Concept of citizen platform – www.ichange.ge

The research is prepared in the frames of the project "Development of e-Participation in Georgia".

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WWW.ICHANGE.GE - CONCEPT

It is desirable to design government initiated platform (www.ichange.ge) with three sections: e-petitions, e-consultation and e-discussions. Each of them will have different tasks:

- **E-petitions section** will enable every citizen to initiate electronic petitions. Initiated ideas must concern the issues within the competence of the government (law on "the structure, authorities and activities of the government of Georgia"), as only government is eligible to take actions. In case of collecting enough electronic signatures (5 000 signatures), issue will be discussed on government meeting.
- **E-consultation** section will be oriented at discussing the opinions of target groups. This can be a one-phase process or process with permanent interaction. E-consultation will be directed mostly at creating documents and taking high-quality political decisions on the bases of analyzing the opinions of the citizens. Identification and initiation of consultation issues will be the prerogative of government, specific ministries, structural units and citizens.
- **E-Discussions –** this part will be entirely devoted to the citizens. They will be given opportunity to publicly discuss problematic issues and require response from the relevant authorities through forming mechanisms, policies and approaches.
It is notable that the mentioned platform should be within the competence of the special group inside the government chancellery, which will focus on communication with the citizens. They will be entitled to monitor and evaluate the functioning of the web page, as well as provide system management, update information, coordinate between the two sides, provide information for the ministries and other decision-maker officials.

Considering the international examples, we suggest the recommendation package about the functions and sections that are important for the above-mentioned platform.

E-PETITIONS

E-petitions section must consist of the following sub-categories:

All petitions – this section must consist of all the petitions. However, in order to simplify navigation for the users, it should be easy to group the petitions. Petitions can be categorized according to the topics (for example education, economics, environment etc), as well as according to the status of petition (open, closed, rejected).

Information about petition is very important. In particular, in case of the open petitions, it is desirable to clearly define problem and suggest the ways to solve it. Besides of the content of the petitions, following details must be displayed:

- Initials of the author of the idea;
- Initials of the supporters;
- Number of needed signatures;
- Number of already collected signatures;
- The deadline of collecting signatures;

In case of **closed petitions,** the following information is required:

- Initials of the author of the idea;
- Initials of the supporters;
- Number of already collected signatures;

Page administrators must constantly provide users with the information about status of petition and the measures taken. In particular:

- On the first stage, once the signatures are collected, government must let the citizens know about when and how the initiative will be discussed.
- Later, government must provide information about the discussions around this issue within the government and various structural units.
- The last stage involves the final response; government's decision must be published on the petition page.

The response from the government may include opinion about the issue as well as the list of measures that will be taken in order to solve the problem.

Publishing the rejected petition will be one of the main mechanisms of providing transparency. Publishing rejected petitions will make clear the rules that were violated and which resulted in rejection of the idea. In addition, this will increase the trust of the society towards the petition platform, administrators and government in general. Page must provide explanation of rejecting the idea together with the idea.

Creating e-petition – these are the steps that need to be taken in order to publish the idea on the platform:

- Searching for the same ideas - citizen must be provided with the tool of searching for the same idea through typing the name of the petition. In case such petition exists, user will just sign it instead of re-submitting the same idea. In case this is an original idea, user is free to continue registration process.
- Registering the petition – major details – this stage is devoted to filling the information about the e-petition: title, description (max. 800 words).

In addition, each category must be provided with the explanation and recommendations in order to make the process of submitting the idea easier. For instance, next to the space for petition description, administrator may recommend the user to express his/her idea shortly, clearly as well as provide the ways of solving the given problem.

- **Personal information** – next stage in indicating the personal information including name, e-mail, address (country, city, postal code) and ID number.
- **Sending the petition** – last stage is dedicated to the final checking of the description and making final changes. User must be made familiar with the terms of the webpage through the detailed description of platform utilization terms and conditions. This document should list every reason why petition may fail to be published. Such reasons may include hate speech, request of financial support for commercial business, attempt of submitting petition with fake account etc.

After the user confirms the submitted information, idea is sent to the government of Georgia. At the same time, user receives an e-mail about the deadlines of discussing the idea and making the final decision.

On the next stage, page administration discusses the petition and checks whether the submitted petition is in accordance to the terms and conditions of the website. In case of confirming the petition, it is published under "open petitions" category. In case the petition is submitted through violating the rules, it is published under "rejected petitions" category. In both cases, the author of

the idea is sent the message about the status of the petition. In case it is published, together with the notification, page administration provides the link of the petition.

Once the petition is published on the webpage, citizens can share it to gather the supporters. After collecting the enough number of signatures, idea is transferred to the "closed petitions" category. This information must be posted publicly, with petition description; the author of the idea must be provided with this information as well.

Decision-making – petitions' portal must provide separate sections for the comments and answers of the government. This section will include the information about petitions after they gained support and administrators put it in the government agenda.

There are several forms of feedback from the government: firstly, users must be provided with the information about the deadline of discussing the petition. Petition is discussed by the special group for petition management. This information must be posted under the "response" category. Not only should the page administrators provide the dates of government meetings and discussions of the proposed ideas for all users, but also they should individually inform the authors of the idea via e-mails. After the last stage of the discussion is over, government should publish the detailed answer and explain the position of the government to the authors and supporters of the idea. In case the government makes some changes, it should provide the detailed description of the future policy and planned activities.

It will be helpful to use the USA example where users are given opportunity to evaluate the answer received from the government and express their opinion about the feedback from the government.

Transparency of decision-making process: In order to provide transparency of the processes, discussion of petition ideas must be public through Livestream. Meeting protocol must be open and available for public.

Section "About" – this section must describe the rules of using the web portal and meaning of online petitions. The description must be provided both in narrative form as well as in graphic form in order to make it easy to understand for the users. It is preferable to prepare a video explaining the rules of web-page utilization. While describing the rules and procedures, attention must be paid to informing citizens about the deadlines of discussing proposed idea. Users must be familiar with what stages each initiative has to cover after gaining enough number of supporters, who is responsible for organizing the discussion, in what conditions do the discussions stop, with whom should the government consult before making final decision.

The same section must provide contact information for users to get competent answer in case of questions or certain inaccuracies. It is preferable to introduce the online chat mechanism with competent operator to answer the questions of the citizens. Besides, citizens will have opportunity to propose their idea for improving the chat service and mention the technical or other kinds of flaws that they detected during the conversation.

Moreover, in order to improve the services, webpage must provide a questionnaire, through which, page users will express their opinions about the efficiency of the webpage. Through these two applications, citizens will be involved in improving web-portal, as they will be given opportunity to express opinions directly (communicating with the operators) as well as through e-mails.

