

Territorial Divides and Trust in Government: What Role for Administrative Capacity Building?

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- > A matter of trust
- > A question of administrative capacity
- > Drawing conclusions: The intersection of administrative capacity and trust.





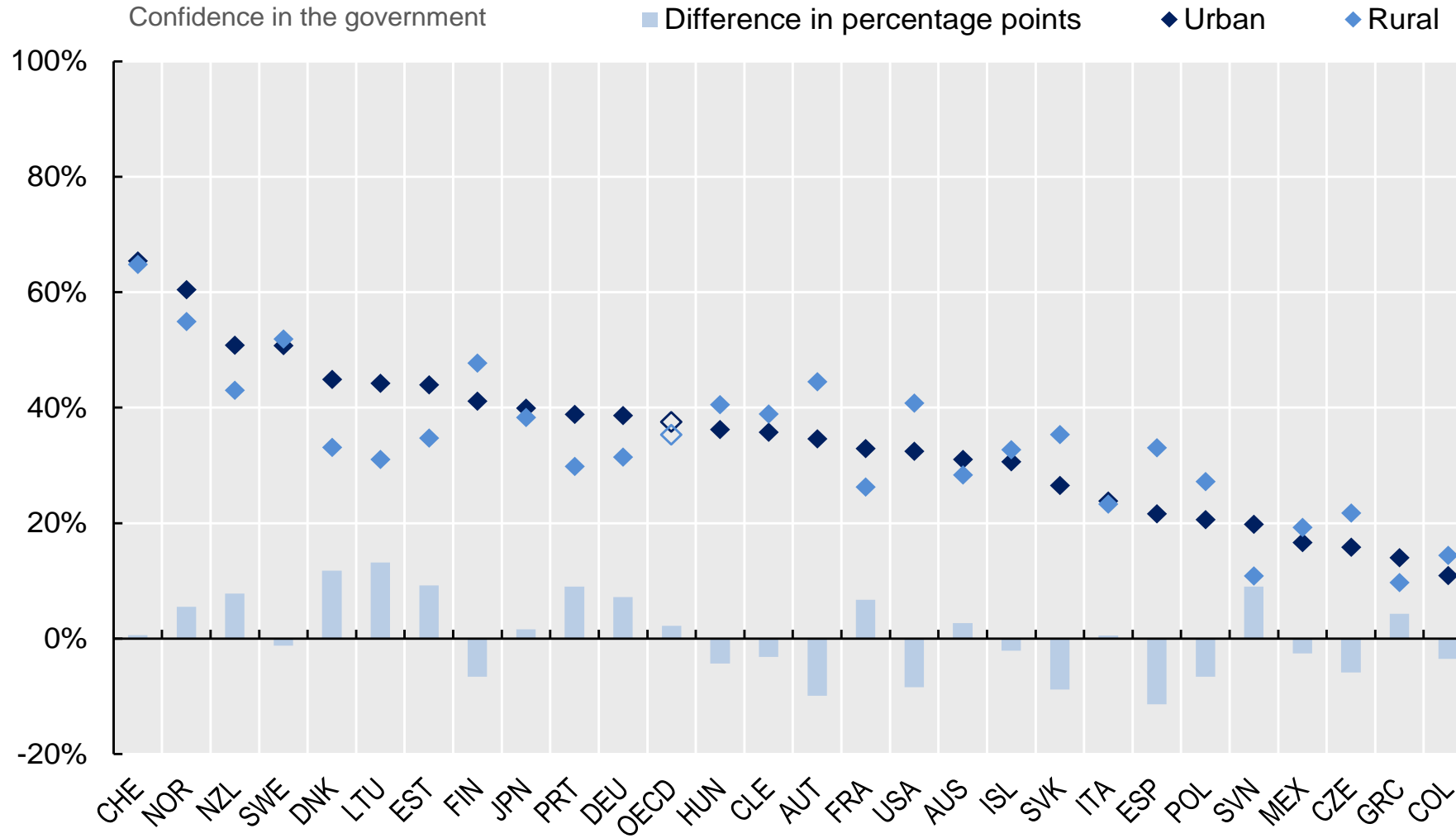
A matter of trust



Is it a question of an urban/rural divide?

