the planning process at the sectoral and national level. In particular, PlanAPP benefits from a whole of government perspective in fostering the development of capabilities and encouraging the creation of similar units in different ministries. RePLAN's envisaged role as a "network of networks" in that regard, with an appointed representative per ministry will be a particularly suitable format to engage in those discussions with line ministries which have less formalised or less established planning capabilities. Developing and leveraging such a network will be crucial in helping the centre develop a strategic planning culture throughout the administration which goes beyond compliance.

Seeking out leaders on strategic planning within and outside the centre who can work within the system in new, and constructive ways, and harnessing their leadership to build a community of practice around planning can indeed be a very effective lever to enhance peer learning, find champions across the administration and decrease asymmetries in capacity between line ministries.

### **Supporting line ministries in the planning process**

Irrespective of the degree of whole-of-government co-ordination for strategic planning, centres of government must carefully toe the line between steering policy planning while giving space to line ministries to shape the substantive direction of policies, both to leverage their expertise and garner buy-in for cross-cutting priorities. One of the centre's core roles in that regard is to support line ministries in enhancing their planning capabilities.

The ability of PlanAPP to support and guide line ministries in the planning process is modulated by two features of strategic planning in the country that are highlighted by government partners<sup>4</sup>:

- The planning process for sectoral planning is not defined by law, meaning there is no set standardized workflow and structure across the administration;
- Whole-of-government planning exercises outlining high-level priorities (Government Programme, Major Options bill, Portugal 2030 Strategy) appear to be largely top-down exercises for which line ministries provide opinions or inputs towards the tail-end of the process.

#### *Guidance, resources, templates for the elaboration of sectoral and intersectoral strategies at line ministry level*

Developing and disseminating quality criteria, guidelines and resources on strategic planning is critical to enhance the quality and overall robustness of strategic planning across the administration. At present in Portugal, no guidance is made available to line ministries during the planning process, and no objective criteria for their review have been established, although this is part PlanAPP's mandate as described in Article 2 of Decree-Law 21/2021. These activities are part of PlanAPP's mandate ("Draw up and disseminate guidelines and support the creation of sectoral planning and assessment instruments") that could develop and disseminate guidance, resources, templates for the elaboration of sectoral and intersectoral strategies at line ministry level, and support line Ministries in developing their strategic capabilities, particularly for those which do not have any planning unit yet. Box 2.2 highlights the detailed guidance as well as templates provided to line ministries in the Czech Republic for the elaboration of government strategies.

#### **Box 2.2. Examples of guidance provided to line ministries for the elaboration of sectoral or cross-sectoral strategies in the Czech Republic**

The original version of the Methodology for the Preparation of Public Strategies (Methodology) in the Czech Republic was approved by the government on May 2, 2013 (Resolution No. 318/2013). The update of the Methodology was discussed by the Ministry for Regional Development in 2018 and approved by the government on January 28, 2019 (Resolution No. 71/2019).

The methodology streamlines and articulates the procedure for creating strategic documents with the aim of increasing their quality and interconnectedness. It describes the process of individual strategy preparation and implementation, from identifying the need for strategy creation, its preparation for approval and actual implementation. The methodology also includes resources on how the typology of strategic and implementation documents, the use of knowledge in strategic work, the evaluation of strategies and their impacts, and summarizes all this graphically in individual figures.

Guidance available to line ministries can be found on the [Government Portal for Strategic Planning](#) and includes the following resources:

- Typology of strategic documents.
- The process of creating a strategic document.



- Templates and tools (model for determining the type of strategic document needed, organisational structure of strategy creation, strategy structure, strategy creation plan, matrix of measures and activities, strategy creation budget, strategy creation schedule, co-operation and communication plan, risk management plan, etc.).
- Comparative analysis of methodological approaches to planning.

The portal is maintained and updated by the Ministry of Regional Development that also uses an Expert Group on Strategies to animate the portal and discuss with line Ministries.

Source: (Government of the Czech Republic, 2022<sup>[9]</sup>).

The methodology and workflow for sectoral planning developed by PlanAPP in the context of their mandate will represent a novelty to the public administration. In that respect, piloting this methodology with one or a small set of line ministries might enable PlanAPP to smooth out possible wrinkles, as well as strengthen buy-in from outside the centre.

For these mechanisms to be effective, they need to be clearly communicated with line ministries, and pertinent stakeholders need to be intimately aware of where those resources can be found and how to call on PlanAPP for additional support if needed. The US Office of Performance Management (OPM) has a dedicated page detailing the support the OPM can provide to agencies (see Box 2.3).

### **Box 2.3. Office of Personal Management services for agencies in the United States**

Given the nature of strategic planning, all projects are tailored to the specific needs of the agency and can range from assisting agencies, cradle to grave, with the step-by-step process for formulating a strategic plan, to facilitating leadership strategic planning off-sites to developing implementation plans.

When facilitating leadership off-sites, a sampling of services that can be provided by OPM include:

- Pre-session development of materials and identifying key documents to be used for strategic planning session.
- Pre-session discussions with leadership and stakeholders to refine the strategic planning session process goals and outcomes.
- A validation or development of the mission and vision statements either during the strategic planning session or prior to the session.
- A Strength Weaknesses Opportunities and Threats (SWOT) analysis exercise to help agencies understand their distinctive organizational competencies and recognize strategic implications.
- A Strategic Issues Identification exercise to help agencies identify strategic issues – the fundamental challenges affecting the mission, mandates, values, structure, processes, and its management.
- A Strategic Goal and Objective Identification exercise to help agencies identify strategic goals and objectives to deal with the strategic issues identified. These goals and objectives will be the foundation of the strategic plan.
- A summary report of the strategic planning session's activities and outcomes that can be translated into a strategic planning document.

Source: (Government of the United States of America, 2022<sup>[10]</sup>).

### *Engaging line ministries in whole-of-government strategic processes and documents*

While the development of sectoral strategies rests in line ministries' purview, they should also be considered key contributing bodies in the definition of government priorities and whole-of-government planning. As such, the centre of Government in Portugal, and PlanAPP in particular could envisage developing additional mechanisms and instruments for line ministries to play their role in this exercise, particularly on the strategic documents that are led by PlanAPP (Major Options and NRP).

Line ministries' role with respect to the Major Options could be twofold. On one hand, ministries can make direct contributions or have a say in the definition of priorities themselves or influence the priority-setting process to include some of their own priorities or at least contribute to the selected ones with their own sectoral perspective. In other countries, line ministries have a more narrowly defined role, limited to commenting the action plan prior to its approval. Both of these scenarios nevertheless require ministries to have the capacity to identify their own priorities in relations to the government's key ones, and the institutional capacity to respond to these documents in a coherent manner.

Conversely, and in particular when the planning process is more top-down, ministries should also have the capacity to scan and analyse whole-of-government strategies to identify priorities that apply to them, and respond with appropriate policy proposals. This role is usually supported by the centre, which can help them identify and connect whole-of-government priorities with sectoral ones, for instance through strategy review meetings. As outlined in subsequent sections of this policy paper, this does not preclude the centre from checking policy proposals for alignment with priorities down the line.

The creation of working groups as was done for the 2022 NRP can support the involvement and discussions with line Ministries and enhance their contributions to key documents with the support of PlanAPP. This can help ensure alignment of priorities and prepare for decision-making at the level of the Cabinet meeting. This work setting is frequently used in OECD member countries on key strategic documents and priorities and could be expanded to more strategic plans in Portugal.

PlanAPP could thus envisage developing resources and instruments to help line Ministries:

- Identify sectoral priorities that could contribute or enrich whole-of-government's priorities, and comment effectively on the Major Options or other national strategies prior to approval to push these;
- Identify priorities relevant to their sector in whole-of-government planning documents to further implement them and reflect them in their own strategic documents;
- Set up working groups in a more systematic manner involving line Ministries to ensure whole-of-government engagement and alignment on key documents, replicating the experience of the NRP 2022.

### *Digital tools and platforms*

Many countries with a standardised and streamlined process for strategic planning have taken advantage of digitalisation in the public administration to better co-ordinate and align strategic documents. As a uniform and standardised system, IT tools can be used to collect and share strategies, to ensure the conformity and quality of strategies, to facilitate the knowledge sharing process and to guide the departments of the ministries on the information to be provided.

Countries such as Latvia and Czech Republic have deployed unified platforms to centralise strategic documents, which are the equivalent of a registry of strategies (Box 2.4). These databases allow the government to publish, consult and share all strategic documents and aim to facilitate their alignment and that they meet appropriate standards of quality. This objective requires that there are processes and mechanisms in place to organise such a strategy review and discussions. The Czech Republic (called eKlep), and other countries such as Estonia and Finland have developed a digital platform for submitting

and reviewing documents in preparations to Cabinet meetings. This procedure includes the review of draft strategic plans and supports the provision and discussions of comments by all government institutions. As highlighted in previous sections, some countries have also used dedicated websites to share guidelines, templates and resources on the strategic planning process.

The Government of Portugal, and PlanAPP in particular, could identify potential areas of opportunity in leveraging ICT to better streamline the planning process, and ease the burden for elaboration, information-sharing, and review at the line ministry level. Online platforms could be used to centralise strategic documents, articulate schedules for the preparation of key documents, support the discussions and organise the preparations and commenting procedure on draft versions as well as share templates, guidelines and methodologies with other entities at the centre of government and elsewhere.

#### **Box 2.4. Examples of online databases of strategies**

##### **Latvia**

Latvia has implemented an online platform of policy planning documents, called [Polsis.mk](https://polsis.mk), on which all strategic documents (plans, monitoring report, updates) are shared and can be accessed by public institutions and the general public. The platform also includes and presents the hierarchy of strategic documents in the country. The platform was launched in 2008 and now includes more than 5,000 references. The platform has been developed and maintained by the Cross-Sectorial Co-ordination Center (CSCC), which is the leading institution in national development planning and co-ordination in Latvia under the authority of the Prime Minister. The CSCC has been part of the State Chancellery, the centre of government in Latvia, since March 2023. The platform has supported better strategic planning process and the standardisation and streamlining of strategic documents in the country.

##### **Czech Republic**

The Czech Republic has also developed an online registry of strategy in 2012 in the context of an EU funded project. The registry of strategies includes all strategic and conceptual documents and is accessible online. It enables a clear display of documents, their goals and measures, responsibilities for fulfilment, and indicators of success. All line ministries and regions add their strategic documents to this registry. A working group for the registry of strategies, the Strategies Database Working Group, where all line ministries and regions are represented, acts as a co-ordination tool and is facilitated by the Ministry of Regional Development which has a number of competencies in the field of strategic planning in the country. The country still faces the challenges of better using the database and the working group to further align and streamline strategic documents, partly due to a limited current role played from the centre on strategic planning.

Sources: (OECD, 2023<sup>[11]</sup>; Government of Latvia, 2022<sup>[12]</sup>).

#### ***Steering role of the centre of government: linking strategy planning with outcomes***

As stewards of the overall national planning framework and coherence of government action, centres of government must complement their role as a resource hub and place of support to line ministries, with effective steering mechanisms for control to enhance quality of planning and performance.

### *Preparing the Major Options and operationalising the Government programme by drawing clear lines of accountability*

Many countries struggle with a disconnect between the high-level vision outlined in electoral manifestos, and the day-to-day priorities and constraints of line ministries and public agencies. While the elaboration of the Government Programme tends to be a more political exercise, its operationalisation is typically driven by the centre of government in OECD member countries, with annual government work plans being a more bottom-up exercise.

In Portugal, the Government Programme is based on the electoral programme of the winning party or coalition, and PlanAPP does not play a role in its elaboration. While there is no dedicated “Government Action Plan” in the Portuguese strategic framework, the 2022 iteration of the Major Options bill aims to bridge that gap in connecting the priorities outlined in the Government Programme and Portugal 2030 Strategy with government programmes and funding. This new version of the MO can be understood as an attempt to operationalise the government programme, with a focus on strengthening the links between priorities and available financing.

The elaboration process of the Major Options bill has experienced a recent shift from a very bottom-up approach to a top-down exercise steered by PlanAPP. Indeed, this year’s edition of the document was drafted centrally and validated by the sectors while in previous years it was based on a compilation of contributions from different sectors/line ministries. While this new, more top-down approach is more typical of other OECD countries, it also requires further consideration around the role of the line ministries in this new process. Indeed, the document does not serve as a way to allocate responsibility for specific measures or priorities, and as such does not clarify lines of accountability.

PlanAPP could envisage complementing the Major Options with a short “Action Plan” on government priorities, clearly assigning lead and contributing institutions to each goal. Box 2.5 provides some information on how the Estonian and French centres of government clarify lines of accountability for the delivery of government priorities.

#### **Box 2.5. Accountability for government priorities: Estonia and France**

##### **Estonia Government Action Plan 2019-2023**

Estonia’s Government Programme is structured around 8 high-level priorities (ranging from COVID-19 recovery, to strengthening the rule of law). Each priority is then broken down into a set of measures, associated and attributed to one or more responsible entities and a precise deadline. The document in full is 35 pages and includes 1 performance indicator per high-level priority.

##### **France Circular on priority government policies**

On 19 September 2022, the Prime Minister of France issued a circular regarding the Government’s Policy Priorities. This table of 60 priority policies follow the course set by the President of the Republic and are structured around the four key challenges identified by the government: ecological transition, full employment, national and European sovereignty, and equal opportunities. These priority policies were derived from the roadmaps (*feuilles de route*) sent by the PM to line ministers.

Each of the 60 priority policy is led by a Minister, mandated to involve other members of the Government contributing to that objective, as appropriate. The lead institution is also tasked with presenting the progress made on the priority policies it is responsible for during the Cabinet Meeting.

Under the PM’s authority, the Interministerial Directorate for Public Transformation (DITP) is responsible for steering priority policies. A central administration director is appointed to ensure the operational deployment of each priority policy. This policy is broken down into one or more operational

projects entrusted to a project director. The project director sets up an organisation to manage the priority, to involve stakeholders and to share best practices with the operational levels in order to ensure its proper implementation. Project managers are entitled to priority access to the support resources of the Ministry of Public Transformation and the Civil Service. They will participate in peer communities led by the DITP to share and develop the most effective methods.

Sources: (Government of France, 2022<sup>[13]</sup>; Government of Estonia, 2022<sup>[14]</sup>).

### *Linking whole-of-government and institutional strategic planning with the performance framework*

To be considered strategic, planning should be anchored in the broader practice of strategic management, linking planning with implementation and outcomes (Bryson, Hamilton Edwards and Van Slyke, 2018<sup>[15]</sup>). Many governments have strengthened the results and outcomes focus of strategic planning as part of a larger effort to mainstream results-based initiatives in the public sector. Measuring performance has increasingly become important for government organisations as citizens apply increased pressure on states to demonstrate effectiveness and their impact on complex problems.

