

Building capacity for evidence-informed policymaking in **Latvia**

Assessment and recommendations roadmap



OECD Public Governance Policy Papers

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Executive summary

In the current challenging international context, central governments need to strengthen their policymaking processes and ensure that expertise, evidence and science are used in the most appropriate way to inform democratic decisions. This policy paper presents key findings and recommendations based on a diagnostic report, a needs and gaps assessment and a roadmap for policy implementation, all carried out as part of the Technical Support Instrument (TSI) project “Building capacity for evidence informed policymaking in governance and public administration in a post-pandemic Europe”, supported by the European Commission’s Directorate-General for Structural Reform Support (DG REFORM).

In recent years, Latvia has undertaken several steps to strengthen its evidence-informed policy making (EIPM) system, including:

- Taking a collaborative and consensus-based approach to policymaking (through the Single Portal for Development and Harmonisation of Draft Legal Acts).
- Developing effective tools to facilitate supply of policy relevant research (through the State Research Programme).
- Initiating a centralised approach to demand for research for policy planning (through the list of commissioned research and the research and publication database).

However, Latvia faces a number of challenges in systematically generating and using evidence at the right time and in the right format to inform policymaking. The current limitations include:

- Informal relationships between researchers and policymakers, resulting in uneven access to research.
- Limited capacities and skills to bridge the gaps between science and policy, both in the government and in academia.
- Heterogenous organisation of analytical skills inside line ministries.
- A burdensome and uncertain data access procedure inside the government for research and analysis.
- Insufficient spaces for cross-domain collaborations both in government and in the academia.

Based on these findings, the OECD identified six key high-level recommendations for Latvia, each supported with a set of suggested implementing actions introduced in the document:

1. Strengthen analytical skills inside the public administration by mapping analytical skills, performing upskilling and attracting new analytical skills.
2. Improve the interface between research and policy to increase the impact of science on policymaking.
3. Enhance the capacity to use evidence inside government.
4. Strengthen data governance across government to facilitate data access and use.
5. Promote high quality impact assessments for major regulations and develop policy evaluation across government.
6. Promote a healthy and multi-disciplinary evidence ecosystem to inform major cross-government priorities.

This policy paper is divided into two chapters: the first chapter provides an overview of the current situation in Latvia, identifying the main gaps and areas for improvement and taking into consideration the best practices shared in the needs and gaps assessment. The chapter builds on the extensive analyses developed in the diagnostic and needs and gap assessments both conducted as part of this project. The second chapter presents the recommendations with key implementing actions to support concrete implementation moving forward in the future.

1 The evidence-informed policymaking system in Latvia: Addressing the challenges ahead

Building capacity for evidence informed policymaking

Governments are grappling with complex and interconnected challenges that transcend departmental boundaries, cut across levels of government, and affect multiple actors. To address issues ranging from sudden crises such as the COVID-19 pandemic to long-term challenges such as ageing populations, as well as the digital and green transitions, governments need innovative and agile policy responses. This calls for multi-disciplinary evidence to support knowledge-intensive policy development, ensuring tangible and sustainable results for citizens.

The COVID-19 crisis underscored critical evidence gaps and underlined the pivotal role of scientific knowledge in informing policymaking. Furthermore, it exposed many challenges at the science to policy interface, such as scientific uncertainty, risks of mis- and disinformation, and the costs of co-ordination failures. A holistic answer to these challenges requires a significant increase in capacity for evidence-informed policymaking (EIPM), to ensure timely, relevant evidence that meets political demands. This effort requires a systemic approach to building institutional capacity for knowledge exchange among experts, scientists and policymakers, as well as attention to the wider needs for co-ordination and co-operation within the science-for-policy community.

Recognising the importance of addressing these challenges, Latvia, alongside six other EU Member States,¹ has engaged in the Technical Support Instrument project on “Building capacity for evidence informed policymaking in governance and public administration in a post-pandemic Europe” funded by the European Commission’s Directorate-General for Structural Reform Support (DG REFORM) and co-delivered by the European Commission’s Joint Research Centre (JRC) and the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD).

The goal of the project is to enable these countries to improve their public administrations' effectiveness by enhancing their institutional capacity to mobilise and use scientific knowledge, data, evaluation, and evidence in policymaking. Investing in capacity for EIPM is a proactive approach to addressing complex societal problems and ensuring that public administrations are well-equipped to meet the needs of their citizens. This initiative represents a crucial step towards creating more resilient and effective governance systems that can tackle the challenges of the 21st century.

The project benefits from collective action and wider initiatives across the European Union. The Council Conclusions of the EU-27 research ministers on “Strengthening the role and impact of research and innovation in the policymaking process in the Union” offer clear pathways to action, as do the provisions

¹ Greece, Belgium, Czechia, Estonia, Lithuania, and the Netherlands.

in the *European Commission's Communication on "Enhancing a European Public Administrative Space"* (Council of the European Union, 2023^[1]) (European Commission, 2023^[2]). The more recent 2024 Ghent Ministerial Declaration of European Ministers of Public Administration acknowledges the importance of using evidence in policymaking and in evaluating policy decisions, and thus the need to build capacity for EIPM throughout government, provide accessible data, strengthen the exchange between policy, scientific institutions and knowledge brokers and encourage the strengthening of internal expertise (EUPAN, 2024^[3]).

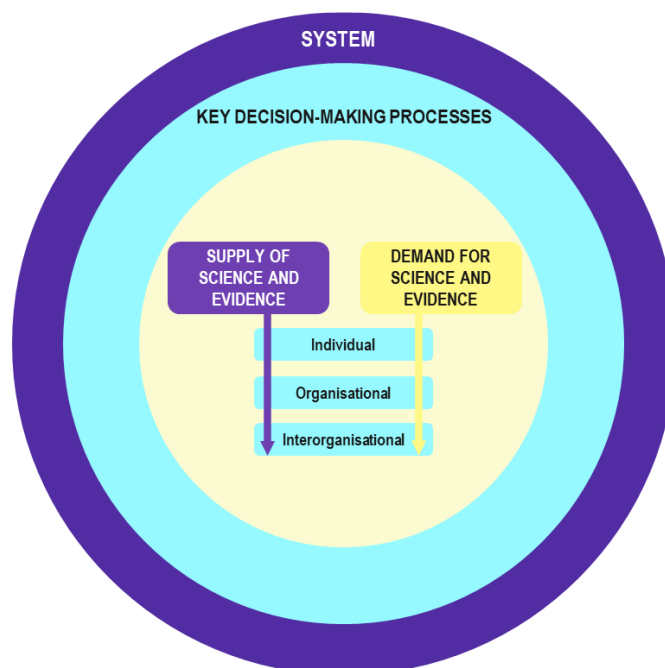
This document presents key findings from the diagnostic report and the needs and gap assessment, along with recommendations from the roadmap for policy implementation prepared as part of the project. Adopting a systemic approach, it examines evidence supply, evidence demand, and their intersection. The analysis is conducted from the individual, organisational and wider community perspectives, to fully address evidence needs.

A comprehensive analytical approach

In recent years, Latvia has significantly improved its approach to evidence-informed policymaking. It has developed key policy processes, such as regulatory impact assessment, and created tools such as online platforms for consultation processes and instruments for ministries to use the results of research programmes. Furthermore, it has designed mechanisms to co-ordinate evidence needs across public entities, increased the transparency of commissioned research through a user-friendly database and encouraged the use of evidence in key policy processes. However, despite these improvements, challenges persist in systematically generating and using evidence at the right time and in the right format to effectively inform policymaking.