SMS system – it would be an advantage to integrate SMS system on the web portal. This system works the following way: user sends a text message to a special number after which he/she is provided with information about petitions. Besides, while registering or signing the petition, user can mark a special box in order to confirm that he/she is willing to receive information concerning the certain initiatives. After this, user receives the text messages on cell phone concerning the following types of changes:

- Initiative gets enough number of supporters;
- Time for getting supporters for initiatives has expired;
- Information about government discussions;
- Decision of the government about the initiative;

Basic procedures of petitions – considering the Georgian reality, above-mentioned platform must have some rules:

- Registering the petition and signing must be available only to the ichange.ge users.
- Registration on ichange.ge must be available only through indicating the personal or organizational ID.
- Topics initiated by petitions must fit within the competence of Georgian government.
- Each petition must get at least 5000 supporters – this figure was defined by the fact that it is necessary to provide popularization of the web-portal and citizen participation, thus in order to create a motivation, it is important to define optimal number. It must also be taken into consideration that the rate of access to the internet is still very low in the country, especially in rural areas.
- Each petition must be given 3-6 months to get supporters. In case the enough number of signatures is collected before the deadline, government is obliged to start discussion immediately.

ELECTRONIC PUBLIC CONSULTATIONS

Electronic consultations will be second main component of government platform. In this section government, ministries or ministry subordinated institutions (LEPL, sub-departments) will announce about the public consultations related to the specific topic and will call for citizens to participate in policymaking process.

Online consultation section will include three main parts – current, closed and planned consultations. For the first part, following data's will be presented:

- The topic;
- Description of the topic and problem – this section will describe the existing challenges and the primary problems that government plans to solve. It is important to specify and explain the impact that solving this problem will have on the society, in order to raise motivation among citizens to participate in problem solving process.
- Ministry or ministry subordinated institution that announced public consultation;
- Contact information of a person who is responsible for consultation;
- Deadline of the consultation;
- Target group/audience – It is notable, that besides citizens, legal entities are also eligible to participate in consultations(organizations, public agencies, non-registered organizations, representatives of scientific society, religious groups, private sector, think tanks, trade unions) in case they are registered in advance with the specific identification code.
- Planed activities that aim at solving the problem; within the frameworks of e-consultations citizens can evaluate these activities;
- Questionnaire – It is possible that governmental agencies get feedback from the citizens through questionnaires. This will simplify the analysis of received responses. The institutions create the questionnaires, considering the specific character of the issue. User can fill out the questionnaire anonymously. Once the final report and statistics is published, incognito users' names will stay secret, but their feedbacks will be public.

The whole process of online consultations should consist of the following procedures:

Announcing the topic – web-page will provide the information about the problem, afterwards government/ministry starts receiving proposals and suggestions about certain issues.

Raising Awareness of the Citizens – government/ministry launches informational campaign around the topic, using different tools – social media, forums, television, internet, print media and calls for people to share their own ideas and visions with government/ministry. This will guarantee large public interest about the specific problem, provide all interested groups with information as well as their maximum involvement in policy planning process.

Making suggestions and feedback – Once the consultations are open, citizens are given opportunity to publicly express their position, provide the government/ministry with their initiatives for solving the problems and this way participate in policy planning and decision making process. Opinion of each user must be public and accessible for everyone. It is very important to ensure that questions, asked by the citizens, are responded by web-page administrators immediately. Thus, it is important to monitor the comments left by users and to provide feedback. **Along with the public comments, interested groups will have opportunity to express their position by filling out the questionnaire.**

Analysis – In order to have all the initiatives and ideas properly paid attention, it is important to register all the proposals systematically from the very beginning. In addition, it is necessary to analyze them and group thematically.

Closing – on pre-determined date, electronic consultations are closed and the process of making suggestions is stopped. After which the issue is moved to the category "closed".

Report – once the process of making suggestions is finished, government, ministry or its sub-department, one that has announced the consultation, starts the final analysis and preparation of report around the held consultation. This document should describe the subject of online consultation and government's original strategy to solve it. This document should also depict the number of citizens' online initiatives, questions and responses. Together with statistical data, this document should consider the attitude of the society towards this problem. It is preferable to mention separately activities proposed by users and specific steps for solving challenges. In the end, it is necessary to explain final position of government and strategy regarded the issue. Once again, it is necessary to explain to the citizens what circumstances influenced on the final decision of the government. It clarifies to what extent the citizen ideas are taken into consideration. Report should be published publicly. **Report must display the publicly published comments and comments received from the questionnaires separately.**

Publicity of decision-making - in order to ensure transparency of report preparing process, it is important to publicly announce the scheduled meeting for discussing the issues. In particular, it is necessary to ensure the openness of the meeting, and in the end of every discussion, publish the meeting protocol.

In case of complete e-consultations, following information should be displayed:

- Issue, around which citizens were sending their own ideas during the certain period of time;
- Deadlines of consultation;
- Contact information of a person who is responsible for consultation;
- Institution which announced public consultation;
- Target group;
- Comments left by citizen's and the responses of web-page administrators;
- Final report and decision;

In addition, it is preferable to group the online consultations of this section in various categories. They can be sorted according to the institution, which announced consultation or according to the deadlines.

The third category – planed consultations section should provide the topic and description of the issue. In addition, presumable date of starting discussion must be specified in order to provide citizens with more time to get prepared for the announcement.

Poll: To understand better the opinion of the citizens about discussions and final decisions made by government, it is preferable to provide a special form on the electronic recourse for asking the opinion of the citizens. Through filling this form citizens will evaluate whether their initiatives were adequately used by the government and in general, whether public opinion was reflected on policy planning and decision making process.

Section "about" and rules of utilization: It is necessary to provide special sub-section under e-consultations category, where the functions of the mentioned service are displayed in both narrative and graphic forms. Above-mentioned procedures must be described in a visualized and simple way.

It is even more important to publish the rules of utilization. This section will introduce users to the main factors that every user has to take into consideration. Among them, there are the following prerequisites: only those who are registered on the portal are eligible to participate in consultations; users must be constructive and avoid hate speech etc.

E-DISCUSSION SECTION

The main function of the third component of e-platform, e-discussion section, is providing a platform for citizens, where they can identify the problems and demand adequate response from the government. For efficient structuring of the issues raised by citizens, it will be preferable to list the titles of ministries and the users will start discussions under each title. This will determine which governmental institution is responsible for which topic and initiative.

Reregistered user is eligible to initiate his/her idea on the web-portal. For initiating the idea, user should provide the following information in special form:

- Issue/problem;
- Description of issue/problem, arguments which are backed up by facts and in the best case, with statistical data;

It must be noted that all issues raised by citizens must be automatically published on web page, except from the texts that consist of obscene words or phrases. However, initiatives should not be limited due to their content.

After publishing certain problem, the rest of the citizens will be able to participate in discussions and share their position openly, stating which problem or challenge is more important for them. This will reveal whether this issue is relevant or influential. For this purpose, it is preferable to integrate a voting button under each issue, which enables citizens to support the initiative. In order to make certain problem the topic of discussion for the certain agency, minimum 1000 users should vote for it. Thus, voting for certain issue will be an expression of citizens' own opinion about that topic.

Once the initiative gets enough supporters, web-portal administrator forwards the description of the problem to the target public agency. Regarding the received notes, public agency should provide two types of responses:

➢ Official of target public agency should publicly express his/her own opinion about raised issue (the official response should depict the position of the public agency, backed up by arguments and the consistency of the position should be proved);
➢ If the representatives of public agency agree with author of the idea on the importance of the issue, they should start the process of developing document (public administrative

proceeding). This document should be published under consultation section. This must be followed by preparation period for starting e-consultations – writing the description of the problem and publicizing the position of the agency about the issue, defining the deadlines of consultation, selecting the main target groups and a person, who will be responsible for the issue during the whole consultation period.