In more than 80% of OECD member countries, the centre of government plays a key role in monitoring the implementation of strategies and policies. Its activities traditionally include ensuring that government priorities are reflected in key strategic documents, verifying that Ministries plans are aligned with government priorities, and collecting information and monitoring the implementation of key measures. While the monitoring of individual sectoral plans is performed by line Ministries, the centre usually focuses on the monitoring of the implementation of the government programme and of key government priorities and on reporting progress and sharing information for decision to the head of the government. These monitoring activities in the centre are performed by strategic units as is the case in Estonia and Finland.

For instance, in the United States, the GRPA Modernization Act of 2010 requires every Federal agency to produce a strategic plan every four years. This plan defines the agency mission, long-term goals and objectives to achieve those goals, strategies planned, and the approaches it will use to monitor its progress in addressing specific national problems, needs, challenges, and opportunities related to its mission. An agency's Strategic Plan aims to provide the context for decisions about performance goals, priorities, strategic human capital planning and budget planning. The Office of Management and Budget (OMB) has outlined a clear narrative which articulates these strategic plans with the existing performance framework: it should provide the framework for the detail published in agency Annual Performance Plans, Annual Performance Reports and on Performance.gov (United States - Office of Budget and Management, 2022<sup>[16]</sup>). Likewise in the United Kingdom, the government has made use of Outcome Delivery Plans as a means to signal and mainstream the priorities they wish to focus on and to steer and monitor the progress in implementing those recommendations (see Box 2.6).

#### **Box 2.6. Prioritisation in the UK through Outcome Delivery Plans**

In 2021, the UK government introduced Outcome Delivery Plans, building on and improving upon the previous Single Departmental Plans. These plans set out how each UK government department is working towards the delivery of its priority outcomes. Outcome Delivery Plans place a greater emphasis on joint working between departments, enabling departments to plan together to deliver shared outcomes. Outcome Delivery Plans also set out plans for delivering critical enabling activities that are crucial to the successful delivery of outcomes, including: attracting and investing in great people; embracing new ideas; and strengthening functional expertise to support the delivery of better outcomes.

Additionally, Outcome Delivery Plans also set out how departments are working towards becoming more sustainable and how work contributes to the delivery of the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the government's equality objectives, to ensure government departments contribute to these overarching whole-of-government priorities.

Source: Internal report prepared by Ray Shostak in the context of the OECD Centre of Government Review of Brazil; (Government of the UK, 2022<sup>[17]</sup>).

In Portugal, the Integrated System of Management and Performance Assessment of Public Administration (SIADAP) established by Law No. 66-B/2007 aims to contribute to the improvement of the performance and quality of service of the Public Administration. In particular, it includes an Assessment and Accountability Framework (QUAR). By law, SIADAP is articulated with the planning system of each ministry, and is described as an instrument for evaluating the fulfilment of the multiannual strategic objectives determined by high-level management and of the annual objectives and activity plans, based on indicators to measure the results to be obtained by the services. The approval of the 2015 Budget Framing Law, still in a pilot implementation stage, aims at enhancing and consolidating this approach by establishing a direct link between what is determined at the strategic planning level, in the MOs, and what are main policy priorities at the sectoral level (line Ministries).

While in the past, institutional Strategic Plans elaborated in this context might have supported line Ministries' proposals for the Major Options bill and use in strategic planning processes, the shift in the MO's elaboration process requires a more in-depth reflection on linkages between whole of government planning documents, institutional strategic plans and reporting requirements outlined for agencies in SIADAP. Additional tools and approaches dedicated to strategic planning and government priorities would be needed. In light of the experience of OECD member countries, monitoring and evaluation activities on strategies in PlanAPP appear to be crucial to enable PlanAPP to track progress on strategic planning activities and on the achievement of government and long-term priorities.

#### *Supporting the delivery of high-level crosscutting priorities<sup>5</sup>*

While historically, centres of government have focused on supporting high-level decision during cabinet-meetings, and enhancing policy co-ordination, over the last two decades many countries have experimented with using centre of government structures as a means to oversee and support progress towards a limited number of priority goals (Brown, Kohli and Mignotte, 2021<sup>[5]</sup>). This can be done through the creation of a dedicated "delivery" or "implementation" unit, as has been the case in the United-Kingdom for instance or can become part of the mandate of an existing unit in the centre of government, as is the case in France. While line ministries remain accountable for driving implementation, these units help them achieve their goals.

A monitoring mandate is attributed to PlanAPP by Decree-Law No. 21/2021, with particular emphasis on monitoring the environmental, social and economic impact of policies and strategies. Within this framework, PlanAPP has singled out the demographic challenge as a cross-cutting theme for several public policies. Within the scope of its mission, PlanAPP started its monitoring activity with the long-term strategy Portugal 2030 Strategy, specifically with the thematic agenda on demography. Monitoring this theme allows the unit to simultaneously monitor one of the four strategic challenges highlighted in the XXIII Government programme – Demography. In the future, PlanAPP would need expand this monitoring model to other high-level priorities outlined in the Government Programme and Major Options (Climate Change; Digitalisation; inequalities). A number of centre of government units in OECD member countries have developed specific units or capabilities to steer, co-ordinate and monitor crosscutting priorities. For instance, France has created the General Secretariat for Ecological Planning under the Prime Minister while Latvia and Czech Republic have established dedicated units on digitalisation in the centre.

While developing the monitoring framework is essential, ensuring the information gathered in that process truly informs decision-making processes is crucial to drive change. One tool available to centre of government to mitigate this risk is the use of “stock-take” or “data-driven review” meetings which bring leaders from across government to assess progress made on priority objectives, using information gathered through the monitoring process (Brown, Kohli and Mignotte, 2021<sup>[5]</sup>). Box 2.7, Box 2.8 and Box 2.9 outline the way in which these data-driven reviews are organised, as well as the centre’s role in them across 3 OECD countries (United States, France, United Kingdom).

### **Box 2.7. Data Driven Review meetings in the United States**

The 2010 Government Performance Reporting and Modernization Act (GPRAMA) introduced the need for quarterly review meetings on each long-term federal government priority goal to discuss the progress achieved during the most recent quarter, overall trend data, the likelihood of meeting the goal, and the planned level of performance against quarterly targets and milestones.

The federal government priority goals are categorised according to their risk of not achieving their planned level of performance. For those federal government priority goals that have the greatest risk of not meeting their planned level of performance, review meetings allow for the identification of prospects and strategies for performance improvement, including any needed changes to agencies, organizations, programmes activities, regulations, tax expenditures, policies, or other activities. Accuracy and reliability of the data used to measure progress towards the priority goal is also discussed.

These meetings are organised by the Director of the Office of Management and Budget with the support of the Performance Improvement Council. Meetings include officials from the agencies, organisations, and program activities that contribute to the accomplishment of each Federal Government priority goal.

Since then, agencies started to organise regularly scheduled, structured, and rigorously prepared data-driven meetings to review performance indicators with department or programme personnel. According to the US Government Accountability Office (GAO), to engage in data-driven reviews, it is necessary that programmes have identified their strategic priorities, that there is authentic leadership support to engage in the process, and that programmes have the capacity to gather and synthesize data related to those priorities. On the latter, though several agencies are able to produce data-rich analyses that identified trends and potential performance issues. Performance Improvement Officers reported that having accurate, timely, and useful data available remains a major challenge.

*Source:* (Congress.gov, 2011<sup>[18]</sup>); (Congress.gov, 2019<sup>[19]</sup>).

### **Box 2.8. The “PILOTE” Platform and data-driven review meetings in France**

#### **Internal monitoring dashboard “PILOTE”**

The French government's priority policies and the prefects' Interministerial roadmaps are monitored on the internal PILOTE platform, the territorial dashboard provided by the Interministerial Department for Public Transformation (DITP). This shared tool enables each operational level to report to the Government on the progress made in implementing priority policies and to mobilise the support of higher levels to resolve any difficulties encountered.

Each reform is monitored by impact and resource indicators that make it possible to measure its progress at national, regional and departmental level. The target objectives of these indicators are

adapted to the specific challenges of each territory in consultation between the central and operational levels. Prefects have access to the platform, which offers a cross-sectional view of the progress of all the government's priority reforms in the territory, enabling them to carry out their mission. They also provide information on the progress of local structuring projects that they have identified.

PILOTE enables the central and operational levels to exchange information on the objectives, results, obstacles encountered, and to follow up on the decisions taken in the reviews. The data is also used to feed the barometer of public action results, which enables citizens to track progress made on priority policies.

### Data-driven review meetings

The performance information derived from the platform is used during a variety of meetings at different levels of government:

- Every week, a member of the Government reports on the progress of priority reforms to the Council of Ministers.
- Every quarter, the project leaders present their results to the Secretary General of the Presidency of the Republic and the Director of the Prime Minister's Office and request the necessary arbitration in the execution of the reforms.
- Regular meetings are held under the chairmanship of the Prime Minister's office, with the office of the Minister for Public Transformation and the Civil Service, to identify blockages and remove them.

Sources: (French Direction Interministerielle de la Transfo, 2022<sup>[20]</sup>; French Direction Interministérielle de la Transfo, 2022<sup>[21]</sup>).

### Box 2.9. Government Performance App and delivery notes to the Prime Minister in the United Kingdom

In 2019, the centre of government in the United Kingdom started moving towards real-time performance tracking. Triggered by the preparation of Brexit and sped-up by the Covid-19 pandemic, the new internal delivery dashboard, called "Government Performance App" was extended to the top 35 government priorities (Government Major Project Portfolio – GMPP). It provides an up-to-date situational picture and allows for early identification of performance risks.

The Government Performance App (GPA) is managed by the Cabinet Office and the HM Treasury and fed by the different departments leading the government priority projects. As outlined standard operational procedures, once per month lead departments are requested to co-ordinate with "contributing" departments and agencies and provide the centre with information on progress against milestones and deliverables, related schedules, on expenditures, and on major concerns. In relation to the whole project, each milestone, and expenditures, the [Senior Responsible Owners](#) (SROs) of projects in the GMPP also provide their own assessment (on track/off track/pending) and qualitative commentaries in relation to actions planned or taken, deviation from planned schedule, and budget/forecast variance.

The GPA ensures up-to-date information, which is used for drafting monthly delivery notes presenting the state of affairs to the Prime Minister. The Prime Minister's Delivery Unit has full access to information; though focusing on a limited number of key policies, it can get a structured situational overview of progress on the overall Government Major Project Portfolio and draw general conclusions.

Source: Government of the United Kingdom, government Strategic Management Office.



The success of these initiatives typically depends on a range of factors. Firstly, this type of performance tracking and review process presupposes the identification of a limited number of priorities and the existing of a set of indicators to monitor high-level priorities. Portugal has not yet developed such indicators. Secondly, it is important to ensure there are consistent indicators and results for each priority and avoid developing siloed monitoring mechanisms, both to ensure consistency of data and to minimise reporting burden at the sectoral and local level. Lastly, once a problem is identified during these meetings and through reporting, PlanAPP needs to have tools at its disposal to support problem solving. The effectiveness of these problem-solving tools will depend on the existence of the right skills within the unit, reliable data, and the ability to set boundaries around priorities.

Among the tools commonly deployed by centre of government units once there is agreement on which performance measure is off track are deep dive reviews. Through deep dive reviews, the centre of government can identify team members with the required expertise, and relevant data for the review. This team's role is firstly to form hypotheses on what is hindering delivery (using methods such as issue trees, brainstorm, force-field analysis, delivery system mapping, customer journey mapping, etc.). Following this initial step, an in-depth review will likely require some fieldwork and additional contact with responsible authorities to test the hypotheses. Subsequently, the centre can produce an analysis of its findings and develop some recommendations, whose implementation it periodically reviews. It should be noted that deep dive reviews can be resource intensive and ensure that the relevant capacities have been developed and the need for the review properly assessed, perhaps focusing the deep dive reviews on crucial strategic issues.

While the identification and delivery on key priorities remain the responsibility of the centre more broadly, particularly of the Prime Minister's Office in Portugal, the development of activities on ensuring, monitoring and supporting delivery of key priorities could be further expanded in PlanAPP.

## **Prioritisation, hierarchy and alignment of the planning framework for more efficient, effective and coherent government action**

For implementation to be effective, planning needs to ensure alignment between long-term and medium-term objectives, as well as between sectoral and whole-of-government priorities. This section will discuss the hierarchy of strategies to ensure high level priorities are reflected across documents and implemented by the different levels of the administration. It will also discuss the articulation between strategic documents at the national and sectoral levels.

### ***Strategic planning as a framework for prioritising government action***

The clear and explicit articulation of strategic planning instruments allows limited government resources to be focused on a few policy priorities while clarifying how these efforts contribute more broadly to other stated ambitions. Articulating strategic objectives across different timeframes is crucial to ensure plans promote synergies, preclude counterproductive efforts and provide a coherent vision for the country.

#### *Hierarchy of whole-of-government strategic planning documents as a tool for prioritisation*

Strategic priorities can be defined as statements of intention set by the government as a whole. These priorities are outlined and reflected in the government's "Strategic Framework" understood as the patchwork of strategic documents and statements setting the course for government action. In most OECD countries the strategic framework includes the following documents (see Table 2.1).

**Table 2.1. Typology of common documents which usually form a country’s strategic framework**

<b>Time-frame</b>	<b>Strategic Framework Documents</b>	<b>Scope</b>
Long-term (longer than an electoral mandate)	SDG 2030 Strategy	Whole-of-Government – Related to International Commitment
	National Development Strategy	Whole-of-Government
	Long-term Vision for the country	Whole-of-Government
Medium-term (multi-annual, length of the electoral mandate)	Government Programme	Whole-of-government – Driven by electoral platform
	Government Action Plan (can also be annual)	Whole-of-government
	National Reform Programme	Whole-of-government – Related to EU commitment and mechanisms
	Stability Programme	Whole-of-government – Related to EU commitment and mechanisms
	Recovery and Resilience Plan	Whole-of-government – Related to EU commitment and mechanisms
	Multi-Sectoral Strategy on a horizontal priority	Cross-sectoral
	Medium-term budgetary framework	Whole-of-government – Driven by Ministry of Finance or equivalent
	Nationally Determined Contributions	Whole-of-Government – Related to Climate International Commitment (Paris Agreement)
Short-term (one to two years)	Annual Government Work Plan	Whole-of-government
	Annual Legislative Agenda	Whole-of-government
	Annual budget	Whole-of-government – Driven by Ministry of Finance or equivalent

Source: Authors.

Taken together, these various documents establish the strategic framework for the work of the government. In practice, it is rare to find a situation where all of the government’s strategy documents are fully aligned with one another and can thus form a clear guide to government action. Governments typically struggle to articulate medium-term and long-term planning due to a planning process largely driven by electoral cycles. Lastly, the different documents which constitute a country’s strategic framework are typically prepared by different institutions or even external consultants and are subsequently adopted by government with little regard to either practicality or the interrelation of the documents.