This chapter provides the main findings emerging from the diagnostic analysis and the needs and gap assessment prepared under the project. The approach follows the analytical framework for assessing capacities for EIPM developed jointly by the OECD and the European Commission's Joint Research Centre (JRC) for the purposes of this project. This framework rests on the assumption that an effective EIPM system functions as a 'market' for evidence, where there is both high availability and quality of evidence (the 'supply') and the interest and ability to use this evidence by the people making the decisions (the 'demand'). This model of demand and supply has been extensively used in academic research to examine EIPM and rests on the work of Weiss and Caplan (Weiss, 1979^[4]) (Caplan, 1979^[5]). Without the expertise offered by researchers, universities and analytical units within government, policymakers and decision makers would not be in a position to make evidence-informed decisions. At the same time, without demand for evidence in the first place, the availability of policy-relevant evidence on the market would be low. While interlinked, each side of the market responds to specific dynamics and incentives and requires different skills and organisational structures to be maintained. As outlined in the analytical framework developed by Stewart, Langer, and Erasmus (Stewart, Langer and Erasmus, 2018^[6]), it is beneficial to examine these dimensions from a variety of perspectives, specifically the individual, organisational and inter-organisational perspectives. Finally, the analysis examines key policymaking processes embedded in the machinery of government where supply meets demand.

Figure 1.1. Analytical framework to frame the analysis of evidence-informed policymaking



Source: Authors based on the OECD/JRC Framework for capacities for Evidence-Informed Policy Making. See OECD (2020), Building Capacity for Evidence-Informed Policy-Making: Lessons from Country Experiences, OECD Public Governance Reviews, OECD Publishing, Paris, <https://doi.org/10.1787/86331250-en> and Stewart, R., L. Langer and Y. Erasmus (2018), "An integrated model for increasing the use of evidence by decision-makers for improved development", Development Southern Africa, Vol. 36/5, pp. 616-631, <https://doi.org/10.1080/0376835x.2018.1543579>. S).

Supply of policy-relevant evidence has increased but still suffers from limited funding and capacities

To adopt an EIPM approach, governments need access to high-quality evidence, defined as evidence that is methodologically robust and produced following principles of good governance that ensure its trustworthiness (OECD, 2020^[7]). Such quality is essential for enabling policymakers to use evidence confidently, leading to better policies that enhance citizens' well-being and trust.

Latvia has seen notable progress in its policy-relevant evidence supply in recent years, with an increase in policy-oriented research. However, the country still faces significant challenges in producing this evidence systematically. With some notable exceptions, including the Ministry of Finance, the Ministry of Economy and the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Regional Development, both government and knowledge brokers operating at arm's length from government **are not equipped with sufficient skills or staffing to systematically produce policy-actionable evidence**. In particular, sectoral line ministries lack sufficient analytical skills, partly due to the low attractiveness of government salaries. These issues are well-recognised by the government: the State Chancellery's Public Administration Modernisation Plan 2023-2027 highlights the need to strengthen the data analysis skills of policy planners (State Chancellery, 2023^[8]) and the government has recently adopted a public sector reform including a change in the remuneration law, although this has come without a corresponding increase to the budgets of line ministries (Cabinet of Ministers, 2022^[9]). Furthermore, there is lack of sufficient training available, although the Latvian School of Public Administration is developing several initiatives to remedy this, including its Digital Academy, where it cooperates with line ministries to offer trainings on digital skills.

Within the government, line ministries **rarely have dedicated units responsible for evidence production** and mainly rely on formal and informal collaborations with arm's length institutes and universities.

At the same time, limited capacity and low levels of research funding mean that **universities have limited interest in working on policy-relevant research**. They are also heavily geared towards receiving European funding, which creates little incentive to focus elsewhere. On the other hand, **public research institutes and other arm's length institutions play a major role in evidence supply in Latvia**. However, their manner of providing evidence can be fragmented – collaboration across research institutes often relies on informal mechanisms rather than clear and structured processes, and multidisciplinary advisory bodies are generally underdeveloped.

While accessing data for research purposes is in theory possible, the decentralised nature of the Latvian statistical system and lack of a strong data governance framework makes data sharing difficult. When data access is granted, it tends to be done on an ad hoc basis, often based on individual connections and the status of the researcher. However, in recent years, Latvia has taken steps to reduce these data access issues, creating a central Open Government Data Portal, adopting an Open Data Strategy and an Open Science Data Strategy, and developing a National Analytical Competence Centre to provide a single data access point, established during this project.

The recent reform of the **State Research Programme by the Ministry of Education and Science** has allowed line ministries to directly fund policy-relevant research, encouraging its production (Cabinet of Ministers, 2018_[10]). However, the question of its full usability remains for some ministries given some of the constraints attached such as the limited capacities. Despite ambitious goals, the overall level of R&D in GDP remains well below the European average, and below other Baltic states (OECD, 2024_[11]).

Table 1. Overview of main needs and gaps identified in terms of supply of evidence

Individual level	Organisational level	Inter-organisational level
<p>Identified gap: Lack of analytical skills in public administration Need: Perform a skill mapping to understand current gaps Develop schemes or job functions to attract new skills Invest in analytical training Organisations involved: State Chancellery</p>	<p>Identified gap: Absence of analytical units across line ministries Need: Explore ways to increase internal supply of evidence Organisations involved: State Chancellery and Ministry of Education and Science + line ministries</p>	<p>Identified gap: Lack of clear data governance Need: Improve data access, simplify legal procedures, clarify governance Organisations involved: State Chancellery and Ministry of Education and Sciences Central Bureau of Statistics, the Ministry of Economics and Ministry of Environmental Protection and Regional Development</p>
<p>Identified gap: Limited Science for policy skills in universities Need: Strengthen science4policy skills by developing specific courses for doctoral students Organisation involved: Ministry of Education and Science and Higher Education Institutions</p>	<p>Identified gap: Absence of schemes to attract researchers in government Need: Develop a scheme to attract researchers inside the government Organisation involved: Ministry of Education and Sciences and State Chancellery</p>	<p>Identified gap: Limited multi-disciplinary collaborations both across ministries and across academic world Need: Strengthen multidisciplinary collaborations across universities and research institutes developing multi-disciplinary working groups Organisation involved: Ministry of Education and Sciences and State Chancellery</p>
<p>Identified gap: Absence of clear incentives for researchers to work with government on policy-relevant research Need: Increase opportunities to work for and with the government ; Explore ways to value policy-relevant research in assessment of academics and researchers Organisations involved: State Chancellery, Ministry of Education and Science</p>	<p>Identified gap: Limited funding to specific policy-relevant centres Need: Increase funding available to some strategic knowledge broker identified also through the new evidence plans Organisations involved: discussion with Ministry of Finance and line ministries</p>	

Demand for evidence is heterogenous across ministries despite some promising practices

Demand is key to ensuring that evidence will contribute to the policymaking process. However, in Latvia, demand for evidence varies across ministries, resulting in uneven use in policymaking. Furthermore, in some cases there is a risk that policymakers use evidence instrumentally to justify predetermined decisions. At the individual level, skills to demand evidence are lacking, and awareness of the value of using evidence remains limited – although in some cases, interest by ministers can have a direct impact and facilitate evidence use. At the organisational level, several notable practices to promote demand for evidence have emerged, although they are not yet systematic. In particular, the Chancellery recently mandated that all ministries submit their commissioned research, which it then compiles into a centralised list, thus strengthening demand and increasing its visibility (Cabinet of Ministers, 2023^[12]). In addition, the Chancellery maintains a research and publication database containing both planned and existing studies to inform the planning phase. The Bank of Latvia competition, where students submit scientific research papers, is another promising initiative that increases visibility of policy-relevant evidence (Bank of Latvia, 2023^[13]).

