

SUPPORT THE PALESTINIAN AUTHORITY TO ENHANCE GOVERNANCE AND THE RULE OF LAW

Online and on-site Coaching Programme on Online Public Consultation,
developing standard operating procedures and establishing an online
consultation portal

Programme targeted at the Ministry of Justice (MoJ) with additional meetings
conducted with the General Personnel Council and the Ministry of Labor

June-September 2023

The project

In coordination with the PMO and its counterparts, the OECD is implementing the EU-funded project “Support the Palestinian Authority to enhance Governance and the Rule of Law” (2020-2024). The project is implemented with funding by the European Union.

A coaching programme for the Ministry of Justice on developing and using an online public consultation platform was initiated in June 2023. Virtual and onsite sessions were organised to present international good and bad practices on online public consultation. Participants were as well informed on the development of terms of reference in regard to the technical development of an online public consultation platform as well as on the development of draft internal standard operating procedure (SOP) for conducting online public consultations. From August to September 2023 preparational work was undertaken to support the development of the platform.

The second phase of the coaching programme will support the finalisation, testing and launch of the platform, which will be followed by the online public consultations on five pilot draft laws. Subsequently, the project will support MoJ in the analysis of the comments received from the public and in the finalisation of the laws for adoption. The platform will be further reviewed following the cycle of pilot public consultations in order to identify and implement any relevant improvements for future online public consultations.

Objectives

Establishing functional processes and tools for conducting online public consultation are key prerequisites to ensure transparent decision-making processes for the government that are inclusive and open to all stakeholders.

For online public consultation to be effective and well implemented, government bodies need to have tools available that enable publication of draft proposals online and the collection of input from stakeholders. The preparation, communication and reporting on the outcomes of consultations for individual draft laws needs to be established based on Standard Operating

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Procedures (SOPs) to ensure that minimum standards can be met and that stakeholders can rely on a predictable and uniform approach to online public consultation.

The coaching programme included supporting the dissemination of tools and best practices regarding online public consultations, as well as support to the Ministry of Justice (MoJ) as pilot institution regarding:

1. identifying specifications for the online consultation webpage of the Ministry of Justice that could serve as a central consultation portal for all administrative bodies;
2. guiding the ministry's staff in developing online public consultations SOPs; and
3. supporting the development of an action plan and timeline for conducting online public consultations for five draft laws of the ministry.

Programme Content and Results

The on-site coaching programme was divided into two stages:

Stage 1: Online workshops with the Ministry of Justice (3 sessions)

In two online sessions, staff from the Ministry of Justice – in particular from the Legal Department and the IT Department – received training on the relevance of public consultation and a detailed presentation of five consultation platforms used by the European Commission, The Netherlands, Croatia, Kosovo and Albania respectively.

In a third session, the IT Department at the Ministry of Justice presented the lessons that it had drawn from the two online presentations and laid out the overall draft list of functionalities of the platform for online public consultation.

Stage 2: On-site Coaching with the Ministry of Justice and other counterparts

The on-site coaching was split into four meetings and three workshops (one with the General Personnel Council and two with the Ministry of Justice).

The first workshop took place with representatives from the General Personnel Council (GPC). The meeting focused on explaining the benefits of online public consultation and on the manner in which the GPC could move forward regarding the online public consultation for three draft bylaws that are related to the draft Civil Service Law that still has to be adopted.

To this end, practical issues such as the decision-making process for running online public consultations through the GPC website were debated, as well as a practical manner of implementation of the consultations for the three draft bylaws. The workshop might be followed up with a dedicated support programme for the GPC in relation to the preparation, launch, promotion, and reporting on the three bylaws.

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