



Learning team administrative burden for citizens

Report on national approaches

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Editors:

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Introduction

The subject of administrative burdens reduction is high on the European political agenda. Spring last year the European commission launched an Action Programme on the reduction of administrative burdens for businesses. The ministerial declaration agreed during the e-government conference in Lisbon last September, focuses on the importance in reducing administrative burdens with the use of ICT.

An increasing number of countries is also working on the reduction of administrative burdens for citizens. More European cooperation in this field is desired. Interesting asset would be comparing the way public services (high impact services) are delivered, and identify the good practices that can be used to serve as inspiration for others in terms of reducing administrative burdens and realising other benefits.

The 49th meeting of the Directors General responsible for Public Administration held in Lisbon, welcomed to work within the European Public Administrations Network by means of horizontal learning teams on issues like administrative burden reduction.

Subsequently a learning team was composed, comprising members of the e-government working group, IPSPG and country experts not linked to a EUPAN working group. January 2008 the kick off session was organised in The Hague, the Netherlands. In April a follow up meeting took place in Helsinki, Finland. The learning team was met with enthusiasm.

Seventeen countries signed up, and during the two meetings, members actively shared their country experiences.

The goal of the learning team is formulated as following:

- To look into methodologies to benchmark, bench learn and exchange European best practices in the field of reducing administrative burdens for citizens with special focus on high impact administrative burdens.
- Exchange experience and gain practical knowledge to measure burdens and to identify possible improvements and actions for simplification.

The aim of the learning team is to get better knowledge of the different methods used in Europe to measure and reduce administrative burdens for citizens. Next to quantitative methods (like SCM) attention will be given to more qualitative methods that indicate the perceived burden of citizens and other methods for identification of possible actions for better, less administrative burdensome services.

The idea is not to develop a single methodology but to inform about the different methodologies applied in the countries and their benefits, and when and how to apply them. The foreseen result is an inventory of these, with a reference to available manuals. A possible next step could be to do some pilot case studies of trying out different methods. The idea behind would be to get inspiration from abroad on how to improve service delivery to citizens, and sharing experience on how to identify possible actions for improvements.

This document is a first product of the learning team. It gives an overview of what all countries are doing in the field of AB reductions or related issues. Each participating country has contributed with a short description on the main issues: policy, organisation, measurement and reduction measures, covering questions like:

- What is the policy? And what are the objectives?

- Which department is leading? Who is politically responsible? What is the size of the team? Is there an independent committee involved?
- What kind of methodology is used to measure administrative burdens for citizens? And what services/legislation cause high administrative burden
- What measures are taken to decrease the administrative burden?

Some general conclusions can be drawn from the contributions. All countries have formulated policy in the field of better service delivery. It has become clear that these policies have different headings: administrative burdens reduction, simplification, administrative modernisation, quality management, efficiency and effectivity and e-government.

The approaches are not only about reducing administrative burdens (diminishing information obligations) but often broader about improving service delivery to citizens. An aspect for instance is diminishing distance, by delivering services more directly (physically) to citizens, i.e. one-stop-shops or local and regional centres for service delivery. Sometimes this can already decrease administrative burdens.

The reduction of administrative burdens for citizens is not always a separate policy goal, but often part of a broader programme on reducing burdens of businesses, administration, civil servants, professionals or the tax payer. However, it is clear that there is an increasing amount of attention for the reduction of burdens of citizens.

Some countries already have well developed programmes on reducing administrative burdens for some years, including structured measurement, while other countries are in a more early stage of developing such a programme. Another difference is that some countries are already measuring the administrative burdens in a quantitative way (e.g. using SCM) while other countries are working with a more qualitative way of getting insight in the administrative burdens of citizens (e.g. customer journey mapping).

In most countries e-government is closely related to administrative burden reduction and the improvement of government services, i.e. delivering information only once, electronic identification, electronic forms, etc. Increasingly, e-government policies are focussed on improving services and processes by sharing data: “the data must circulate, not the citizen”.

The general perception is that quantifications of administrative burdens for citizens and a measurable target (e.g. 25% reduction) are strong political drivers for change. A common information infrastructure is an important foundation. But it is important not to focus at these quantitative figures alone. Citizens should indeed perceive improvements in public service delivery in a broad sense, and that this makes living easier. Therefore an approach in which political objectives and citizens perception meet each other are considered to be the most effective.

Austria



By Theresia Niedermüller and Michael Kallinger

Policy

Administrative Burdens of Citizens

In the Government Programme in Austria it is planned to advance the “reduction for businesses” programme and broaden the scope of the application of the SCM in Austria. The Council of Ministers decided to examine the possibilities to start an initiative on AB citizens using the SCM. The SCM Unit in the Federal Ministry of Finance is currently examining to start an initiative on AB citizens using SCM and undertakes international research.

Quality Initiative of the Federal Administration

The Quality Initiative is part of the Government Programme. The aim of the 40 projects the initiative consists of is to raise the quality of the work of public administration and at the same time achieve savings for citizens.

Organisation

This has not been decided yet.

Measurement and high impact services

The kind of methodology is under development.

Reduction measures

www.help.gv.at

This platform for citizens publishes relevant information concerning administrative procedures. The site comprises federal, provincial and local administrative proceedings: online-proceedings, forms, information and much more. 200 life situations are mapped on that website to support citizens in their interaction with the administration.

Common Public Consultation Day

Once a month the Social Security Office, District administration and Welfare Office have a common public consultation day for citizens.

Belgium



By Kris Blancke

Policy

The reduction programme for citizens is embedded in the Kafka-approach. The main objective is to reduce the number of information obligation for citizens by applying the principle of unique information gathering. Examples are: Only Once project (Project on use of data stored in National Register of persons and on use of eID), number of projects with crossroad bank social security

Organisation

Leading departments:

- Agency for administrative simplification (federal)
 - Steering committee: employers, employees, other administrations and representatives of ministers
 - 10 experts – 5 support
- Wetsmatiging (Flemish region)
- Easiwal (Walloon region)
- Cellule pour la Simp. Adm. Et e-government (Brussels region)

Political responsables:

- Federal level: Vincent Van Quickenborne, Minister of Enterprise and Simplification
- Flemish region: Geert Bourgeois, Minister of public administration
- Walloon region: Rudy Demotte, Prime Minister of the Walloon Region
- Brussels region: Brigitte Grouwels, State Secretary for Public Administration

Measurement and high impact services

- SCM
- Contact point kafka.be

Reduction measures

Simplification:

- Declaration of birth
- Marriage
- Divorce
- Declaration of decease
- Other minor simplifications



Cyprus

By Maria Alexandrou

Policy

The Government of the Cyprus Republic includes the issues of reduction of bureaucracy, improving the quality of services offered to citizens and enhancing the efficiency and effectiveness of the public administration in general, amongst its main priorities, in the framework of modernising the public sector. The objectives of the National Plan for modernising the public administration are to develop a new, more result-oriented culture, to fully exploit ICT and to create a more accountable and transparent public administration that places special emphasis on citizens' needs.

At present, there is no systematic, comprehensive policy/ programme targeted at reducing administrative burden for citizens. Nonetheless, the Government is already taking action towards reducing bureaucracy and improving the quality of services offered to citizens, mainly via the:

- Operation of one stop shops/ Citizen Service Centers, the purpose of which is to provide better and easier access to a series of government information and services, from one point of contact/ location. It is noted that five one-stop-shops are currently operating. The operation of at least 2 additional One-stop-shops is planned by the end of 2008.
- Dissemination of the Common Assessment Framework (CAF), a tool that has been used in the last years, across Europe, to assist public sector organisations in using quality management techniques to improve their performance and to highlight the importance of process orientation and customer orientation.
- Implementation of e-government initiatives, thus making accessible, through the internet, a series of public services to citizens. Examples of services provided on-line include electronic services offered by the Road Transport Department (e.g. renewal of road tax license), Taxisnet services (e.g. for income tax returns), customs clearing services (Theseas: integrated computerised system of the Department of Customs and Excise) and candidate placement services. For more information on the services provided on-line, visit the Cyprus Government portal at <http://www.cyprus.gov.cy>
- Undertaking of studies (Organisation and Methods studies) in Governmental organisations, so as to enhance the administrative capacity, efficiency and effectiveness of the organisations under review. The aim of the studies is to ensure that the right organisational structures and working methods and procedures are in place, and that organisations are in a position, amongst others, to offer high quality services to the public
- Introduction of Citizens' Charters or Citizens' Guides, which adopt a customer-driven approach aiming at assisting citizens in exercising their rights and improving the organisation's performance, thus providing high quality services
- Development of a National Action Plan (NAP) which calls upon the reform and improvement of the Regulating Frame (RF). The NAP for Better Regulation, which was

approved by the Council of Ministers in July 2007, constitutes the base for the determination of a complete national strategy with the aim to develop the RF in the Republic of Cyprus. The Council of Ministers recently adopted the proposal of the Ministry of Finance for setting the national target of administrative burden (AB) reduction (for enterprises) to 20%.

Organisation

The Minister of Finance is politically responsible for all the above-mentioned initiatives.

The leading Departments are the following:

- Better Regulation programme: Ministry of Finance and the Public Administration and Personnel Department, which comes under the Ministry of Finance. A Steering Committee (SC) has been set up (Chairman of the SC: Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Finance, members of the SC: officials from all the Ministries/ Organisations involved).
- One stop shops/ CAF/ Citizens' Charters/ Organisation and Methods Studies: Public Administration and Personnel Department, Ministry of Finance.
- E-government initiatives: Public Administration and Personnel Department, and Department of Information Technology Services, Ministry of Finance.

Measurement and reduction measures

In measuring citizens' satisfaction, a citizens' satisfaction survey was carried out in April 2007, so as to obtain insight into the quality of services provided to citizens by the One-Stop-Shops, and any administrative burdens that may be imposed on citizens. The survey will be repeated in due time. In addition, in the framework of continuous attempts to improve the quality of services offered to citizens and to reduce bureaucracy, most governmental organisations have a system of receiving and examining citizens' complaints. In many cases, this may also be done on-line.

It is noted that the approved methodology for the measurement of administrative burdens for enterprises is the Standard Cost Model (SCM). However, the SCM is not yet used to measure administrative burdens for citizens. The adoption of the SCM for measuring administrative burdens for citizens will be examined at a later stage.

The Cyprus Government has as a top priority, the simplification of the legislation regarding the procedures of issuing planning and housing permits (pilot project for the reduction of AB). In addition, the Government is now in the process of close consultation with the private sector, so as to identify possible areas that cause high administrative burden, that should be given priority.



Czech Republic

By Petr Fejtek

Policy

The current Government of the Czech Republic (appointed in September 2006) included the issue of reduction of red tape in general among its main priorities, but there is no systematic or complex policy targeted specifically to citizens at present.