At the inter-organisational level, several actors both within and outside the executive have the mandate to promote evidence use, putting pressure on government to be more transparent in the way it uses evidence, and thus enabling an overall culture for transparency across government. This includes the Fiscal Council, the Productivity Board, and NGOs like Providus or Delna. While this is welcome, there are still not enough opportunities for such organisations to connect and discuss evidence needs. Beyond the executive, demand for evidence has also increased in Parliament in recent years, with a Parliamentary analytical unit established in 2017.

Table 2. Overview of main needs and gaps identified in terms of demand of evidence

Individual level	Organisational level	Inter-organisational level
<p>Identified gap: Lack of commissioning skills inside line ministries</p> <p>Need: Reinforce training on public procurement to include elements on commissioning research</p> <p>Organisation involved: Ministry of Education and Science (Latvian Council of Science), State Chancellery (Latvian School of Public Administration)</p>	<p>Identified gap: Lack of systematic demand for evidence</p> <p>Need: Transform the current research plans in more strategic documents to foster supply of evidence in relevant areas and ensure that they are appropriately used (maybe link to budgetary allocations)</p> <p>Organisation involved: Ministry of Education and Sciences, State Chancellery, Ministry of Finance</p>	<p>Identified gap: No systematic network to discuss evidence needs</p> <p>Need: Revitalise past networks or develop a new network on EIPM across line ministries</p> <p>Organisation involved: Ministry of Education and Science, State Chancellery, line Ministries</p>
<p>Identified gap: Absence of strategic figures performing a ‘science’ advisor role, or acting as “evidence champions”, such as Chief Economists or Chief Scientists</p> <p>Need: Reflect on potential Chief Science Advisers, Chief Economists or Chief Analyst to ensure some visibility and capacity for EIPM skills at the political to administrative interface</p> <p>Organisation involved: State Chancellery, Line ministries</p>		<p>Identified gap: Still limited impact and visibility to evidence across line ministries</p> <p>Need: Engage with the Parliament and other relevant actors to increase interest in EIPM Engage with other Baltic/ Nordic countries to explore potential collaborations in EIPM</p> <p>Organisation involved: Ministry of Education and Science, State Chancellery, Line ministries</p>

Some policymaking processes have been streamlined, although they are still not able to systematically channel evidence

Key policymaking processes can significantly help in integrating evidence into the policy cycle. In recent years, Latvia has made significant progress in the development of such processes, including frameworks for policy planning and tools for regulatory impact assessments (hereafter RIA) and stakeholder consultation (OECD, 2021^[14]). The Single Portal for Development and Harmonisation of Draft Legal Acts offers an interactive and open platform to receive feedback from stakeholders. Further to this, it provides an integrated tool to share feedback across Ministries to ensure coherence in the review process and monitor the advancement of policy proposals (State Chancellery, 2023^[15]). These tools have helped create common practices across ministries, channel evidence into policymaking processes and increase the transparency and overall accountability of the policymaking system.

While the planning processes within Latvia are generally well developed, in part to meet the requirements of the funding processes at European level, some of the internal requirements are excessively developed and may result in undue pressures at line ministry level, with limited use of foresight. In fact, foresight approaches are barely existent to support forward looking analytical approaches. Furthermore, the way that evidence is channelled into policy processes remains fairly heterogeneous across ministries and relies on the skills and motivation of individual civil servants. This is particularly the case in sectoral plans, where evidence is employed to a lesser extent than in strategic long-term documents.

Table 3. Summary of current gaps and needs to improve strategic planning, foresight and regulatory management

Current Need/Gap Description	Main relevant Beneficiary Organisation(s)	Potential Intervention(s)
Limited skills to systematically use evidence in planning process and perform monitoring and evaluation	All actors performing strategic planning	Provide relevant trainings to policy planners through the Policy Planner Network, School of Public Administration
Limited use of foresight in planning documents	All actors performing strategic planning	Strengthen capacity in line ministries Apply foresight methods to long-term strategic plans Reflect on the potential development of a dedicated centre
Insufficient resources to perform good RIAs for all legislative proposals	State Chancellery with Ministry of Justice (together with other relevant stakeholders)	Develop ways to better implement the proportionality principle Plan ahead which legislative proposals require more advanced RIAs
Absence of skills and relevant training on RIAs methodologies	State Chancellery (Latvia School of Public Administration), Ministry of Justice and Ministry of Economy	Develop trainings on RIAs methods Implement and nurture the network in the area of regulation
There are insufficient mechanisms for quality insurance and control	State Chancellery and Ministry of Justice	Strengthen oversight capacities in the State Chancellery and focus the oversight on high impact regulations
Stakeholder engagement takes place often late	State Chancellery	Engage stakeholders earlier Monitor the use of fast-track procedures to ensure appropriate use
<i>Ex post</i> evaluation of regulation is weak	State Chancellery	Develop an annual list of regulations to evaluate
<i>Ex post</i> policy evaluation is rare outside EU financed programmes	All government	Develop capacities in arm's length institutes to perform evaluations upon demand from ministries Development of guidelines on policy evaluation

2 Recommendations and key areas of action

Strengthen analytical skills inside the public administration by mapping analytical skills, performing upskilling and attracting new analytical skills

Analytical skills are essential to ensure that governments are able to develop and use evidence. In Latvia, despite significant variation across ministries, analytical skills are not sufficient in the public administration to ensure a systematic supply and take up of evidence for policymaking. There is a need to invest in training the current workforce and attracting new qualified analysts.

Map current skills and identify gaps

Performing a mapping of existing skills is essential to identify the main skills gaps. This activity can support the development of tailored trainings and the eventual update of line ministries' hiring strategies. This activity could be co-ordinated by the State Chancellery with the support of the Latvian School of Public Administration. In addition, support from line ministries is essential to ensure a good coverage of civil servants and sufficient response rates.

The State Chancellery could consider the following actions:

Phase one

- **Define competence framework against which to map skills**
 - Develop a user-friendly survey engaging with line ministries to ensure a design that is fit-for-purpose
- **Perform large scale personnel survey to identify current gaps**
 - Analyse results and share insights with all line ministries

Phase two

- **Adapt trainings and hiring strategies to the results of the mapping exercise**

Update the competence framework to recognise analytical and science for policy skills

Analytical competences are not always sufficiently defined in the professions that in theory should cover them (e.g. policy planners). For this reason, updating the position catalogue and including a clear and strong emphasis on analytical and 'science for policy' skills should be considered. This activity could be conducted by the Chancellery together with the Latvian School of Public Administration.

The State Chancellery could consider the following actions:

Phase one

- **Use the results of the mapping exercise to identify current gaps**
- **Select which job professions need to be amended (e.g. Policy planners)**
 - Discuss with key stakeholders the potential changes to the competences required for the job profession

Phase two

- **Amend the current competences from the Position catalogue to better reflect the importance of analytical competences**

Develop training programmes to strengthen analytical skills

Following the results of the mapping activity, developing training is necessary to support the development of internal analytical skills. Areas to be considered should include data analysis, impact assessment, policy evaluation, among others. The training could be developed by the Latvian School of Public Administration in collaboration with relevant academics and training experts. Training needs to be initiated with pilots and sustained over time. At the same time, line ministries will play an important role in incentivising their staff in undertaking these courses to progressively upskill the existing workforce.