This state of affairs does not match with the traditional OECD guidance on the matter, as laid out in OECD/SIGMA Principles of Public Administration, which recommends the status of key government planning documents be established in the legal framework, and the hierarchy of the key government planning documents also be enshrined (SIGMA, 2018<sup>[22]</sup>). In Latvia for instance, the hierarchy of planning documents and their relationship with “political guidelines” was enshrined in law (see Box 2.10).

### Box 2.10. Hierarchy of planning documents in Latvia

The Latvian Law on the Development Planning System was adopted on January 1st, 2009. The law outlines development planning principles, types of planning documents, their hierarchy, and relations, as well as allocates responsibilities to institutions in the planning process. According to the Law on the Development Planning System, national development planning documents are prepared for a long-term (up to 25 years), medium-term (up to seven years) and short-term (up to three years). The law also outlines specific requirements for development planning documents: strategic objectives and results (outcomes and outputs), a description of existing problems and their solutions, an impact assessment, as well as further action for the implementation and evaluation of the planned policy. The necessary financial resources and responsible institutions are also identified.

The document also establishes a specific hierarchy across documents. This hierarchy outlines that short-term documents must be consistent and are subordinated to mid-term plans which are in turn subordinated to long-term plans. Sectoral documents on the short, mid and long term are also subordinated to the key national document of the same time horizons and prepared by the Cabinet of Ministers, for instance Latvia's Sustainable Development Strategy for 2030 on the long-term and the National Development Plan 2027 for the mid-term (Table 2.2).

The Government Action Plan is prepared based on the Declaration of the Intended Activities of the Cabinet of Ministers. The document defines the main results to be delivered and tasks to be accomplished by the responsible institutions to implement political priorities set by the current government. Compliance of Government's Declaration and Action Plan with development priorities set in the hierarchically highest long/ medium term development planning documents is ensured by law.

**Table 2.2. Overview of the planning system in Latvia**

Time period	Governance level		
	National	Regional	Local
Overarching	Conceptual document: The Model for Growth of Latvia: Human Being in the First Place		
Long-term (up to 25 years)	Sustainable Development Strategy for Latvia	Regional Development Strategy	Local Development Strategy Territory Plan
Mid-term (up to 10 years)	National Development Plan	Regional Development Programme	Local Development Programme
	Sector Guidelines		
	Plan		
Short-term (up to 3 years)	Plan		
Others	Conception National Position		Local Plan Detailed plan
Government cycle	Political guidelines: Government Declaration and Government Action Plan		

Sources : (Cross-Sectoral Coordination Centre Republic of Latvia, n.d.<sup>[23]</sup>); (Government of Latvia, 2009<sup>[24]</sup>).

Portugal is confronted with similar levels of complexity in its strategic framework (see Table 2.3). The multiplicity of strategies, lack of coherence and/or alignment between strategies was highlighted as a major challenge by government stakeholders during the project. The Constitution and the 2015 Budget Framing law provide two important overarching frameworks for strategic documents in Portugal.

**Table 2.3. Documents forming Portugal’s strategic framework**

Time-frame	Strategic Framework Documents	Scope
Long-term (longer than an electoral mandate)	Portugal 2030 Strategy	Whole-of-Government
	Long-Term Low greenhouse gas Emission Development Strategy (LT-LEDS)	Whole-of-Government – Related to International Commitment
Medium-term (multi-annual, length of the electoral mandate)	Government Programme	Whole-of-government – Driven by electoral platform
	Major Options 2022-2026	Major Options bill - Whole-of-government – Linked to the government programme
	Medium-term budget framework ( <i>Quadro Plurianual de Programação Orçamental – QPPO</i> )	Whole-of-government – Driven by ministry of finance
	National Reform Programme	Whole-of-government – Related to EU commitment and mechanisms and linked to the government programme
	Recovery and Resilience Plan	Whole-of-government – Related to EU commitment and mechanisms
	Stability Programme (revised every year for midterm fiscal planning)	Whole-of-government – Related to EU commitment and mechanisms
	Other cross sectoral strategies: <i>Roadmap towards Carbon Neutrality, the National Plan for Energy and Climate, the National Strategy for Adaptation to Climate Change, National Strategy Against Poverty, etc</i>	Cross-sectoral
	Nationally Determined Contributions	Whole-of-Government – Related to International Commitment
Short-term (one to two years)	Annual legislative agenda	Whole-of government
	Annual Major Options (revision)	Whole-of government
	Annual budget	Whole-of-government – Driven by Ministry of Finance

Source: OECD questionnaire and desk research.

Portugal has a partial legal framework for strategic planning defined by the Constitution, the Planning Framework Law (Law no 43/91), the Budgetary Framework Law and a series of decrees for instance on PlanAPP. These legislations mainly cover overall principles on strategic planning and consistency, focus on the Major Options (while mentioning broadly defined “annual and mid-term” plans), and provide general roles and responsibilities between the government, the Economic and Social Council and the Assembly in strategic planning. However, they do not provide a clear, detailed strategic planning hierarchy across the different documents nor processes or instruments to prepare and co-ordinate them. This leaves flexibility to governments to adapt the strategic planning to their vision, but also creates uncertainty and a lack of clarity for most players to be involved in the strategic planning process. Defining mandates for specific institutions as was done for PlanAPP can help address these challenges as well as establishing and communicating broadly on a detailed strategic planning process.

Commitments and regulations of the EU are also an important part of the strategic planning landscape of any Member State and lead to the establishment of specific processes and documents. PlanAPP is in charge of both the MO and the National Reform Programme which should facilitate the alignment between the two documents. Both should also be consistent with the government programme and reflect its priorities

which can be ensured by linking up with the Prime Minister's Office. The RRP was prepared in Portugal by an ad hoc structure, the *Recover Portugal Mission* («Recuperar Portugal»), which also requires close and formal co-operation with PlanAPP to ensure consistency of strategic plans and processes (Government of Portugal, 2021<sup>[25]</sup>).

This level of complexity is often a hindrance to effective delivery as different documents outline various priorities, in the sense that it does not enable the government to focus its limited resources, capacity, on a clear set of priorities and communicate on these with citizens and makes the alignment between those documents more complex and subject to interpretation. Additionally, the blurry hierarchy between documents can obscure the genuine policy trade-offs to achieve high-level goals.

These challenges point to the need for Portugal to consider strengthening the strategic planning framework by outlining more detailed strategic processes and clearer roles and responsibilities for each player and enshrining them more formally.

### *Problem identification and prioritisation process in the strategic framework*

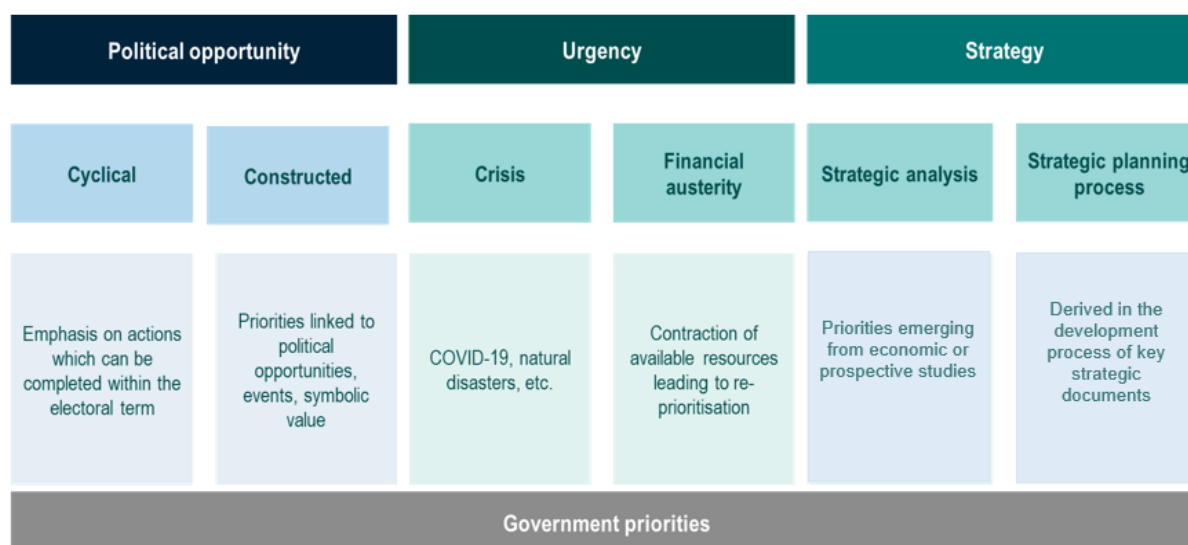
Prioritisation is challenging for governments and decision-makers, as it requires them to “downgrade” or postpone some worthwhile reforms or policy areas. As a result, governments might try to eschew making these difficult choices by developing many sets of “priorities”, which at times might be at odds. Governments, including centres of government, also have limited resources and capacities to address and implement a wide range of priorities. Thus, in conjunction with a clear hierarchy of strategic documents, a clear and transparent framework for prioritisation is also a key determinant of the ability of the strategic planning process to steer government action coherently, effectively, and respond to citizen expectations.

The specific criteria for prioritisation in government planning are rarely published or discussed publicly due to the sensitive and political nature of the exercise. Nonetheless, prioritisation in the strategic planning process generally includes the two following steps:

- Problem analysis – Analysis of the current state of affairs (achievements, challenges, and opportunities), preferably based on lessons learned from previous efforts, as well as prospective studies;
- Prioritisation of problems and objectives – Review and selection of the problems to be addressed, based on their urgency, importance or scale, and available resources, and in light of the views of affected institutions and the wider stakeholder community.

It is important to note government prioritisation also occurs *outside* of the strategic framework (see Figure 2.2). Prioritisation of problems and measures throughout the planning process thus needs to be agile enough to be articulated or revised based on other “sources” of prioritisation.

Figure 2.2. Sources of prioritisation



Source: Author's own elaboration adapted from (Institute for Global Change, 2016<sup>[26]</sup>).

The strategic framework in Portugal reflects a fairly coherent set of priorities throughout its main documents (see Table 2.4). However, the government's prioritisation approach could be reinforced by a clearer and transferable problem identification methodology, especially as the strategic documents were elaborated by different institutions responding to different objectives (EU, SDGs, etc.). In addition, the priorities identified are quite broad and high-level, and would thus benefit from associated outcomes indicators to refine them. Lastly, and most crucially in the case of Portugal, the strategic framework lacks a coherent and systematised prioritisation methodology to choose and stagger measures within the priority "blocks" identified.

**Table 2.4. Priorities, problem identification and prioritisation criteria in the Portuguese strategic framework**

	Priorities	Problem identification	Prioritisation criteria
<b>Portugal 2030 Strategy</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- People first: a better demographic balance, greater inclusion, less inequality.</li> <li>- Digitalization, innovation and skills as drivers of development</li> <li>- Climate transition and resources sustainability</li> <li>- An externally competitive and internally cohesive country</li> </ul>	Based on "Visão Estratégica para o Plano de Recuperação Económica de Portugal 2020-2030" 1.100 contributions during public consultation. No published methodology for problem identification	Use of public consultation / feedbacks No published criteria for prioritisation
<b>Government programme</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Good governance (cross-cutting agenda that creates the conditions to fulfil the other objectives)</li> <li>- Climate change</li> <li>- Demography</li> <li>- Inequalities</li> <li>- Digital, creative and innovative society</li> </ul>	Priorities derived from the electoral manifesto No published methodology for problem identification	No published criteria for Prioritisation Limited prioritisation within the 5 "blocks"

	Priorities	Problem identification	Prioritisation criteria
Major Options	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Good governance (cross-cutting agenda that creates the conditions to fulfil the other objectives)</li> <li>- Climate change</li> <li>- Demography</li> <li>- Inequalities</li> <li>- Digital, creative and innovative society</li> </ul>	Transposed “Problems” identified in the Government Programme and in Portugal 2030 strategy	<p>Singled out measures for which PlanAPP could associate financing (RRP and 2030)</p> <p>Subsequently added additional measures with national funding resources when these were clear</p> <p>Social and emergency social measures in particular were added</p>

Source: Author’s own elaboration based on exchanges with PlanAPP in the context of this project.

One of the most cutting-edge and innovative approaches to prioritising the Government Agenda can be found in Finland (see Box 2.11). The prioritisation process was characterised by a systems approach, underpinned by a solid problem identification phase, as well as sustained stakeholder engagement.

### Box 2.11. Prioritisation approach of the Finnish Government Programme

Conceptually, the Finnish Government Programme is not based on ministerial structure and sectoral objectives, but on societal phenomena or systems changes, focusing on systemic opportunities and challenges in society. This concept emphasizes and applies sustainability approach and coherence from ecological, social and economic points of view (in short term and especially in long-term perspective).

The Government assigned the Prime Minister’s Office Government Strategy Department (GSD) to facilitate and co-ordinate the preparation of the programme in Spring 2019. The process included (i) defining a situational picture on key themes, (ii) future (4 year) projection exercise; (iii) setting out goals and objectives (complementing rhetoric-based and actions-based objectives with output-based and impact-based targets, as a basis for further elaboration of indicators and measures for each of the strategic themes).

The process was managed in thematic groups of political actors, supported by circa 200 experts, under the co-ordination of the GSD. A dedicated tech platform allowed the stakeholders to follow progress made on the different negotiation strands.

High-level outcomes and objectives with indicators as well as sub-indicators were identified and communicated to set a target and define what success looks like. For instance, the government aimed to reach carbon neutrality by 2030, to increase employment rate to 75% and to have government finances balanced by 2023.

Source: (Government of Finland, 2019<sup>[27]</sup>).

### ***Alignment and coherence of sectoral government strategies***

An element hampering effective and efficient steering from the centre is often the excessive complexity of the strategic-planning system at the sectoral level. In many OECD member countries, the number of strategic planning documents identified across the government exceeds several hundreds, leading to an absence of consistency and continuity in the implementation of strategies and very often duplications of efforts. This level of complexity requires effective co-ordination instruments at the highest level to avoid the dispersion and duplication of public resources and efforts. The centre can be a lynchpin of this effort,

by helping to ensure the coherence of the strategic framework and guarantee the continuity of action around major strategic objectives, between sectoral policies. Strategic entities at the centre of government in OECD member countries can also help resolve inconsistencies and conflicts on strategic priorities and measures at an informal, lower level during bilateral meetings or committees with line ministries; and can resort and brief the head of the executive branch when higher-level executive decisions are needed (Ben-Gera, 2004<sup>[28]</sup>).

The ability of the centre to carry out this type of analysis requires a certain level of clarity on the government's priorities, as outlined in the previous section. It should also be accompanied of efforts to analyse and get to the root cause of the complexity and proliferation of strategic documents at the sectoral/cross-sectoral level. Some possible sources of complexity might be the following:

- Lack of strategic capacities in line Ministries with asymmetry in the skills and resources devoted to planning and resulting in unequal quality in the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of strategies;
- The planning regime does not always encourage inter-ministerial collaboration and, as such, multiple overlapping agencies operating in the same sectors often develop overlapping plans;
- Specific strategic documents are linked to external drivers and international commitments, including the Paris Agreement, the SDGs or EU commitments, funding and mechanisms.

