

Summary record of the webinar *Regulation and regulatory improvement during the pandemic: how to ensure the quality of the decisions?*

12 May 2020

On 12 May 2020, the first webinar in the framework of the Ibero American and the Caribbean Network of Regulatory Improvement took place. Representatives from Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Ecuador, Mexico, Peru, Portugal, Spain and the Dominican Republic participated in the meeting, as well as officials from the IDB and the OECD. More than 100 attendees joined the webinar.

The session began with opening remarks by Laura del Castillo, Technical Director of the National Competitiveness Council of the Dominican Republic, followed by Lea Giménez, Head of the Innovation in Citizen Services Division of the IDB and Manuel Gerardo Flores, Coordinator of the OECD Regulatory Policy Programme for Latin America.

The first presentation, *Regulatory Improvement in Mexico: background and management of the COVID-19 crisis*, by the Commissioner César Hernández focused on the efforts that the National Commission of Regulatory Improvement of Mexico (CONAMER) has made during the sanitary emergency faced by the country. A first element that is worth highlighting is that the CONAMER still processes the Regulatory Impact Analyses (RIA), even during this emergency period. This has helped maintain the transparency in the regulatory response and has foster evidence-based decisions. Secondly, CONAMER published a [website](#) that assembles the regulatory responses of the different federal entities and municipalities in the country. This tool increases the transparency, provides information to the citizens and incentivises a “race to the top”, where the states and municipalities try to improve in comparison to its peers.

Additionally, the presentation underscored the relevance of the measures that will be taken during the economic reactivation period. In the case of Mexico, CONAMER is currently working on a digitisation programme of formalities and services and on specific deregulation actions focused on improving the business environment in the country.

The second part of the webinar focused on the experiences and lessons learned by some of the member countries of the Network in terms of regulation and regulatory improvement during the COVID-19 crisis. The participations of representatives from Peru, Colombia, Spain and Chile highlighted the common challenges that the region faces (e.g. informality, little fiscal room for the provision of aid, low digitalisation and administrative burdens, among others) and presented some of the measures that each country has taken to reduce the negative effects of COVID-19. Among the dispositions that have been adopted to deal with the crisis are the provision of social and financial aid (direct cash transfers), credit facilities and digitisation of formalities and services.

All the panellists agreed on the important role of better regulation for economic recovery. Governments must make decisions based on evidence, ensure the quality of their regulations and reduce the administrative burdens that citizens and businesses face.

Additionally, the format of the next meeting of the Network, which will take place in the Dominican Republic during the second half of the year, will be defined in the following months. Given the mobility restrictions in the region and in the world, it is still soon to define the format (either virtual or physical) of the meeting.

Finally, the organisers proposed to the member countries the possibility of carrying out small webinars, every 4 or 5 weeks, on specific topics that might be of interest for public officials in the region. A list of topics will be circulated to identify the priorities of the participants.