Confidence in government by urban-rural group

% with the highest and lowest level of trust by country



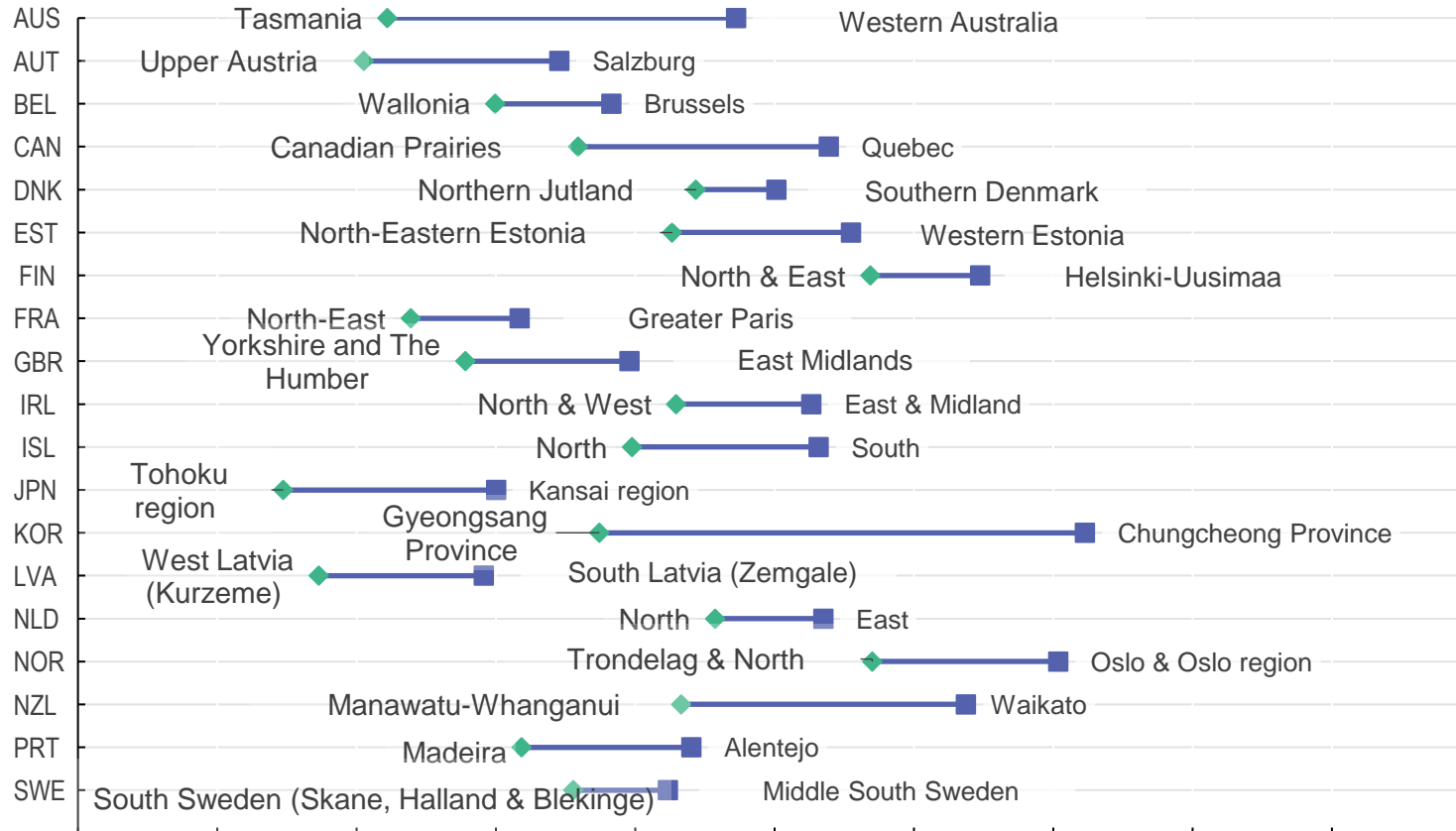


What is happening with territorial levels of trust in government?