Thus, citizens are the initiators of e-consultation issues. As mentioned above, government launches consultation process in two ways: in one case, government identifies problem by itself, in the second case, selection of the issue is the prerogative of the citizens with the means of the procedure described above.

APPENDIX 1: LOGICAL FRAME OF E-PARTICIPATION PORTAL

E-participation portal

www.ichange.ge
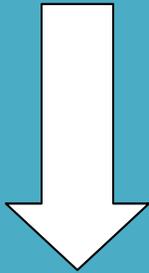
| E-Petitions | E-Consultations | E-discussions |

E-petitions to the government of Georgia

Citizen registers the petition

Petition gets 5000 online signatures within 6 months

Government of Georgia discusses the petition

Government partly complies the petition requirements

Government fully complies the petition requirements
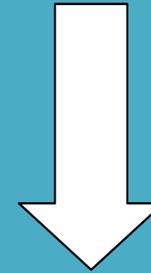
Government rejects the petition requirements
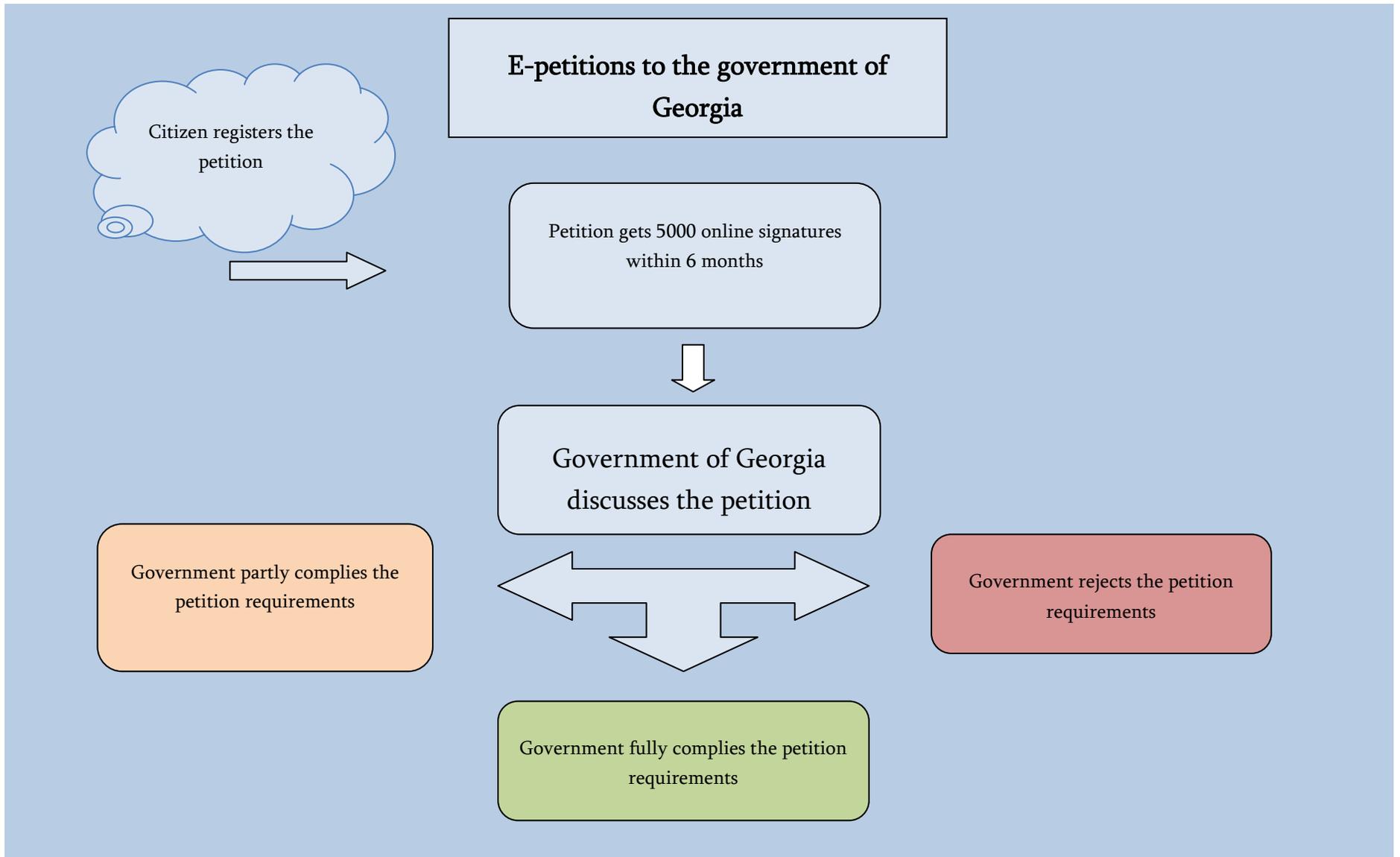
Public electronic consultations (G2C)

Institution publishes the public consultation (ex. Ministry of Environment Protection announces the discussion about evaluating the impact of Khudon Dam construction on the environment)
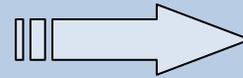
For two weeks citizens, experts, representatives of NGOs and others are involved in public discussion

RESULT

Improved public policy document

Institution reviews the results of public discussion and makes changes in draft document

Electronic public discussion is closed. All the documents and materials are available in the history of the consultation.

E-discussions (C2G)

Citizen states the problematic issue and starts public discussion (ex. Impact of Khudon Dam project on the environment)

Necessity of discussing the problem through the administrative proceeding is supported by 1000 users

RESULT

Problem discussed with involvement of society or developed public policy document

Institution states its opinion publicly on the web-portal under each issue

Institution develops a document and appoints public consultation

Portal administration forwards the issue to the responsible institution in order to start public consultation

APPENDIX 2: THE BEST PRACTICE OF PETITIONS

ONLINE PETITIONS IN THE USA

One of the major components of ichange.ge will be integrating applications. Thus, we should consider the international practice. The petition section of the administration of the White House – We the People, is especially interesting for us.

American online petitions platform

White House electronic platform provides number of interesting services:

1. Registering the petition – petition can be initiated by those users who are already registered on the web page. Creating the account is quite simple: user has to indicate e-mail and name. After authorization, user is able to initiate the petition, which consists of the several stages.

- Basic information about the petition: primarily user indicates the name of the idea and chooses three categories/issues that are the closest to the content of the idea. This way, web page categorizes the petitions which simplifies navigation not only for the administration of the page, but for the users as well;

The Second stage of registering the online petition

Searching for the similar petition: Once the user provides the basic information about the idea, web page automatically checks whether such petition is already available on the platform or not. In case the similar petition is already registered, user can simply sign the existing petition instead of creating the new one. In other cases citizen continues registering the petition;

Description of the petition: On the next stage, the author of the petition describes the idea. It is notable that in order to guarantee the effectiveness of petition description, web page administration provides number of advice – to state the position clearly, to bring the additional sources including the survey conducted about this issue. It is preferable to fit the text within the limit of 800 words. It must be noted that even organizations can initiate the petitions. In this case, author should indicate the name of the organization which is submitting this idea.