Portugal, like many other OECD countries, also faces challenges linked to the proliferation of strategic documents at the sectoral and cross-sectoral level. The country has identified around 140 planning instruments, supported by approximately 43 inter-ministerial networks. PlanAPP reported recent plans usually report alignment with other sectoral strategic plans and national strategic plans (e.g., *this plan is aligned with national strategy A and B and with national plan for XY*), but the process and the methodology to ensure alignment have not been detailed. PlanAPP's mandate is in part designed to remedy this situation, empowered to maintain the coherence of sectoral plans with transversal planning document, as well as issue reports and opinions on sectoral plans. This challenge function played by PlanAPP could be the lynchpin of the planning system's overall coherence.

PlanAPP's efforts to enhance alignment to this day have been more focused on whole-of-government documents, notably by confronting the Major Options and the National Reform Programme against goals outlined in Portugal 2030, the RRP, and SDGs. Additionally, the latest iteration of the Major Options bill elaborated by PlanAPP details the programmes and plans associated with each option, thereby providing a vivid visualisation of the degree of complexity of the planning framework in Portugal.

Ensuring alignment at the sectoral level across strategic documents and consistency with government priorities is one of the key tasks of the centre of government in terms of strategic planning. It has been a fundamental role of strategic units particularly in Estonia that called for instituting a number of mechanisms such as strategy review meetings with ministries, terms of references (concept notes) for each new strategy to be prepared by line Ministries and discussed with the centre and the use of a number of working group dedicated to strategic priorities. Belgium has redesigned its approach and process to ensure articulation of strategic documents particularly on the mid-term (Box 2.12). Several OECD member countries have initiated approaches to streamline and reduce the number of sectoral strategies, including Estonia, Poland and most recently Lithuania (Box 2.13).



### Box 2.12. Articulating national and sectoral strategies in Belgium

The strategic planning in Belgium has been developed to be highly collaborative and iterative, to account for the federal and “consociational” nature of the administration. Distinction is made between strategic plans on one hand, and operational plans in the other to better link priorities with outcomes.

Strategic planning documents are cascaded down from the government agreement (*Accord de Gouvernement*), which feeds into the government’s policy statement (*Exposé d’orientation politique*), declined into a yearly general policy note (*notes de politique générale*). Once political priorities have been established through these documents, the Federal Public Service / Policy and Support (FPS/PPS BOSA) elaborates a draft national strategic plan, and further refined following feedback from ministers. The national strategic plan also includes the budget framework, internal management, communication plan, and allocation of responsibilities. Transversal objectives derived from political priorities are elaborated and selected in parallel and integrated in the strategic plan after a formal validation process.

Yearly operational plans translate the strategic and tactical goals outlined in the strategic plans into operational objectives and processes. These operational plans differ from the strategic plan by their elaboration process, modalities, content, and obligations to politicians, citizens and the BOSA unit. Following the budget approval, the FPS/PPS elaborates and shares the operational plan with Ministers and State Secretaries for their information. In essence, the operational plan includes a SMART description of operational objectives and resources allocated to these, outlines the processes and initiatives through which the operational objectives will be achieved, and related indicators to measure achievement and assign responsibility. Specific KPIs are also assigned to transversal objectives.

Source: (Government of Belgium, 2022<sup>[29]</sup>).

### Box 2.13. Streamlining and aligning sectoral strategies in Lithuania

In Lithuania, about 250 strategic documents existed in 2015, and strategic action plans included 1,800 monitoring indicators.

The 2016 – 2020 government developed guidelines and an action plan for restructuring the strategic-planning and budget-formulation system to focus more on results and ensure fiscal sustainability. A new Law on Strategic Management No. XIII-3096 has been adopted on 25 June 2020 and regulates a results-oriented strategic-management system: laying down the principles of the new strategic management system, the levels and types of planning documents, their interrelationships and their impact on the planning of funds, the participants of the strategic management system, their rights and duties, and the provisions of governance of strategic management system management. The objectives are to optimise the number of strategic planning documents in order to make planning, monitoring and evaluation clearer, as well as to revise the preparation, approval and implementation of the strategic planning, i.e. thus setting out a new strategic planning system.

On the basis of the Law, the Government has prepared a Strategic Management Methodology detailing its implementation that will be used in the preparations of the future Lithuania 2050 long-term strategy. In order to ensure that the strategic action plans reflect the essential objectives set out in other planning documents, the guidelines are to determine which elements of the planning documents must be transferred to the strategic action plans, and along which criteria.

Implementation of the new law and methodology is aimed to harmonise and improve strategic planning documents and to reduce the number of strategic-planning documents from 290 to 100; however, many types of strategic-planning document would remain.

Sources: (National Audit Office of Lithuania, 2021<sup>[30]</sup>; Bertelsmann Stiftung, 2022<sup>[31]</sup>); (Nakrošis, Vilpišauskas and Jahn, 2020<sup>[32]</sup>).

The role of PlanAPP is instrumental in ensuring alignment across national and sectoral plans. This role consists both in ensuring that national priorities are consistently reflected in sectoral plans and that measures included in those will contribute to achieving the overall strategic objectives of the government, and in securing that sectoral plans are coherent to avoid overlaps and favour complementarities in terms of strategies, objectives and actions. RePLAN can in particular provide an efficient channel to support co-ordination and alignment with Ministries and public agencies on horizontal policy issues and sectoral strategic plans by encouraging discussions and feedbacks along the entire strategy and policy cycle. The preparations and discussions of strategic concepts prior to the drafting of sectoral strategies as well as the use of interministerial working groups and individual strategy review meetings are examples of tools to support this role.

## Strengthening the link between planning and budget to better address and fund key strategic priorities

The relationship between budgeting and planning is critical to government performance. Indeed, a plan that is disconnected from the budget sets out a vision without the practical means to achieve it. Conversely, while budget processes are an opportunity for prioritisation, they do so primarily through the lens of cost-effectiveness. Prioritisation in the budget process tends to underplay reforms with long-term payoffs but little short-term budget impact, and focus more on budget cost than feasibility (Grattan Institute, 2020<sup>[33]</sup>). This highlights the importance of aligning government expenditures with strategic priorities of the government during the budget process as well as during the preparations of strategies.

The alignment of the budget and planning process in Portugal is framed in the 2015 Budget Framing Law and articulated through the Major Options. Indeed, Art. 105 of the constitution outlines that the State Budget (SB) bill should be elaborated in line with the planning options identified in the Major Options. The 2015 Budget Framing Law aims *inter alia* to support the transition to performance budgeting and to better connect spending with priorities. It also supported the development of a medium-term expenditure framework in Portugal, in line with previous OECD recommendations (OECD, 2012<sup>[34]</sup>) (OECD, 2008<sup>[35]</sup>). The implementation of the law could be accelerated to further help facilitate the rechanneling of public resources to strategic priorities (OECD, 2021<sup>[36]</sup>). The Stability Programme (SP) drafted by the Ministry of Finance also conditions the yearly State Budget through medium-term objectives. Together, the Major Options and the Stability Programme thus constitute some of the initial stages of the budgetary process and of its linkages with government priorities while the Budget Law 2015 aims to establish an enabling framework.

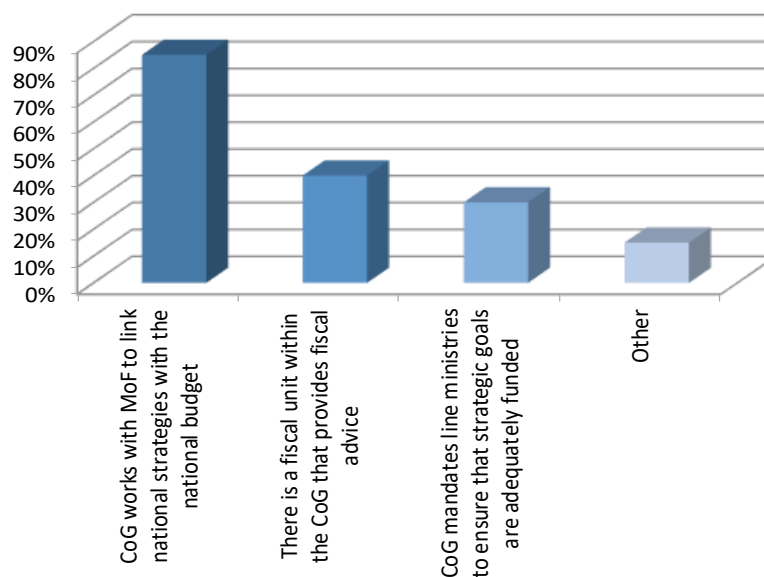
Despite these provisions, a number of barriers to effectively linking planning and budgetary processes have been identified and underlined by government stakeholders. Firstly, the Major Options bill for the coming year is being discussed in parallel to the budget mainly due to the change of government, which doesn't provide sufficient time for the plan to steer budget prioritisation and the allocation of resources. This is set to change in 2023 to follow the 2015 Budget Framing Law: the Major Options elaboration and presentation is scheduled to take place prior to the budget process. Secondly, for the MO to truly orient the budget prioritisation process, it will be key to develop prioritisation criteria which are not just related to the availability of multi-annual funding. While the MO concentrates on measures which are already funded, it should in principle help identify priorities and allocate and adapt funding accordingly. Thirdly, and as

highlighted by PlanAPP the proposal to include, for the first time, a table of multi-year public investments in the MO bill has faced challenges, that will need to be overcome to provide a clear link between multiyear investments and objectives. Finally, Portugal is characterised by a high degree of control of the line ministries' budget.

### ***Governance arrangements and the collaboration with the Ministry of Finance***

Increased levels of co-ordination and collaboration between PlanAPP and the Ministry of Finance are critical to help ensure government priorities are appropriately funded to deliver better outcomes for citizens. Most centres of government in OECD member countries have some forms of collaboration with the MoF at least during the budget process when they help channel and highlight the priorities of the government (Figure 2.3). 90% of them work with the Ministry of Finance to link national strategies with the national budget. A co-ordinated approach requires well-defined governance arrangements that articulate the functional responsibilities and expertise of each organisation, the flow of information that is to occur, and the decisions and outputs that are to result from the co-ordination (OECD, 2022<sup>[37]</sup>). This would call for an early involvement of the MoF in the development of strategies and in the preparations of cost estimates by line Ministries. This includes typically associating teams in charge of strategies and finances in line Ministries and in the centre as well as units in charge of the budget and of spending reviews in the MoF. Line Ministries in Portugal do not systematically comprise a unit in charge of budget while their establishment could support institutional dialogue between their respective Ministries and the Ministry of Finance on funding allocation and their alignment with strategic priorities. Conversely, centre of government units, and particularly PlanAPP could also play a more active role in the budgetary process to ensure coherence with the strategic framework as is the case in Estonia and Latvia (See Box 2.14). In Sweden, the government includes in the Budget Bill each year a specific table of reforms that identifies the key priorities of the government and their proposed levels of funding in addition to their proposals for allocation of expenditures.

**Figure 2.3. Co-ordination and collaboration between the centre of government and the Ministry of Finance in OECD Member countries**



Source: (OECD, 2017<sup>[41]</sup>).

### **Box 2.14. Centre of government's involvement in the budgetary process for better policy coherence in Latvia and in Estonia**

#### **Latvia**

In Latvia, the Cross-Sectoral Co-ordination Centre (CSCC), that is now part of the State Chancellery, has an official role in the budgetary process, scrutinising new budgetary initiatives alongside the Ministry of Finance. The CSCC evaluates such proposals according to a pre-established set of criteria (including on substantive conformity with national development planning documents and government programme) to determine their order of precedence, which is then submitted to the government for further deliberations on the annual budget and the multi-annual budgetary framework.

#### **Estonia**

In Estonia, a number of co-ordination mechanisms have been developed between the centre, the MoF and line Ministries to improve the coherence between budget and strategic planning. In particular, yearly meetings are held with the different Ministries and the MoF on their strategies and on funding needs to ensure that key strategic measures are funded. The MoF is also involved in the preparations and review of terms of references (concept notes) on upcoming strategies that are led by the centre with the relevant line ministries.

Sources: Interviews with representatives of Pārresoru koordinācijas centrs/Cross-sectoral Co-ordination Centre of Latvia, 16 May 2022, and with former representative of the Strategic Unit in the Prime Minister's Office of Estonia, December 2022.

The further implementation of the Budget Law and its application decree, as well as the preparations of the MO, provide a supportive context for these evolutions and for further connecting budget and strategic priorities and should be accelerated (OECD, 2021<sup>[36]</sup>). PlanAPP could be further involved in the different steps of the budget preparations in connection with the strategic planning process and should be further associated to a number of exchanges and mechanisms. In particular, clear mechanisms involving PlanAPP, other centre of government entities and the MoF should ensure cross-cutting priorities and agendas are appropriately funded.

### ***Other budget and strategic tools for alignment on priorities***

In addition to governance arrangements, “budget tagging” and the use of specific budget instruments have emerged in recent years, as a means for countries to mainstream cross-cutting priorities into their budgetary and public financial management framework and practices.

Several countries have been using approaches to respond to cross-cutting challenges and ensure that spending priorities support strategic ones. In particular, Finland has been working on developing phenomenon-based budgeting that aims to address high-level, long-term, strategic priorities that require horizontal, collaborative, whole-of-government approaches (“phenomenon”). This aims to connect the strategic themes and priorities of the country with the budgetary process where appropriations are steered by the strategic priorities and allocated to Ministries accordingly (OECD, 2022<sup>[38]</sup>). New Zealand has developed a Living Standards Framework (LSF) to include wellbeing priorities into the budget. The wellbeing budget includes outcomes to achieve related to wellbeing every year. Discretionary expenditures are identified to finance those priority outcomes. Five priorities were selected in 2022 pertaining to the “just transition”, Physical and Mental Wellbeing, Future of Work, Māori and Pacific Peoples, and Child Wellbeing. The government prepares a specific report and monitoring of the achievements on those outcomes (Government of New Zealand, 2022<sup>[39]</sup>).

Specific efforts have been made in many OECD member countries on mainstreaming gender and green into budgeting practices. Below is an example of the French approach to “green” budgeting, a practice used in more than half of OECD member countries (OECD, 2021<sup>[40]</sup>). “Gender” budgeting is also implemented in 61% of OECD member countries (OECD, Forthcoming<sup>[41]</sup>).

