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**QUESTIONS FOR WRITTEN SURVEY ON
"STRENGTHENING GOVERNMENT-CITIZEN CONNECTIONS"**

**19th Session of the Committee, Château de la Muette, Paris
25-26 March 1999**

The attached questionnaire [also issued under the activity reference PUMA/CIT(99)2/REV1] was developed in consultation with the working group on "Strengthening Government-Citizen Connections". The Committee is asked to identify areas where clarification may be necessary, and to agree to its dissemination to all 29 OECD Member countries.

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Or. Eng.

**QUESTIONS FOR WRITTEN SURVEY ON
“STRENGTHENING GOVERNMENT-CITIZEN CONNECTIONS”**

The attached questionnaire will be sent to all Member countries in the context of the Public Management Committee’s work on Strengthening Government-Citizen Connections.

The completed questionnaire should be returned to **Christian Vergez** and **Daniel Blume** at the Public Management Service by 14 May, 1999, care of:

OECD Public Management Service
2, rue André-Pascal
75775 Paris Cedex 16
Fax: (33-1) 45 24 87 96

Any enquiries regarding this questionnaire should be addressed to Mr. Vergez or Mr. Blume.

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Mr. Blume can be reached at (33-1) 45 24 97 59; E-mail: daniel.blume@oecd.org.

Please insert the name and title of the person who completed the questionnaire:

Name.....
Title.....
Address.....
.....
Telephone.....
Fax.....
E-mail.....

**QUESTIONS FOR WRITTEN SURVEY ON
“STRENGTHENING GOVERNMENT-CITIZEN CONNECTIONS”**

Definition of terms used in this study

“**Citizen**” is used in its larger sense to refer to an individual or group of individuals (non-governmental organisations, unions, pressure groups, etc.), regardless of nationality, who may have an interest in or be impacted by public policies and programmes.

“**Government**” (*administration* in French) signifies the central administration, including those of its functions which are administered at the local level. As participants of the working group stressed the difficulty that many countries would have in obtaining comprehensive information from the local level, the questionnaire addresses as a priority information at the “higher” central level. Nevertheless, information regarding the situation at the local level will also be welcome.

“**Connections**” or “relations” refers to the continuum of citizen involvement in government policy-making and service delivery. This continuum encompasses 1) government provision of information to the citizen; 2) government consultation with citizens, which can vary in degree from a simple, one-off request for citizen views to more active citizen involvement in providing views; to 3) higher levels of citizen participation, or even partnership, in the development of public policies and delivery of services.

“**Strengthening**” refers to the sustained improvement of government-citizen relations, notably through political will, the use of new information technologies and better communication.

“**IT**” refers in this context to new information technologies -- computers, other screen terminals such as kiosks or television, and the associated networks and technologies that connect them to information databases (the Internet, intranets, microchips, CD-Roms, “smart cards”, etc.). The telephone and fax are **not** considered new technologies in this context.

General context

1. Can you briefly explain the overall context – the key problems or issues to address -- in your country in order to “Strengthen Government-Citizen Connections”? (Objectives, priorities).

Legal and policy framework for strengthening government-citizen connections

2. What laws and policies have been adopted, and what are their key points, in the following areas:
 - 2.1 To ensure citizen access to government information, and to promote its dissemination?
 - 2.2 To promote citizen participation in government decision-making?
 - 2.3 To ensure citizen involvement in improving the quality and responsiveness of service delivery?
 - 2.4 To develop the use of new information technologies to strengthen government-citizen relations;
 - 2.5 To support citizens in making well-informed and effective choices (between different public services and/or private alternatives), including the use of choice to better understand citizen preferences.
3. What types of texts are in place to support the carrying out of these laws and policies?

Law Regulation Decree Directive Circular Guidelines Other

Which does your government rely upon most?

Please include relevant texts. If available, English or French texts will be appreciated.
4. For the members of the European Union, what is the relationship between these texts and texts of the European Community?
5. What government information, if any, is not made accessible to the public? Please describe those categories of information concerned.
6. Can you provide examples of policy **sectors** where special laws or policies are in place:
 - 6.1 Emphasising access to information (e.g., environmental information, information to protect consumers, etc.)?
 - 6.2 Promoting citizen participation in decision-making or improvement of services?
 - 6.3 Requiring public information campaigns to persuade citizens to act in the public interest?
7. What laws or policies are under development or debate to further strengthen government-citizen relations?

Implementation and Tools

8. What is being done to promote or ensure that these laws and policies are actually implemented, i.e.:
 - 8.1 What kinds of institutions (e.g. special department or agency, commission, task force, ombudsman, institutions for preventing or resolving disputes, etc.)? What co-ordination, if any, is undertaken through these institutions between the central and local levels of government?
 - 8.2 What tools (for better communication and management)?
 - 8.3 What resources (financial and human)?

9. Has the government evaluated the relative use of different communication tools?
 - 9.1 If so, what is the relative proportion of use of these different tools for communicating with the public, for example:
 - 9.1.1 **Indirect** tools: the media, press releases, press conferences, TV, radio, written press, other means etc...;
 - 9.1.2 **Direct** tools: regular mail, e-mail, telephone, fax, publication on the Web, face-to-face contact, information kiosks etc....

10. If studies on the effectiveness of these tools have been done, what did they conclude? Are new tools being used in addition to the old, or are they substituting for the old tools? What do they conclude about the cost-effectiveness of these different methods?

11. What actions have been taken to facilitate and increase **citizen use** of new information technologies in their relations with the government (for example, subsidies for computers, training, publicity, etc.)?