However, a list of approximately 180 particular projects (called “Government Objectives”) was set up in December 2006, of which about 45 deal with the topic and focus on reduction of bureaucracy impinging to citizens. Some of them have a direct effect to reduction of administrative burdens of citizens (simplifying forms, reduction of information obligations), some others cut the red tape indirectly – e. g., inheritance tax and gift tax for most categories of persons were cancelled; so the groups concerned are primarily pleased they need not pay anything in such cases and the secondary effect is that they are no longer obliged to fill in complicated forms and deal with financial offices.

Also, the Government adopted so-called “Smart Administration Strategy”, a conception that should lead to an effective public administration and friendly public services. Its priorities include reduction of bureaucracy and administrative burdens. Projects under this Strategy are largely supported from the EU funds.

Recently, an extensive survey dealing with the approach of the public to the Czech legislation has been completed, indicating the most problematic areas from the point of view of citizens – this should be a base material for a future project aimed at reduction of administrative burdens for citizens.

Such a wide-range project composed of measurement, assessment and subsequent reduction of administrative burdens for citizens is being planned to start in 2009 or 2010, with an EU fund support, after the current project of baseline measurement and reduction of administrative businesses is finalised.

Organisation

The coordination of the whole agenda is, at present, realised only at governmental level, more exactly by the Office of the Government.

Nevertheless, the future project aimed at measurement and reduction of administrative burdens of citizens should be co-ordinated by the Department for Reform of Regulation and Quality of Public Administration in the Ministry of Interior, as it was the case in co-ordination of the project dedicated to reduction of administrative burdens of businesses. There is a relatively small team in this Department following the agenda, composed of 4 – 5 people (director, head of unit, EU-co-ordinator, policy advisor, administrative advisor, project

manager); thus a close co-operation with other experts is essential, e.g. with the members of the groups within EUPAN, with experts from line ministries, with local and regional authorities, with subjects outside public administration (external agencies, consultants, university scholars) etc.

Politically responsible are and will be the Prime Minister and the Minister of Interior in general and respective ministers in terms of their competences for specific objectives.

Measurement and high impact services

Regarding methodology, it is necessary to point out that administrative burdens of citizens have not been measured yet, but such intent has been broadly discussed at working ministerial level. As a result of these discussions, from various possibilities the route maps are considered to be one of the most eligible ways in a future measurement.

To identify the most burdensome areas, a number of surveys have been implemented among citizens – the one dedicated to legislation is mentioned above, another one called “Dedicate 10 minutes for improving of regulatory environment” gave the citizens the opportunity to specify the most burdening, confusing or controversial regulation, obligation or area (similar to the “kafka” website introduced by our Belgian colleagues).

According to all the surveys’ results, the following areas have been detected as the ones causing the highest administrative burden – social care, health care, financial and tax administration, general internal administration (personal documents – passports, identity cards, driving licences).

It is however necessary to emphasise that the last-mentioned area falls into this category perhaps only temporarily – in December 2007 there was the deadline for fulfilment of the obligation to change old, mainly paper-made personal documents issued mostly between the sixties and nineties for the new, unified ones (e. g. passports with chips and biometric data). In spite of the fact there was a 5-year term for the change, most people, in compliance with the usual bad habit, came in the latest possible moment, which caused enormous complications in providing services (long queues, congestions, nervousness on both sides etc.). As a result, not all personal documents could be changed on time (e. g., there are still more than 600.000 invalid driving licences among people)

Reduction measures

There is no profiled policy concerning measures, however, as mentioned above, a number of particular steps and projects have been implemented.

Probably the most visible project in this category consisted in introduction of the system of one-stop-shops (here called “Czech POINT”, where the word POINT is an abbreviation and means – in Czech – submitting, verifying, informational national terminal) in 2007. In the future, these Czech POINTs should function as a complex communication platform between citizens (or the public in a wider sense) and public administration. At the initial phase, they provide general information concerning public administration and issue abstracts (print-outs) of 4 registers, namely from commercial register, register of entrepreneurs, criminal record and

land registry. The one-stop-shops operate at all municipal and regional offices, many post offices and also abroad, mostly at embassies or Czech centres (e. g. in Berlin). Currently, more than 1.500 one-stop-shops are in operation.

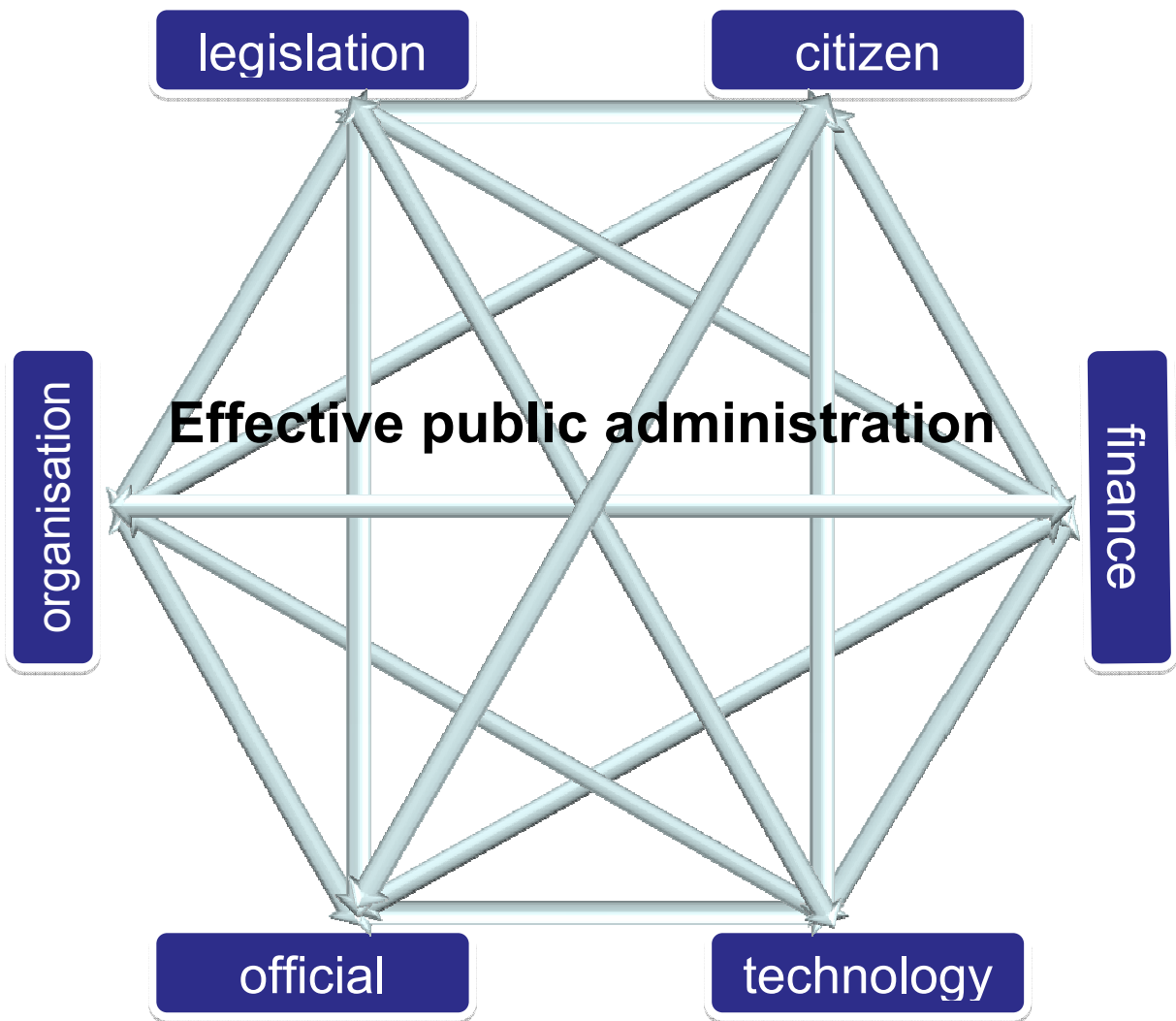
To spare citizens' time and effort, a motto was marked out by the Prime Minister and Minister of Interior stating that "it is the paper that must circulate and not the citizen" – it means that data should be shared by state authorities and processes should be simplified so as the citizen could submit only one application at one spot. Information and communication technologies and aforementioned one-stop-shops should be helpful for achieving this goal, implementation of the motto is however successful only in some extent presently. Other government objectives aimed at decreasing of administrative burden for citizen involve reduction of the number of information obligations and simplification of forms (mainly in the field of financial and tax administration and social care).

In addition, audits of all agendas (public services) from the point of view of all 6 components of so-called "Hexagon" are being prepared (Hexagon is a symbol of effective public administration and comprises 6 vertices entitled CITIZEN, FINANCE, ORGANISATION, LEGISLATION, TECHNOLOGY and OFFICIAL – see addendum 1); the audits will involve "process maps" showing how burdensome are particular agendas for all subjects of public administration (thus also for citizens); moreover, the audits should ascertain how effective, efficiently and successfully each of the components plays its role in the system of public administration. The results of these audits will be followed by an analysis and subsequent measures focused on improving of the operation, including cutting the red tape for citizens.

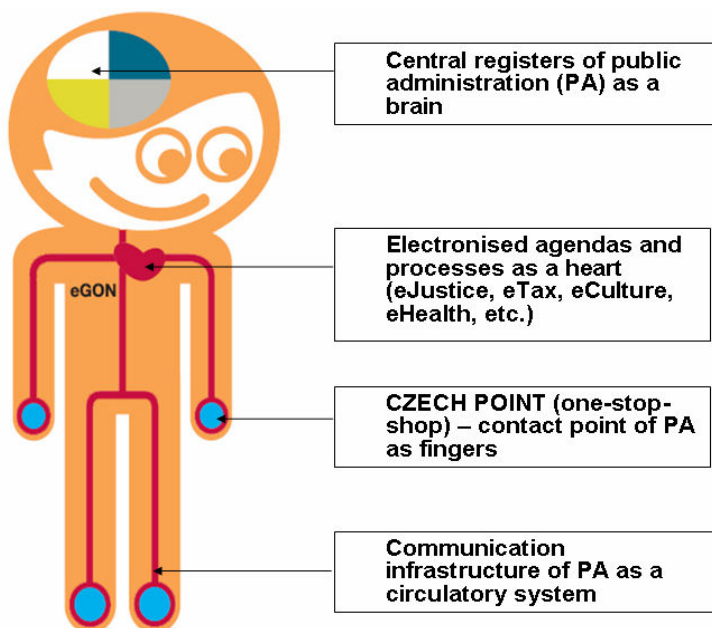
The current Government also pays increasing attention to development and a wider use of information and communication technologies, its strong support to this area generated another icon symbol called EGON (see addendum 2). This small orange figure should evoke the whole complex of e-government agendas that significantly facilitates reduction of administrative burden for citizens, mainly by connection of central registers, electronised agendas (e-Health, e-Justice, e-Tax, e-Culture etc.), fully functioning contact points of public administration (Czech POINTs) and faultless communication infrastructure.