### Box 2.15. Green budgeting in France

Since 2020, France has published an annual “Environmental Impact Report on the State Budget” as an annex to the initial budget bill. Each expenditure item is rated according to its impact on 6 environmental objectives:

- Climate change mitigation
- Climate change adaptation and natural risk prevention
- Water resource management
- Circular economy, waste management, prevention of technological risks
- Pollution
- Biodiversity

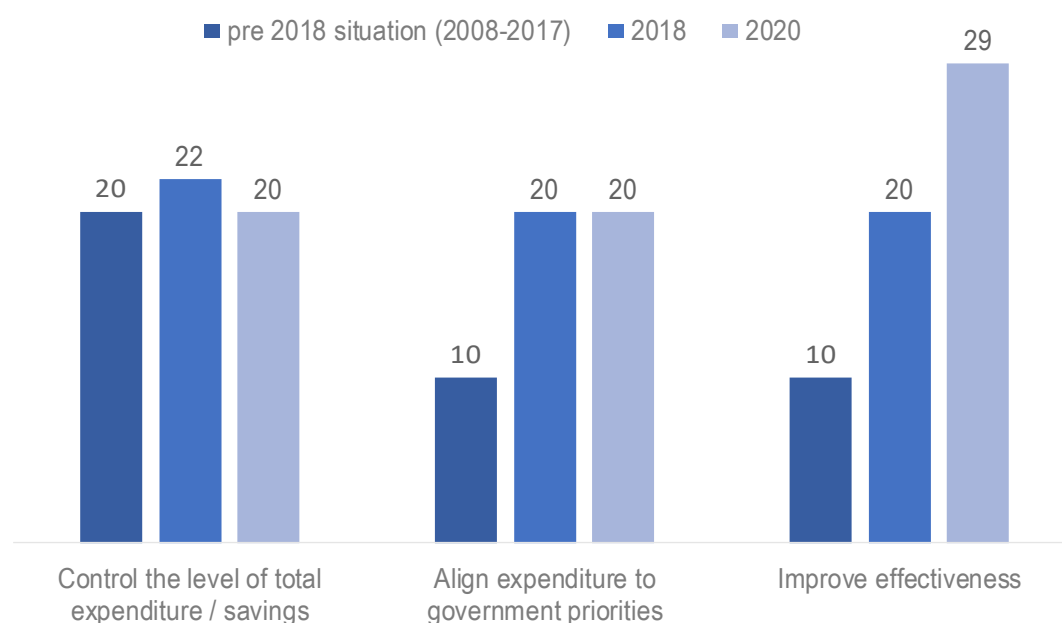
Each expenditure is subsequently graded or “tagged” by a mark ranging from 3 to -1 depending on its environmental impact.

In 2022, out of a total of €586.6bn in budgetary and fiscal expenditure, €53.4bn of expenditure was classified as having a potential impact on the environment. 32.5bn of ‘green’ spending will do so positively, €4.5bn of ‘mixed’ spending, is favourable to the environment on at least one axis but has negative effects on at least one other axis; and €10.8bn of expenditure has an unfavourable impact on at least one environmental axis.

Source: (Government of France, 2022<sup>[42]</sup>).

Finally, spending reviews provide an assessment of the public expenditures that have already been appropriated to ministries and agencies and provide political leaders with recommendations on ways to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of that expenditure. At its core, a spending review is concerned with identifying funding options that ministers can select to advance governmental priorities and increase the value-for-money from public spending. The OECD’s research shows that since 2008 the majority of OECD countries have adopted spending reviews with a range of objectives, including alignment of expenditures with priorities (see Figure 2.4). The OECD underlines that Portugal could further implement performance budgeting and enhance the monitoring, evaluation and ultimately the effectiveness of its public expenditures, particularly vis à vis its strategic objectives and national priorities (OECD, 2021<sup>[36]</sup>).

Figure 2.4. Objective of spending reviews in OECD countries



Source: (OECD, 2022<sup>[43]</sup>).

## Policy options and instruments for consideration

Based on the benchmark and analysis above, the following box highlights a number of options and instruments to be considered by PlanAPP to further improve the strategic planning process and increase its capabilities and mechanisms to steer and co-ordinate strategic plans.

### Clarifying responsibilities and players

The different strategic planning processes could benefit from more clarity on the roles and responsibilities and on the contributions of line Ministries (see links with other options below):

- Develop an overall strategic planning process architecture with clear roles and responsibilities for central units and for line Ministries;
- Continue the current mapping of strategic planning processes and carry out a functional review of the mandate and role of units involved in the strategic planning process;
- Communicate a clear vision and narrative on strategic planning through for instance a Manual of strategic planning as in Latvia.

### Strengthening the planning framework and ensuring alignment and consistency across strategies

To strengthen the planning framework, it could be envisaged to revise the Planning Framework Law to cover more documents, ensure mandates and roles and responsibilities of all players are clear, and

design detailed strategic planning processes for key documents. In particular, the centre of government, with the support of PlanAPP, could consider:

- Defining and formalising the hierarchical relation between the documents which compose its strategic framework ensuring that the Portugal 2030 Strategy is considered as the overarching long-term document as a national development strategy; and revising the Planning Framework Law to include the different documents beyond the Major Options; alternatively a Manual could be published and shared with all government entities as in Latvia;
- Designing detailed strategic planning processes for each key strategic document, including clarifying the top-down **and** bottoms-up linkages between sets of documents;
- Further clarifying the role of the different stakeholders into the strategic planning processes, by outlining these roles in the new framework or revising their mandates;
- Ensuring the through-line in the strategic framework is a clear set of priorities.

As PlanAPP develops additional instruments and tools to enhance strategic alignment in the planning process, the following approaches, in conjunction with performance management instruments could be envisaged:

- Introducing a taxonomy of strategic documents and streamlining documents;
- Enhancing co-ordination and collaboration to ensure the consistency across national and sectoral documents as well as the translation of key national priorities into sectoral documents through institutional and digital mechanisms – for instance by leveraging RePLAN and by creating strategic review meetings with line Ministries on key national and sectoral strategies;
- Establishing standards and a review process for sectoral and cross-sectoral strategies at different stages of their development (e.g. concept note at origination, inputs and review during the preparations, support to centre of government review on the consistency with the government programme when the document is submitted for discussion and approval to the Cabinet meeting).

### **Supporting line ministries in the planning process**

PlanAPP could consider developing additional instruments and tools to support line Ministries:

- Consider mapping the existing strategic units and resources and identify institutional gaps and overlaps, including in line Ministries;
- Consider developing guidelines and templates for line Ministries;
- Dedicate resources in PlanAPP to further support line Ministries in preparing strategies and applying the guidelines;
- Establish online platform that could include: a registry of strategies, and the above-mentioned guidelines and templates;
- Establish a clear work process with line Ministries in the preparations of Major Options to ensure that they can contribute to the document by linking with their sectoral priorities and plans and have the relevant expertise; formalise the existing informal working group and use for instance additional technical groups and informal meetings and consider secondments between line Ministries and PlanAPP to support; the creation of working groups as was done for the 2022 NRP can support the involvement and discussions with line Ministries and enhance their contributions to key documents with the support of PlanAPP.
- Replicate the creation of similar working groups for key national strategic and planning documents to ensure alignment and consistency on key priorities and measures.

### **Linking strategy planning with outcomes**

Portugal could further develop its strategic performance framework both on the government programme and on high-level priorities, for instance by:

- Expanding the current monitoring model to other high-level priorities outlined in the Government Programme and Major Options (Climate Change; Digitalisation; inequalities) that could be steered by the PMO and monitored and supported by PlanAPP, including targets and a limited set of key performance indicators;
- Developing roadmaps and monitoring tools for line Ministries to deliver on high-level priorities, like the Outcome Delivery Plans in the UK;
- Organising and supporting strategy and data review meetings for PlanAPP with other Ministries to track progress on the implementation of strategies and check their consistency with other national and sectoral strategies.

### **Increase the link between strategic planning and financial planning**

- Develop systematic meetings on linking strategy and budget between line Ministries authoring the strategy, the MoF and PlanAPP when preparing and developing the strategy to foster a dialogue on priorities, costing and cost effectiveness of measures; this could take the format of joint meetings and concept documents for strategies;
- Consider increasing the connection between high level prioritization and the budget:
  - By using the MO to further present measures and priorities of the government programme and guide budget discussions and allocations on priorities if not on the entire budget;
  - and for instance by outlining expenditures linked to government priorities in the budget process through discussions between the centre and the MoF and possibly a specific document (“table of reforms” as in Sweden), and developing the practice of spending reviews to align expenditures with strategic priorities.



# 3 PlanAPP as a lever for evidence-informed and inclusive strategic planning

PlanApp through the establishment of “RePLAN” (the Public Administration Planning and Foresight Services Network) has a clear mandate to structure and oversee intra-governmental networking for strategic alignment and policy coherence. Institutional structures in charge of co-ordinating strategic planning activities across OECD member countries have also been tasked with articulating expertise and evidence in the planning and policy development process across the government, as well as embedding citizen insight and feedback in strategic planning. The following sections addresses ways in which PlanApp could build on its existing mandate to perform these functions.

To this end, the decree creating PlanAPP also establishes RePLAN as an inter-ministerial network for planning and foresight services of the public administration in its chapter III (articles 13-15) (Government of Portugal, 2021<sup>[1]</sup>). The Director of PlanAPP is in charge of co-ordinating RePLAN and heads its commission. RePLAN aims to foster co-operation and alignment on strategies across the government, increase knowledge sharing and competencies in the administration and to further build the evidence base also involving civil society and academia. In addition to strategic planning processes, RePLAN should also support the co-ordination of activities on foresight, monitoring and evaluation of strategies.

This section will explore the role and opportunities for RePLAN in three main key areas:

- Harnessing expertise and evidence from within and outside the administration;
- Institutionalising and strengthening internal networking with policymakers, line Ministries and the whole-of-administration;
- Further engaging and fostering citizen and stakeholder engagement in strategies, particularly on cross-cutting issues, with case studies on climate and Corporate Social Responsibility.

## Harnessing expertise and evidence from within and outside the administration

Strengthening the use of evidence is critical for problem identification, better prioritisation of actions and enhancing the quality and relevance of strategies and policies. A robust diagnostic phase requires high-quality and timely information coupled with excellent skills in data and policy analysis, strategic thinking, and policy evaluation. OECD member countries have used a wide range of practices and instruments to better collect and analyse evidence in the policymaking process. They have developed a number of initiatives to increase capabilities for evidence-based policymaking within the administration, including establishing standards, using online platforms, holding lectures and seminars, commissioning research and creating toolkits (OECD, 2020<sup>[44]</sup>).

### **Defining standards and tools to systematise the use of evidence in strategic planning**

A wide range of sources of data and evidence underpin the planning process in Portugal. Sources range from horizon scanning (such as the PlanApp Mega trends project), to on-demand studies, monitoring reports, RIAs, national statistics, etc. While the plurality and diversity of sources and types of evidence is to be commended, PlanAPP possesses little information on the type and quality of evidence used in planning activities to which they are not directly tied (namely the Major Options bill and the NRP). A better understanding of the evidence used in the elaboration and revision of strategies in general would strengthen the overall planning framework and help ensure public bodies are operating with the same underlying assumptions when identifying problems, potential solutions and setting objectives. This topic is even more important in the context of Portugal where more than three quarters of citizens believe that scientists are not involved enough in decision-making as evidenced by the OECD Trust survey and the Policy Paper on Lessons from the OECD Trust Survey in Portugal (OECD, 2022<sup>[45]</sup>; OECD, 2023<sup>[46]</sup>).

To this end, PlanAPP could develop harmonised standards for the use of evidence in planning activities. A common understanding of what is considered qualitative and appropriate evidence would improve the overall quality and coherence of planning documents/outputs. The OECD has engaged in a stocktaking exercise to develop principles and standards to mobilise evidence for policy design, implementation, and evaluation (OECD, 2020<sup>[47]</sup>). One of the most “mature” examples of standard - setting from the centre for the use of evidence in strategic planning activities can be found in the United States (see Box 3.1). See also the final project report that explores the use of evaluation and other practices such as knowledge brokers and feedback loops in evidence-based policymaking.

#### **Box 3.1. Evidence-building for strategic plans in the United States**

##### **Guidance related to evidence on elaboration of agency strategic plans**

The Office of Management and Budget in the USA issued detailed guidance on the elaboration of Agency Strategic Plans. Part of this guidance relates directly to the use of evidence in the elaboration of strategic plans:

- Meet criteria of suitability, feasibility, and acceptability, resting on a data-driven diagnosis of the problems being addressed and the complexities of goal achievement, reflecting the input of key experts, stakeholders, and previous organization learning through such processes as the agency's strategic review;
- Consider several alternative implementation approaches to address the problem, and identify a primary strategy which promises to be most effective by providing the most likelihood for success while accounting for: legal and policy considerations; likely future scenarios; lessons learned through the strategic reviews; the extent to which the agency has control over desired outcomes; the degree of certainty on cause and effect of the agency's interventions; and the agency risk tolerance (as identified in the agency ERM process).

Additionally, the circular contains a thorough explanation of what a “logic model” is and how this framework tool help agencies co-ordinate strategic planning, strategies, and evidence.

##### **Agency's Learning agenda**

Moreover, with the enactment of the Foundations for Evidence-Based Policymaking Act of 2018 ("Evidence Act"), agency strategic plans are supported by the inclusion of the agency's Learning Agenda (i.e., Evidence-Building Plan), which establishes and maps the activities agencies will undertake to answer important short-and long-term strategic and operational questions most pressing

to achieving the agency's mission. The Evidence Act also requires agencies to conduct and include a Capacity Assessment for Statistics, Evaluation, Research, and Analysis in their Strategic Plans.

Source: (Whitehouse.gov, 2023<sup>[48]</sup>).

The use and availability of data are also crucial to inform strategies and policies. The COVID-19 crisis has further underlined the need for high-quality and timely data to design strategies and policy responses. Statistical reports and information provided by statistical institutes or line Ministries can sometimes be produced in cycles that are long and do not respond to the immediate needs of governments. To address this issue, Finland has created a shared dataroom for the government that can provide quick and easy access to a wide range of data. This service is primarily intended for use by ministries and secondary by agencies. The service is based on rapidly available register data to support policy preparation and decision-making as well as ex ante and ex post impact assessments. A steering group is responsible for the activities and prioritisation of information needs. The steering group is chaired by a representative of the Ministry of Finance and vice-chaired by a representative of the Prime Minister's Office.

### ***Policy advisory systems and links with external expertise***

A countries' knowledge infrastructure generally consists of knowledge producers, brokers and users. Knowledge producers are located in academia, statistical agencies and research institutes as well as think tanks who provide the basic scientific data upon which analyses and decisions are based (OECD, 2017<sup>[49]</sup>). Knowledge brokers are the intermediary between knowledge producers and decision-makers, to ensure the alignment between the needs of the policy community and the evidence synthesis provided by these actors (OECD, 2017<sup>[49]</sup>). They also guarantee evidence synthesis is robust, transdisciplinary, and with appropriate expert inputs. Knowledge brokers may also provide advice in the form of options or of specific recommendations and help policymakers assess what evidence is reliable (OECD, 2023<sup>[50]</sup>).