In addition to describing the initiative, user can add the key words in order to simplify the search of this petition. Web page administrators give recommendation to avoid sentences and use only those key words that are directly connected to the idea. For example, if petition concerns the issue of energy policy, key words may be oil, sun energy etc.

Publishing Online Petition

▪ **Publishing the petition:** After confirming the information about the petition, user is on the last stage of submitting the petition. The author is given another chance of editing the petition for the last time. In addition, web page shows the amount of the signatures petition needs to get and the deadline of gaining supporters.

Once the petition is initiated, author will receive an e-mail with the information about the premises of publishing the information on the web page. In particular, in order to finally publish the initiative, user has to get 150 signatures in 30 days. Users are allowed to use various social networks to share the link. Once the needed amount of signatures is collected, petition is automatically published on the web page and it becomes available for everybody. **Each initiative must be signed by 100 000 users in 30 days for American government to start discussing the initiative.**

2. Information video – web page provides an information video, which visually depicts the procedures of creating account on the page, registering petition and signing the initiative. Even though web page also provides the written instruction, it is easier to inform citizens with visual instructions.

Online petition search tool categorized according to the topics

3. Signing the petition – besides initiating one's own idea, user can also support other users through signing already initiated petitions. What is most important, web page provides the searching tool and every user is able to find initiatives though searching terms or phrases. Ideas are categorized and it is easy to search them through the filter.
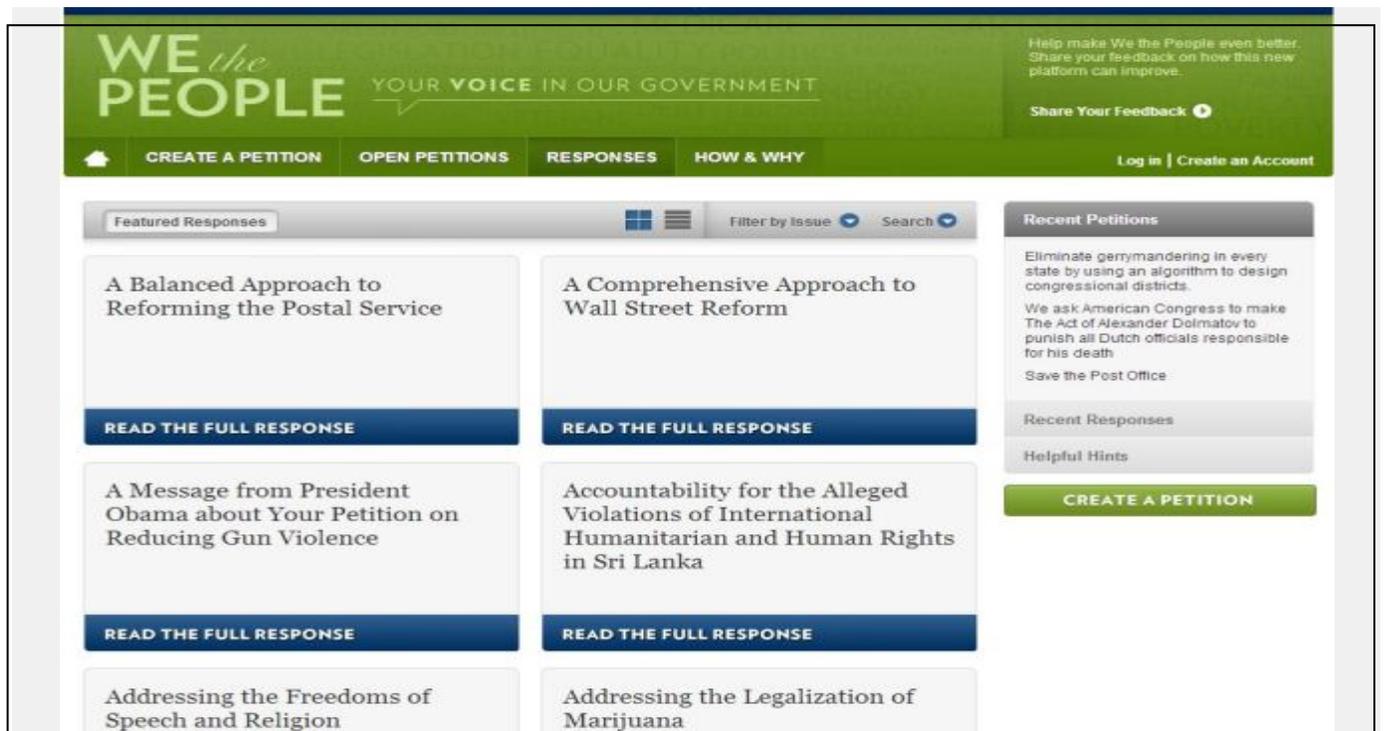
Responses of the Obama administration to the petitions

4. Responses to the petitions – It is crucial for the web page administration to provide feedback on the petitions, which have already gained enough amounts of signatures. Obama administration strategy is interesting. On the first page of the web portal, user sees the sections "responses" which displays the responses of the government. It must be emphasized that these responses are open and accessible for every user.

Becoming familiar with the responses of the administration made it clear, that in some cases, even public official responds to the author and the supporters of the petition.

As for the form of response in some cases author of the response explains the position of the government towards certain issues through providing the statements of the president and other government officials, various official documents etc. In other cases, administration provides information about the activities planned by the government in short-term and long-term perspectives.

OFFICIAL OFFICE OF MANAGEMENT AND BUDGET RESPONSE TO
Save the Postal Service and 1 other petition

A Balanced Approach to Reforming the Postal Service

By Dana Hyde

Thank you for signing a petition about the U.S. Postal Service. We appreciate your participation in the We the People platform on WhiteHouse.gov and your concerns about the U.S. Postal Service (USPS) in a challenging economy. The Postal Service is vital to the Nation's commerce and communications, which is why we must act quickly to make the changes necessary to ensure its viability for years to come.

Postal volumes have dropped precipitously in recent years due to longer-run shifts in communication technologies and other economic factors. As a result, USPS accrued losses of $8.5 billion in 2010, and faced financial insolvency on September 30th. Without reform it is forecast to sustain greater losses this year and next.

However, the Postal Service needs more than just short term financial relief at this time; it needs a comprehensive plan for reform to ensure that it can be flexible and competitive in a changing marketplace. There are multiple ways to provide relief and reform, but the Administration's proposal in The President's Plan for Economic Growth and Job Creation [PDF] represents a balanced approach for postal workers, USPS, consumers, and taxpayers.

More specifically, the proposal includes a set of near-term financial relief measures that will provide the Postal Service with the time necessary to restructure its operations and take advantage of flexibilities in the proposal, such as the ability to cooperate with state and local governments and modest pricing flexibility.

In the longer term, we are proposing to help the Postal Service reduce its excessive operating costs by providing the flexibility to gradually move to 5-day delivery, beginning in 2013. Under USPS' plan for how it would use this authority, post offices would still remain open on Saturdays, Express Mail deliveries would still be made 7 days a week, post office box deliveries would still be made on Saturdays, and USPS would continue to make Saturday deliveries in the busy weeks leading up to the winter Holidays. These and other cost structuring actions will ensure that the Postal Service remains viable for the medium- and longer-term.