Pursuing this objective, the Czech Government has worked out two legislative proposals: The first one is a draft of so-called E-Government Act (Act on Electronic Operations, Personal Numbers and Authorised Conversion of Documents) that should, inter alia, introduce electronic tools into the main procedure regulations, especially into Administrative Procedure Code and Civil Procedure Code. This proposal has already been submitted to the Parliament and is prepared for second reading. Secondly, Draft Act on Basic Registers of Public Administration has been finalized, which should facilitate an effective interconnection among the register of inhabitants, register of legal and natural persons, register of right and duties and register of addresses, territorial identification and real estates. This will enable state institutions to extract data directly from these registers without requiring them from citizens.

Addendum 1 – Effective public administration – Hexagon



Addendum 2 – eGON – symbol of e-Government



Estonia



By Martti Mandel

Policy

In the Coalition Agreement of the Government and in other main programmes there isn't defined consistent and measurable objective of reducing administrative burdens for citizens. Although the Coalition Agreement aims at development of more user-friendly and accessible public services through IT-solutions and regional service centres, there isn't unified, clear and coordinated programme behind this.

Organisation

There is no central institution which deals with administrative burdens. Issue is divided between different institutions:

- Ministry of Economic Affairs and Communications – corporate field
- Ministry of the Interior – public services
- Ministry of Finance of the Republic of Estonia - organizational and functional furthering of the public sector

There is no special working group or independent committee which deals with reduction of administrative burdens for citizens.

A lot of social services have been delegated to the local government level. Capability of different local governments is very different, which means that the level on administrative burdens is also different. Some local governments have even developed their own e-solutions. For example city government of Tallinn started a project "Citizen focused public service in the city of Tallinn – linking services to ID-Card". Same time some not so wealthy and administratively capable local governments or their public servants have still the view towards public services what should belong to soviet times.

Measurement and high impact services

New rules, regulation and laws do not require a qualitative description of the effects of the administrative burden; neither is specific target groups taken into account separately.

While the standard cost model has been applied to administrative burdens related to enterprises it has not yet been done in case of citizens.

There are researches which measure administrative burdens for entrepreneurs. Some examples:

- Administrative burdens caused by labour agreement legislation. Basis of this legislation derives from soviet period and it puts a lot of administrative burdens on the shoulders of entrepreneurs. 2007 research showed that administration of labour market legislation costs for Estonian entrepreneurs about 10 million EUR p.a.

- Administrative burdens caused by value added tax legislation. 2005. Research showed that administration of VAT costs for Estonian entrepreneurs more than 15 millions EUR p.a.

Reduction measures

The main instrument has been the development of standards of public services e-solutions:

- E-Tax authority - All citizens can submit their income tax statement via the web
- E-voting – 2007 it was possible to elect the parliament electronically for the first time in the world.
- The State Examinations Centre implemented a couple of years ago a system where the pupils can check their State Exam results via web.
- Today I Decide (www.tom.ee) – it is web solution for citizens giving ideas for the government or to ask relevant questions.
- Ministry of Economic Affairs and Communications launched a project called X-Road, a secure web-based data exchange layer, which provides access to the data of state registers through a unified interface.



Finland

By Johanna Nurmi, Olli-Pekka Rissanen

Policy

A specific project for reducing administrative burden for citizens does not exist in Finland. Instead there are different approaches including better regulation, one stop shops, central database/shared data, proactive services, e-government, total quality management and structural reforms.

Organisation

- Better regulation programme/Ministry of Justice
- One stop shops/ Ministry of Finance
- Central databases (Shared data)/Open Network (Registry Pool)
- Proactive services/No single responsibility
 - e.g. pre-filled tax form/National Board of Taxes
- eGovernment/Municipalities and Agencies-> Ministry of Finance

Measurement and high impact services

As a general level "health check" of public services the Ministry of Finance publishes an annual service barometer. The barometer includes eight different services:

Municipal services studied:

- Children's day care
- Primary schools
- Public libraries
- Doctor's appointments in health centres
- Health centre emergency visits

Government services studied:

- Sense of security produced by police
- Tax office services
- Highway maintenance outside cities

For the barometer 2000-5000 citizens are interviewed by telephone.

The state agencies and municipalities have different approaches to measure their services, including customer satisfaction measurement (customer satisfaction measurement, customer segmentation, citizen complaints, waiting and handling times, life situation analysis etc.).

Reduction measures

The state agencies and municipalities are encouraged to implement *methods of total quality management* (e.g. CAF, Common Assessment Framework) in order to highlight the importance of process orientation and customer orientation. Currently regional quality networks are being established to collect different public sector organisations together to improve their services. One of the motives for this is the shared customers, same people and businesses are customers of both, municipal and state services within one region.

The project to restructure municipalities and services was launched in 2005. The aim of this administrative reform is to create a well functioning and cohesive municipal structure. The service structure must be comprehensive and economically sustainable and must allow a cost-effective use of resources. Framework legislation concerning the reform came into force in Feb 2007 (Act on Restructuring Local Government and Services, in force until the end of 2012). The legislation sets certain obligations to the municipalities they have to perform. The obligations include e.g. that there has to be a population of about 20 000 at least in a municipality or an area (partnership area) that is responsible for primary health care and clearly associated social services. A population of about 50 000 at least is required from a municipality or an area (partnership area) authorized to provide vocational basic education. The municipalities may choose what measures they use when aiming to implement the law. In addition to these structural reforms, in November 2007, Ministry of Finance launched the "Best Service Practices"-project, that promotes the modernizing of production of services in municipalities. It also aims to improve productivity and effectiveness and to diffuse the best service practices and innovations.

Based on the Government Programme a project to *reorganise the regional administration* was launched in June 2007. The aim is to enhance the citizen and customer orientation of regional administration as well as to increase the efficiency and productivity of its functions by collecting services into fewer authorities and by streamlining the processes of these authorities. The term of the project is March 2009 and the reform in its full form will be completed by the year 2010.

The division of duties between regional authorities, State Provincial Offices, Employment and Economic Development Centres, other district authorities and regional councils will be clarified, overlapping functions eliminated, and the number of administrative staff reduced. At the same time, the regional geographical divisions will be reviewed. The project has handed in its mid term report at the end of March 2008. The project has proposed that the state regional administration will be collected into two authorities. This means reorganisation of the duties of six existing regional authorities.

One stop shops are one main line in developing public administration services in Finland. They have many goals that include increasing productivity and efficiency, but reducing administrative burden is a vital part of work. One stop shops have two way effect on administrative burden;

- In a relatively large country with relatively low population density one stop shops cut down customers need to travel; and
- Strong administrative sectors can offer their specialized services in one place and cut down customers need to visit several authorities. This includes centralized advice that covers customer's need for information.

At present, there are approximately 200 one stop shops in Finland, and they are located in about 180 municipalities. Along with municipal services, the key services include police licence services and services of the labour administration, services of register offices, tax administration and the Social Insurance Institution of Finland. In areas with low population density, a wide range of top-quality services is ensured through cooperation between state authorities and municipalities.

The aim is to supply every one stop shop with a public access terminal, equipped with a reader of electronic identity cards. Through public access terminals, citizens can easily get information on open vacancies, electronic public services or some other Internet services and use public electronic services. The secretary for citizen services can assist citizens in using the terminal and services.

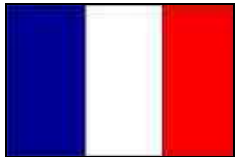
The new act of Public Administration Joint Services entered into force at 1st April 2007. Legislation was changed pretty thoroughly even that the basic idea of providing public services in co-operation between authorities remained the same.

The new act limits public joint services to state and municipal authorities and SII. Earlier even private firms could have participated in such co-operation. The new act also defines joint services as “assisting customer service” to notify that decision-making cannot be given to other authority. New legislation does not limit co-operation if the authorities take care of their own responsibilities.

One stop shops and joint services are under thorough development. First all existing shops must make some changes to adapt to the new legislation. Most agreements must be renewed until the end of year. At the same time a variety of services given at offices should be widened and in some cases quality checked.

Many authorities are facing serious changes in their structure. Many sectors have to cut down number of authorities and service points. At the same time they must take care of availability of their services. Joint services are one main method to be able to do this. Electronic services are also very helpful in achieving these goals, but they have some limitations that can be bypassed by joint services.

The *Development Programme Customer-centered eServices* will create joint operating models for eServices of administration and develop the portals suomi.fi and yritys-suomi.fi into an interactive entity of electronic communications, where the administrative sectors can implement customer-centered services utilising joint support services and information reserves as well as the components of electronic communications. Also eServices implemented earlier can be integrated into the service entity.



France

By Wendy Carrara and Jean Jacques Leandri

Policy

Two ways are identified to contribute to the reduction of administrative burden for citizen :

- Simplifying the access to the services

This issue is addressed from the point of view of performance and efficiency within public administration. The actions related are, for example, merging of administrative structures or a strategy for a multi-channel administration. Then the aim is more to adapt the access to the service.

- Definition of standards and service commitment

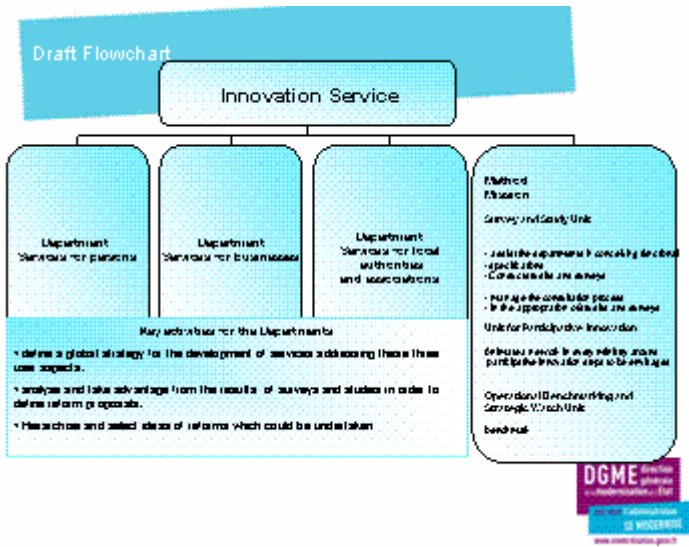
The reduction of administrative burdens for citizen is based on a cultural evolution.

The first aim is to define standards in order to clarify rules for the citizen. The rule is clearly announced and respected, to promote equity.

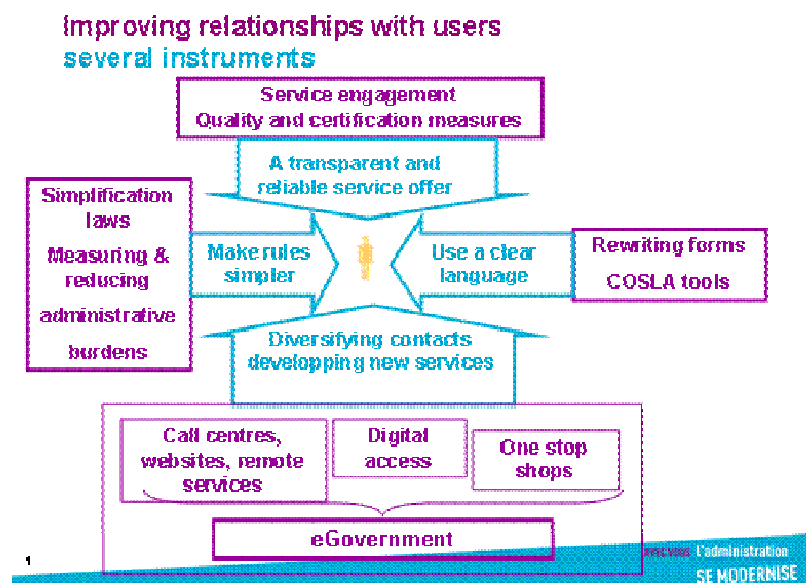
Organisation

These actions are politically endorsed by the RGPP (General Review of Public Policies).