The State Chancellery could consider the following actions:

Phase one

- **Understand the current training offer and gaps**
 - Use the results of the mapping exercise to identify training needs
 - Map the current training offered to understand which courses could be adapted and which ones need to be redeveloped
- **Decide which training elements will be carried out in-house and which ones will be contracted out**
 - Define terms of references for external training

Phase two

- **Provide the training to all line ministries**
 - Pilot training modules with identified beneficiaries
 - Scale training to a broader audience by offering the training on email, social media and at events to ensure visibility

Develop job professions with clear analytical requirements

To attract high quality analytical skills from outside the public administration, there is also a need to develop specialised job professions that emphasise clear analytical competences. Such positions should also attract profiles able to work across ministries, thereby promoting internal mobility. The State Chancellery could work on this long-term effort together with the Latvian School of Public Administration.

The State Chancellery could consider the following actions:

Phase one

- **Use the results of the mapping exercise to identify job categories that are not currently available**
- **Define specific requirements and skills for the new professions**

- Consult with stakeholders to ensure understanding of the new professions

Phase two

- **Amend the Position catalogue to add the newly develop professions**
 - Communicate the newly created professions on social media and recruiting events to ensure visibility

Envisage the development of a central recruitment scheme to strengthen analytical capacity across the government

In the long run, analytical skills could be centrally recruited through the establishment of a specific scheme or 'analytical track' dedicated to these functions in order to offer them interesting and valuable careers within the context of the level of remuneration of the public sector. This could include some flexibility in compensation, professionally attractive positions, good in-career mobility compared to the general civil service framework, and the possibility of some compensation during academic and study time in exchange for a commitment to work for the government (for e.g. a period of 8 years), as is done in the case of customs police officers. To ensure its sustainability, the scheme could start by hiring a limited number of analytical people each year and grow overtime. Ensuring that analysts can move across different policy areas can promote cross fertilisation and break silos. However, to ensure that this will not face resistance from line ministries, it is important to regulate the mobility to strike a good balance between specialisation and the need for cross cutting and mobility approaches.

The State Chancellery could consider the following actions:

Phase one

- **Define which job categories should be specifically targeted**
- **Define how the scheme would work: number of hires per year, rotation options, career opportunities**
 - Discuss with all line ministries the benefit and address the potential challenges risen

Phase two

- **Centrally hire following a competitive process**
 - Pilot the new scheme with few initial hirings Promote the scheme in events and social media to ensure visibility and take up

Resource Intensity: medium- high

The recommendation includes several actions that require human capacities and technical skills. The mapping exercise and the consequent development of trainings require resources that need to be sustained over time. In addition, the development of new job professions and a central recruitment scheme imply the hiring of new personnel which could also replace ad hoc and unorganised hiring practices. On the other hand, some activities come at some limited cost, such as the update of the position catalogue and the development of a new job profession.

Potential risks	Mitigation actions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Limited resources for mapping activities Resistance to update competence framework and job professions Resources for training are not consistent over time Lack of interest in the trainings developed Lack of willingness of Ministries to co-operate as part of a central scheme 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure sustained resources for the mapping activity Discuss competence frameworks with main stakeholders involved to ensure buy-in Ensure consistent funding of trainings Promote the trainings and eventually create incentives to attend the trainings Engage with all line ministries to discuss the benefits of a shared hiring scheme

Recommendation 1: Roadmap for policy implementation

Implementing actions and steps for policy implementation	Key implementing actors	Timeframe
Map current skills and identify gaps <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Define competence framework against which to map skills Perform large scale personnel survey to identify current gaps Adapt trainings and hiring strategies to the results of the mapping exercise 	State Chancellery	~ short term
Update the competence framework to recognise analytical and science for policy skills <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use the results of the mapping exercise to identify current gaps Select which job professions need to be amended (e.g. Policy planners) Amend the current competences from the Position catalogue to better reflect the importance of analytical competences 	State Chancellery	~ short term
Develop trainings to strengthen analytical skills <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Understand the current training offer and gaps Decide which elements of the training will be performed in-house and which ones will be contracted out Deliver the training to all line ministries 	State Chancellery with Latvian School of Public Administration	~medium term
Develop job professions with clear analytical requirements <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use the results of the mapping exercise to identify job professions that are not currently available Define specific requirements and skills for the new job profession Amend the Position catalogue to add the newly develop job professions 	State Chancellery	~medium term
Envisage the development of a central recruitment scheme to strengthen the analytical capacity across the government <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Define which job categories should be specifically targeted Define how the scheme would work: number of hires per year, rotation options, career opportunities Centrally hire following a competitive process 	State Chancellery and all line ministries and possible co-operation with Bank of Latvia	~long term

Improve the interface between research and policy to increase the impact of science on policymaking

The evidence produced in the scientific and academic world is not always accessible and actionable for policymakers and often focuses on fundamental research. This creates barriers for decision makers to access, understand, and ultimately use, this evidence. To improve the exchange between academia and policymaking several actions can be undertaken.

Integrate Science4Policy training in doctoral courses to increase the understanding of working with governments and conducting policy relevant research

At the moment, in Latvia, researchers and scientists are rarely formally trained with a policy-oriented approach. They engage with policymakers either in informal ways or through procurement processes that are not always able to ensure quality of evidence. To strengthen the ability of researchers to produce policy actionable evidence, universities could include specific trainings as part of the doctoral curriculum. The training could build upon the JRC's 'science4policy' training, delivered to six scientists as part of this project, and be further tailored to national needs and specificities. For the development of this training, an important stakeholder that should be involved is the Association of Latvian Young Scientists as well as additional knowledge brokers active in promoting evidence-informed policymaking.

The Ministry of Education and Science could consider the following actions in co-operation with selected universities in the academic community:

Phase one

- **Develop a new training course based on international and national experiences**
 - Use the JRC Science4Policy as starting point, together with additional training material identified
 - Expand training material engaging with Latvian academics and knowledge brokers

Phase two

- **Invite Universities to pilot the training in selected PhD tracks before scaling**
- **Adjust the training following feedback from the pilot and invite Universities to integrate it to the doctoral curricula**

Develop a government sponsored PhD scheme on policy relevant questions

Currently, there are no structured mechanisms to perform PhDs in collaboration with line ministries. The Ministry of Education and Science could reform the current PhD regulation and include the possibility of conducting some months/semesters in a public administration or in a research facility attached to a line ministry to perform policy relevant analyses, possibly using administrative data. This would offer a practical way for researchers to engage with the public administration and better understand their needs and could support the administration in filling evidence gaps. To ensure that researchers are focusing on relevant evidence it is important for line ministries and their relevant research organisations to identify their evidence needs and the areas that could be offered for such a scheme ahead of time, with clearly defined policy questions. For this reason, line Ministries will also need to invest in their skills to commission and use evidence as well as to define evidence needs in a strategic manner through the use of evidence plans (this will be further discussed in Recommendation 3).