To deal with complex challenges, governments need the expertise, views and information from a wide range of actors. This requires a strategic knowledge infrastructure which can go beyond administrative siloes, including bodies operating at arm's length from government (OECD, 2017<sup>[49]</sup>), and elaborated policy advisory systems in which knowledge brokers play a key role. Policy advisory systems consist of advisory councils, strategic planning councils, ad hoc commissions, commissions of inquiry, foresight units, special advisors, "tiger teams", innovation fora, "what works centres", think tanks and many other bodies, all of which provide knowledge and strategic advice to government.

Since its creation, PlanAPP has been playing pioneering role as a knowledge broker between science and policy, including its agenda-setting initiatives for evidence-informed policymaking and mechanisms such as the Science for Policy workshops. PlanAPP could expand its role in a more systemic way by articulating and steering the currently fragmented policy advisory system in Portugal for a coherent evidence-informed policy development and planning (see Table 3.1).

In that regard, PlanAPP has already ongoing and planned co-operation protocols with research and academic institutions, as well as with data providers within the public administration (e.g. Statistics Portugal). Additionally, several Foresight notes have been issued by PlanAPP and are available on-line.

The development of RePLAN can further strengthen and institutionalise this knowledge broker role and consolidate the existing policy advisory system in the country. The establishment of RePLAN envisages the creation of multisectoral teams that could help build and collect evidence and inform strategy making on key priority areas (Government of Portugal, 2021<sup>[1]</sup>). These teams would function as working groups and bring together policymakers, civil servants, academia and other stakeholders. They could contribute to enhanced evidence-informed strategy and policymaking on specific themes by providing, discussing and sharing inputs, data and analysis that could be used to inform the work of PlanAPP as well as line Ministries.

Under the guidance of PlanAPP, RePLAN could support the establishment, organisation and work plan of these multisectoral teams focusing on strategic priorities and crosscutting themes that can feed whole-of-government strategic work. A limited number of well-selected multisectoral teams could support strategic and long-term priorities of the government with defined mandates, deliverables and timelines. Finland has established at a higher level a Ministerial working group that focuses on the implementation of one government priority and that brings together line Ministries and experts. These working groups are terminated with the end of the government's mandate and new ones are established on new government priorities. They are supported by the Government Strategic Department through a dedicated unit.

**Table 3.1. A sample of the policy advisory system in Portugal**

Type of organization	Institutions (sample)
Research organisations	Associated laboratories (in general); Associated laboratories council (CLA); CIMO- Mountain Research Centre; INL - International Iberian Nanotechnology Laboratory; iMM- Instituto de Medicina Molecular João Lobo Antunes; i3S- Institute for Research & Innovation in Health
Public laboratories	Hydrographic Institute (Instituto Hidrográfico - IH); Institute for Agrarian and Veterinary Research (Instituto Nacional de Investigação Agrária e Veterinária, I.P. - INIAV); National Institute of Legal Medicine and Forensic Sciences (Instituto Nacional de Medicina Legal e Ciências Forenses, I.P. - INMLCF); National Health Institute Doutor Ricardo Jorge (Instituto Nacional de Saúde Doutor Ricardo Jorge - INSA); Portuguese Institute for Sea and Atmosphere (Instituto Português do Mar e da Atmosfera, I.P. - IPMA); National Laboratory for Energy and Geology (Laboratório Nacional de Energia e Geologia, I.P. - LNEG); and National Laboratory for Civil Engineering (Laboratório Nacional de Engenharia Civil, I.P. -LNEC)
Permanent and ad-hoc advisory committees	Permanent advisory committees: Comissão Técnica de Vacinação – CTV. Ad-hoc advisory committees: ad-hoc committees to investigate the 2017 wild fires (Comissão Técnica Independente); ad-hoc committee in charge of writing a white paper on the present and the future of Portugal's National Health System (SNS).
Scientific and consultative councils	Mainly consultative: Economic and Social Council (Conselho Económico e Social- CES). Consultative with significant scientific advice content: National Council for Public Health (Conselho Nacional de Saúde Pública - CNSP); National Council for Environment and Sustainable Development (Conselho Nacional do Ambiente e do Desenvolvimento Sustentável – CNADS); Council for Productivity (Conselho para a Produtividade); and National Council for Science, Technology and Innovation (CNCTI).
Expert panels, task-forces	Expert meetings held at INFARMED, the National Authority for Medicament and Health Products, to assess the developments of the COVID-19 pandemic in Portugal; Thematic Agendas for Research and Innovation.
Policy observatories	Universities: ISCTE (some are managed by Associated laboratories); Minho university Associated laboratories: six observatories managed by the Instituto de Ciências Sociais (ICS) [University of Lisbon]; six observatories managed by the Centro de Estudos Sociais (CES) [University of Coimbra]. Collaborative laboratories: CoLABOR and ProChild data. Other examples: Observatory of Energy (Observatório da Energia), managed by ADENE, the Agency for the Energy, and Portuguese Observatory of Health Systems (Observatório Português dos Sistemas de Saúde – OPSS)
Contracted advisors	The document 'Visão estratégica para o plano de recuperação económica de Portugal 2020-2030', produced by António Costa Silva, as a chief example.
Consulting firms	Increasing role played by national and international consultancy firms

Source: Adapted from (Simões, 2021<sup>[51]</sup>).

### ***Strategies to mobilise scientific evidence to support decision-making: inter-ministerial co-operation and the organisation of a common research plan***

Scientific evidence, much like data and official statistics, can support trustworthy and evidence-informed decision-making. It can particularly help governments analyse and address “wicked”, multidimensional issues (OECD, 2020<sup>[47]</sup>). While evidence can be collected and gathered from different sources by the government, interministerial co-operation can help identify, share and use robust scientific evidence to support strategy and policymaking. Whole-of-government collaboration can also foster a shared understanding of the evidence needs and priorities and a common analysis of the issues at stake and lead to the joint identification of potential responses. It can also support the discussions on how to integrate and address them into strategic documents and ensure they are included in the policy cycle. This is even more important in the case of crosscutting issues that go beyond the scope of one line Ministry and require co-ordinated and multi-faceted response from the government. In that regard, formal and informal channels

can be used by governments to mobilise, share and analyse evidence, for instance with the establishment of formal networks and working groups on broad or specific matters where evidence, inputs and potential solutions can be discussed to inform strategies and policies. These bodies can focus on thematic or functional issues for instance co-ordinating the whole-of-government work on topics such as research, evaluation or foresight.

To build synergies and ensure alignment on key priorities, governments can also establish whole-of-government annual research agendas. These agendas cover the main research priorities for the government and for individual line Ministries and can be discussed and agreed upon under the guidance of the centre of the government. Common agendas help identify jointly priorities, address potential analytical gaps or lack of internal resources in the government that can be solved through outsourcing, and have access to independent research in a co-ordinated manner covering multiple aspects of a specific issue while pooling resources, particularly funding, and centralising the activities of selecting and contracting out partners.

On the basis of these agendas, the ability to commission research and reviews from the centre can increase the analytical materials and evidence base available to the administration and the relevance of the research work for a wider range of stakeholders (OECD, 2020<sup>[44]</sup>).

In developing its role as a knowledge broker, PlanAPP could draw on the successful Finnish experience that uses both the practices of managing inter-ministerial co-operation on research and foresight and of a common annual plan on research (see Box 3.2 and (OECD, 2023<sup>[50]</sup>)).

### **Box 3.2. Co-ordination of the research and foresight agendas driven by the centre of government in Finland**

#### **Government working group for the co-ordination of research, foresight and assessment activities**

The Government working group for the co-ordination of research, foresight and assessment activities (TEA Working Group) enables the Finnish ministries to co-operate and exchange information smoothly. It serves to strengthen horizontal oversight of research, foresight and assessment activities, improve the information base for decision-making and develop new ways of disseminating information on research, foresight and assessment activities to decision-makers and society at large.

The term of the working group, appointed by the Prime Minister's Office, is for an indefinite period and includes representatives from all ministries. It is subject to an annual assessment by the Prime Minister's Office. It serves as the collective contracting body for the co-ordination of the analysis, assessment and research activities of the Government and its ministries.

The responsibilities of the TEA Working group are to:

- give a proposal to the Prime Minister's Office, on an annual basis and through horizontal co-operation between the ministries, for [an analysis, assessment and research plan in support of the Government's decision-making procedures](#);
- guide the analysis, assessment and research process of the Government in the respective ministries;
- co-ordinate and monitor the implementation of the analysis, assessment and research plan and achievement of its objectives;
- take part in the dissemination of information and knowledge created in the respective ministries and administrative branches;

- prepare a joint proposal for the Government for a decision on the thematic areas and priorities for [strategic research](#) on an annual basis, after consultation with the Research and Innovation Council and based on an initiative of the Strategic Research Council;
- co-ordinate the drafting of a description of the context of operations and other foresight work as a basis for the futures reports of the ministries; and
- Facilitate the utilisation of analysis, foresight, assessment and research knowledge and public information repositories in political decision-making procedures.

The working group for the co-ordination of research, foresight and assessment activities liaises with other bodies that use, finance and produce research, foresight and assessment data and is composed of representatives of the different Ministries. The TEA Working Group does not produce research on its own, but plays a role of broker for the whole-of-government to identify and select potential knowledge providers (academia, think tanks, etc), draw an annual research plan, and supervise the preparation and dissemination of studies. It also organises seminars and lectures to disseminate the research work and expand the analytical capabilities of the administration. All studies are published by the TEA Working Group on the official government website.

### **The foresight panel**

Working in collaboration with the TEA Working group, Finland also has a foresight panel that supervises, supports and aligns foresight activities across the government. It aims to further streamline and institutionalise foresight activities in policy and strategy-making in Finland. In particular, the panel helps the preparations of Future Reviews of line Ministries that provide foresight on future trends and challenges for the country on sectoral matters and the Government report on the future that aims to identify future crucial issues for the country.

Sources: (Government of Finland, 2022<sup>[52]</sup>); interviews with the government of Finland held in Helsinki in November 2022; (Government of Finland, 2022<sup>[53]</sup>).

Other countries have developed analytical capabilities in line Ministries to enhance the use of evidence. The Slovak republic has for instance created a system of analytical policy institutes under line Ministries (Box 3.3).

To support this role as a knowledge broker, Portugal is working on institutionalising the relations with the scientific community. For instance, PlanAPP and the OECD organised roundtables on “Scientific Advice for Policymaking in Portugal” around the priorities of Portugal Strategy 2030 that helped identify recommendations for actions to bridge science and policy (OECD, 2023<sup>[46]</sup>). One way forward could be to develop a general code of conduct on scientific advice, addressing issues as confidentiality of information, conflicts of interest and feed-back (Simões, 2021<sup>[51]</sup>). One example under the Ministry for Health, underlines the need to further co-ordinate the different organisational forms for the provision of policy advice and better connect knowledge providers with knowledge brokers and decision-makers through specific regulations in this regard (Decree-Law 14/2014).

### Box 3.3. Analytical Institutes in the Slovak republic

Analytical Institutes are placed under line ministries and serve to provide analytical background for the ministry's decisions. They support evidence-informed policymaking in the country and provide analytical capabilities on a wide range of topics for the government. Their structures, competences and position in the organisation of the ministry vary.

The Institute for Financial Policy of the Ministry of Finance (IFP) plays a co-ordination role among the different institutes in addition to its specific role for the Ministry. It produces a significant number of policy briefs and working papers, including economic forecasts and inputs for medium-term budgets and is regularly asked to provide the Minister of Finance with advice and supporting analysis; however, it is at the discretion of the Minister of Finance or the government whether to use these analyses to support their decisions. The IFP's main activities include macroeconomic, tax and fiscal analyses and forecasts and on structural reforms. It provides inputs to the government for its strategic documents such as the Stability Programme or the National Reform Programme and for its medium-term budgets.

Source: OECD (2020), *Regulatory Policy in the Slovak Republic: Towards Future-Proof Regulation*, OECD Reviews of Regulatory Reform, OECD Publishing, Paris, <https://doi.org/10.1787/ce95a880-en>.

## Internal networking: mobilising the whole-of-government on strategic planning

As outlined above, the centre of government is well positioned to steer and co-ordinate whole-of-government strategic planning activities through its convening power and proximity to the head of the executive branch, and to organise the strategic planning process and ensure the involvement of line Ministries and other public institutions. While it needs to ensure alignment of sectoral plans with national strategies and priorities, the centre can also facilitate and support work and exchanges on strategies including through the provision of guidance and methodology. This helps build communities of practices around the strategic planning process across the government.

Portugal is developing the RePLAN network to help mobilise, align and share strategic priorities, documents and methodologies and increase capabilities across the public administration. Overall, RePLAN can support internal networking at two levels: at a more strategic level, priorities, plans and methods can be discussed at its commission headed by the Director of PlanAPP and involving the directors of the planning activities in the different Ministries and agencies, and at a technical level, it can establish and supervise *ad hoc* multisectoral teams that involve the administration as well as external stakeholders and can focus on more specific themes, projects and activities to inform strategy making.

The creation of RePLAN in Portugal can also be a crucial lever for PlanAPP to foster an “esprit de corps” among policy professionals (e.g., “groups of collaboration” for best practice exchange, training and informal exchanges among policy planners, “champions” etc. from line ministries and relevant centre of government bodies) and strengthen both the stability of the new planning processes and the agility of its planning framework.

The first meeting of RePLAN held on 23 November 2022 allowed the launch of the network, discuss its objectives and operating model, transversal challenges, and guidelines to support an Action Plan for 2023 (PlanAPP, 2022<sup>[54]</sup>). This meeting was followed by several additional meetings in 2023.

Portugal reports the existence of 43 inter-ministerial networks associated to the large range of planning instruments being enforced in Portugal, plus 43 networks linked to one line Ministry or involving other public administration entities. There is no overview nor oversight of these networks, their members, mandates

and present activities. In this regard, RePLAN can act as a “network of networks” and supervise at least part of the existing networks that relate to strategic planning activities. This might involve mapping the different networks, streamlining the number of networks and prioritising those that concerns the whole-of-government or strategic priorities for RePLAN’s oversight and guidance. RePLAN can also ensure that their inputs and outcomes are used to inform strategic policymaking and feed the processes steered by PlanAPP.

Under the guidance of PlanAPP, RePLAN could support the establishment, organisation and work plan of the multisectoral teams focusing on strategic priorities and crosscutting themes that can feed whole-of-government strategic work. A limited number of well-selected multisectoral teams could support strategic and long-term priorities of the government with defined mandates, deliverables and timelines. OECD member countries use a wide range of interministerial bodies to support collaboration, alignment and networking on strategic planning. These bodies can take different forms, from permanent Ministerial Committees on key policy issues and levers (sometimes called Cabinet Committees) to *ad hoc* thematic working groups as well as functional networks looking for instance at research, evaluation or foresight across the public administration. Finland has set up a governance architecture using these different formats (Box 3.4). Ireland has also created 10 Cabinet Committees that correspond to national strategic priorities and allow to steer and co-ordinate on them across the government, and which are replaced with new ones when the government and its priorities change. This work is steered from the centre by the department of the Prime Minister (*Taoiseach*) (Government of Ireland, 2021<sup>[55]</sup>). These Committees help establish a joint vision on a topic and support alignment and implementation of the identified strategic priorities. The Czech Republic has used another setting and established an Expert Group on strategies that specifically support co-ordination and sharing of guidance on strategies with a limited role on decision-making (OECD, 2023<sup>[11]</sup>).