The DGME (Directorate General for State Modernisation) is responsible for State Modernisation and is at this stage in the process of creating a new service, Innovation, which will mainly deal with the active listing of services :



Regarding the definition of standards, service commitment, the organisation is as follows



Measurement and high impact services

We do not have yet a global methodology to measure administrative burdens for citizen. But a manual of best practices of measure has been made and is used by some structures (see attached document). The guide helps to measure the conformity to commitments, the user satisfaction and the progress (corrective actions, ...)

The “baromètre Delouvrier” gives a bi-annual complete outlook on the expectations and satisfaction of citizen. The access to the services is a new indicator which has been added a year ago.

Reduction measures

“Ensemble simplifions » : <http://www.modernisation.gouv.fr/simplifions/>

« Suppression de la déclaration de ressources CAF » : www.caf-cplusimple.fr

Germany



By Thomas Nehring

Policy

The reduction of AB for citizens is part of the cabinet decision of 25th april 2006 (details see under “organisation”). After nearly having finished the measuring of AB for industry arising from national and broadened EU and international law, Germany has currently started measuring AB for citizens arising from registration law, which falls into the responsibility of the ministry of the interior, as a pilot project.

This is based on the decision of the Committee of State Secretaries for the Reduction of Bureaucracy of 19th march 2008 which contains the following basic principles:

- Reducing of unnecessary administrative burdens incumbent on citizens
- Use of a modified SCM; enhancement of methodology in cooperation with the Regulatory Control Council
- Combination of quantitative and qualitative approach:
IO for citizens often are required to ensure that benefits or other public funds are only be paid to qualified citizens. Therefore, by thinking about simplification measures, the way citizens get the informations they need to put in their claims should also be taken into account.
- The focus is on the ex ante assessments:
In case of ex ante assessments of AB for citizens arising from legislation drafts the ministries have to check also underlying existing regulations. The ministries decide whether a SCM measurement would not be useful to identify unnecessary administrative burdens or whether an additional presentation of AB for particular target groups would be appropriate. We're aiming at a full scale measurement.
- Besides the ex ante assessments, the ministries are free to define particular areas of legislation or life events to be analysed
- The AB for citizens would be expressed in hours. Additional presentations are possible (e.g. qualitative description or monetary quantification)
- The measurements would be conducted by the Statistical Office

Organisation

The adoption of the Standard Cost Model in Germany is founded on the decision of the Cabinet of 25th April 2006 on a programme for the Reduction of Bureaucracy and Better Regulation, finally based on the Coalition Treaty between Christian and Social Democrats in November 2005.

Above all the programme alleviates the administrative burden on enterprises and helps increase the citizen's acceptance of government action. The aim is to cut measurably the costs of bureaucracy particularly those which arise for companies, citizens and the administration from legislated information obligations, and to avoid new information

obligations. In order to realize these goals, the Federal Government in addition to the standard cost model implemented a Regulatory Control Council (Nationaler Normenkontrollrat; abbr. NKR) and a Federal Government Coordinator for the Reduction of Bureaucracy und Better Regulation (Minister of state Mrs. Hildegard Müller).

The entire process of SCM implementation is steered by the Federal Government Coordinator who chairs the Committee of State Secretaries for the Reduction of Bureaucracy. To support the Coordinator and the Committee, a “Better Regulation Unit” has been set up in the Federal Chancellery, provided by staff from the federal ministries.

The ministries are responsible for mapping and reduction, the measuring is being conducted by the Statistical Office. For all new proposals the ministries have to estimate the AB for citizens and include the Regulatory Control Council in the legislative process (for further information about organisation see figure 1 and chapter B.1 in our 2007 federal government report on the use of the SCM – to be found on the SCM website)

Measurement and high impact services

We will use a modified SCM, currently preparing a workshop to check methodological questions together with the Regulatory Control Council and the line ministries using the results of the registration law pilot as a base for discussion.

There seems to be no doubt that – from the citizens point of view - the quality of service is an important parameter for the perception of changes. Any simplification proposal on the federal level therefore should take into account its effect on enforcement.

Reduction measures

Currently no measures are scheduled being based on SCM (The process has just been started). However, Germany at present follows one main track to reduce burdens for citizens (and companies as well) which probably could be pushed by the results of SCM measurements:

This is to have one phone number for all contacts to administration/authorities (called “project 115”), including federal government, states and municipalities.



Italy

By Roberto Pizzicannella and Maria Giulia Cosentino

Policy

In Italy there is not a specific programme for measurement of Administrative Burden for Citizens. In July 2007 an “Action Plan on Simplification and Regulatory Quality” has been adopted, which includes areas of intervention such as:

- measurement of burden arising from Information Obligation
- reduction of burden for businesses
- reduction of burden for citizens

The Action Plan will be revised each year.

At Regional and Local governmental level, within the initiatives concerning e-government implementation, some specific initiatives to produce simplification in public services by using ICT are being carried out.

In , recent years, a lot of investments have been done in e-government initiatives at regional and local level. And even if the introduction of ICT in public service delivery not always produces simplification, some positive experiences of simplification are emerging. They represent possible examples to be disseminated in other local administrations.

Being part of an e-government initiative, the actions related to simplification at regional/local level are generally pursued by the business process reengineering approaches.

It has to be underlined that in Italy, due to the institutional arrangement, the majority of services are delivered at local level, making the establishment of a nationwide simplification policy more complicated to be defined and managed.

Organisation

At a central level, the main policies are collected into the 2007 Action plan for simplification and quality of regulation.

In September 2006 an Interministerial Committee for strategic guidance of regulatory quality and simplification policies has been established in order to provide strategic guidance on simplification policies. The Unit for Simplification (a relatively independent committee of 20 advisors), that works for the Cabinet Office, has been established to provide support to the Interministerial Committee.

The Unit plays a leading role in defining the measures to be included in the Action Plan, while the single measures are in the responsibility of each Department or Minister.

As said above, in the regional/local level the responsibility for identifying specific measures of reduction of burden or of simplification is devolved to the single local administration.

Measurement and high impact services

As it is said above, there is not a methodology in use, but a mere customer satisfaction approach.

In the area of reduction of Administrative Burden for Enterprises the measurement methodology used is the EU Standard Cost Model. This means that we have acquired some competences on this quantitative methodology.

At the same time we recognise the importance of looking at qualitative methodology, especially when considering services delivered at regional/local level.

The first issues collected in the view of the 2008 Action Plan for simplification include measures for measuring and reducing administrative burdens on citizens, so far without any indication of the methodology chosen.

Reduction measures

The 2007 Action plan identified some areas of intervention. In particular:

- simplification of identifying office procedures;
- one-stop shops for immigration procedures;
- reengineering of the procedure for obtaining citizenship;
- simplification of burdens about the protection of public health;
- parajudicial procedures for compensation of surgery damages;
- simplification of the public control on cars trading.

The implementation of the single measures is based on a business process reengineering approach.

Just to give an idea of what is done at local level, we mention the case of Ravenna municipality. Here a task force (NUS: nucleo per la semplificazione – unit for simplification) has been established with the task to define a basic knowledge of all the administrative procedures both related to Front Office and Back Office. On this formal basic knowledge, the NUS has been assigned the task to identify areas of improvement and to propose measures to achieve such improvements.

In other local administrations, there are initiatives to promote the adoption of measures to establish a single contact point for citizens, taking as example similar initiatives carried out in single contact points for businesses.

Latvia



By Ieva Bloma

Policy & organisation

At the moment it can be called a “transition period” concerning the institutional establishment of Better Regulation policy as such and thereby also – the reduction of administrative burdens, incl. administrative burdens for citizens.

The State Chancellery is currently drafting a *Concept Paper on implementation of the Better Regulation policy in Latvia* – it is foreseen that it will be approved by the Government till the end of July, 2008. The *Concept Paper* prescribes the establishment of a common institutional framework for already ongoing activities that have been carried out so far in order to implement different tools of Better Regulation. Thereby the State Chancellery (Policy Co-ordination Department) will be the main responsible institution for the co-ordination of implementation of Better Regulation policy in general, as well as the leading institution responsible for activities in order to simplify administrative procedures for citizens and to reduce administrative burdens for citizens. After the adoption of the *Concept Paper* a necessary step will be the establishment of an official Steering Committee (incl. representatives of all ministries, other involved public bodies, as well as representatives of local governments).

At the same time it should be also noted that in May 2008 the Government is going to adopt a new reform programme *Public Administration Policy Development Guidelines 2008-2013 (Better Regulation: Qualitative and Effective Governance)*. The aim of these *Guidelines* is to improve the efficiency and quality of the public administration, as well as to bring the public administration closer to the society. Thereby *Guidelines* also include principles and action lines regarding the reduction of administrative burdens (clearly separating the task to reduce administrative burdens for entrepreneurs from the task and measures in order to reduce administrative burdens for citizens) and the improvement of the quality of public services. Besides, within the framework of *Guidelines* the national target will be set for the reduction of administrative burdens.

In fact, the adoption of the both above-mentioned policy planning documents will mark a turning point for Government’s policy concerning the reduction of administrative burdens for citizens because so far the main attention has been paid to the reduction of administrative burdens for entrepreneurs. However, there are situations when activities with the aim to identify and to reduce administrative burdens for entrepreneurs also have given benefits to citizens (establishment of “one-stop-shops”, as well as projects that have been carried out during year 2007 in order to perform *ex-post* measurement of administrative burdens using Standard Cost Model covered fields that are relevant also for citizens and where the requirements deriving from regulation are more or less the same for entrepreneurs, as well as

for citizens – for instance, administration of real estate tax and procedures of registration of real estate).

Simultaneously, there is a significant role in the process of simplification of administrative procedures and the reduction of administrative burdens for Secretariat of Special Assignments Minister for Electronic Government Affairs which is responsible for the development of e-government. Thereby The State Chancellery works in a close co-operation with Secretariat of Special Assignments Minister for Electronic Government Affairs regarding activities and measures with the aim to maintain the development of electronic services.

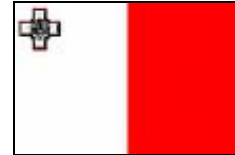
Measurement and high Impact services

From 1 July, 2008 a new requirement will enter into force regarding the *ex-ante* regulatory impact assessment system. It will be mandatory to include the assessment of administrative costs for citizens deriving from draft normative acts (using SCM formula). The State Chancellery is currently organising trainings for civil servants in order to maintain the appropriate execution of this requirement.