Trust in national governments in OECD regions

% with the highest and lowest level of trust by country

◆ Region with lowest level of trust in gov't in country ■ Region with highest level of trust in gov't in country



Many OECD countries have **wide regional disparities in trust**

- Lowest in Sweden and Denmark
- Highest in Australia and Korea

In OECD countries, **trust in different levels of government also varies** (e.g., trust in regional and local authorities across EU Member States was nearly 10% higher than trust in national governments)

Factors supporting regional levels of trust include:

- Quality local services
- Labour market opportunities
- Long-term economic growth



Three Factors Affecting Territorial Levels of Trust in Government

Long-term regional economic performance

Regions with lower economic dynamism and less opportunity appear more prone to declining levels of trust

- E.g. comparatively wealthy areas that have been in long-term economic decline
- E.g. middle-income regions with limited innovation capacity

Poor short-term economic shocks

Trust in government can also be undermined by short-term shocks to regional and local economies, such as unemployment

- E.g. in the EU, regional unemployment rises have contributed to lower trust in national parliaments
- E.g. in the US, declines in manufacturing employment have fuelled anti-establishment candidate support

Government responsiveness: communities and services

Dissatisfaction with local public services and/or lack of government responsiveness to local needs can lower trust in government

- E.g. in the EU, growing rural distrust of government has been fuelled by dissatisfaction with education/ healthcare
- Australian focus groups have attributed low political trust to a lack of government responsiveness to local needs



A lot is still unknown about territorial divides in government trust, and further (qualitative and quantitative) research is needed, including:

- Investigating how the factors that affect trust vary across population groups, geography and institutions
- Exploring how non-economic factors (e.g. citizen engagement) could affect territorial variations in trust



What we do know is that the quality of subnational governance can help address those factors that affect trust in government.

Our research suggests that several policy interventions may be particularly helpful.

- Place-based regional development policies
- Increasing the uptake of inter-municipal co-operation
- **Consolidating institutional and subnational capacity, including administrative capacity**