We believe USPS' financial situation demands such reforms and the Administration's package includes provisions to reduce the impact for USPS workers and customers. We share petitioners' concern for the health and viability of the USPS and developed this plan with the best interest of this vital institution in mind.

As we work to get our Nation back on a sustainable fiscal path, the Administration is making tough choices across the Federal government and asking everyone to do their fair share. These shared sacrifices are not easy, but together with investments in our economic growth and job creation [PDF], they will make us stronger and more competitive for the future.

Dana Hyde is Associate Director for General Government Programs, Office of Management and

Response of Obama administration – explains the plans of government to solve the issue raised by the petition.

One more innovation must be emphasized: almost all the responses are provided with the survey, which assesses the answer whether it was helpful, or not. After assessing the petition and the response, user can also use the same survey for assessing the work of the web page and provide the administration with their opinions about the portal.

Tell Us What You Think About We the People and the Petition Response on Legalization of Marijuana

You recently received a response from the Obama Administration about a petition you signed on the We the People platform on WhiteHouse.gov on the legalization of marijuana. Fill out the survey below to let us know what you thought of the response and the We the People platform generally.

Even if you don't agree with the Obama Administration's response, was it helpful to hear the Obama Administration's position on this issue:

○ Yes

○ No

Do you think the petition response adequately addressed the concerns raised in the petition you signed:

○ Yes

○ No

Did you learn something new about the Administration's policies in this response:

○ Yes

○ No

Please rate your overall experience using the We the People platform on a scale of 1-10 (1 being very poor and 10 being excellent):

- None - ▼

Would you consider creating or signing another We the People petition in the future:

○ Yes

○ No

Please provide any additional comments about the We the People petitions system:

Survey designed for assessing the responses from the government.

5. Detailed information about the usage of the web page: Web page provides special section "why and how" which gives detailed information about the petitions. In particular, it explains the importance of the initiative and the legislative framework. It also provides the narrative description of registering

the petition, procedures of collecting signatures and the major details connected to the response of the government.

In addition, web page provides the "Frequently Asked Questions" section which explains the issues concerning registration, publishing petition, defines the aim of this web portal, importance of civil engagement, explains the mechanisms of providing government feedback, details about monitoring the platform and other additional issues.

We should emphasis the importance of publishing rules of web page utilization. In particular, mentioned portal explains that in order to use this web page, user must register his/her account with e-mail. In case of indicating the fake e-mail, citizens will not be able to create the account. Web page also limits the age of the user: Citizen has to be at least thirteen years old. In addition, each person is able to create just one account. Administration reserves the right to block the access to web services of those IP addresses, which have been suspected of creating number of accounts in order to increase the signatures artificially.

Besides participation rules, web page also provides the moderation rules. Firstly, it is explained that the administrator monitors the process of collecting the signatures on time. The requests posed by the petition are also paid significant attention. It is forbidden to initiate the ideas which request purchasing commercial products or services, supporting or opposing candidates etc. web page also imposes restrictions on publishing the petition which harms an individual or a group, involves humiliating statements, reveals private secret of the individual or obscene materials.

In case the petition is rejected from publishing due to violating the rules of the page, author of the idea must get informed which enables him/her to request re-discussion of the idea. Another way is creating new petition – in this case, user should not violate the rules. User may try other ways to connect to the government. The web page notifies users about all alternative ways.

Other Ways of Contacting the White House

We the People is a new tool on WhiteHouse.gov that gives all Americans a way call on the Obama Administration to take action on a range of important issues facing our country. The White House has always accepted petitions electronically and through the mail and We the People won't change the traditional ways Americans petition the White House. Messages and petitions submitted to the White House through the White House Correspondence Office will continue to receive the same consideration they were given prior to We the People.

If you'd prefer not to use this tool, there are a number of ways you can submit a petition or voice your concerns and ideas to the White House.

Contact Form on WhiteHouse.gov

Anyone can contact the White House at WhiteHouse.gov/Contact. If you are an organization submitting comments on behalf of your membership, please use our Organization Contact Form.

Mail

The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington, DC 20500

Please include your e-mail address

Phone Numbers

Comments: 202-456-1111

Switchboard: 202-456-1414

FAX: 202-456-2461

Introduction
Step By Step Guide
FAQ's
Terms of Participation
Moderation Policy
Contact the White House

Information about the alternative ways of contacting the administration

6. Alternative ways of contacting the White House

- **Contact form** – users can send their opinions and comments through filling the special contact form.

- **Contact form for organizations** – this is a special form for organizations

- **Contact information** – web-page provides the address, telephone, fax and e-mail of white house. Web page also indicates that instead of submitting petitions, users may send their initiatives through e-mails and messages.

7. Survey – in order to improve the services that the web-page provides, site administration provides commenting space. This way, users are able to send their concerns, ideas or comments regarding the installed applications and assess the provided services.

ONLINE PETITIONS IN GREAT BRITAIN

The government of Great Britain provides special section on the web page "Government and Democracy" which is devoted to petitions. In order to submit the petition or sign one, user has to be the citizen of Great Britain or live in the country.

Online petition searching tool

Before initiating one's petition, user can get familiar with other petitions. For this purpose, web-page provides electronic petitions search tool. It is notable that besides online petition complete base,

submitted petitions are categorized according to the addressee institutions in order to simplify navigation for the users.

Furthermore, submitted initiatives are grouped in three categories:

- Open – initiatives that are still in the process of collecting signatures;

- Closed – petitions with expired time for collecting supporters;

- Rejected – Initiatives that were rejected due to violation of certain rules;

Categorizes online petitions

Besides, web page indicates the total number of petitions from all three categories. Together with description of each petition, web-page also provides the information about number already collected

signatures, name and last name of the initiator, deadline of collecting signatures, as well as integrates social network tools for sharing the initiative.