Mostly the main tools public institutions use to get insight into administrative burdens for citizens are satisfaction inquiries and separate researches (good practice – State Social Insurance Agency, Road Traffic Safety Directorate).

Reduction Measures

To conclude, it has to be mentioned that the reduction of administrative burdens in Latvia is gradually becoming one of the top priorities, especially in the context of the improvement of performance and quality of public administration and public services. The importance of this issue can be illustrated by the fact that there is a specific Action Line in the Operational Programme “Human Resources and Employment” (is going to be financed from the European Social Fund) regarding the reduction of administrative burdens and improvement of the quality of public services.



Malta

By Marisa Scerri

Policy

As part of its Budget measures to encourage growth, the Maltese Government embarked on a regulatory reform programme in 2005. Government's commitment towards better regulation is reflected in its strategic documents including the National Reform Programme 2005-2008. To this effect, the Government established a Better Regulation Unit (BRU) within the Office of the Prime Minister.

Government's better regulation approach is focused primarily on, but not limited to, the implementation and monitoring of the *An Action Plan for Simplification* (APS). A substantial part of the plan is dedicated to citizens.

Resulting measures were anticipated to have an effect on the whole of society, albeit on different levels, as they deal with various aspects of everyday life such as the provision of health, education, business and social security services.

Organisation

Different players are involved in the reduction of administrative burdens for citizens:

- *Cabinet Office: Legal Notice Checklist*

Government has a policy which states that draft subsidiary legislation, when forwarded to the Office of the Prime Minister, has to be accompanied by a basic Impact Assessment referred to as a Legal Notice Checklist. The Legal Notice Checklist covers general aspects, drafting exercise (whether stakeholders were consulted and a RIA was carried out), impact and outcomes.

- *Office of the Prime Minister, Better Regulation Unit (Management Efficiency Unit): Simplification*

The BRU is a central unit, that with the support of a network of Government departments and agencies, co-ordinates the implementation of the APS. In order to ensure Ministry and entity involvement the BRU works through a network of ministry, departmental and authority contact persons.

- *Ministry responsible for competitiveness*

The Ministry responsible for competitiveness has embarked on the measurement of administrative burdens on business to meet the Spring European Council 2006 priority. It is believed that this exercise may also shed light on services which are burdensome for citizens. The Ministry has identified the Standard Cost Model (SCM), which is already employed in several other European countries, as the best model to be adopted by Malta to measure administrative burdens emanating from national legislation. Given Malta's small size and limited resources, it is not feasible for it to embark on a full baseline measurement programme. Consequently, the Ministry will be concentrating on selected areas of legislation with the highest burdens on businesses which will then be measured with a view to stipulate a quantitative target for reducing administrative burdens by October 2008.

Measurement and high impact services

- Government agencies were asked to identify measures within Government agencies, leading to a reduction of administrative burdens for citizens and businesses, which formed part of the APS. Following the implementation of a number of such measures, Government agencies were asked to indicate the resulting benefits, including the number of beneficiaries.
- Malta has also compiled an inventory of forms which are currently being used in the wider public sector with a view of rationalising these forms. Government intends to take this forward in a prioritised manner aiming towards providing all government services, as far as possible, online.
- External feedback is collected through customer care offices and media input. Moreover, the BRU has started consulting various stakeholder organisations in order to obtain “on the ground” feedback which will be analysed with a view to recommending any further complementary actions to the APS. This consultation exercise may also shed light on services which are burdensome for citizens. Moreover, Government has pledged support to a constituted body, one which significantly affects consumers, to further inputs into simplification.
- Consultation is a common practice for Ministries, government departments and public sector entities, who work in close collaboration with stakeholders when drafting legislation and policies. This checklist also looks at the citizen aspect, e.g., gender, burdens, impact on quality of life, consumers, vulnerable groups, social cohesion, etc
- Malta, currently does not have a scientific approach to measuring of administrative burdens on citizens although efforts have been taken in a structured and systematic way, as the main focus is on the implementation of measures which reduce the administrative burdens to hasten the pace of implementation. It is believed that by implementing “quick wins”, government entities, businesses and citizens realise the benefits of better regulation. Given that there is no scientific instrument in use we are not in a position to determine which services/legislation cause high administrative burden for citizens.

In the meantime, Malta has embarked on a Twinning Light Project (with the United Kingdom), with the aim of increasing our knowledge on the tools available to measure administrative burdens on businesses and citizens.

Reduction measures

- The APS consists of 111 projects of simplification aimed towards reducing administrative burdens for both businesses and citizens. The projects have been classified by a particular thematic, identifying whether the proposal relates to the setting up of a one-stop-shop entity or consolidation of existing entities; revision of internal procedures / processes; use of I.T. / e-Government; simplification or revision of Legislation; repealing of obsolete legislation; or consolidation of forms.
- A large number of Maltese public services are provided online with the aim of delivering a better and efficient service and streamlining public services. Such services include for example the ordering of birth / marriage / death certificates; submission and payment of income tax return; application for examinations and on-line vehicle license renewal.

- Moreover, according to Eurostat, in 2007, 95% of the 20 basic services are fully available online i.e. it is possible to carry out full electronic case handling for these services.
- Alternative Delivery Channels for services are also being considered. This includes the delivery of a number of services through the local councils, to ensure that services are provided as closest as possible to the citizens, particularly vulnerable groups. Recently, the private sector is also being involved in agent-based government services, e.g., vehicle license renewals, whereby members of the public can renew their licenses at the same time as they renew their vehicle insurance in a one-stop transaction.
- Government is also striving to maximise the use of its ICT assets. Initiatives to make better use of an internal Common Database are being pursued with the aim of providing a better service to the citizens by placing the onus for ascertaining identity on the department rather than the citizen.
- During the setting up of quality service charters within Government departments, the administrative burden or ease of service are also assessed and reviewed to simplify the lives of citizens and remove burden.



The Netherlands

By Peter Rem and John Kootstra

Policy

Since 2003 there is a specific programme for the reduction of administrative burdens for citizens. The government committed itself to a reduction of the administrative burdens for citizens (and businesses) of 25% in 2007 (compared to the situation of 2002).

After the parliamentary elections of November 2006 a new Cabinet started in March 2007. The programme on the reduction of administrative burdens for citizens continued, but with a different approach. The focus changed to a more qualitative approach. The programme now aims to reduce the top ten of most irritating burdens of citizens, i.e. waiting time for services, understandable language in forms, etc. The objective is to get better public service delivery to citizens with less administrative burdens.

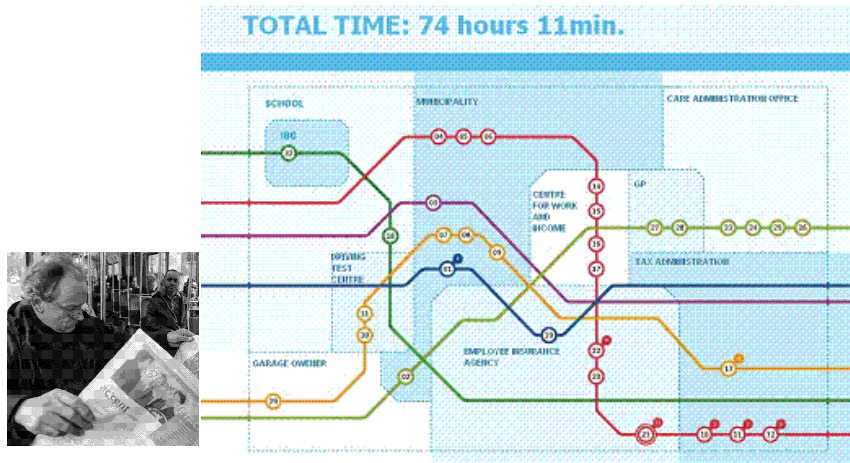
Organisation

The state secretary of the Interior and Kingdom Relations, Ms. Ank Bijleveld is responsible for the programme on reducing administrative burdens for citizens. The programme team consists of about 15 persons and works in two clusters (cluster national and international and cluster municipalities). The programme team is supported by the ICRAL; the interdepartmental commission of Coordinators for the reduction of Administrative Burdens for Citizens. Each department has one coordinator which coordinates the reduction programme within their own ministry.

Another important part of the infrastructure is ACTAL, the independent advisory board on Administrative burdens. All new government proposals with possible effects for administrative burdens for businesses or citizens MUST be sent to ACTAL for advice, before it can be sent to the council of ministers. This advice is not binding, but it is very important for the coordinating ministries, as they can use it to give a negative advice to their ministers/ state secretaries.

Measurement and high impact services

In 2003 a baseline measurement was executed by using the SCM model. The model, which was originally developed in the Netherlands to measure the administrative burdens of businesses, was adapted so that it could be used to measure the administrative burdens of citizens. During the measurement it became clear that some groups of people have more administrative burdens than other people, like the handicapped and chronically ill, elderly people, volunteers and benefit claimants. To get a clear picture of their burdens, nine role models of people were developed with maps which showed the routes through bureaucracy through their perspective.



The areas which caused the highest volumes of administrative burdens for citizens were the law on taxes (tax declaration), law on passports (obtaining or renewing your passport) and the traffic law (obtaining and renewing your driving license).

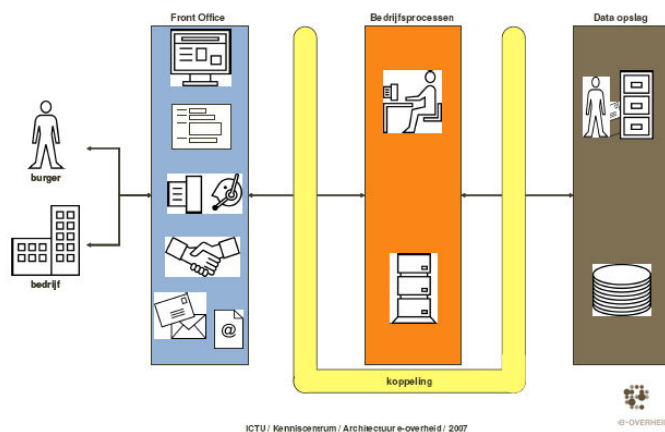
The programme of the new Cabinet has a more qualitative approach and focuses on the reduction of the top ten of irritating burdens of the citizens. The following top ten is being addressed:

- Quick and Reliable; *Individuals and businesses gain insight into the waiting and processing times for government and municipal services and products. Added to which, waiting times are shortened by introducing internet services*
- Simple application and justification of social security: *simple (electronic) applications and more efficient justification of extraordinary social security benefits*
- Submit your personal details only once: *all income-related regulations on the personal internet page*
- Getting a travel document easily; : *applying for passports and identity cards at any town hall*
- Fewer Permits: *avoid delays by converting permits to general legislation, for example chopping down a tree*
- User-friendly Forms: *simplified forms for change of address notifications, requesting health care services (e.g. transport) and applications for information from the GBA (Gemeenschappelijke Basis Administratie - General Basic Administration)*
- More Trust; : *Trust people more, for example introduce more subsidies within health and social services that do not need to be justified*
- Lending an ear: *problem solving with the authorities by (pre)mediation rather than legally through objection- and complaint procedures*
- Give volunteers more freedom: *treat volunteer organisations as groups of individuals instead of as a business, so that organising events can be less complicated*
- Quality comes first; *a rating of at least seven out of ten for the quality of government services*

Reduction measures

Different measures are being taken to reduce the administrative burdens of citizens:

- Reduction proposals which imply a simplification or removal of rules or procedures, i.e. instead only being able to vote in one polling station in the vicinity of your house, it is also possible to vote at all polling stations (so also in the neighbourhood where you work or on train stations)
- With the use of ICT it is possible to reduce the time people have to spend on their administration (i.e. making forms digital and enable the application of services via internet). Several measures comprise like the Digital Client File in the social security domain, prefilled tax forms in the fiscal domain.
- An important condition is a common information infrastructure (including access, key registers, uniform numbers, authentication etc) for the different public service providers. This infrastructure enables organisations to exchange data digitally and allows people to provide their information only once. About the development of this infrastructure is regularly reported to Parliament¹



- With the use of general rules or frameworks instead of licenses or permits, the administrative burdens can be reduced (i.e. general rule which state that the trees on a specific list can not be cut without a permit, the rest can be cut without any need for a permit).