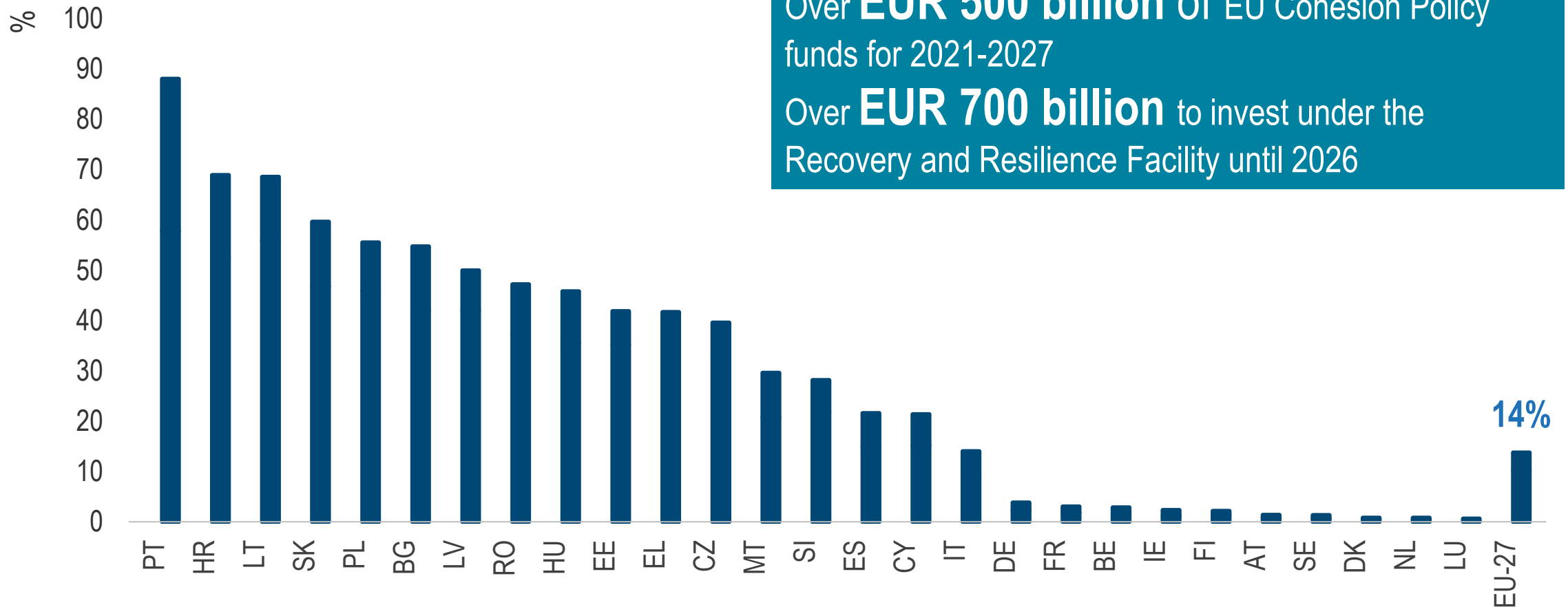
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**A question of
administrative capacity**



Cohesion Policy is an important source for public investment

Cohesion policy funding relative to government investment in Member States in the 2014-2020 period