The Ministry of Education and Science could consider the following actions:

Phase one

- **Discuss both with universities, line ministries and experts from the research institutes attached to the line ministries the opportunity to develop joint partnership schemes for PhD**

Phase two

- **Modify the current scheme for industrial PhDs to include also research opportunities in the public sector (line ministries/ affiliated research institutes)**
- **Promote and publicise the newly created scheme**

- Encourage line ministries to sponsor PhDs by developing policy relevant questions and applying targeted funding
- Organise events where line ministries present their policy questions and engage with PhD students

Develop knowledge brokerage skills inside research institutes and universities to engage with policymakers and strengthen the communication of scientific evidence

Connecting evidence to policymaking requires a set of skills that are not sufficiently developed in the Latvian evidence ecosystem, and in particular among academia and in the research institutes attached to the line ministries. To increase the policy impact of research institutes and university research centres, developing trainings and workshops on effective knowledge brokerage for impact is essential. These could focus on understanding policymakers' evidence needs, creating trustworthiness and ownership of evidence results, communicating and synthesising these results, and disseminating evidence to targeted audiences. The Ministry of Education and Science could promote such trainings and workshops to connect different research institutes and universities and informally develop a network of knowledge brokers.

The Ministry of Education and Science could consider the following actions:

Phase one

- **Develop a new training and domestic capacity building workshops based on international and national experiences**
 - Use the JRC-OECD training as starting point, together with additional training material identified
 - Expand training material following consultation with relevant stakeholders and experts
 - Decide which elements of the training will be performed in-house and which ones will be contracted out
 - Define terms of references for external trainings

Phase two

- **Organise recurrent trainings and workshop for research institutes and research labs**

Promote and recognise engagement of academia in policymaking

To improve the science to policy interface, it is important to reward the engagement of academia in policy-relevant areas of research. This can be done in different ways. Firstly, professors should be able to take secondments in public administration without being penalised in their academic performance assessments. In addition, policy-oriented research should be included as part of the evaluative criteria in Regulation N.129 *Procedures for Evaluating the Scientific and Teaching Qualifications or Results of Artistic Creation Work of an Applicant for the Position of Professor or Associate Professor and of a Professor or Associate Professor Holding the Position.*

The Ministry of Education and Science could consider the following actions:

- **Discuss with university councils and professor organisations potential mechanisms to strengthen policy relevant research**
- **Include recognition of policy relevant research in the working paper on the new academic career framework**
 - This would be based on the consultations above

- **Amend the rules on professorship to allow for periods working for public administration or to better recognise policy relevant work**
 - This implies updating the evaluative criteria in the Regulation N.129 *Procedures for Evaluating the Scientific and Teaching Qualifications or Results of Artistic Creation Work of an Applicant for the Position of Professor or Associate Professor and of a Professor or Associate Professor Holding the Position*

Shift to more structured procurement frameworks for research/analysis to nurture the creation centres for excellence in Latvian academia through greater reliance on framework contracts

Research for line ministries is often commissioned through public procurement, which is often organised in fragmented ways and is not always able to include quality considerations in the selection process. Furthermore, this approach does not support the development of cutting-edge capacity among universities who could engage and create capacity to respond effectively to such calls. For this reason, line ministries should reflect strategically about their evidence needs and develop more robust collaborations with universities or research institutes that have a strong expertise in their areas of need. This can ensure that the best research centres receive more secure funding and promote specialisation and quality. It is important to ensure that such frameworks are developed respecting competitive processes and clear rules.

The Ministry of Education and Science could consider the following actions:

Phase one

- **Invite Ministries to map current policy-relevant research centres to understand current areas of expertise**
- **Check legal requirements for framework agreements and feasibility with current procurement law**

Phase two

- **Promote the development of partnerships between excellent centres, line ministries and their research institutes through framework contracts for procuring evidence**
- Organise meetings between line ministries and research centres to promote exchange

Resource Intensity: low to medium

The overall resource intensity of this recommendation is relatively moderate. Most of the interventions do not require a significant increase of funding, consisting mainly of legal adjustments and a better planning of evidence needs to ensure more stable collaborations rather than the current ad hoc requests.

Potential risks	Mitigation actions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limited interest from line ministries to engage with doctoral students • Resistance from university to engage with policymakers • Procurement processes not allowing for more structured funding mechanisms • Insufficient resources to fund research centres 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote the development of evidence plans/ areas of interest in line ministries to identify relevant policy questions for doctoral students • Organise meetings with relevant stakeholders to promote Science4Policy initiatives • Ensure stable resources to research centres in key policy relevant areas

Recommendation 2: Roadmap for policy implementation

Implementing action	Key implementing actors	Time frame
<p>Integrate Science4Policy training in doctoral courses to increase the understanding of working with governments and conducting policy relevant research</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a new training course based on international and national experiences Invite Universities to pilot the training in selected PhD tracks before scaling Adjust the training following feedbacks from the pilot and invite Universities to integrate it to the PhD curricula 	Ministry of Education and Science in co-operation with universities	~short term
<p>Develop a government sponsored PhD scheme on policy relevant questions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Discuss both with universities, line ministries and experts from the research institute the opportunity to develop joint partnership schemes for PhD Modify the current scheme for industrial PhDs to include also research opportunities in the public sector (line ministries/ affiliated research institutes) Promote and publicise the newly created scheme 	Ministry of Education and Science	~short term
<p>Develop knowledge brokerage skills inside research institutes and universities to engage with policymakers and strengthen the communication of scientific evidence</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a new training and domestic capacity building workshops based on international and national experiences Organise recurrent trainings and workshop for research institutes and research labs 	Ministry of Education and Science	~medium term
<p>Promote and recognise engagement of academia in policymaking</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Discuss with university councils and professor organisations potential mechanisms to strengthen policy relevant research Include recognition of policy relevant research in the working paper on the new academic career framework Amend the rules on professorship to allow for periods working for public administration or to better recognise policy relevant work 	Ministry of Education and Science	~medium term
<p>Shift to more structured procurement frameworks for research/analysis to nurture the creation centres for excellence in Latvian academia through greater reliance on framework contracts</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Invite Ministries to map current policy-relevant research centres to understand current areas of expertise Check legal requirements for framework agreements and feasibility with current procurement law Promote the development of partnerships between excellent centres, line ministries and their research institutes through framework contracts for procuring evidence 	Ministry of Education and Science to engage with Ministry of Finance and the Procurement Monitoring Bureau (IUB)	~long term

Enhance the capacity to use evidence inside government

Using evidence systematically for policymaking remains challenging. There is a need to invest in individual skills for using and commissioning evidence, to develop more structured processes to ensure use of evidence and to further promote the use of commissioned research by making it more visible and accessible. Several implementing actions should be considered to improve use of evidence within government.

Develop trainings for policymakers on how to commission and use evidence

At the individual level, skills to commission and use evidence are lacking in line ministries. For this reason, additional trainings on how to commission and use evidence are needed. The trainings could build on the OECD – JRC trainings developed as part of the project and be further tailored to the national needs. This could be developed by the State Chancellery in co-operation with the Latvian School of Public administration within the Innovation Lab. Given their strong analytical background, some experts from the Bank of Latvia could be invited to participate and support the process.

