

Perception surveys on the quality of law and the administration (Germany)

Source: OECD (2016), *Pilot database on stakeholder engagement practices in regulatory policy*, <http://www.oecd.org/gov/regulatory-policy/measuring-regulatory-performance.htm>.

Provider of information	Answers
Organisation	Federal Statistical Office (Destatis); Federal Chancellery
Division	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bureaucracy Cost Measurement (Federal Statistical Office) Better Regulation Unit (Federal Chancellery)
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Overview of the practice	Answers
Name of practice	Perception surveys on the quality of law and the administration
If available, please provide links that provide further information about the practice or attach documents.	<p>Main website of the project (German only)</p> <p>Main report on the results of the survey of citizens (German)</p> <p>Press release on the results of the survey of citizens (English)</p> <p>Main report on the results of the survey of businesses (German)</p> <p>Press release on the results of the survey of businesses (English)</p> <p>Presentation by the Federal Chancellery on the project at the 2016 conference “Towards Better Regulation: New Approaches, New Challenges” hosted by the Australia and New Zealand School of Government in Sydney.</p>
Is this practice ongoing or was it applied only during a limited amount of time/at one specific occasion?	<p>Ongoing practice</p> <p>The survey exercise was first conducted in 2015 and will be repeated every two years.</p>
In what year was the practice launched?	2015
Was the practice updated/reformed since then? If yes, when and how has it evolved over time?	No.

<p>Please describe the practice, including information on</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Features of the practice that you consider its key strengths • Key challenges faced during the implementation of the practice • Main results of the practice. 	<p>The Federal Statistical Office was commissioned by the Federal Government to conduct quantitative surveys of individuals and companies regarding their subjective perception of public authorities and the body of law in specific life events. The approach identified 22 typical life events in which citizens interact with public authorities and 10 events which require companies to interact with the administration.</p> <p>In telephone surveys, 5,666 individuals and 1,572 companies indicated their satisfaction with public agencies. A total of 7,250 interviews with citizens and 1,865 interviews with business representatives were completed. These interviews inquired about the level of satisfaction of the interviewees with the services provided and the subjective importance they attach to different factors of their experience (e.g. the comprehensibility of the law, access to relevant information, non-discrimination, trustworthiness and opening hours). For every life event, a specific customer-journey map was constructed displaying the typical and most important offices citizens or businesses have to contact and the procedures they have to complete to obtain the respective service.</p> <p>Results show that on average, both citizens and businesses are largely satisfied with government services. On an ordinal scale from +2 (very satisfied) to -2 (very unsatisfied), the aggregate rating was +1.06 for citizens and +0.94 for companies. Both citizens and businesses consider trustworthiness of the public authority, non-discrimination, incorruptibility and professional expertise of public authorities' staff the most important factors for their level of satisfaction. Respondents of both surveys were less satisfied with the comprehensibility of the law in general and of the forms in particular, as well as with information provided on the steps in the administrative process. While 61% of the businesses surveyed consider e-government as an important factor, only 30% of the citizens did.</p> <p>In response to the survey results, the 2016 Work Programme on Better Regulation of the German government outlines several measures to further improve legislative procedures and reinforce a citizen and business-friendly administration/e-government.</p> <p>Strengths of the practice according to the German government include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Although the German Federal Government has developed and utilized several instruments to further improve the simplicity, comprehensibility, and effectiveness of the body of law and its quality in Germany, most of the measures remained limited in its effects, since they focused on resources, procedures, and outputs of the legislative process. Thus, it was difficult to estimate whether these instruments were effective in changing regulatory outcomes in real life. The surveys indicate whether those concerned experience the intended changes. • The preparation of the surveys provided an opportunity to design "user journeys" across authorities and legal branches for specific real-life events. These user journeys are a powerful tool to visualize the interaction of different legal branches and authorities for specific life events. • Politically, the surveys proved to be most effective: there is a high awareness for the results, Federal authorities started to reconsider their performance, and first political conclusions have been drawn quickly. <p>One of the major challenges in implementing the practice according to the German government was the development of a survey instrument which actually measures aspects that the Federal Government is eager to learn about, even though some of the factors of satisfaction such as opening hours are out of the direct responsibility of the Federal Government, and administered by the states (<i>Länder</i>), municipalities or self-governing social security institutions. These factors have been measured nevertheless to achieve a comprehensive image of public administration in Germany, since citizens and companies are often uninterested or even unaware of the distribution of responsibilities. Furthermore, e-government solutions provide means to make opening hours, waiting times or spatial accessibility less critical factors for contacting public agencies.</p> <p>This project is based on a methodology developed by the French Secretariat-General for Government Modernisation (SGMAP), which has run similar examinations since 2008.</p>
<p>Please provide specific details or examples to illustrate the practice (including supporting links and documents).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Results from the survey of citizens and customer-survey map for the life event "marriage/same-sex partnership" • Results from the survey of businesses and customer-survey map for the life event "import/export"