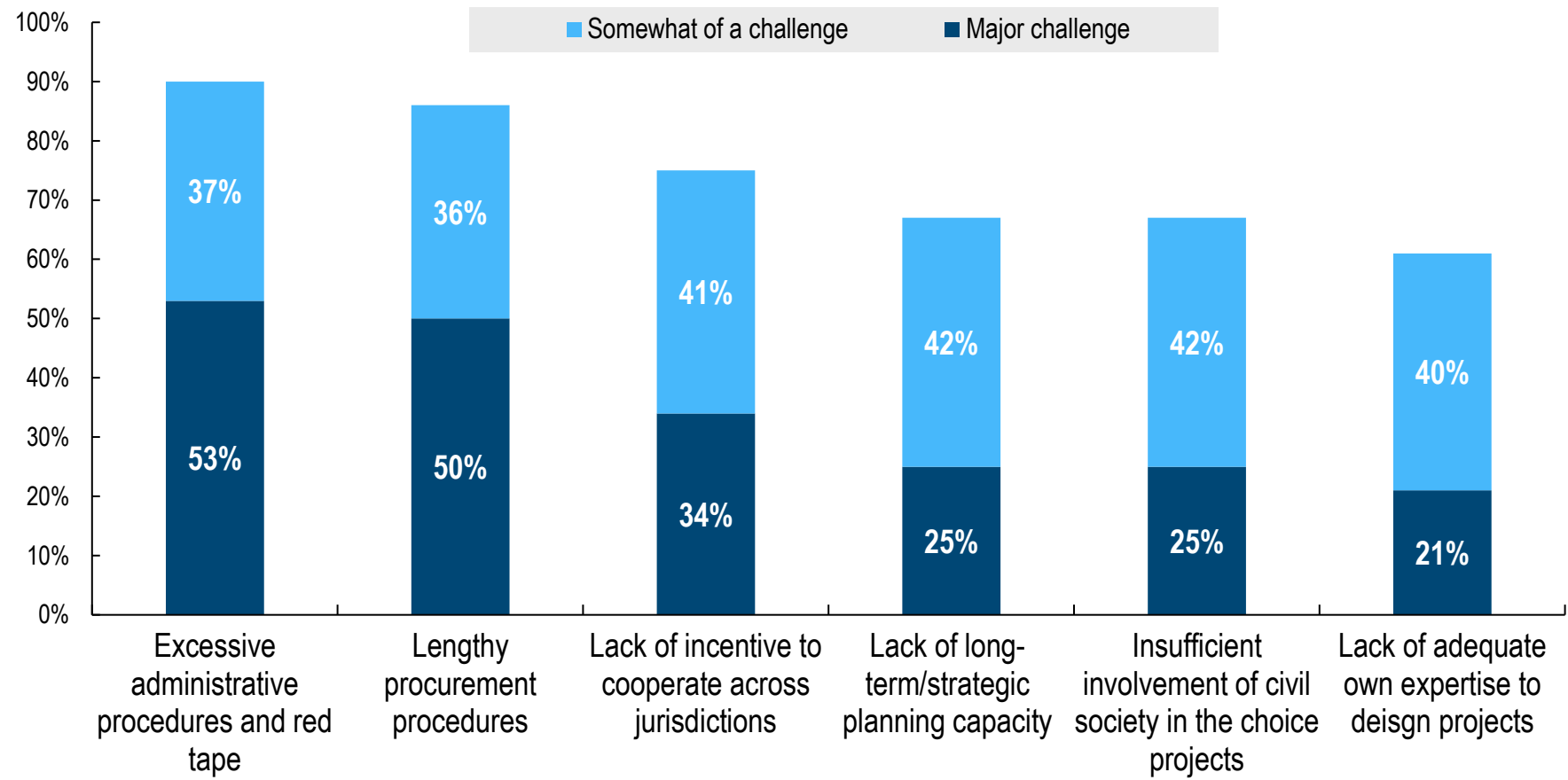




Capacity gaps in managing public investment at all levels of government



Selected challenges of infrastructure investment faced by subnational governments
(N=255)



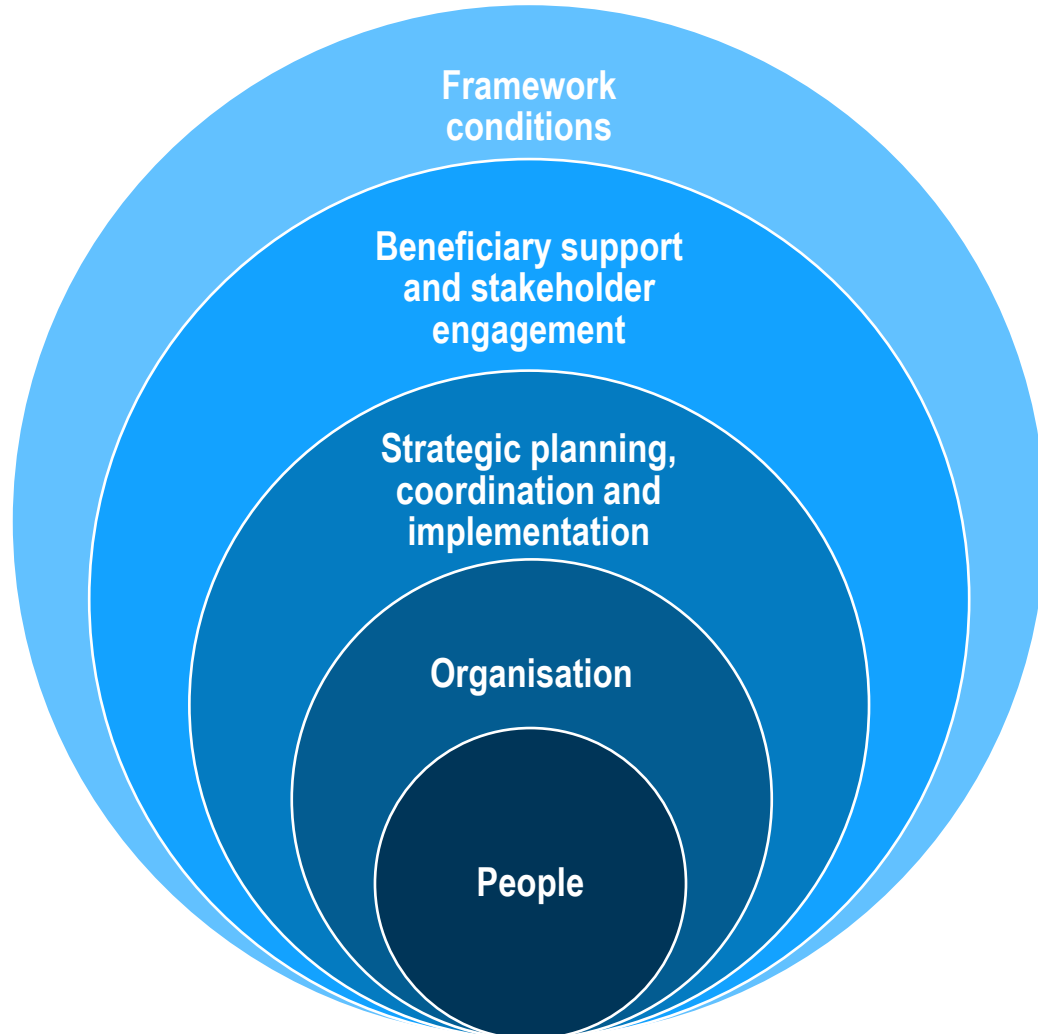
Possible to generate **savings of about 40%** on infrastructure projects when project selection, delivery and management of existing assets are more effective