RePLAN has also launched a Working Group for the Foresight Community in 2022, which helped assess the existing situation and capabilities for foresight across the administration and discuss issues and priorities. Networks of foresight experts in the public administration have also been developed in a number of OECD member countries, such as Finland, France, New Zealand and Singapore (SOIF, 2021<sup>[56]</sup>).

### Box 3.4. Governance arrangements and mechanisms for interministerial co-ordination in Finland

Finland has established a number of co-ordination mechanisms to support strategy and decision-making that are supported by the centre of government, and particularly the GSD. They bring together different line Ministries and are usually shared by one or two lead Ministries depending on the topic. It has created:

- four permanent Ministerial Committees on Finance, Economic Policy, EU Affairs, and Foreign and Security Policy, that play a key role in co-ordinating government policies on these issues and in preparing the government plenary sessions;
- thematic working groups focusing on few government priorities (e.g. the *Ministerial Working Group on Developing the Digital Transformation, the Data Economy and Public Administration*) that help steer, monitor and implement those priorities;
- and functional working groups on research and foresight (see above).

The GSD is also using informal channels and communication with line Ministries to align, discuss and monitor the implementation progress on strategic reform priorities.

Source: (Government of Finland, 2021<sup>[57]</sup>; Government of Finland, 2022<sup>[8]</sup>).



The identification and appointment of relevant counterparts in line Ministries is a common challenge to ensure that they have both the expertise and legitimacy as well as the authority to mobilise in their own Ministry. This very often depends on the proactiveness and competence of specific individuals which can be mitigated through the development of structured networks and of analytical and strategic units and capacities in line Ministries. Both Estonia and Finland have largely relied on informal and interpersonal networks from the centre to drive the agenda on strategic topics such as digitalisation. These networks have also operated at high levels with informal meetings of secretary generals in Estonia that helped discuss crosscutting issues and increase collaboration (OECD, 2015<sup>[58]</sup>). Both countries have worked on further institutionalising some of these networks, for instance through the creation of a “digital office” with representatives on digital from different Ministries that supports the work of the Ministerial Working group on digital and facilitates continuous collaboration on the topic. While representatives working on planning activities in line Ministries will typically be formally involved in the RePLAN commission, maintaining frequent informal contacts and exchanges with them has been widely used and proven crucial to advance strategic agendas and planning activities in many OECD member countries.

These arrangements can be complemented by bilateral meetings between the centre of government and line Ministries regarding their own strategy, such as data and strategy review meeting as in the case of Estonia or the US during which the centre can play a challenge function particularly in regard to the consistency with the government programme and key national documents.

As it is done in many OECD member countries, PlanAPP can also use the opportunity to convene and establish specific formal and informal working groups on strategic priorities, documents or needs to coordinate the work and involve line Ministries. It has used this possibility to prepare the latest Major Options and to prepare the NRP 2022, and might want to further formalise such mechanism as this document will be prepared on a regular basis and the working group can be used to better define, prepare and monitor the document.

Mobility programmes between the centre and line Ministries have also been beneficial in several OECD member countries to strengthen the links across the government, share expertise and resources, provide a better understanding of the roles and responsibilities of each institution and to develop an “esprit de corps” among participants to the programme. Staff mobility and circulation programmes from line ministries to the centre have been used in countries such as Canada and the UK.

RePLAN should also consider ways to further engage government agencies and units in charge of key strategic documents as well as quasi-government bodies and public institutions (typically Court of Auditors, Economic and Social Council). These participants can be included in its commission or specific bodies and regular meetings can be created involving them to ensure continuous dialogue and harness their evidence and evaluations into strategy-making.

## **Citizen and stakeholder engagement in strategic planning and on crosscutting topics**

Recent experiences in OECD member countries show that when the planning process is open and inclusive, strategic planning can enhance the legitimacy of policymaking and increase the sustainability of policies beyond the electoral cycle. When defining participation, the OECD Recommendation on Open Government refers to stakeholders, grouping together both citizens interest/affected parties (OECD, 2022<sup>[59]</sup>). The focus of the following section will be on harnessing insights from citizens and will suggest two concrete examples on deliberative approaches involving citizens on climate.

In Portugal, as is the case in many OECD countries, there is a growing culture surrounding the participation of citizens and civil society in legislative and administrative processes. Recent planning exercise (Portugal 2030, RRP, National Railway Plan, and Active Mobility Strategy) involved meetings with citizens, open

hearings, opportunities for written contributions and suggestions. The study that underpinned Portugal 2030 had received over 1,100 contributions during the public consultation process.

Additionally, certain consultative councils include civil society representatives. For instance, the Economic and Social Council (with representatives of public administration and civil society) is consulted as regards State Budget, Major Options and National Reform Programme documents. The Public Finance Council (a state body of experts) is also consulted on the State Budget and the Portuguese Stability Programme. Both Councils are consulted and emit an opinion on the Major Options prepared by PlanAPP.

However, these processes have been insufficient to meet people's expectations on participation and representation as underlined in the OECD work on the Trust survey in Portugal, with only 4 in ten Portuguese perceiving that their opinions would be considered in a public consultation or they would have opportunity to voice their views (OECD, 2023<sup>[46]</sup>). Despite some punctual efforts to include citizens earlier in the planning process on several key strategic documents, engagement with citizens seems to occur mainly at the tail-end of the planning and policy-development cycle. Portugal could steer its effort towards including citizens at other stages of the decision-making cycle (see Figure 3.1) and systematise citizen engagement in strategy making. In the final stage of the elaboration process of planning instruments, a period of public consultation is mandatory in Portugal, during which both citizens and representative associations or any other entities can make remarks or suggestions on the presented proposal of such instruments. This process is carried out through web-based platforms ([www.consultalex.gov.pt](http://www.consultalex.gov.pt), [www.participa.gov.pt](http://www.participa.gov.pt), [www.participa.pt](http://www.participa.pt)).

**Figure 3.1. Stages of the decision or policy cycle, and the potential role of citizens**



Source: (OECD, 2022<sup>[59]</sup>).

The inclusion of diverse perspectives during the planning process can improve the quality of problem analysis and the implementation of the plan. Further engaging scientists should also be a priority for RePLAN, with 44% of respondents to the OECD Trust Survey believing that scientists are not sufficiently involved in decision-making (OECD, 2023<sup>[46]</sup>). Evidence also tends to show citizen engagement can help educate civil servants about specific issues and inform proposed solutions. Box 3.5 outlines some successful examples from Italy and Lithuania of strategies which involved extensive public consultations and/or stakeholder engagement processes.

### Box 3.5. Examples of strategies shaped by citizen and stakeholder engagement

#### The government of Lithuania: National Strategy Lithuania 2030

The government of Lithuania has engaged in an in-depth process to define its national strategy Lithuania 2030. The State Progress Council, led by the centre of government, was responsible for the drafting process of the strategy; government authorities, business leaders, community groups and prominent public figures participated in its development. Three working groups were set up on smart economy, smart governance and smart society. The consultation involved the national level and Lithuanians living abroad. The council also travelled to meet with mayors, municipality representatives, young people and non-governmental organisations (NGOs). Innovative approaches were developed to involve harder-to-reach groups, including youth and the elderly. The outcome is a national strategy which is guiding the policies of the whole country and whose implementation is monitored in an inclusive process.

#### The government of Italy: Triannual Development Co-operation Strategy

Italian legislation (Law No. 125/2014) for development co-operation foresees that civil society is consulted during the formulation of the Triannual Development Co-operation Strategy. For this, a permanent civil society-government platform, *Consiglio Nazionale per la Cooperazione allo Sviluppo* (CNCS), is chaired by the Deputy-Minister of Foreign Affairs and involves relevant ministries and the Parliamentary Commission for Foreign Affairs.

Source: OECD (2016<sup>[60]</sup>); OECD (2019<sup>[61]</sup>).

As it is located at the centre of government, PlanAPP is in an ideal position to strengthen citizen engagement in the policy development and planning process. Centres of government in several OECD member countries have developed guidelines or toolkits for line Ministries and public institutions to design and foster citizen engagement in strategy and policymaking. Box 3.6 presents the experience of the French centre of government in that matter. In Canada, the Privy Council Office, which supports the Prime Minister and the Cabinet, has released principles, case studies and a toolkit to help public institutions plan a public engagement process (Government of Canada, 2020<sup>[62]</sup>). It has also established a Public Engagement Community of Practice.

PlanAPP has launched a number of collaborative initiatives around strategic planning and foresight, particularly the Project Lab 2050 (PlanAPP, n.d.<sup>[63]</sup>). The project aims to foster national debate around the development of future visions for 2050 for Portugal. This includes the creation of a laboratory, of an online collaborative platform and of reports on different visions for the future. These efforts should be pursued and could mirror the work on *Spain 2050* vision done by the National Foresight and Strategy Office in Spain that also went through a consultative process with citizens and other stakeholders (Oficina Nacional de Prospectiva y Estrategia del Gobierno de España, 2021<sup>[64]</sup>).

### Box 3.6. Role of the centre of government in strengthening citizen participation in France

Within France's Interministerial Direction for Public Transformation, the Inter-ministerial Centre for Citizen Participation (CIPC) offers strategic and methodological support to ministries and government departments that wish to involve citizens in the development of public policies. This support enables the implementation of a sincere, transparent and rigorous participation framework.

Created in November 2019, following the commitments made by the Government at the 3<sup>rd</sup> Inter-ministerial Committee on Public Transformation, the CIPC offers inter-ministerial support, advice and expertise dedicated to citizen participation. It is responsible, on the one hand, for supporting administrations in their participatory projects and, on the other hand, for ensuring the quality of the processes, transparency and the implementation of a "right to feedback".

The CIPC provides the public administration with resources and methodological tools to help them understand the challenges of citizen participation, including: presentation of the different modes of participation, methodological kits, commitment templates, recommendations for measures to be taken depending on the objectives of the consultation and the degree of participation envisaged. It also provides access to service providers specialised in facilitating consultations (face-to-face or online).

Finally, the CIPC co-ordinates a community of practice for public agents in charge of citizen participation through meetings and training adapted to their needs.

Source: (French Interministerial Direction for Public Trans, 2023<sup>[65]</sup>).

### ***Deliberative decision-making in Ireland and France as case studies on citizen engagement in climate action***

The Irish Citizens' Assembly provides a strong case study on how citizen engagement can contribute to decision-making and reaching strategic objectives on cross-cutting issues through a deliberative approach. The Citizen Assembly on climate was established by the Irish government in late 2016 and operated through to early 2018, followed upon the Convention on the Constitution, held in 2012–2014 (see Table 3.2). Several Citizens' Assemblies focused on new topics have been organised since, the latest one dealing with biodiversity (Ireland's Citizens Assembly, 2023<sup>[66]</sup>).

France has used a similar approach in 2019-2020 by establishing a French Citizens' Convention on Climate that involved nine months of participation from citizens and support from experts and from the government. 150 citizens were selected to constitute a representative sample. The participants' recommendations were drafted with the help of legal experts, to ensure they could go directly to a legislative debate by the Parliament. The 149 proposals made by the Convention were published on a dedicated website. The government has communicated on how some of them were to be integrated into strategic and policy documents. A final report was prepared by consulting the 150 selected citizens to assess the usefulness of the work to reach climate objectives. While a majority of answers point out to the lack of integration of the proposals into government measures, respondents underline the value of the Convention and of the practice of Citizen Assemblies to promote climate action (France's Citizens' Convention on Climate, 2021<sup>[67]</sup>). It should be noted that the website and the mechanism have been inactive since the final report released in 2021.

**Table 3.2. Comparing Citizen Assemblies in Ireland and the OECD guidance on public deliberation initiatives**

Issue	Citizen assemblies in Ireland	OECD guidance on public deliberation initiatives
<b>Considerations for the appropriateness of an issue for public deliberation</b>	<p>Chosen citizens deliberated on the 5 topics:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the challenges and opportunities of an ageing population,</li> <li>• fixed-term parliaments,</li> <li>• the manner in which referenda are held,</li> <li>• abortion,</li> <li>• how the state can make Ireland a leader in tackling climate change</li> </ul> <p>This rather eclectic set of topics in part resulted from commitments made by the political party Fine Gael in its manifesto; but also reflected pressures for action in key areas (notably on abortion and climate change) as well as the negotiation between potential coalition partners that precede the establishment of a coalition government.</p>	<p>An issue is appropriate for public deliberation IF:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Broad concern exists within a community;</li> <li>• Choices must be made, but there are no clear “right” answers;</li> <li>• A range of people and groups must act in order for the community to effectively move forward;</li> <li>• Additional perspectives and ideas may help the community to move forward;</li> <li>• Citizens have not had the opportunity to consider the different courses of action and their long-term consequences; and</li> <li>• The decision-making of officeholders and other leaders needs to be informed by public judgment, as well as experts’ views.</li> </ul>
<b>Role of citizens</b>	<p>The Citizens’ Assembly was founded on foot of a commitment in the Programme for Government in May 2016. It consisted of a chairperson (now retired supreme court judge Mary Laffoy) and 99 citizens who were selected to be randomly representative of the Irish electorate in age, gender, social class and regional spread by a leading market research company, RED C</p>	<p>Random selection attempts to overcome the shortcomings and distortions of “open” and “closed” calls for participation. It ensures that nearly every person has an equal chance of being invited to participate and that the final group is a microcosm of society. It can also insulate the process from an overwhelming influence of vested interests.</p> <p>The most popular random participant selection method for representative deliberative processes to date has been two-stage selection (59%), commonly called a “civic lottery”. This method has mostly been used in Germany, Australia, Canada, and the United States.</p> <p>When stratifying the final sample of citizens, all deliberative processes select participants according to demographic selection criteria that matches the general makeup of the wider population (such as that available in a census), and usually includes at least four criteria: gender; age; geography, and socioeconomic factors.</p>
<b>Role of experts</b>	<p>Piloting the process: Ireland’s experience with citizens’ assemblies dates back to 2011, when a project run by Irish academics, entitled “We the Citizens,” piloted the process. They concluded that such forums could help to address citizen disconnect in Irish politics and ignite their participation in democracy.</p> <p>An expert advisory group was formed for each topic of the Assembly to assist with the expert selection process.</p>	<p>There have been different ways of informing participants about the policy issue at hand and facilitating learning. Among the deliberative processes for which data was available on learning practices (157 out of 282 cases), a large majority (79%) have had experts on the policy issue available at meetings. Experts were there to give presentations and answer participants’ questions. Other types of learning components include introductory reading material before the first meeting (48%), learning sessions, including field trips to locations concerned, (43%), the right for participants to request information and invite speakers,</p>

Issue	Citizen assemblies in Ireland	OECD guidance on public deliberation initiatives
	<p>The topic of climate change included presentations from 15 climate change experts and 6 individuals championing low carbon transition.</p> <p>The organisation of the Assembly according to a “learn-hear-deliberate” orientation allowed for inclusion of expert witnesses, public submissions and facilitated discussions.</p>	<p>stakeholders, and experts (35%), and providing participants with clear and extensive reading material in between meetings, so that participants could come prepared to the discussions (31%).</p>
<b>Role of government officials</b>	<p>A dedicated secretariat drawn from staff across the public service and financed by the centre further ensured the smooth running of each event.</p> <p>There is a need for concrete and agreed follow-up and implementation procedures. The Irish example of establishing a dedicated parliamentary committee for consideration of the Assembly’s recommendations by elected politicians provides one possible model.</p> <p>During the 2016-2018 Irish Citizens’ Assembly, the final report is written by the Secretariat with input from citizens, and sent back to a sub-group of citizens for comment, and then to the entire group to validate it.</p>	<p>Commitment: To show citizens that their input is welcome and valuable, and that it is a privilege to represent fellow citizens in a deliberative process, it is a good practice to highlight the importance of the duty in which they have been invited to participate. Having strong political and/or institutional commitment is important for giving the process credibility and motivating people to invest their time.</p> <p>Facilitators: Government officials also often act as facilitators during deliberative initiatives.</p> <p>Elaboration of the recommendations: The good practice principle is that the participants should have control of the recommendations and that the drafting can be supported by legal experts and advisors, and by the centre.</p> <p>Integration in the decision-making process and feedback to citizens is also crucial.</p>

Source: (OECD, 2020<sup>[68]</sup>); (Devaney and et al., 2020<sup>[69]</sup>); (Farrell, Suiter and Harris, 2019<sup>[70]</sup>).