In case petition collects 100 000 signatures before the deadline, it is transmitted to the specific committee of House of Commons and the lawmakers may discuss the initiative on the weekly meetings of the committee. In particular, below we will present the procedures that the petition has to cover before it is discussed at the parliament committee (Backbench Business Committee).
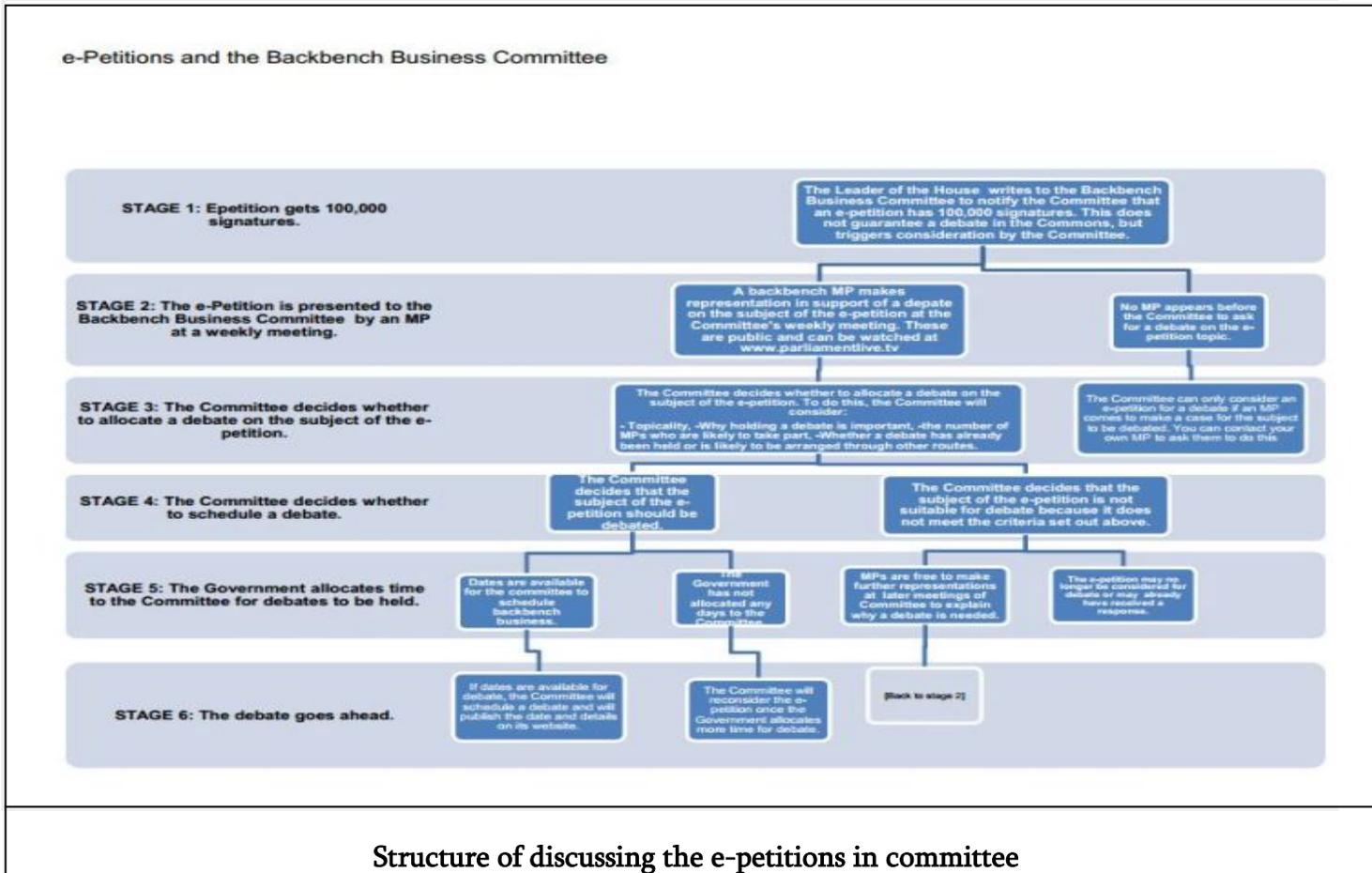
Structure of discussing the e-petitions in committee

First stage: Once the initiative gains enough number of supporters, leader of the House informs parliament committee about it. However, this does not automatically mean that the House of Commons will discuss it. Committee will start discussion about this issue.

Second Stage: Afterwards, petition is presented on the weekly meeting of the committee and the lawmakers decide the importance of the issue. In case none of the members of parliament are interested with the problem presented by the petition, further discussion of the issue will be delayed. In case the lawmakers are present on the next meetings, committee decides the fate of the petition –

whether it will be presented on the committee hearing. It is notable that committee meetings are broadcasted on the parliament channel.

Third stage: On the third stage, members of the committee decided whether they will conduct the discussion around the e-petition. They assess the petitions with the following criteria:

- Considering the issue, why is it important to start debates;

- What is the presumable number of members of parliament who would participate in debates;

- Have debates been organized before and is it planned to be conducted in some other ways.

Fourth stage: In case the decision is made to discuss the issue further, committee schedules debates and publishes the date and other details on the web page. In case the members of the committee decide that it is inappropriate to organize discussion, it is still possible to discuss the petition on the other meetings. The initiative is not lost, in case other lawmakers are interested in it, the initiative has chance to get on the agenda of committee. Except these factors, it is also possible that the committee fails to agree on the discussion date due to its busy schedule.

Stage five: Committee members agree on the date of debates and information is available on the web page. Lawmakers discuss the petition.

Describing the results of discussing petition

Most importantly, results of the legislative discussion are available online. In particular, web page administration informs the society about the stage of discussing the initiative - when it is discussed and what the position of the lawmakers is. In some cases web page provides the transcript of the meetings where lawmakers discuss the particular initiative. Such approach makes the politics more transparent and citizen engagement oriented. In case of a successful petition, page administration makes the decision of the lawmakers available. Information also includes the measures that will be taken in order to solve the issue.

As for the procedures for signing the petition, each citizen needs to provide the following information: name, e-mail, address and confirm that he/she is a citizen of Great Britain or a permanent resident of Great Britain.

In order to register a petition, user has to cover the following stages:

1. **Searching for the identical petitions**: Before creating the petition citizen must check whether the same idea is already registered by searching with the name of the idea. In case such petition exists, instead of re-creating the same petition, user just signs already existing petition. In other case, user continues the process of registration:

2. **Starting to register the petition – major details:** On this stage, users have to provide the following details: title, ministry/department which is the addressee of this petition (citizens are provided with the list of these institutions), description (max. 1000 words) and deadline of collecting the signatures. It is notable that in this case, citizens make the decision about the time needed for gaining supporters (3, 6, 9 or 12 months). In addition, each box is accompanied by the instructions which make this process easier for the users. For instance, next to the petition description box, web page administrator advice appears, which recommends formulating the idea clearly as well as states what are steps would be taken by the government to fix this problem.

Second stage of registering petitions

3. **Personal information:** On the next stage, user indicates personal information. In particular, name, e-mail, address (country, city and postal code) and confirms that he/she is either the citizen of the GB or permanently lives there.

4. **Sending the petition:** On the last stage, initiator finally checks the petition and agrees on the terms and conditions of the page. These terms and conditions describe the procedures of submitting the petitions as well as the procedures of discussing this initiative by government. Page specifies the reasons why certain petition may be rejected. British practice is also interesting because in case of not discussing the petition, they are still published under special section "rejected". Webpage explains the requirements that the petition failed to meet. Such approach makes this process public and transparent.

Feedback form

In order to provide effective functioning of the webpage and improve the services, feedback forms are integrated to the web page. Users are able to send critical comments, recommendations or report about the technical flaw to the administrator of the page. Besides sending the question, users can also leave a comment concerning certain petitions. In this case, user has to specify either the title of the petition or a link. It is notable that if the user wants to get a response, he/she must check the box through which user gets the answer from the government on e-mail.