¹ <http://www.e-overheid.nl/sites/english/organisation/>

Norway



By Carlo Thomsen

Policy

There has for some years been much focus upon adapting public services to individual needs and to increase user-friendliness and user satisfaction. In its work on reform of the public sector, the Norwegian Government places emphasis on user orientation.

The current government has issued a strategy for a continuous improvement of the public sector where user-friendliness is one of seven objectives. This objective should be achieved through means such as:

- Increased transparency and openness
- focus on plain language in all communication with citizens,
- electronic communication as the main channel for communication, and
- all relevant public services for citizens should be accessible through the internet

Better use of user satisfaction surveys is seen as an important tool to enhance user-friendliness.

Another objective in the strategy is more participation by, and cooperation with citizens. This objective should in part be achieved by creating contact points (virtual as well as physical) where citizens are invited to come up with ideas and suggestions for a better functioning public sector.

An important aspect of this is to involve the users of public services in how these services are individually delivered.

Norway has so far not engaged in a systematic and whole of government approach to administrative burdens on citizens. But in recent years much has been done from state entities to make public functions and services more efficient and user friendly in accordance with the goals and means stated in the strategy, thereby reducing burdens on citizens. Two examples of this:

- The Norwegian Labour and Welfare Service (NAV) – has been reorganized as a kind of one stop shops for citizens across levels of government to ensure job opportunities for as many people as possible, opportunity of meaningful activity for those with special needs, and to secure income in accordance with rights enshrined in legislation. Before creating NAV in 2006 citizens would have to deal with two different state organizations and the local authorities for labour and welfare assistance and disbursement of public insurance benefits and social benefits, all together 3 organisations.
- Electronic forms, of which until now a system of a pre-filled Electronic tax form, probably has had significant impact for lessening administrative burdens for citizens.

Organisation

The minister of Government Administration and Reform is politically responsible for user orientation on the national level, but each sectoral ministry is responsible for user orientation and burdens in it's sector. The government has established a Directorate for Public Management and Information Technology that will strengthen the government's ability to implement policies on important issues such as user orientation and user friendliness by instruments such as issuing guidance material, gather information and knowledge on best practice and by offering training courses.

Measurement and high impact services

As part of the strategy to improve the public sector, the Norwegian Government has taken an initiative for a national user survey of public services, and has set up a national citizens conference.

- The national user survey is probably going to be launched next year, with preparatory work going on this year and last year. It is recommended that the survey is repeated each year.
- The national citizens conference was arranged last spring (20.03.07). 150 persons from different parts of the country and different age and ethnic groups were present, Participants were selected from people active in the local community, but not representing organized interests. The participants spent a whole day discussing:
 - Concrete measures on how the public sector can be more user-friendly and tailored and more inclusive in the policymaking processes
 - What kind of adjustments can be done within the public sector in order of being more user-friendly and more inclusive
- The participants placed emphasis on plain language, better coordination between public services, more use of ICT and that users of public services are met with respect. The Ministry will use the report from the conference when working with general guidelines on how to make the Public Sector more open and inclusive.

All national public entities with extensive user interaction are encouraged to have user panels. All national public entities are required to carry out user surveys.

Reduction measures

The most important steps are expanding the use of ICT for different kinds of communication between citizens and the public sector, both on the national and on the municipal level..

Portugal



By Ana Sofia Figueiredo

Policy

Simplex Programme – Strategic programme that incorporates a vast Administrative and Legislative Simplification Programme that bets heavily on the use of Information and Communication Technologies and combines solid measures in areas which are the joint responsibility of several Ministries (health, education, justice, public finance, etc).

- Reduce bureaucracy;
- Increase the State's transparency and the Public Administration's efficiency;
- Improve people's relationship with public departments.

Organisation

The Simplex Programme is being implemented since 2006 and is, nowadays, politically directed by SEMA - State Secretary for Public Services Reform. Its focus is on the Citizens, Enterprises and Public Administration.

Advisory and evaluation Board, composed by independent experts. This group follows the programme's execution and preparation for the next programme.

SEMA is at the political level.

AMA is at the operational level (5 collaborators):

- Evaluation of the Public consultation (SIMPLEX) – Evaluate and identify new measures (Citizens/Enterprises);
- Follow the implementation of some SIMPLEX measurements;
- Result evaluation – Standard Cost Model regarding Businesses;
- Monitoring:
 - Measures regarding the Citizen's Shop - trimester;
 - Measures regarding the services to the citizens.

This year we intend to...

Chart of Quality – **Principle for service evaluation and monitoring methodology:**

- UMIC (Knowledge Society Agency) – National inquiry for the Electronic Services (ICT penetration level in Portuguese society, usage of electronic services, etc) – high level analysis;
- Focus Group towards a specific theme: e.g. Expectations and necessities for a new electronic service (Citizens / Enterprises), satisfaction level towards a specific electronic service;

- Citizens Portal (300.000 registered active users) – use online inquiries about public online services (implemented and to be implemented);
- National Customer Satisfaction Index: The National Customer Satisfaction Index (NCSI) is a system to measure the quality of the available products and services in the national market, through European standards, European Consumer Satisfaction Index.

Measurement and high impact services

- Citizens complaints;
- Satisfaction inquire;
- National inquiry for the Electronic Services (UMIC);
- (future) Focus Group;
- (future) e-Inquiries to the Citizens Portal registered users;
- National Customer Satisfaction Index;
- (future) SCM (being implemented regarding Enterprises). The result analysis (results and methodology) will be fundamental to determine the model's dynamics towards a different thematic - Citizens

Identified services that have been simplified and implemented:

- “Lost wallet service” with the objectives of:
 - Organize the services regarding the citizen's necessities;
 - Promote the coordination and cooperation between different organisms.
- Document renovation/substitution: Identification card, Unique Vehicle Document, Social Security card, Beneficiary card (public employee social security system), Finance card, Drivers License, Automotive Club of Portugal
- Citizen's information (name, address, civil status, etc) alteration (14 different entities are involved);

Identified service/legislation:

- Certified information delivery to the Public Administration. Represents many physical interactions with the PA, and heavy costs (time, money and human resources). Some simplification has been done, towards the Citizen – online request for this type of information.

Reduction measures

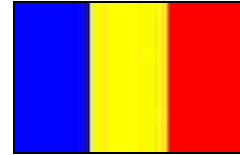
These are some examples of measures that have already been implemented, in the scope of SIMPLEX'07 Programme. There were a total of 235 measures pointed out to be implemented: 149 towards Citizens (remaining 86 towards enterprises)

- Measures already implemented (SIMPLEX'07):
 - Citizen's Card – citizen authentication and document certification;
 - Elimination of criminal registration certification (95 situations).
- Elimination of obligatory military census;
- Marriage and divorce processes have been simplified;
- House acquisition, transmission and registry processes have been simplified;
- Online request of the automobile transfer registry, consult the request status, request and consult the automobile Permanent Certificate;
- Electronic Complaint;

- All the legal process concerning a deceased and Inheritances;
- Citizen's Shop expansion (2 new shops in 2008).

These are examples of measures pointed out by Citizens in the scope of SIMPLEX'08 public consultation. The measures are being submitted to screening and will be soon revealed which have been selected for implementation.

- Public consultation for SIMPLEX'08, examples:
 - 24 hours self-service Public Services - Better access and larger availability;
 - Common Network of Knowledge – virtual and physical networks of knowledge.
 - Book of creativity and innovation.
- Public consultation screening results:
 - 189 measures to be implemented
 - 89 towards Citizens;
 - 79 towards Enterprises;
 - 21 towards Public Administration.



Romania

By Ionut Vasilca

Policy

The state of affairs in public administration imposes a new approach of the simplification process and the administrative procedures.

Therefore, CUPAR in collaboration with other institutions and directorates implements a few simplification projects which have as expected results not only the reduction of bureaucracy but also the prevention and combating more effectively corruption in the public administration. In 2005 - the first measures in the field of simplifying administrative procedures coordinated by MIAR-CUPAR.

Since May 2007 - CUPAR and GSG started a program of reducing administrative burden at the ministerial level.

In the National Strategy regarding prevention and fight against corruption within the vulnerable sectors and the local public administration (2008-2010) an objective is:

„Simplification of administrative procedures in order to improve public services”.

In the close future Romania will approve the National Strategy about Better Regulation.

Objectives: Reduce administrative burden in accordance with re-launched Lisbon Strategy

Organisation

The Ministry of Interior and Administrative Reform – Central Unit for Administration Reform (CUPAR) – administrative simplification procedures compartment – is leading the simplification process of administrative procedures regarding the citizens.

At the ministerial level the administrative simplification process is coordinated by MIAR-CUPAR and GSG.

MIAR-CUPAR is leading the simplification process of administrative procedures regarding the citizens and GSG regarding the business.

MIAR-CUPAR and GSG share the responsibility of the administrative simplification

The Secretary of State for the Reform in the Public Administration is political responsible with the administrative simplification procedures

Measurement and high impact services

The interest of public services users holds a central place in CUPAR's activity. When conceiving an administrative simplification project, our goal is to focus on making administrative regulations simpler and less burdensome for the citizens and the business environment, even if this process entails sometimes an increased effort from public institutions.

In the process of modernizing public administration, administrative simplification is a fundamental element in all démarches to improve the quality of public services.

In our vision, administrative simplification is mainly about:

- making regulations more efficient and effective by reducing the cost and complexity of laws and regulations;
- -“easing” administration for citizens, business and public sector by using an accessible language between the administration and the public;
- reducing the number of forms and methods of completing claims; also re-examine of it the form and the contents
- introducing new communication technologies (e-administration);

Purpose of the administrative simplification process: to facilitate the relationship between the citizens and the administration.