### **Engaging scientific, civil society and governmental stakeholders jointly on cross-cutting issues – case studies on climate and responsible business conduct**

The engagement of civil society, experts and citizens can help source ideas and co-create, raise broader public consensus and interest, and provide a stronger evidence base on crosscutting issues. Two case studies from Ireland and France can provide examples for RePLAN on how to establish formal dialogue mechanisms with a wide range of stakeholders to better inform strategies and mobilise stakeholders around complex, multidimensional policy problems. They look at the Social and Environment Responsibility platform in France (Box 3.7) and at the National Dialogue on Climate Action in Ireland (Box 3.8).

These topics, particularly climate change and sustainable development, are crucial for citizen participation in Portugal and for increasing trust in the government. The OECD Trust Survey for Portugal highlights that Portuguese citizens would like to be more listened to and involved in social and environmental policymaking (OECD, 2023<sup>[46]</sup>). The Survey also indicates that social policies related to fairness and to the provision of equal opportunities to all are crucial for citizens in Portugal and could benefit from further dedicated work. While there already exists some online participatory platforms in Portugal, such as *Participa!* from the Ministry of Environment and Climate Action, they remain insufficient for promoting citizen participation, particularly as they do not allow the co-construction of new solutions and idea with citizens and they focus on online participatory channels.

#### **Box 3.7. Engaging civil society and stakeholders on responsible business conduct in France**

The French government created under France Stratégie in 2013 a consultative and exchange platform to discuss and provide recommendations on Social and Environmental Responsibility (RSE). The platform aims at promoting RSE and focuses on social, environmental and economic challenges at large, looking at issues such as SDGs, competitiveness, RSE labelling, governance and climate change. It provides recommendations to the government and to all stakeholders including businesses and NGOs, suggests priority actions and identifies and disseminates good practices. The government can also express requests to the platform on certain issues related to RSE.

The platform gathers 50 members from the government, civil society and academia including trade unions, business organisations, NGOs, think tanks, tertiary education institutions' associations and representatives from France Stratégie, Ministries and the Senate. Principles and rules for the functioning of the platform were formalised and agreed by all participants at the onset, including a charter for expressing diverging views. The platform uses a consensus based decision-making approach. Mapping and identifying the right stakeholders have been an important task that has underpin the success of the platform. Members meet during general assemblies several times a year (5 in 2021) and during specific working meetings and groups. The Secretariat is ensured by France Stratégie. Publications are released on the website of France Stratégie and web conference are organised on the different themes to encourage idea sharing and the promotion of the outcomes of the work. Members have agreed on a multiyear roadmap for their activities at the end of December 2020 that is now being implemented by the platform.

The platform has enabled France Stratégie and more broadly the government to engage a wide range of stakeholders into a co-ordinated and systematic manner on a crosscutting topic to help inform strategy and policymaking on the topic. Its work has helped develop new measures and ideas in the field of RSE in France, for instance on RSE labelling for SMEs and micro-entreprises.

Source: (France Stratégie, 2022<sup>[71]</sup>; French RSE platform, 2022<sup>[72]</sup>).

### Box 3.8. Engaging citizens and civil society in the National Dialogue in Ireland

The government of Ireland developed a Climate Action plan in 2019 and then in 2021 and created the National Dialogue on Climate Action (NDCA) to further increase societal engagement and public participation in the Climate Action Plan. The NDCA aims to establish a new social contract on climate, to engage, enable and empower everyone in society, including politicians, policymakers, stakeholders and the public, to co-create and deliver practical climate actions, and to inform strategies and policy responses. The NDCA is led by Ireland's Department of the Environment, Climate and Communications and supported by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) that also plays the role of Secretariat.

The NDCA relies on a number of tools and platforms, including in 2022 alone:

- The Climate Conversations 2022 (CC22) involving more than 400 stakeholders, 4,300 members of the public, young people, populations vulnerable to the transition to carbon neutrality, and local and community organisations.
- Three National Climate Stakeholder Forum events which took the form of deliberative workshops inviting over 300 stakeholders from a wide range of organisations to discuss challenges and solutions to delivering climate actions.
- The first National Youth Assembly on Climate which engaged over 40 young people to capture the views and suggestions on how we deliver climate actions from the young people in Ireland.
- The EPA Climate Change in the Irish Mind (CCIM) study which provided a nationally representative data on the attitudes and behaviours to climate change of 4,000 citizens.
- The EPA Climate Conference 2022, *Creating Ireland's Climate Future* which examined the vision for a climate-neutral and resilient Ireland by 2050 and how that vision will be achieved in terms of strategic planning, built and natural environments.
- The National Social and Behavioural Advisory Group which met 3 times and was established to provide ongoing expert insight into research findings and help inform policy.

The NDCA has built an evidence base on climate action, particularly on the views and behaviours of citizens through the Climate Conversations, that are annual consultation and engagement processes, and the CCIM study. The Climate Conversations have a dedicated webpage that encourages public participation and the CC22 was opened by the Minister of the Environment, Climate and Communications to ensure political support and visibility. The CC22 highlighted that the voice of the public was clear, responsive, conveyed a sense of urgency, and enthusiasm to work with the government. According to the online questionnaire that was also part of the Climate Conversations' process, 92% of respondents expressed that they were worried about climate change, 83% were motivated to take action and 85% said they were already taking some form of action. At the same time, the CCIM study suggested that there might be a disconnect between desire to take action and understanding and implementation of actions that have significant impacts. Both consultation mechanisms have allowed the government to identify trends and practices but also paradoxes in people's behaviours and helped inform future activities and actions.

The NDCA is also enabling the government to identify priority areas for action, such as climate literacy, and to further bring politicians, policymakers, and stakeholders to accelerate delivery through specific engagement events and policy feedbacks. The NDCA contributes to the prioritisation and implementation of climate and energy policy, including the new Climate Action Plans that have been prepared and released every two years since 2019. The creation of the Youth Assembly on Climate is for instance an outcome of the Climate Action Plan 2021.

Sources: (Government of Ireland, 2021<sup>[73]</sup>); (Government of Ireland, 2022<sup>[74]</sup>); (Government of Ireland, 2022<sup>[75]</sup>).



## Policy options and instruments for consideration

The analysis above and the different experiences and case studies from OECD member countries can help provide PlanAPP and more specifically RePLAN with new ideas and practices to consider implementing to increase their capabilities in external and internal networking for evidence-based strategy making.

### **Harnessing expertise and evidence from within and outside the administration**

PlanAPP could strengthen its role as a knowledge broker:

- Raise awareness about the advantages provided by the use of evidence in planning through RePLAN;
- Develop guidance and methodology on the use of evidence and include it in key strategic methodologies and guidance to be established (as suggested in the first part of the policy paper);
- Map out the policy advisory system bodies, particularly the existing networks against the thematic orientations of RePLAN's future multi-sectoral teams; consider grouping some of them and suggest the involvement of RePLAN in those that concern strategic, crosscutting priorities;
- Consider establishing a network on foresight and research across the administration (as in Finland for example).

### **Fostering internal networking: mobilising the whole-of-government on strategic planning**

- Build a sense of community among units and individuals in charge of strategic planning using the RePLAN commission and informal relations at more technical level;
- Consider creating a limited number of ministerial working groups on strategic priorities that PlanAPP and RePLAN can support as Secretariat - establish and use multisectoral teams on strategic themes and priorities of the government for research and evidence-purpose that can feed the work of the working groups;
- Consider solidifying and formalising the working group on the preparations of the Major Options to ensure buy-in and systematise the process;
- Consider using staff mobility programmes between PlanAPP/RePLAN and line Ministries;
- Consider organising capacity-building activities e.g. supporting the creation of new strategic units in Ministries where they do not exist, and develop training, seminars and lecture on topics selected with the RePLAN network for participants and for the whole-of-administration.

### **Increasing citizen engagement and participation in strategic planning**

- Consider PlanAPP as playing a role in promoting citizen engagement in strategic planning across the government by ensuring that consultations take place and for RePLAN to discuss and share practices, methodologies and guidelines on citizen engagement in strategy-making;
- Ensure that citizen engagement is envisaged systematically in key national strategic documents as was the case for in Portugal 2030 and suggest mechanisms to the different authors of future strategies when considering the creation of a new one;

- Consider creating a centre for citizen engagement in the centre of government to build standards and promote citizen participation principles and practices by all public institutions;
- Develop citizen participation mechanisms, such as national dialogue, on crucial topics and priorities identified by citizens and integrate them into key strategic planning processes and plans around those issues, especially inequalities and fairness;
- Further communicate on the opportunities for citizens, especially the youth, to participate into consultation mechanisms on policymaking and on key strategies, for instance in education institutions and on social media.

#### **Engaging scientific, civil society and governmental stakeholders jointly on cross-cutting issues**

- Consider establishing new platforms and tools to foster dialogue and stakeholder engagement on selected topics e.g. the launch of a national dialogue on climate with the Ministry of Environment and Energy Transition following the example of Ireland; or the creation of public-private dialogue platform on selected priorities;
- Further use these platforms to reinforce the relations between policymakers and scientists' communities and draft a roadmap to institutionalise in a single framework the mechanisms that bring scientific evidence as input to policymaking.

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# Notes

<sup>1</sup> The main strategic documents described in the document and related to government priorities include:

- Portugal 2030 Strategy is the main long-term strategy of Portugal that sets four main objectives for Portugal: People first: a better demographic balance, greater inclusion, less inequality; digitalization, innovation and skills as drivers of development; Climate transition and resources sustainability; and an externally competitive and internally cohesive country. The document was prepared by the former Ministry of Planning, now a Secretary of state, and was approved by a Resolution of the Council of Ministers (n.º 98/2020) (Government of Portugal, 2020<sup>[79]</sup>).
- The *Major Options* is a multiyear strategic document planned in the Portuguese Constitution with the force of a law, with which national plans and the budget should be aligned (Articles 91 and 105 of the Constitution). The latest version of the Major Options 2022-2026 was prepared by PlanAPP who is tasked with drafting the document. While the document was originally used to plan investments in the country, the Major Options bill now aims to connect national priorities outlined in the Government Programme and Portugal 2030 Strategy with other government programmes and funding, and provide a roadmap and monitoring on the implementation of these priorities.
- the Government Programme is the government plan for the duration of the mandate that translates electoral commitments into a set of priorities and measures. The current programme is the *Programme of the XXIII Constitutional Government* that was presented in April 2022. It covers a number of key priorities over the period 2022-2026 on good governance, climate change and transition, demography, inequalities, digital society and innovation (Government of Portugal, 2022<sup>[77]</sup>).
- the National Reform Programme (NRP) of Portugal is a document prepared by the country (PlanAPP in the case of Portugal) as part of the European Semester detailing the specific policies it will implement to boost jobs and growth and to comply with the EU's country-specific recommendations. The most recent NRP presents the medium-term strategy of the XXIII Constitutional Government for the development of Portugal and aims to be aligned with the RRP and with Portugal 2030 Strategy and to respond to the Recommendations made during the 2019 and 2020 European Semester (Government of Portugal, 2022<sup>[78]</sup>).
- the Stability Programme of Portugal, most recently over the period 2022-2026, is a document presenting mid-term fiscal plans prepared by the Ministry of Finance of Portugal and submitted to the EU, that is based on economic governance rules in the Stability and Growth Pact, which aim to prevent the emergence or exacerbation of fiscal difficulties (Government of Portugal, 2022<sup>[80]</sup>; European Commission, n.d.<sup>[76]</sup>).

- Portugal's Recovery and Resilience Plan is a nationally applicable programme developed by a dedicated structure, Recover Portugal Mission («Recuperar Portugal»), on the basis of the EU Next Generation instrument. It aims to help Portugal restore its economic growth, become more sustainable, resilient and better prepared for the challenges and opportunities of the green and digital transitions in line with EU's and national strategic priorities (Government of Portugal, 2021<sup>[25]</sup>).

<sup>2</sup> The centre of government refers to “the body or group of bodies that provide direct support and advice to the Head of Government and the Council of Ministries” as defined by the OECD (OECD, 2018<sup>[3]</sup>). The centre of government typically includes a number of government entities such as the Chancellery, Cabinet Office, Office of the President or Prime Minister, General Secretariat of the Presidency, and the Ministry of Finance and Planning depending on countries' institutional setting, that play five key functions: preparations of Cabinet meetings, policy co-ordination, strategic planning, communications of government messages, and monitoring of the implementation of government programmes and strategies.

<sup>3</sup> As part of the project, the OECD administered a questionnaire on strategic planning processes and activities to a large number of government entities involved in these processes, in order to collect information and evidence.

<sup>4</sup> See note 3.

<sup>5</sup> A distinct output of this project addresses the monitoring and evaluation framework in detail. As such in this section the discussion is limited to the related tools deployed by centres to support delivery.