In order to make above described procedures easier to comprehend, government portal provides graphic guide, which explains every service in detail. Web page visually displays the following procedures:

1. Searching for the idea before creating the petition

2. Creating the petition

3. Checking the petition

4. Submitting the idea (max. 1 year)

5. Signing the petition

6. Collecting 100 000 signatures after which the petition may be discussed by the House of Commons
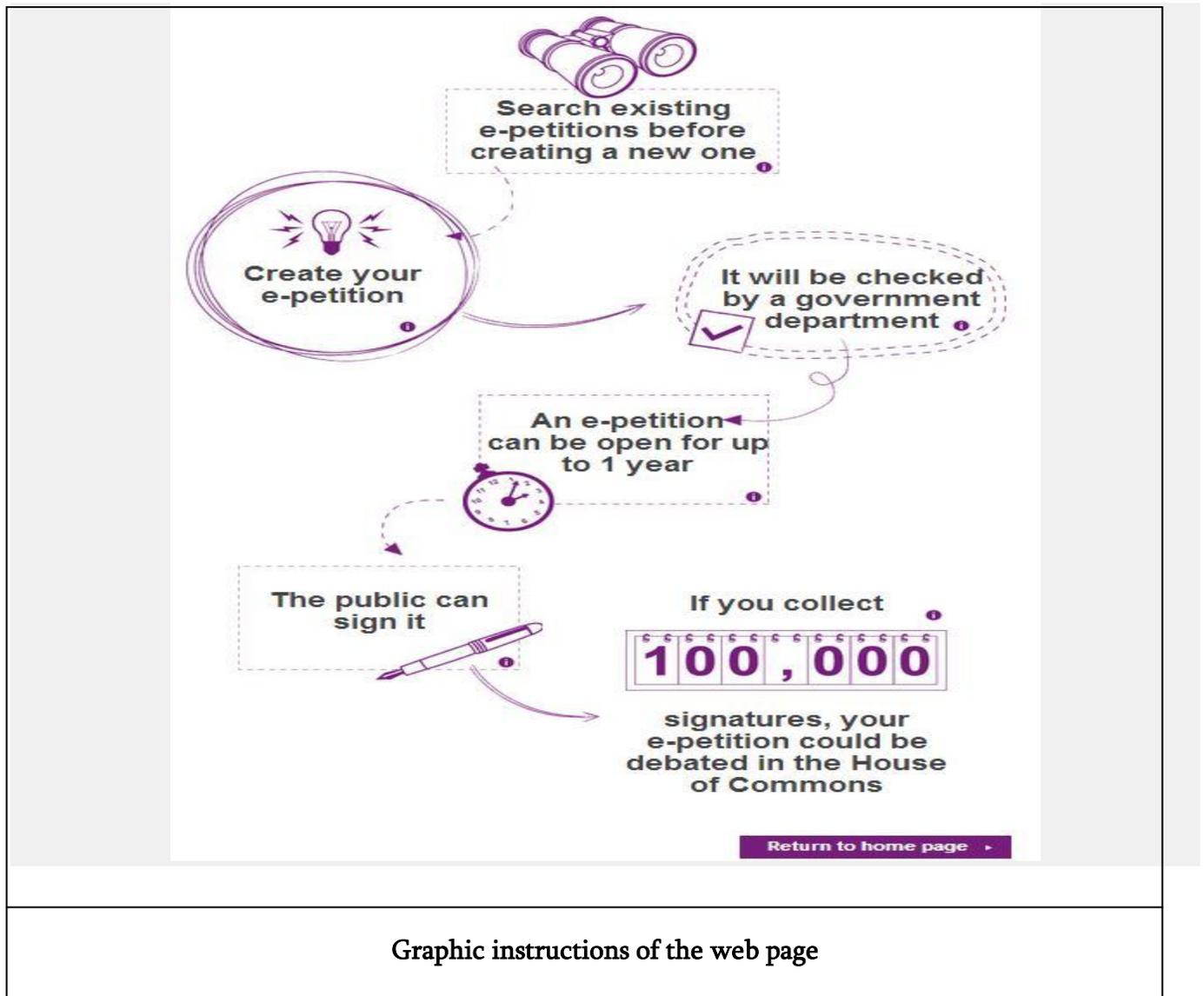
Graphic instructions of the web page

Visual materials are accompanied by the narrative explanation of each stage and recommendations to guarantee effective utilization of integrated service.

Analyzing the GB e-petitions platform displayed that in order to ensure civic engagement, it is crucial to provide citizens with the means of feedback and to constantly update information about the stage of discussing the initiatives. Web page also explains the procedures of discussing the petition in

details. It can be noted that through supporting civic engagement, government shows readiness to discuss the problems raised by the citizens and interested groups.

ONLINE PETITIONS OF BUNDESTAG

Simultaneously to developing e-governance in Georgia, petition services began to emerge, while Germany and other European countries moved to the next stage and made available already approved practice of engaging citizens in policy making through petitions.

It is notable that in German Federal Republic right of submitting the petition is regulated by legislation. Directives, based on the constitution enable only citizens and public servants to submit the petition.

According to the 17th article of the constitution of German Federal Republic, every person has right to address to the supreme legislature of Germany. According to the article 45 (1) (G) there is a petitions committee at Bundestag which is accountable for discussing the petitions of the citizens.

Petition committee of German parliament is called "Seismologist of Bundestag". Special department which is responsible for discussing the citizen petitions usually gets first impressions of the citizens – whether the new laws work, is it possible to achieve the set goal through these laws.

Considering the views and complaints of the citizens, petitions committee provides Bundestag with recommendations concerning the required changes and preferable issues. Afterwards parliament makes decision and sends an appeal to the institutions that are responsible for implementing them; Bundestag is a mediator between the citizens and the government. **Parliament is not authorized to request implementation of the petition idea from the government institutions. However, in case the government institution rejects the petition, it has to prove parliament with detailed explanation of the rejection.**

Bundestag webpage provides special section where registered users can submit their initiatives to the supreme legislature of the country – request amendment in law or express dissatisfaction towards the work of federal authorities.

Petition committee consists of the six parties and the members of coalition. Petition committee has a spokesperson and 26 members. Spokesperson as well as each member of the commit has a deputy. Certain party groups have officials.

It is notable that petitions page provides the biographies of the spokesperson and each member of the committee. Thus, society is given full information about the persons who are responsible for processing their initiatives.

User can register his/her petition or express opinion about already published petitions and support certain ideas on the web page of the parliament.

Petition may be a personal or social issue, like making amendments to the law etc. Therefore user is able to register three types of petitions:

1. Closed petition – personal or social issue that stays closed as the author prefers not to publish it. Thus, this issue will not be discussed publicly and other users will not be able to support the certain idea.
2. Petition for the third person – in case person is authorized, he/she can initiate petition in the name of the third person.
3. Open petition – Complaints and ideas considering the public interest which is published on the web page of the committee. This way certain persons or groups are given opportunity to participate in discussion and express support by signing the petition.

User can get familiar with the detailed information about the service of the web page and the news implemented by the page administration in order to improve the platform. Page pays special attention to the security of personal information. Users can get familiar with the legal groundings of the petition and **directive about the discussion of the public petitions;** Under "Frequently Asked Questions" section questions asked by the users are answered and all the important terms are explained. Under the same section users will find the link to the feedback form, through which users can submit their ideas to the administration in order to improve the platform.

Registering the public petition – According to the general law of petitions, petition committee gives citizens opportunity to present their petitions, which will be placed on the official page of the petition committee. This, on the other hand, means providing open platform for sharing opinions, experience and assessment.

Committee aims at providing users with wide range of issues, which will simplify participating in the discussion and share one's own initiative for much more people.

Submitting the petition does not depend on the citizenship or the residence country of the user.