To measure or to get insight into administrative burdens for citizens we used: Sociological studies, reports of international institutions and the Methodological guide of simplifying administrative procedure.

We want to develop SCM for the citizens

High administrative burdens for citizens: taxes and fees, land registration ...

Reduction measures

Simplifying registering procedures

The process of simplifying vehicle registration procedures started as part of the PHARE Project RO 03/IB/OT/01 which aimed at strengthening CUPAR's and the National Modernization Network's institutional capacity. CUPAR has elaborated a public policy on this issue. The simplification involves less documents needed to register, less bureaucratic procedures, an integrated IT system, the separation of the vehicle registration from other procedures. The new procedures will be approved by the government this summer.

Methodological guide of simplifying administrative procedures

The guide aims to be a representative document to support public administration in its path towards reform and modernization. The objective is to support public institutions in the formulation, planning, monitoring and evaluation of the simplification procedure. The guide's target group is primarily represented by project managers, but also by the decision makers that wish to change procedures.

Improvement of the legal framework regarding the road accidents management

The objective is to reduce police involvement in damage-only traffic accidents. In order to reach this objective, a series of changes have to be made within the Romanian traffic and insurance legislation. The aim is to improve legislation, whereby damage-only accidents can routinely be settled among the parties involved and their insurance companies, without police involvement. A specific objective is introducing a common accident claims reporting format.

The strategy on the implementation of the „one stop shop” practice in public institutions

CUPAR has designed a strategy of implementation of the „one stop shop” in public institutions. The one stop shop concept is initially put into practice in the institutions under the Ministry of Administration and Interior in order to make it easier to evaluate to what degree this system responds to citizens' expectations.

Methodology regarding the organisation and functioning of the „one stop shop” within the local service of people registry

As a result of the implementation strategy, CUPAR has elaborated a methodology, together with other compartments of the Ministry of Administration and Interior. The „one stop shop” is designed to deal with identity cards, voting cards, vehicle registry certificates, registry plates, driving licenses and passports.

Driving licenses – in 2 hours to change / 24 hours a new one,

Vehicle registration certificates - in 2 hours.

Plates numbers - in 2 hours.

Passports release normal – at most 7 days, urgent delivery - in 2 hours

Criminal record on the spot.



Slovenia

By Matija Kodra and Polona Kobal

Policy

At the Ministry of Public Administration we have set a goal to establish friendly public administration, which will provide assistance as well as support in assertion of users' rights. Therefore we perform activities to reduce administrative burdens on the basis of a national anti-bureaucratic programme as well as on the basis of the Programme for administrative burdens reduction for 25% till the year 2012, prepared by the European Commission. In our work we cooperate with a number of interested stakeholders: chambers, non-governmental organizations etc.

For this purpose every year the Programme of measures is prepared, which contains regulation simplification proposals in various fields of life of citizens and businesses. Irrespective of this citizens and businesses continuously send proposals for simplification and administrative burdens reduction. For this purpose we have opened an electronic address for the citizens to send their proposals and opinions regarding the state administration's activity. All proposals are thoroughly examined and forwarded to competent institutions, from which we demand prompt solving of the problem and sending the answer to the customer and to us. The majority of proposals are from the field of public administration, finances, work, internal affairs and the economy.

- main goal of our ministry is establishing a friendly and an effective public administration; i.e. friendly towards users who are the reason for the existence of the public administration, and towards civil servants who are the nucleus of the public administration – **to see people instead of information, number or data**
- the Government of the Republic of Slovenia adopted first annual **Programme of Measures for Reduction of Administrative Burdens** at the session on 10 November 2005 (both for enterprises and citizens)

collecting proposals to simplify legislation in order to reduce administrative burdens (web site, official appeal)

Organisation

- Ministry of Public Administration (**Directorate for e-Government and Administrative Processes**) is responsible for coordinating, measuring and reducing administrative burdens for citizens – ex post (in order to prevent new burdens (ex-ante) also all drafts of legislation have to be checked by the Ministry of Public Administration since the beginning of the year 2006)
- Measuring and reducing administrative burdens for enterprises and citizens are high on political agenda (one of main goals of our Government and one of Slovenian priorities during EU Presidency)
- team responsible for all projects on “better regulation” (EU and national level) - 10 people

- in Slovenia there is no independent committee involved

Measurement and high impact services

- we are planning to adopt and adapt modified Dutch Standard Cost model for citizens (at the moment we use SCM with adjustments)
- from 2005 we collect all proposals, suggestions and complaints about reducing, simplifying or eliminating unnecessary burdens on official web site (after checking they are placed into Programme of Measures for present and coming year)
- focus on:
 - life events (birth of a child, renewing the validity of the registration certificate, building a house, etc.)
 - exposed groups (unemployed, pensioners, expectant mothers, handicapped persons, etc.)
 - to achieve reduction and simplification results: if possible automatic granting of benefits, single data collection, re-use of information, prefilling of forms, data sharing (exchange of data between public servants by official duty)

Reduction measures

Special attention is being paid to systematic reduction of administrative obstacles for citizens who on the basis of various life events enter into relations with the state. It is a complex system of rules extending to various fields: creating a family, birth of a child, creating a home, education, taxes, arranging car documentation etc. In this way important simplifications have been achieved for the citizens, through which many administrative obstacles and burdens and with these the costs have been removed.

Much energy is being invested in birth of a child procedures simplification: forms simplification, enabling of electronic submission of applications, possibility of arranging certain rights deriving from fatherhood before the child is born etc.

- single entry point (regarding the birth of a child and procedures for execution of rights)
- possibility to submit applications electronically (electronic signature)
- reduction of necessary forms and documents (from 30 to 15) and simplification of subsistent ones
- abolition of local competence for execution of rights upon childbirth

Change of residence procedures simplification should include change of these data via the internet, territorial jurisdiction has been abolished. Savings amount to 4,9 million € on yearly basis.

- automatic electronic reminder for renewing the validity of registration certificate
- abolition of local competence (also for passports, driving licences and personal ID)

Regarding fees payment simplification the possibility of electronic payment of judicial fees has been established, certain administrative fees have been eliminated (e.g. in tax procedures).

We have established the abolition of certain personal identity documents recall obligation in the Official Gazette. A citizen had to in the case of a lost passport personally call at the Official Gazette Office in Ljubljana and submit a recall as well as pay a certain fee. This

obligation is now eliminated. Recall announcement was eliminated for a loss of a personal identity card as well. Savings amount to 0,14 million € per year.

One of major achievements is personal income tax assessment simplification. The customer will receive decision issued by Tax Administration by its official duty. This decision will contain personal income tax assessment for the previous year. If the customer will not agree with the decision it will be possible to file a complaint within the time given. Thus an enormous administrative burden, which the state imposed upon the citizens every year was eliminated. Furthermore, we estimate that the savings amount to 22,8 million € per year.

- for year 2000: time spend per person (141 minutes), costs per person (38 €)
- for year 2007: prefilling of forms – time spend (53 min), costs (22€)
- for year 2008: prefilling written order - anticipated time spend (29 min), costs (8€)

We have enabled the citizens to prolong their drivers licence via the internet.

Very important – complicated operations and unnecessary bureaucracy should not be transmitted from paper operations into electronic services



Spain

By Mercedes Rubio Pascual and Maria Angeles Martinez

Policy

There are two main national instruments that pay attention to the reduction of administrative burdens for citizens in Spain:

- The Spanish Plan to Improve the Public Administration (Plan **MODERNIZA**) is based in three pillars: Improvement of the Organization, Improvement of the Civil Service and Improvement in the relationship with the citizens including the following guidelines:
 - 24 hours Administration, with particular interest in the e-Administration.
 - Simplification of administrative procedures for the citizens.
 - Transparency & participation of the citizens.

- The Council of Ministers' Agreement of May 2007 "*Promotion of the Better Regulation and Reduction of Administrative Burdens Programme*", with the objective of the reduction of current administrative burdens resulting from national legislation with a view to reducing them by 25% by the year 2012. It also includes the following points:
 - The participation of Spain in the Commission's Action Plan for the reduction of administrative burdens in the EU.
 - The cooperation with Autonomous Communities and Local Authorities in order to insure their involvement in achieving the targets set in the Plan.
 - The creation of cooperation channels with business organizations, Chambers of Commerce, trade unions and other social partners to make progress in the rapid detection of unnecessary administrative burdens.
 - At the heart of the Interministerial Administrative Simplification Commission, identify new initiatives that contribute to the simplification of procedures that affect the lives of citizens and their relationship with public administrations and authorities.
 - Make progress in the intensive use of information technologies, including interconnectivity between administrative bodies, as a way of reducing the administrative burden of procedures that affect citizens.

Organisation

Ministry for Public Administration

- High Level Group on the reduction of administrative burdens, presided by the Minister of Public Administration and comprising the Secretary of State for the Economy, the Secretary of State for the European Union, the Director of the Prime Minister's Economics Office and the Undersecretary of the Ministry of Trade, Industry and Tourism.

Measurement

The methodology that is currently being used to measure administrative burdens for citizens in Spain includes the SCM and the IEB (Administrative Effort Index).

In the development of the Law 11/2007 of Electronic Access to the public services, the IEB is a comparative scale that enables the procedures involving most opportunities for simplification to be identified, focusing on those intended for citizens and/or companies.

The definition of the IEB has been based on a series of indicators grouped into blocks and weighted according to their importance:

Load Index Indicators Volume of documentation to be submitted by the requester (citizen or business)

- Average number of visits to the administration
- Degree of automation, in terms of processing channels available
- Number of administrative claims associated with the process compared to the total number of proceedings
- Processing percentage
- Frequency with which the procedure is processed
- Average time required to process the procedure
- Processing time index, defined as the relation between the average time required to process the procedure and the time established by regulation
- Assistance available for the interested party (citizen or business)

Volume

- Group affected, for both citizens and businesses

Information about administrative burdens for citizens can also be obtained from the complaints sent by e-mail at the integrated Network of Administrative Information Offices website (060 Network): <http://www.060.es>

Reduction measures

Several measures have been taken in the last years to decrease the administrative burden on citizens:

- **Law 11/2007 of Electronic Access to the public services:** regulating the so-called “digital rights”, to save time and money for the citizens in their relations with the different public administrations, 24 hours a day.
 - Access to public services through the Internet, mobile phone, television or any other new electronic device.
 - Consultation of the status of the on-going procedures.
 - Elimination of the requirement of copies of documents which the public administration already have in their files.
 - Legal value for the electronic communications procedures.

This Law declares the deadline on 31 December 2009 for all Public Administrations to offer all their services with electronic access for the citizens, and in December 2007 the Government has established an Action Plan to achieve this goal. The Action Plan includes

the economic, technical and human resources that are necessary to implement this Law, and it has three vertical guidelines:

- Citizen-oriented public services: with six specific actions (completed attention of the citizens with Red060 system, thematic one-stop shops, e-Inclusion, public participation, electronic seats or addresses, dissemination of the on-line services).
- Adaptation and simplification of the administrative procedures: with three special actions (updating the administrative procedures adapted to Law 11/2007, chronogram of adaptation and support services for the process).
- Availability of infrastructures and common services to develop new services and the interoperability of the existing ones: with eight actions referring to Red SARA (common infrastructure for communications of the three territorial systems of public administration), on-line certificates, electronic registries, support platform for translations, etc.