The State Chancellery could consider the following actions:

Phase one

- **Develop a new training course based on international and national experiences**
 - Use the OECD-JRC workshop as starting point, together with additional training material identified
 - Expand training material with the support of the Latvian School of Public Administration

Phase two

- **Pilot the training with selected invitees nominated by line ministries**
- **Scale up the training after having adjusted based on feedbacks**

Develop a cross governmental evidence plan based on evidence plans submitted by line ministries

It is important to develop systematic mechanisms that can help identify evidence needs and foster production and commissioning of useful research, evaluations and analytical work in areas of interest. A first step at the organisational level involves developing evidence plans in line ministries and consolidating them in a cross governmental evidence plan. This could contribute to identifying demand for evidence and ensure its impact at political level. Currently, line ministries are developing annual research lists to inform their commissioned research. However, these are not strategic documents and are not discussed either internally or externally. Line ministries should develop a multiannual evidence plan including all the research, analysis and evaluations that they are planning to conduct in the next 2-3 years as well as areas where they need more evidence. These evidence plans will need to be vetted by the State Secretaries of each line ministry. In addition, the State Chancellery could ensure that synergies between different evidence plans are identified and that a consolidated version is developed. Plans should be made available and shared with relevant stakeholders. These include academic councils, the Analytical Unit inside the Saeima, the Bank of Latvia, universities and research institutes (further discussed in Recommendation 6: Promote a healthy and multi-disciplinary evidence ecosystem to inform major cross-government priorities).

The State Chancellery could consider the following actions:

- **Require each line ministry to develop an evidence plan including future research commissioned, evaluations planned and areas of interest**
 - Organise meeting to discuss the different evidence plans and to identify areas of cross-disciplinary collaboration
 - Invite the State Secretaries of each of the line Ministries to officially vet the approved evidence plans.
- **Consolidate the different evidence plans into one document published on the State Chancellery website**
 - Share the evidence plan with key stakeholders
 - Invite a discussion of the consolidated evidence plan at political level
 - Organise a discussion with the Latvian Council for Science in terms of the implications for future research and future PhDs.

Expand the current Research repository to include all results coming from commissioned research, state research programmes and evaluations

In Latvia, a significant part of commissioned research is made available through a dedicated database managed by the State Chancellery, which is already an excellent step. To further improve its use and impact, the research repository could be expanded to include all evidence produced and commissioned for policymaking. This should include *ex ante* and *ex post* evaluations and studies conducted as part of the state research programme. To ensure its accessibility, AI generated summaries could be included at the beginning of each report and the database should include a search system through keywords.

The State Chancellery may wish to consider the following actions and intermediate steps:

- **Map all evaluations, analytical work, evidence and recommendations commissioned through state research programmes**
- **Include the additional resources in the repository classifying them for policy area/ type of evidence**
 - Define the types of evidence that will be included in the updated repository
- **Ensure systematic update of the repository**
 - Present the updated database to different stakeholder within and outside government to ensure visibility and use

Assign leadership positions to ensure take up of evidence at the political level

Finally, specific positions such as scientific advisors, chief economists, and chief statisticians to manage and communicate evidence across the public sector should be established. These figures can play an important role in ensuring effective interaction at the political-administrative interface, communicating evidence and research findings to Ministers at the political level as well as in the media and public debate when needed, providing leadership internally to co-ordinate line ministry evidence plans, playing a key role to ensure peer review and quality standards, and supporting the commissioning of research. In addition, these senior leadership figures could also work as part of a network. Before establishing such figures is important to clarify their role, how they will be selected, what type of challenge they can exert on proposed evidenced and how long they will be appointed. This is essential to avoid confusion and to manage expectations about how evidence should feed into the policy cycle. For these reasons, a gradual implementation should be considered.

The State Chancellery, together with line ministries as well as the statistical institute and the Bank of Latvia, may wish to consider the following actions and intermediate steps:

Phase one

- **Develop clear competences and functions for senior leadership advisory positions**
 - Use current examples of other OECD countries
 - Discuss with line ministries the roles, functions of these positions and identify which existing positions should be considered for upscaling and transformation
- **Clarify selection criteria for science advisors**
- **Phase two**
- **Invite pilot Ministries and institutions to launch a first competitive selection procedure to select a small set of chief advisors.**
- **Review the experience after two years to envisage gradually extending the process.**

Resource Intensity: medium to high

The resource intensity of this recommendation is moderate high. The development and delivery of trainings requires sustained funding. More importantly, the development of a more complete evidence repository and interactive web-portal also requires specific technical skills and an up-to-date IT software. On the other hand, some implementing actions have limited costs and require only co-ordination across different actors with some political impetus (e.g. Evidence plans). Establishing senior advisory positions should also involve moderate costs given it would imply upscaling some existing positions for a limited number of individuals (around 1-2 for some relevant Ministry).

Potential risks	Mitigation actions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lack of motivation or interest in following the training Resistance of line ministries to develop evidence plans Little use of evidence plans Limited resources to effectively manage the repository and keep it up to date Lack of political support to promote more systematic use of evidence 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Present the training to relevant audience and highlight the importance of EIPM Discuss with line ministries the benefit of developing such a plan and its relatively limited costs Promote the cross governmental plan in relevant fora to ensure visibility Ensure sufficient resources to keep the repository up to date and relevant

Recommendation 3: Roadmap for policy implementation

Implementing actions	Key implementing actors	Time-frame
<p>Develop trainings for policymakers on how to commission and use evidence</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a new training course based on international and national experiences Pilot the training with selected invitees nominated by line ministries Scale up the training after having adjusted based on feedback 	State Chancellery in co-operation with Latvian School of Public Administration	~short-term
<p>Develop a cross governmental evidence plan based on evidence plans for each line ministries</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Require each line ministry to develop an evidence plan including future research commissioned, evaluations planned and areas of interest Consolidate the different evidence plans into one document published on the State Chancellery website 	State Chancellery, all line ministries,	~short-term
<p>Expand the current Research repository to include all results coming from commissioned research, state research programmes and evaluations.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Map all evaluations, analytical work recommendations and evidence commissioned through state research programmes Include the additional resources in the repository classifying them for policy area/ type of evidence Ensure systematic update of the repository 	State Chancellery	~medium-term
<p>Assign leadership positions to ensure take up of evidence at the political level</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop clear competences and functions for senior leadership advisory positions Clarify selection criteria for science advisors Invite pilot Ministries and institutions to launch a first competitive selection procedure to select a small set of chief advisors Review the experience after two years to envisage gradually extending the process 	All line ministries	~ long-term

Strengthen data governance across government to facilitate access and use

Access to quality data is essential to generate evidence. At the moment, access to data is in theory possible in Latvia. In reality, it is often difficult and is often linked to individual capacity in terms of connections and influence. The decentralised nature of the Latvian statistical system, a burdensome regulatory system and lack of a strong data governance framework make data sharing difficult. For this reason, different implementing actions are needed to improve the current data governance.

It is essential to modernise the current data access by developing single access point, simplifying and updating the legal framework

At the moment, data access is not centrally managed. It is often burdensome for line ministries to access data from different data holders. For this reason, there is a need to strengthen data governance to support the establishment of a one-stop centre for data access. This centre should have the mandate to access and link data from different registries and data holders and provide it in pseudonymised form in a safe environment following approved requests, both from governmental actors and from academic experts. In order to allow this, it is also important to update the procedures for data access both for internal and external use. At the moment, data access is regulated by the Archives Law, which is inadequate for responding to the needs of users. This activity would be under the responsibility of the Ministry of Smart Administration and Regional Development and will require a strong collaboration with the Central Statistical Bureau and the Ministry of Economy, which has the oversight of the Bureau. It is important to ensure that the Central Statistical Bureau is equipped with the resources to manage the one-stop centre that should be placed under its managerial responsibility.

