

Good Governance for Development (GfD) in Arab Countries Initiative

Working Group II on e-Government and Administrative Simplification

Questionnaire on Administrative Simplification

Background

Administrative Simplification is narrowly understood as the reduction of burdens imposed by formalities and paperwork to citizens and businesses. From a broader perspective, the reduction of administrative burdens takes into account all policy processes behind administrative procedures (licenses and permits that are necessary to conduct commercial or industrial operations). In recent years, countries have focused specially on the burdens imposed on businesses. The main objective has been to enhance public trust on government action, increase efficiency in the economy, and thus promote competitiveness.

Administrative Simplification has been one of the key areas highlighted by participating countries to the GfD Initiative. In this framework, the OECD Secretariat proposes this brief questionnaire conceived to assess administrative simplification strategies being planned or ongoing in the MENA region. This exercise will help to identify the priority areas for the future of the GfD Initiative on administrative simplification. This questionnaire will be discussed in the Regional Meeting of Working Group II on E-Government and Administrative Simplification to be held in Tunis on May 29, 2008. Later on, it will serve as a basis to define the barriers to implementation encountered by governments when applying administrative simplification. The answers will constitute the building blocks in the short term to the organisation of the upcoming OECD Regional High Level Seminar on "Administrative Simplification: Overcoming Barriers to Implementation", hosted by the Ministry of State for Administrative Development of Egypt, to be held in Cairo, Egypt on 18-19 June, 2008.

This questionnaire does not deal with the simplification of the Public Administration from a perspective of human resources management. Administrative simplification does not necessarily imply a reduction of civil service staff or the number of public institutions. But it can encourage improvements in the management of workload and a better prioritisation of objectives in public administration, thus enhancing government flexibility to face changing environments.

We invite you to circulate this questionnaire among your partners in other institutions who are involved in administrative simplification or whose work is related to your administrative simplification activities. We would appreciate consolidated answers providing a single voice from your country.

The answers to this questionnaire will not express any kind of commitment with the OECD to work specifically on any topic mentioned. This questionnaire is merely informative and aims to support the communication between the OECD and the participating countries in this demand-driven Initiative. Further discussion on the questionnaire is envisaged in future GfD activities.

How to answer

There are a number of questions divided into sections. Please stick to the following instructions:

- Please answer the questionnaire electronically in one of the official languages of the OECD (English or French).
- Questions are not exhaustive, it will be very helpful if you can supplement your answers with more detailed information about specific practices in your country. Supplementary relevant data, studies or articles that may be helpful should be provided in attachment and referred to in the text.
- Answers should reflect the situation as it exists at the time of response or as recently as possible. Future reform actions should be clearly identified as such, noting the current stage of implementation, the body responsible for the reform and the expected date of completion.

Please send the answers to this questionnaire no later than **5 June, 2008**. Please send the answers to **Ms. Delia Rodrigo**, Policy Analyst and Administrator, Regulatory Policy Division (delia.rodrigo@oecd.org; tel: +33 1 45 24 16 53; fax: +33 1 45 24 16 68), and **Mr. Pedro Andres Amo**, Policy Analyst and Administrator, Regulatory Policy Division (pedro.andresamo@oecd.org; tel: +33 1 45 24 11 96; fax: +33 1 45 24 16 68). They are also available to provide assistance should you have any question in filling in the questionnaire.

NAME AND TELEPHONE OF MAIN RESPONDENT:

MINISTRY/NATIONAL ADMINISTRATION:

Questionnaire:

A. Identification of the main objectives in the national strategy for administrative simplification

1. Is there an explicit, published national strategy for administrative simplification? If yes, please describe it.
2. Which are the key political and administrative institutions responsible for administrative simplification design and implementation? Are their responsibilities established by law?
3. How is the programme on administrative simplification organised, and what are its goals?
4. What kind of policies and tools have been introduced to promote and to improve the administrative environment for businesses and citizens? Please describe exhaustively the use of these tools. Indicate whether any of these have priority now.
 - Review, modification and streamlining of existing laws and regulations
 - Simplification of licensing procedures
 - Removal of obligations
 - One stop shops: please specify if they are set to offer information on licences and notifications, and/or for accepting notifications and issuing licences.
 - Time limits for administrative decision-making and the "silence is consent" rule
 - Others
5. How have e-government policies and tools been used to promote and achieve administrative simplification (for instance electronic databases and on-line formats)?
 - digitalization of administrative forms
 - simplification through re-engineering and automation of back office processes (e.g. e-HR, e-accounting)
 - portals for information and services (e.g. citizen portal or business portals)
 - electronic data storage and exchange (e.g. through middleware solutions)
 - others

B. Identification of the most common barriers encountered during the design and implementation of administrative simplification measures

6. What have been the major successes in reducing red tape in your country? What have been the main disappointments?
7. What are the greatest barriers encountered during the **design phase** (legal complexity, financial resources, human capacities, lack of information and data, no political support, etc.) of the administrative simplification strategy?

8. What are the greatest barriers encountered during the **implementation phase** (legal complexity, financial resources, human capacities, lack of information and data, no political support, etc.) of the administrative simplification strategy?
- C. Examples of cases drawn from concrete experience with administrative simplification that can be used to illustrate your experience on administrative simplification during the GfD activities (the upcoming OECD Regional High Level Seminar on “Administrative Simplification: Overcoming Barriers to Implementation”)
9. Please provide relevant examples

Some final questions

Expectations from the upcoming OECD Regional High Level Seminar on “Administrative Simplification: Overcoming Barriers to Implementation”, hosted by the Ministry of State for Administrative Development of Egypt, to be held in Cairo, Egypt on 18-19 June, 2008:

- What are you expecting to discuss and to learn from this activity?

- How do you think this activity will have an effect on your work?