These three guidelines are accompanied by different horizontal actions: interoperability and safety national schemes, training courses, E-Administration Observatory, etc. For more information: <http://www.060.es>

- **Network of Information Offices (RED 060):**

In cooperation with the different territorial public administrations (Autonomous Regions and Local Entities), it involves a new approach to the citizens with a broader network of offices, a specific telephone number for information (060) and the website www.060.es.

All of them facilitate information or procedures of more than 300 public services; the website receives more than 600,000 different visitors each month.

- **eID:** the national identity document (DNI) is compulsory for all the Spanish citizens and serves to prove the personality and nationality of the holder in daily activities and procedures. The new eDNI includes an electronic chip to improve access to different electronic services (digital signature, etc.): <http://www.dnielectronico.es/>
- **On-line procedure in the Ministry of Public Administrations website** to enrol in the exams for access to the public service and receive information by SMS on the dates and development of the exams.
- **On-line tax revenue payment procedure:** <http://www.aeat.es>
- **On-line Social Security Procedures:** with services both for workers and employers (affiliation to the system, payments, temporary disability notifications, etc.). http://www.seg-social.es/Internet_1/SistemaRed/index.htm
- **On-line request of birth, marriage and death certificates:** issued by the Ministry of Justice <http://www.mjusticia.es>

- **On-line police claims:** a signed copy must be produced before any police office in the next 72 hours after completing the on-line form.
<https://www.policia.es/denuncias/entrada>
- **On-line access to public services for people with disabilities:** according to Law 34/2002 regulating the services of the information society and e-commerce, requesting public administrations to make available the information in their websites for old people and people with disabilities. The Royal Decree 366/2007 regulates the accessibility and antidiscrimination conditions for people with disabilities in their relations with the General Administration.
- **e-invoicing:** in February 2008, the Ministry of Finance and the Ministry of Industry, Tourism and Trade have presented a new format of free and open e-invoicing, with the highest technical standards.

According to some studies, there are about 4,500 million invoices per year in Spain and in the case of using the new e-invoicing, it would reduce the cost in more than 15,000 million € each year.

For more information: <http://www.facturae.es/>



Sweden

By Anna Enström Järleborg

Policy

The government has in January 2008 launched a new action plan for e-government. "Make it as easy for as many as possible" is the goal. The public sector shall be "customer orientated, efficient and effective". Ways of doing this is to improve the automatization in the case handling process, remove legal obstacles, co-operation within public sector, improve the technical co-ordination and improved service to citizens and businesses. There is no special policy for reduction of the administrative burden for citizens. Though there is a policy for businesses.

Organisation

The e-government work is lead by the unit for Public Administration at the Ministry of Finance (2-3 persons). They have the responsibility for policymaking in this area. To get the other ministries involved there is a State secretary group for e-government (10 persons). Verva - The Swedish Administrative Development Agency there (80 persons) has a co-ordination and supporting role to implement intention of the Ministry of Finance. Verva works in close cooperation with the other central government agencies to implement the policies.

Due to the Swedish public management system, which compare to other MS is much decentralised, the actual work is done at individual agencies at the state, regional and local levels. They are individually responsible for the development of e-government at their own organisations. In these work different co-operation groups of agencies has emerged.

Measurement and high impact services

Verva has developed a guideline on how to do process analysis (2 1/2 days to analyse) to estimate the potential savings in automatize different case handling processes. The case handling process is described as a generic seven steps sequence. The process starts with information and ends with archive. The critical questions to ask are if some of the steps could be digitalized.

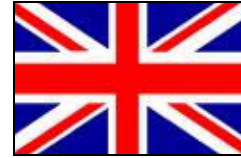
Much has been done to improve and increase the data and information exchange within public sector. Solutions on electronic identification have been developed to secure the exchange.

To improve the effectiveness and the customer focus many co-operation projects among state, regional and local agencies has been launched. Since customer often has much contact with many agencies there is a great need for co-operation within public sector.

One of the big obstacles to lower the administrative burden is the rigorous data protection regulations that prevent agencies to share data.

Reduction measures

There is no country joint measure on administrative burden. Each agency does own work in reducing the administrative burden. Each agency in their daily life tries to make themselves more effective, efficient and customer focused. To increase this work the Ministry of Finance has written an action plan, to put focus on different important areas.



United Kingdom

By Helen Begley

Policy

Citizens' time is not free, yet often the way public services are delivered assumes it to be so. The aim of the Service Transformation Agreement (STA) is to change public services so they more often meet the needs of people and businesses, rather than the needs of government and by doing so reduce the frustration and stress of accessing them. The result will be services that are better for the customer, better for front line staff and better for the taxpayer.

The direction of travel for Service Transformation was set out in the *Transformational Government Strategy* (November 2005) and Sir David Varney's *Review of Service Transformation* (December 2006) which reported to the then Chancellor on how to embed Service Transformation in the Comprehensive Spending Review. The publication of the *Service Transformation Agreement (STA)*, which underpins delivery of the whole new Public Service Agreement (PSA) frame work, now makes this agenda central to government's plans for public service reform over the CSR period.

Service Transformation is about changing public services so they are tailored more to the needs of people and businesses. Its key aim is to create better public services which are easier for customers to access, more efficient for government to deliver and more successful in terms of policy outcomes. Service Transformation is linked closely with the practical delivery of Public Service Reform, the opportunities we are currently seeking to embed public engagement in the service design and delivery process, and the Prime Minister's "personalisation" agenda.

The STA has four main objectives or principle elements

- a set of (currently six) specific projects and areas for reform which not only give specific benefits in their own right but which also put in place frameworks and capabilities for wider service transformation.
- two broad measures of progress on cutting avoidable contact and building better online services (to be supplemented later by a third on the delivery of face-to-face services)
- Departmental Service Transformation Plans for each major delivery department - these were commissioned by the Chief Secretary to the Treasury last year and represent the agreed service transformation elements underlying individual departments' spending plans and Departmental Strategic Objectives;
- a broadly based programme of cultural and business change across the public sector.

Organisation

The Cabinet Office coordinates overall delivery of the Service Transformation Agreement, although it is clear in the Agreement and elsewhere that most of the action, and most of the funding, rests with individual departments and agencies.

Measurement and reduction measures

The Service Transformation Agreement is not **what** we deliver so much as **how** we deliver. The real measure of success is therefore how well we achieve our ambitions across the PSA set. The PSAs are about real people - individuals whose needs and behaviours we need to understand and act on if we are to stand any chance of tackling the social and economic challenges of the future. Each project and deliverable will have its own progress and outcome measures. We do not want to undermine these in the Agreement, but have instead included two **high level** measures which are not ends in themselves but are intended to act as a litmus test for transformation. They are both measures of success and tests of our commitment:

Reducing "avoidable" contact

This measure is closely linked with the major project on transforming our Contact Centres. It derives from the Varney Review recommendation that a performance management framework for contact centres be established to include a target of 50% reduction over the CSR 07 period of "avoidable contact" (based on the definition of avoidable as a contact which is duplicate, made in error or nugatory). By eradicating this type of valueless contact we not only tackling immediate customer access issues, but we are also forced to pay attention to what is happening across the whole of the service delivery operation.

We are drawing data from returns submitted voluntarily by public sector contact centres under the Performance Management Framework. As the reporting arrangements become bedded in and collection volumes increase we expect the definitions to become more consistent. The real key to this measure lies in establishing a solid baseline. We are therefore investing considerable effort with the departments and local authorities in getting the measurement systems and baselines right. A complementary measure on avoidable contact (NI14) is also included in the new local government indicator set and we are currently defining and testing an appropriate measurement and reporting process which will feed into the main data collection for the Service Transformation Agreement progress measure.

Rationalising websites

The STA argues that government can "*better manage customer online access to services by progressively moving e-services onto two websites where they can be presented and linked in ways which customers understand*". That aim is the driver of the Directgov and Businesslink.gov project which will make these sites the primary digital channels for government services for citizens and businesses respectively. It will be important to ensure that Directgov and Businesslink.gov are as complete as possible in terms of both content and transactional services. However this is hard to measure in any objective way and so (as a proxy) we will track the closure of sites whose functions have been taken on by Directgov or Businesslink.gov and which can, as a result, be shut down. Although closure is not itself the objective sites cannot be closed unless the content has been moved to Directgov, Businesslink.gov or (for policy and corporate information) a main departmental site. Here too our principal data source is from departmental returns – although we also have a master record of all authorised website names on the ".gov.uk" domain. We have agreements in place with departments detailing whether and when each of their own sites will move their content and subsequently close: overall this will reduce 764 departmentally-owned sites at the start of the exercise to 50 (94% reduction) by 2011. Those remaining will essentially be Direct.gov, Businesslink.gov and one corporate/policy site for each department, plus some cross-government sites for specialist audiences.

These two progress measures will give government a view across the public sector of progress being made towards a service economy which is slicker, more immediate, more convenient to the citizen and less intrusive on their time. But in order to understand what this looks like to the citizen, the public sector needs to be able to follow and understand representative customer journeys through their various stages in accessing public services.

The technique of “**customer journey mapping**” is widely used in the commercial world and there are some excellent examples in public services. It enables a service provider to look at each step a customer takes towards completion of a task but from the point of view of that customer. Taking this viewpoint is critical for government because it exposes those steps which lie outside the immediate horizon but which hold part of the solution to streamlining the whole journey.

By its nature, customer journey mapping is qualitative. It is often complex, covering journeys which extend over long periods of time and which are often disjointed and sometimes ambiguous. But it is one of the best ways available to the public sector to understand what needs to be done to streamline a particular area.

The cross government Customer Insight Forum has provided guidance and a toolkit for customer journey mapping, drawing on best techniques currently in use. It now acts as a clearing house to ensure that good practice is shared and to help teams across government with responsibility for PSAs to understand how customer journey mapping can be used to improve outcomes for citizens.

In the commercial world better services lead directly to more loyal and satisfied customers. In the public sector the linkage is less straightforward. Very few citizens have a strong sense of what a “public service” is and, without anything to compare it with, find it hard to express a firm opinion of how satisfied they are.

Used appropriately **customer satisfaction monitoring** is a valuable tool, although it does require careful interpretation if it is not to mislead. Many parts of the public sector monitor customer satisfaction as part of their performance management regimes. At the moment, these activities are rarely linked or comparable, either within or across departments or agencies. This means that service delivery organisations are not able to compare their findings with peers and are missing opportunities for benchmarking and sharing learning.

The Customer Insight Forum has provided government with guidelines and a framework aimed at improving the comparability and consistency of customer satisfaction across government. It is now working with departments to help them to understand how good customer satisfaction measurement can lead directly to improved service delivery.

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