The Ministry of Smart Administration and Regional Development, together with the Statistical Bureau and the Ministry of Economics, may wish to consider the following actions and intermediate steps:

- **Simplify the procedures to access data across administrations for research and analytical purposes by amending the Archives Law (2011)**
 - Discuss with key stakeholders the new legal framework
- **Develop a National Analytical Competence Centre to ensure a single access point to government data**
 - Invite a joint partnership and agreement between the Ministry of Economics, the Statistical Bureau and the Ministry of Smart Administration and Regional Development to develop and support a government data centre with a centralised access point
 - Ensure sufficient resources and clear access rules both for government experts and researchers

Develop stronger leadership capacity at the Central Statistical Bureau with a strong focus on users' needs

The decentralised statistical system in Latvia creates issues of comparability, with difficulties in merging the use of data collected from heterogeneous registries. For this reason, there is need to strengthen the quality control and harmonisation of data across the different data holders. This requires strengthening the leadership capacity of the Central Statistical Bureau, setting up a Chief Statistician position, and assigning cross government responsibility for data deemed usable for statistical purposes, including not only survey but also administrative data. This also implies equipping the Statistical Bureau with some resources and a stronger mandate to conduct such stewardship functions, supporting and engaging with the various registries and administrative data holders. Creating a board of users managed by the Central Statistical Bureau also represents a way to discuss data quality and needs and to ensure a fruitful dialogue between data users and data producers.

The Ministry of Economy and Latvian Statistical Bureau may wish to consider the following actions and intermediate steps:

- **Create a board of users to ensure data needs are satisfied (line ministries, researchers)**
- **Strengthen the leadership and mandate of the Central Statistical Bureau in the area of data stewardship and quality control**
 - Create a Chief Statistician position and an explicit function of data steward within the Statistical Bureau
 - Ensure resources to conduct harmonisation, meta data methodological work and standardisation across different datasets

Facilitate access to administrative government data to researchers and academic experts under clear and rigorous processes

In the medium term, once the one-stop-shop is operative, hereby called the “National Analytical Competence Centre”, it is important to develop mechanisms to ensure access for academics and researchers outside the government. This represents an essential element to ensure production of policy relevant research by PhD students, researchers and academics.

The Statistical Bureau and its partners under the National Analytical Competence Centre may wish to consider the following actions and intermediate steps:

- **Engage with CBS board of users to understand data needs and preferred data access options**
- **Develop an access point for external academic users through the National Analytical Competence Centre**
 - Create clear access rules
 - Regularly update security systems to ensure up to date protection of administrative microdata

Resource Intensity: High

The resource intensity of the recommendation is high. The development of a National Analytical Competence Centre requires significant investments in technical skills and in IT infrastructures. For this reason, to ensure the implementation of the following recommendation, sufficient resources need to be secured. The Ministry of Smart Administration and Regional Development together with the Ministry for Economy and the Statistical Bureau should be invited to develop a multi-year development plan with clear resource needs identified and costed.

Potential risks	Mitigation actions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Insufficient resources to maintain the National Analytical Competence Centre • New mandate of the Central Statistics Bureau is not backed by sufficient resources to conduct its data stewardship function • Expanding access to micro data increase risks of security and data protection 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Secure sufficient resources to allow the National Analytical Competence Centre to perform the expected activities • Invest in data protection and security to mitigate cyber security risks

Recommendation 4: Roadmap for policy implementation

Implementing actions	Key implementing actors	Time-frame
<p>It is essential to modernise the current data access by developing single access point, simplifying and updating the legal framework</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Simplify the procedures to access data across administrations for research and analytical purposes by amending the Archives Law (2011) Develop a National Analytical Competence Centre to ensure a single access point to government data 	Ministry of Smart Administration and Regional Development, State Chancellery, Ministry of Economy, Central Statistics Bureau	~medium to long-term
<p>Develop stronger leadership capacity at the Central Statistical Bureau with a strong focus on users' needs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create a board of users to ensure data needs are satisfied (line ministries, researchers) Strengthen the leadership and mandate of the Central Statistical Bureau in the area of data stewardship and quality control 	Central Statistics Bureau, Ministry of Economics	~medium to long-term
<p>Facilitate access to administrative government data to researchers and academic experts under clear and rigorous processes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engage with CBS board of users to understand data needs and preferred data access options Develop an access point for external academic users through the National Analytical Competence Centre 	Central Statistics Bureau	~medium-term

Promote high quality impact assessments for major regulations and develop policy evaluation across government

Despite significant progress, there is room for improvement in the development and use of regulatory management tools. Indeed, the diagnostic report identified limited resources and lack of strong quality assurance processes both for *ex ante* regulatory impact assessments and for *ex post* evaluation. To improve the current use of RIAs and *ex post* evaluation some implementing actions are recommended.

Improve the impact and quality of RIAs by applying the proportionality principle

At the moment, *ex ante* RIA is compulsory for all legislative acts in Latvia. However, considering the limited resources available, a better prioritisation of regulatory impact assessment is envisaged. This could be done by selecting a threshold over which a full impact assessment is required and updating the current regulatory rules. To select such threshold the State Chancellery should organise consultations with Ministry of Justice, Ministry of Economy and the Ministry of Finance.

The State Chancellery could consider the following actions:

- **Identify the criteria under which fully RIAs should be conducted after discussing it with key stakeholders**
- **Consult the proposed threshold with major stakeholders**
 - Identify two levels of requirements for RIA, including a simplified level, and a full impact assessment process
- **Amend current regulatory framework to include principle of proportionality**

Strengthen the role and capacity of the State Chancellery to ensure quality oversight for laws or regulations of major impact

There is a need to strengthen the oversight function of the State Chancellery and improve practices for quality control across departments and line ministries. The State Chancellery should then organise training with line Ministries to ensure shared understanding of the new requirements related to the proportionality principle.

The State Chancellery could consider the following actions:

- **Promote internal co-ordination in the State Chancellery to monitor RIA quality**
- **Develop selected trainings on regulatory impact assessment involving State Chancellery and line ministry experts**

Strengthen ex post evaluation across government

Finally, *ex post* evaluation only rarely takes place in Latvia. It is not systematically identified, without clear requirements and resources identified across government. For this reason, it is important to invest in the institutionalisation, quality and impact of policy evaluation as supported by the OECD Recommendation on Public Policy Evaluation (OECD, 2022^[16]). Firstly, the State Chancellery could develop specific guidelines and methodological support to better define the role of different actors and provide clear instructions on how evaluation should be conducted. Such guidelines should be developed by the State Chancellery with the engagement of the external experts from the Latvian Evaluation Society. Secondly, the Latvian School of Public Administration could develop specific trainings on policy evaluation to enhance internal capacities inside line ministries. Once again, the trainings can benefit from the involvement of evaluation experts in Latvia. Furthermore, to foster the visibility and impact of evaluations, these should be included in the newly developed evidence plans of line ministries. This would ensure more visibility of the evaluations and increase their use. Finally, the State Chancellery should ensure full implementation of the Regulation of the cabinet of Ministers on *ex post* evaluation to be inserted in relevant important legal proposals, identifying a time frame as well as a process to collect data to support the evaluation.

The State Chancellery could consider the following actions, further strengthening ongoing practices :

Phase one

- **Develop *ex post* evaluation guidelines with key stakeholders**
 - Use other OECD countries guidelines as inspiration
- **Develop or commission trainings on *ex post* evaluation to strengthen capacity across line ministries and government agencies**
 - Discuss such trainings with Latvian School of Public Administration and evaluation experts
 - Engage with Ministries and institutions that have developed capacity for evaluation internally, including related to European Funds Requirements (e.g. Ministry of Agriculture, Ministry of Economy, Bank of Latvia, Ministry of Finance).