What stage(s) in the process of policy making does the practice relate to? (Please tick all that apply)	<input type="checkbox"/> Early-stage in the development of regulations (before draft) <input type="checkbox"/> Later-stage in the development of regulations (during draft) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Implementation (incl. transparency/accessibility) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Ex-post evaluation of regulations <input type="checkbox"/> Review of regulatory policy
What were the objectives of the practice?	<p>The Federal Government of Germany has introduced the programme on "Bureaucracy Reduction and Better Regulation" in 2006. A cornerstone of the scheme is the measurement of administrative burdens and compliance costs for individuals, businesses and public administration based on the Standard Cost Model (SCM). Despite major successes, such as the reduction of administrative burden by 25%, the public often objects this assessment.</p> <p>As a consequence, the Federal Government passed the work programme "Better regulation 2014", which aims to achieve a more noticeable reduction of compliance costs including administrative burden. The Federal Statistical Office was commissioned to conduct perception surveys on the quality of law and the administration, taking into account the perspectives of individuals and companies as users of the public administration and its services to identify measures for a more noticeable bureaucracy reduction.</p>
Main actors involved in the practice	Answers
Responsible authority	Federal Statistical Office
Country	Germany
Level of government (e.g. national/regional/municipal level)	National level
Were partners involved in preparing, implementing or evaluating the practice? If yes, please list the partners and describe their involvement.	<p>Yes.</p> <p>The market research institute TNS Infratest Sozialforschung conducted the perception surveys of businesses and citizens.</p>
Stakeholder involvement	Answers
Which methods were used to involve stakeholders for the practice?	<p>Stakeholders were involved throughout different phases of the project. Civil society organisations, business associations and trade unions have been consulted on the draft of the decision adopted by the Federal Government to commission the surveys as well as prior to their implementation by the Federal Statistical Office.</p> <p>As a first step towards implementing the project, the Federal Statistical Office selected 22 life events for individuals based on an online survey of 1,000 people, ranging from the birth of a child to marriage, unemployment, retirement and need for long-term care. Similarly, 10 events for companies based on a company's life cycle were selected on the basis of desk research and in consultation with representatives from business associations, trade unions and ministries. Business life events range from a business's start-up to appointing of employees, the construction of an establishment and its discontinuation.</p> <p>Using the method of customer-journey mapping, the Federal Statistical Office identified the typical and most important public authorities that citizens or businesses have to contact to obtain the respective service. The resulting interactive customer-journey maps provide the public with general information about the processes in a specific life event.</p> <p>As a second step, the research institute TNS Infratest Sozialforschung conducted telephone surveys with individuals and companies to learn about respondents' satisfaction with government services. The focus on specific life events helped to increase comparability of the ratings. In total, 5,666 individuals and 1,572 companies provided information on 7,250 and 1,865 individual life events respectively.</p> <p>The concept of perceived quality of the public administration was operationalised according to 16 factors including the comprehensibility of the body of law, access to relevant information, opening hours, non-discrimination, trustworthiness and incorruptibility of the public authority.</p>