Around **30%** of potential gains from public investment are **lost** due to inefficiencies in public investment processes

Source: Results of the OECD-CoR Consultation of Sub-national Governments; (OECD 2014), Recommendation and Principles for Action for Effective Public Investment across Levels of Government



OECD Analytical Framework for Administrative Capacity Building



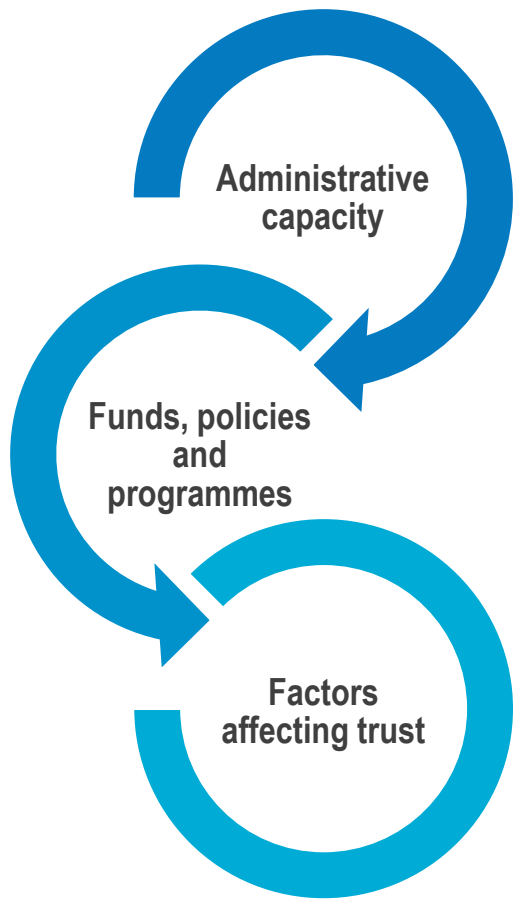
- Multi-level governance framework
- Legislative and regulatory framework (e.g. procurement)
- Build beneficiary capacity
- Broad stakeholder engagement
- Strategic planning and prioritization
- Coordination
- Risk management
- Performance evaluation
- Leadership
- Structure
- Competencies
- Attract, recruit and retain
- Train and promote learning
- Motivate