Phase two

- **Better include requirements for *ex post* evaluation in significant relevant legislative proposals**
- This should include identifying a time frame, relevant data, as well as resources and responsibility for the *ex post* evaluation.
- **Include planned *ex post* evaluations in the evidence plans to increase visibility**

Resource Intensity: medium

The resource intensity of the recommendation is medium. The recommendation requires developing trainings and increasing human resources to a limited extent in the State Chancellery to monitor the quality of RIAs. At the same time, some of the actions recommended could be easily implemented with the current resources at their disposal (e.g. development of guidelines). In addition, by efficiently applying the proportionality principle suggested in the recommendation, the need for additional resources would be more moderate as the total number of RIAs could be drastically reduced.

Potential risks	Mitigation actions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Scarce resources to conduct trainings consistently Unclear mandate on policy evaluation and lack of comprehensive collaboration 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure sufficient resources for the development of trainings Clarify the role of different stakeholders in policy evaluation

Recommendation 5: Roadmap for policy implementation

Implementing actions and steps for policy implementation	Key implementing actors	Time-frame
Improve the impact and quality of RIAs by applying the proportionality principle <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify the criteria under which fully RIAs should be conducted after discussing it with key stakeholders Amend current regulatory framework to include principle of proportionality 	State Chancellery	~short-term
Ensure a comprehensive and in-depth approach to quality oversight for laws or regulations of major impact <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improve internal practice in the State Chancellery to monitor RIA quality Develop selected trainings on regulatory impact assessment involving State Chancellery and line ministry experts 	State Chancellery	~short-term
Strengthen ex post evaluation across government <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop ex post evaluation guidelines with key stakeholders Develop or commission trainings on ex post evaluation to strengthen capacity across line ministries and government agencies Include requirements for ex post evaluation in significant relevant legislative proposals Include planned ex post evaluations in the evidence plans to increase visibility 	State Chancellery	~medium-term

Promote a healthy and multi-disciplinary evidence ecosystem to inform major cross-government priorities

Major policy challenges impact multiple policy areas and hence require a multi-disciplinary approach. For this reason, to address government priorities, evidence should be produced in co-operative and multidisciplinary ways. Multiple actions can be undertaken to develop a healthy multi-disciplinary evidence ecosystem.

Promote co-operation among line ministries on evidence generation and research to address major multidisciplinary challenges

Several policy challenges require multidisciplinary approaches and cover different policy areas. For this reason, identifying areas for co-operation is essential to ensure a better use of resources and to avoid evidence duplication. The development of evidence plans can support line ministries in identifying common areas of interests. Once these areas are identified, line ministries could develop joint State Research Programmes and further develop interdisciplinary working groups to ensure knowledge sharing with the

support of the Latvian Council of Science. In order to ensure the development of multidisciplinary state research programmes and support the functioning of working groups, it is important to identify some resources to be used for cross-departmental co-operation.

The State Chancellery in co-operation with the Ministry of Education and Science and the Latvian Council of Science could consider the following actions:

- **Identify common areas of interest through evidence plans**
- **Support the development of joint State Research Programmes and establish working groups for knowledge exchange**
 - Ensure regular discussions across line ministries and experts inside working groups
 - Identify clear leadership role for the working groups to ensure that they have impact and result into concrete proposals

Share the evidence plans and organise high level discussions with the Saeima Analytical Unit, Members of Parliament, Bank of Latvia and other relevant stakeholders to ensure co-ordination and discussion of evidence needs and results

Discussing evidence needs with a broader audience is essential to foster evidence supply and engage with users of evidence with significant expertise and political responsibility. For this reason, it is important, once it is developed, to share the cross governmental evidence plan with key stakeholders. This represents an opportunity to identify synergies and develop further collaborations.

The State Chancellery could consider the following actions:

- **Organise high-level events to present the cross governmental evidence plan to key stakeholders at expert level**
- **Organise high level discussions with Parliament on the cross governmental evidence plan**

Support academic efforts to engage with other Baltic/ Nordic countries on regional priorities and research needs

Several policy challenges that affect Latvia today are not unique to the country but are shared with neighbouring countries, particularly the Baltic and Nordic countries. For this reason, considering the limited size of the country and number of researchers in Latvia, co-ordination and co-operation in knowledge production is essential to foster strategic specialisation and ensure high quality of evidence. It is important to realise that current competitive approaches among the Baltic states may not create optimal results at the regional level. In this area, the Ministry of Education and Science could encourage stronger co-ordination on research with Baltic and Nordic countries, for example, by exchanging and co-ordinating research programme identifying key challenges shared across the Baltic states. More broadly, existing inter-governmental fora like the Baltic Assembly or the Nordic Council of Ministers should be used to promote evidence-informed policymaking across the region.

The Ministry of Education and Science could consider the following actions:

- **Organise meeting with key actors in neighbouring countries to discuss potential collaborations in research and evidence needs**
- **Further encourage universities in collaborating with specific countries with common policy challenges**

Strengthen capacity for foresight to identify and address major challenges ahead across government

Despite all the investment in strategic planning, there is currently limited capacity for foresight in Latvia, with lack of relevant skills and scarce use. This contrasts with the experience of some neighbouring countries such as Finland, which has used it effectively in the policy process, and Lithuania, which has made significant investments in recent years. In the long run, some foresight capacity should be integrated inside all line ministries to include long term perspectives in policy planning. As an initial step, the State Chancellery could establish a foresight unit at the Centre of Government to address challenges using clear methodologies. This unit could be part of or closely collaborate with the newly established Analytical Unit in the State Chancellery.

The State Chancellery could consider the following actions:

- **Develop a dedicated unit at the Centre of Government**
 - Identify a relevant scale and function for foresight activity in Latvia, reviewing the experience of Nordic and Baltic countries
 - Use the cross-governmental evidence plan to select the first areas of research
 - Collaborate with the Analytical Unit to conduct original research

Resource Intensity: medium

The resource intensity for the recommendation is moderate. Indeed, the actions recommended imply the development of a small-scale structure, and a better communication and sharing of activities that are already taking place.

Potential risks	Mitigation actions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unwillingness to fund research on cross domain topics • Difficulty in co-ordinating evidence needs across different institutions • Difficult collaborations across countries for policy relevant research 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Highlight funding mechanisms for cross governmental collaboration • Ensure regular meetings with cross domain working groups • Focus cross country research on topics that are high priorities for all stakeholders and have cross boundary effects

Recommendation 6: Roadmap for policy implementation

Implementing actions	Key implementing actors	Timeframe
Promote the co-operation among line ministries on evidence generation and research to address major multidisciplinary challenges <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify common areas of interest through evidence plans • Develop joint State Research Programmes and establish working groups for knowledge exchange 	All line ministries, State Chancellery, Ministry of Education and Science	short-term
Share the evidence plans with the Saeima analytical unit, Bank of Latvia and other relevant stakeholders to ensure co-ordination and discussion of evidence needs and results <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organise high-level events to present the cross governmental evidence plan to key stakeholders 	State Chancellery	medium-term
Support academic efforts to engage with other Baltic/ Nordic countries on regional priorities and research needs <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organise meeting with key actors in neighboring countries to discuss potential collaborations in research • Further encourage universities in collaborating with specific countries with common policy challenges 	Ministry of Education and Science	medium-term
Strengthen capacity for foresight to identify and address major challenges ahead across government <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a unit at the Centre of Government 	State Chancellery in co-operation with Academia	short to medium term

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