	<p>Furthermore, respondents were asked to indicate the importance they attach to the different factors.</p> <p>The level of satisfaction with government services is measured on an ordinal scale of -2 (very dissatisfied) to +2 (very satisfied).</p>
Which stakeholder groups were involved?	<p>Representatives of different stakeholder groups were involved in the selection of relevant life events to be surveyed.</p> <p>In total, 5,666 individuals and 1,572 companies provided information on 7,250 and 1,865 individual life events respectively as part of stratified random samples.</p>
How were stakeholders notified of the engagement opportunity?	<p>Survey respondents were contacted by TNS Infratest Sozialforschung over the telephone.</p>
What inputs were received from stakeholders (e.g., brief comments, position papers)?	<p>In total, 5,666 individuals and 1,572 companies provided information on 7,250 and 1,865 individual life events respectively. Each respondent rated up to three different public authorities involved in a specific life event. Survey questions covered the level of satisfaction with government services for each of the 16 factors defined, the importance respondents attach to the 16 different factors of satisfaction, as well as demographic information to enable the analysis of results according to different characteristics.</p>
How were inputs from stakeholders used and by whom?	<p>The Federal Statistical Office analysed and published the results of the satisfaction surveys.</p> <p>The Federal Government has taken into account the results of the surveys to identify fields of action and possibilities for improvements to legislative procedures and public administration services. Please see the section "Outputs and evaluation of the practice" below for further details.</p>
Was participation limited? If yes, please describe the selection mechanism.	<p>No.</p> <p>The telephone surveys employed stratified random sampling and ensured that every German-speaking individual above 15 years and every company had a selection probability of higher than zero. Besides that, the public website offers opportunities to further comment the results or to contribute individual experiences.</p>
Was there a mechanism to ensure balanced representation among stakeholder groups? If yes, please describe the mechanism.	<p>Yes.</p> <p>The surveys used stratified random sampling ensuring a representative selection. Different strata based on regional, socio-economic and other characteristics were employed. Certain groups of the universe were oversampled to allow meaningful comparisons and analyses. Weighting procedures corrected mathematically for oversampling.</p>
Was supporting material made available to stakeholders? If yes, what kind?	<p>No.</p>
Was ICT used for the practice? If yes, how?	<p>Yes.</p> <p>All results, as well as information on the methodology used are publicly available on the project website amtlich-einfach.de.</p>
Was information on the process and the outcomes of the practice collected? If yes, what did it include?	<p>Yes.</p> <p>The results of the perception surveys were published in two reports as well as on the project website.</p> <p>Results are presented for every life event surveyed, as well as grouped by individual authority contacted in the event of a specific life situation, the means of communication by which the authority was contacted, and whether respondents lived in rural or urban areas. In addition, results for the least and most satisfied quarter of respondents are depicted to show the variation of results within the sample. Both the level of satisfaction with and importance of the 16 factors were analysed in combination, which allowed for the identification of areas of priority, e.g. factors that respondents considered relatively important but were also dissatisfied with.</p> <p>Overall, citizens are largely satisfied with the services of public administration and law with an aggregate score of 1.06. Businesses are slightly more critical with an average score of 0.94. Results differ only very slightly between urban and rural areas for both businesses and citizens.</p> <p>Citizens rated the life events of marriage/same-sex partnership, residential moves and vehicle registrations best, whereas life events in the</p>

	<p>context of unemployment and financial problems scored worst. Businesses are most satisfied with government services in the context of vocational and continuing training and health and safety at work. Below-average scores were achieved for experience with authorities regarding the construction of an establishment (0.50) and participation in a tendering process (0.82). The average level of satisfaction with government services by businesses is quite similar across different economic sectors and business sizes, but shows high variations within the sample across different life events, different factors of satisfaction and sectors.</p> <p>Both citizens and businesses consider trustworthiness of the public authority, non-discrimination, incorruptibility and professional expertise of public authorities' staff the most important factors of satisfaction. Respondents of both surveys were less satisfied with the comprehensibility of the law in general and of the forms in particular, as well as with information provided on the steps in the administrative process. While 61% of the businesses surveyed consider e-government as an important factor affecting their satisfaction with government services, only 30% of the citizens consider e-government as important.</p>
Was this information made publicly available? If yes, where could it be accessed? Please provide a web link or copies of the relevant documents	<p>Yes.</p> <p>Please see links to the main project website and the main reports on page 1.</p>
Was feedback provided to participating stakeholders? If yes, please describe how.	<p>Yes.</p> <p>Detailed results of the surveys are published in two reports on results of the surveys of citizens and of business respectively, as well as on the project's website (please see p. 1).</p>
Development and implementation	Answers
How long did the development and implementation take?	<p>Between January and March 2015, 5,666 citizens were surveyed about 7,250 life events. Results of the survey were published in August 2015. 1,572 companies provided information on 1,865 life events between April and June 2015 respectively. Results of the business survey were published in January 2016.</p> <p>Between March and May 2014, a shortlist of life events was developed and the 32 final life events selected. Subsequently, desk research and expert panels were conducted to create the customer-journey maps. In autumn 2014, the questionnaires were prepared and tested before the first survey started in January 2015.</p>
Which resources were needed to develop and set up the practice initially (i.e., staff, budget etc.)?	<p>Staff (Federal Statistical Office): 1 employee of the higher civil service and 2 employees of the higher intermediate service to develop the necessary concepts, questionnaires and to identify the relevant public agencies.</p> <p>Budget (Federal Statistical Office): 130,000 euros to develop and design the website <i>amtlich-einfach.de</i></p>
Which resources were needed to implement the practice (e.g., staff and budget per consultation)?	<p>Staff (Federal Statistical Office): 0.5 employees of the high service and 1 employee of the higher intermediate service</p> <p>Budget (Federal Statistical Office): 600,000 euros per year for conducting the surveys</p>
What challenges were encountered during development and implementation and how were they overcome?	<p>The main challenge according to the German government was contacting the citizens and companies affected by the different life events and developing the customer-journey maps. Several life situations touch sensitive areas such as death, divorce, disability and discontinuation of a business. The customer-journey maps and later the questionnaire involved direct contact with those affected, as their perception is at the centre of the practice.</p> <p>Due to the diversity of the various life situations, a vast amount of information was gathered ranging from the federal to the municipal level. Since states (<i>Länder</i>) and municipalities are autonomous, the responsibilities and names of the agencies often differ between and within states. Reducing this vast information to provide a quick but nevertheless correct overview proved difficult. The graphical representation presented another remarkable challenge, which was eventually overcome and led to a visually appealing and innovative result.</p>