**Drawing conclusions:
The intersection of
administrative capacity and trust**



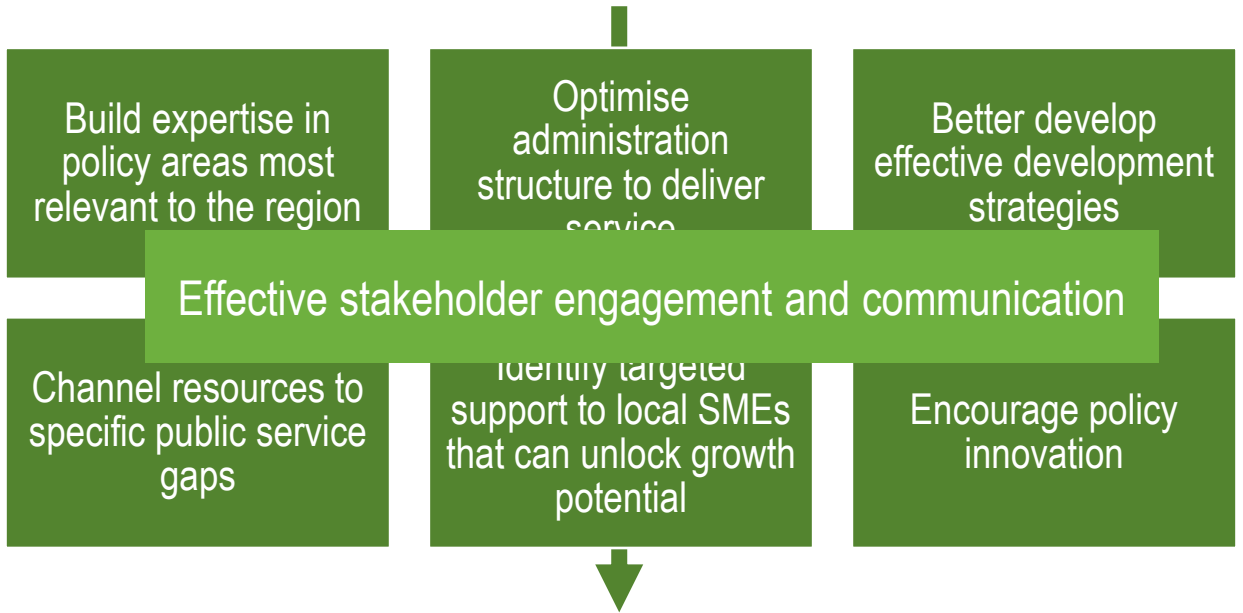
Using administrative capacity to address factors affecting trust in government



Examples of EU fund investment priorities 2021-2027

- Economic transformation and SME support
- Social inclusion and equal access to healthcare
- Locally-developed strategies
- Youth employment

Strong administrative capacity can help



Factors supporting regional levels of trust include:

- Quality local services
- Labour market opportunities
- Long-term economic growth



References

**The territorial
dimension of trust in
government deserves
greater attention**

**Position administrative
capacity building in the
broader context**

**Stakeholder
engagement and
communication is at
the core of capacity
and trust building**



Trust in government

The exploratory work looks at the factors (e.g., level of unemployment, access to quality public services, etc.) driving the territorial differences in trust in government. It also looks at the levers available to policy makers that may help to rebuild trust, as well as areas for future qualitative and quantitative OECD research.

[COGITO BLOG](#)

OECD Multi-level Governance Studies
Strengthening Governance of EU Funds under Cohesion Policy
ADMINISTRATIVE CAPACITY BUILDING

ADMINISTRATIVE CAPACITY BUILDING SELF-ASSESSMENT INSTRUMENT

for Managing Authorities of EU Funds under Cohesion Policy

Upcoming: Building Beneficiary Capacity for EU fund implementation and building a network of Managing Authorities

More information on OECD work on governance of regional development:
<https://www.oecd.org/regional/governance/>



Thank you!

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