12. How is your government using new information technologies to support citizens in their dealings with government:
 - 12.1 to better understand and respond to their demands?
 - 12.2 to inform?
 - 12.3 to consult?
 - 12.4 to encourage their active participation?
 - 12.5 to customise service and interactions?
 - 12.6 to integrate services vertically (across levels of government) and horizontally (across different ministries or departments at the same level of government)?
 - 12.7 to support citizens in making well-informed and effective choices?

13. Have new technologies impacted the relationship between the government and the citizen (Please provide examples, including the aspect of cost-effectiveness) ?

14. What use is the government making of the media in their policies and practices for strengthening government-citizen relations?

Evaluating results

15. How does the government evaluate how well information, communication and consultation policies and practices are working? What were the principal conclusions of these evaluations?
16. Can you describe examples of “promising practices,”* explaining what worked and key factors or conditions contributing to their success, addressing:
 - 16.1 information for citizens?
 - 16.2 citizen consultation/participation, either directly with individuals, or through non-governmental organisations (NGOs), or other intermediaries representing the public (e.g. social partners)?
17. Can you provide examples in these areas of practices that worked less well, and why? What were the main factors impeding their success? How can such difficulties be overcome?

* **Promising practices:** Criteria to take into account in selecting promising practices include the extent to which the practice contributed to a better informed and more involved public; effectiveness; the capacity to sustain the practice over time; a good balance between cost and quality; generation of savings; and the potential for broader application.

Annex A

PRELIMINARY QUERY ON FOLLOW-UP QUESTIONNAIRE: INDICATORS OF GOVERNMENT USE OF INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

To complement the qualitative information obtained in the questionnaire on “Strengthening Government-Citizen Connections,” PUMA is planning to launch a follow-up questionnaire later in the year **to develop more quantitative, comparable and detailed data on the use of new information technologies as a particularly significant tool in these efforts.** The follow-up questionnaire will be a first step in developing indicators aimed at providing not only a view of the present state of government use of IT, but also to follow its development over time. The results will not only support PUMA’s work on government-citizen relations, but also OECD work on the development of IT and the use of electronic commerce, providing information on the public sector.

Indicators can be based on both **qualitative and quantitative information.** They can result from yes-no answers, numbers, or brief explanations of how a tool is being used. No indicator by itself can give a complete view of progress or development of a government’s use of IT. But a broad range of indicators addressing a variety of services and government practices can provide a complementary perspective, used in combination with qualitative information obtained in the first questionnaire on the context and general practices, to develop an overall picture and track progress over time. To develop such a balanced set of indicators will require:

- additional research and consultation on what information is already available ;
- careful consideration of common definitions; and
- further discussion of priorities regarding what information would be most useful to support improved understanding of how governments are using IT to strengthen government provision of information, consultation, and responsive and cost-effective service delivery.

It is therefore proposed to develop a more complete proposal for the working group to consider at its meeting scheduled on **17-18 June.** Participants at the meeting will consider emerging practices in the use of IT, qualitative information obtained from the first questionnaire, and the quantitative information (and additional qualitative information) that can be most useful in complementing this perspective.

To help the Secretariat prepare for this meeting, it would be useful at this stage to have information on what type of quantitative information is available and would be of interest as a basis for developing a set of indicators on government use of IT. The following items are provided as possible examples rather than the Secretariat’s proposal, and are not intended to represent the full range and balance of indicators that will be proposed. They merely provide some preliminary ideas aimed at obtaining a first indication of what type of information may be available from governments.

Definitions will need to be refined, but the following are provided to give a general indication of what is meant by particular terms:

- **“Citizen electronic access”** refers to a direct citizen link to information or services via the Internet or other open, non-proprietary networks, which can be accessed for example through a personal computer, an information kiosk, or television screen.
- **“Information”** in this context refers to government information provided to the citizen (one-way).
- **“Services”** generally involve two-way transactions (e.g. payments, reception of permits or licenses, tax filing, administrative transactions, etc).
- **“Public servant”** can be defined in many ways. This survey aims to focus on the national (central) level of government paid for by public funds.

Actual figures are not sought at this stage for the items listed below, but if possible, specification of availability and data sources would be useful. For example, do you have quantitative information on the situation in your country concerning:

Citizen electronic access to information and services:

- % of citizens with access to e-mail;
- % of citizens with access to World Wide Web;
- % of government ministries and departments with Web pages;
- Access figures for most popular government Web site (e.g. number of users/month);
- Access figures for main gateway(s) or portals to government information and services;
- Availability of government forms on-line (e.g., % of total number of forms available), and extent to which citizens submit government forms electronically (e.g., % of total submitted electronically out of total number of forms filed overall).
- What services are provided electronically at no charge? If there are too many to list, can this be quantified in some way (e.g. number of services provided and/or % of total)?
- Do you measure cost-effectiveness of government use of IT, and if so, how?
- Would it be of interest to develop comparative indicators of the impact of IT on a specific subset of services, e.g., electronic passport delivery, tax filing, applying for permits or licenses, or others?

Public servant electronic access to support provision of information and services to the citizen:

- % of public servants with access to e-mail;
- % of public servants with access to government intranet;
- % of public servants with access to World Wide Web;
- % of public servants’ e-mail addresses made available to public;

Electronic tools for public consultation:

- Is policy consultation carried out electronically, and if so, to what extent (e.g., number of policy consultations, number of participants, electronic consultation in proportion to other means such as telephone, mail, in-person)?
- Do decision-makers (politicians or high-level government officials) participate in electronic policy discussion groups with citizens? To what extent?

The impact of electronic commerce on government and citizens:

- Is government information sold electronically, and if so, to what extent?
- Is there differential pricing between information provided electronically and provision by paper?
- What services are sold electronically, if any, and if so, to what extent?
- How much of public procurement takes place electronically?

Other measures of government IT use to suggest that would be of interest on a comparative basis.