Has the practice been tested before implementation? If yes, please describe.	Yes. For each of the two surveys, the Federal Statistical Office conducted cognitive and simple pre-tests of the questionnaires. The cognitive pre-tests asked respondents to explain how they understood the questions. This procedure ensured a high validity of the instruments. The simple pre-tests were a rehearsal to check whether the structure and duration worked as intended during telephone surveys.
Outputs and evaluation of the practice	Answers
Did the implementation of the stakeholder engagement practice lead to any new policies, reviews of existing policies, changes in policy design or structural reforms?	The 2016 Work Programme on Better Regulation of the German government, which was passed on 22 June 2016, takes into account findings from the surveys. It outlines the following measures in response to the survey results to further improve legislative procedures and reinforce a citizen and business-friendly administration/e-government through <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Measures to increase the comprehensibility, transparency and accessibility of legislation • a training programme for legislators “in modern methods for structured problem solving, in the use of available scientific findings, in the development of alternatives and empirical testing of effectiveness as well as in evaluation” to increase the quality of draft laws • The examination of how “different research approaches, for example “citizen science”, can be used to gear legislation more clearly to the needs and experiences of those applying the law”.
Was the impact of using the practice quantified? If yes, please provide key results of the quantification.	No.
Has the practice been evaluated internally by the government? If yes, what methods were used for evaluation and what were the conclusions? If possible, please attach documents related to the documentation of the evaluation or provide a link.	No.
Has the practice been evaluated externally by other actors? If yes, who did the evaluation, what methods were used for evaluation and what were the conclusions? If possible, please attach documents related to the documentation of the evaluation or provide a link.	No.
Additional comments and information	Answers
Is there any more information or documentation that would be valuable to share in relation to the practice?	Further information on the surveys can be found here: 2015 Federal Government Report on Better Regulation pursuant to Section 7 of the Act on the Establishment of a National Regulatory Control Council Kuehnhenrich, D., and Susanne Michalik (2016), “Are Citizens and Businesses (Dis)satisfied with the Public Administration in Germany?” . Paper prepared for the 34th IARIW General Conference, Dresden, Germany, August 21-27, 2016.
Crosslinks to OECD principles and databases	Answers
Related further OECD material	OECD (2015): Regulatory Policy Outlook 2015: http://www.oecd.org/regreform/oecd-regulatory-policy-outlook-2015-9789264238770-en.htm OECD (2015), Regulatory Policy Outlook 2015. Companion Volume: http://www.oecd.org/gov/regulatory-policy-in-perspective-9789264241800-en.htm

	<p>OECD (2014), <i>OECD Framework for Regulatory Policy Evaluation</i>, OECD Publishing, Paris.</p> <p>OECD (2012), <i>Measuring Regulatory Performance: A Practitioner's Guide to Perception Surveys</i>, OECD Publishing, Paris.</p> <p>OECD website on regulatory policy in Germany: http://www.oecd.org/gov/regulatory-policy/germany.htm</p>
Sources	
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