Sending e-petitions is only available through special form, which is integrated on the web page.

In order to submit public petition, user has to register, open special account, which will be used in future as well to support other petition and participating in discussion. In order to register, user has to follow the special link.

Übermitteln Sie hier in nur wenigen Schritten Ihr Anliegen an den Deutschen Bundestag.

Schritt 1 Ihre Daten	Schritt 2 Ihre Petition	Schritt 3 Daten prüfen	Schritt 4 Benutzerkonto	Schritt 5 Bestätigung

Schritt 1 - Ihre Daten

Bitte machen Sie folgende Angaben zu der Person, oder der Organisation, die die Petition einreicht, einschließlich einer Kontaktadresse, an die die Korrespondenz geschickt werden soll.
Diese Angaben sind notwendig, weil der weitere Schriftverkehr aus Gründen der Vertraulichkeit ausschließlich auf dem Postweg erfolgt.

(Die mit einem * gekennzeichneten Felder sind Pflichtfelder.)

Anrede *	Frau	Titel	Bitte geben Sie Ihren Titel ein (optionale Angabe)
Vorname *	Vorname		
Nachname *	Nachname		
Straße, Hausnr. *	Bitte geben Sie Ihre Straße und Ihre Hausnummer ein!		
PLZ *	Postleitzahl	Ort *	Bitte geben Sie Ihren Wohnort ein!
Land *	DE - Deutschland		
Organisation	Bitte geben Sie Ihre Organisation oder Unternehmen an! (optionale Angabe)		
Telefon	Bitte geben Sie Ihre Telefonnummer an! (optionale Angabe)		

Weiter zu Schritt 2

Stages of registering the petition

Registration form consists of the five stages:

1. After filling the personal information, citizen has to indicate the address, as in order to increase credibility, government will keep correspondence through post.

2. The petition section consists of three parts. In the first section citizen writes about the aim of submitting the petition, afterwards proves validity and on the third stage initiates discussion on the forum. Users are once more notified about the conditions and terms of publishing the petition. Under each category, web page says the limit of symbols. Additional information (copies of decisions, complaints etc) can be sent to the Bundestag via post.

3. Third stage is checking the information. Web page administration provides each user with detailed information about personal data protection. For moving on the next stage, it is necessary to get familiar with the document on personal data protection and agree on the terms and conditions of publicizing personal information. Users can also subscribe and get the information on the e-mail.

4. On the next stage, user registers an account by indicating e-mail and password and after confirming the password, user chooses the nickname for forum. If the user does not indicate the nickname, he/she will appear on the form with his/her own ID number. **Name of the discussion participant or supporter of the petition remains secret for other participants.** User has to check the special box in

case he/she is willing to change the ID number to the nickname for participating in discussions, agree on terms of platform utilization after which he/she is given opportunity to send the petition.

5. The last stage involves confirmation. Page administration informs the user that the petition and the data are saved and he/she will shortly get the link on the e-mail to finalize the registration process. It is notable that it is possible to change data on four stages of registration. On the fifth stage user can view the petition in final form and download it in PDF format. On the other hand Bundestag archives this document.

Publishing the petition – before publishing the petition, committee checks the compliance of the petition with the requirements. The premises of publishing the petition are the content and importance of the issue. Idea must be inspired by public interest and it should be followed by interesting and fruitful discussion. Issue must fit within the competence of the committee. Issue and the description must be explained briefly and clearly. The size of the text is technically defined. Issue should not concern certain individuals.

Committee reserves the right to merge similar petitions and identify the main petitioner. Afterwards, other authors of the similar petitions will be supporters of this joint idea.

Petition will not be published if it is not written in state official language, it humiliates the human dignity or is erroneous or requires taking the actions that are contrary to legal and moral limits; in case it deprives somebody from privacy by specifying name, advertises certain products or business.

Petition will not be published if the committee has taken decision about the similar issue or such petition is discussed by parliament or the same user initiates other petition; also, if the petition puts social welfare, international relation and intercultural dialog under threat.

The deadline for checking the compliance of the petitions with the web page regulations is 3 weeks.

In case the petition complies with the rules it is published under "Signing Petitions" section to collect supporters.

It is notable that if petition is not published on the web page, initiator will be informed according to the rules set by the general law of petitions.

Forum for Petitions – main aim of public petitions is introducing society with the public initiative and providing space for dialogue and discussion about problematic issues.

Through forum every participant – citizens and members of parliament - should have an opportunity to get introduced with questions, complaints, different opinions about the laws as well as they should be given opportunity to participate in decision making process. Petition forum section is located on the second block of the petition page.

These petitions are divided into three groups: petitions to be signed, petitions under parliament discussion and closed petitions.

For searching the interesting petition easily, on the right to the page, quick search section is located. User can choose one out of above mentioned categories or select the "all" option, indicate title, ID number or/and search term;

Under forum category, there are table of all three categories of petitions and statistical data. For instance, number of closed petitions is 1947 as of March 7, 984 are being discussed and 42 are open.

Forum for Petitions

Users can sign the petitions and/or participate in discussions for 4 weeks after publishing the initiative. Web page informs citizens about the time left for gaining support, date of closing discussions and amount of citizen signatures and comments. The title of the petition leads to the text of the petition. Together with description, this page also includes various details: the author, ID number of the petition, date of submission and deadline of collecting signatures. All these information can be downloaded in PDF format. On the same page, you will find the number of signatures and page graphically displays the dynamic of signatures according to time. Users are also notified whether the quorum was reached.

In order to reach the quorum, user has to collect at least 50 000 signatures. After collecting this amount of signatures, petition committee publicly discusses the idea. The author of the idea

participates in this discussion and personally presents his/her own idea. However, **it is strictly underlined that the idea and the content of the petition is the most important**. This means that, regardless of number of supporters, interesting idea will be discussed by the committee.

It is clear that the major reason of initiating the petition is creating comfortable discussion space for the citizens. Every interested person can discuss issues in individual aspects. One petition may be discussed in several different ways which gives opportunity to evaluate the issue fully and makes the decision making process easier.

Forum is moderated according to the "directive on the public petition discussion rules" according to which **in case the discussion is not engaging and interesting any more, petition must be closed before the deadline** (paragraph 9.3).

It is notable that it is in parliament's interests to get as many comments, ideas, opinions, criticism concerning the lawmaking as well as public activities as possible. This makes it easier to provide the executive branch with recommendations.

Parliamentary discussion of citizen petitions – once the petition is closed, it goes through parliamentary check. Committee submits the appeal to certain ministries to assess the initiative. In case of positive decision, discussion of the petition is over, but in other case institution starts preparing report which consists of several stages: at the beginning document is studied by at least two member of the committee – form the government and opposition parties; afterwards committee starts discussing the petitions and prepares the package of recommendations; Bundestag makes the final decision. In case the petition is considered fully or partly well-grounded, parliament prepares recommendations based on the package of recommendation set up by committee and sends it to the government to be implemented.

Government decided whether to take parliaments decision into consideration or not. In case the government refuses to take action, it must explain the reasons to the committee.

Parliament owns certain mechanisms to make the ministries and other public institutions see the importance of the issue; for example, request documents of questionable issue, conduct the hearing of witnesses etc. It is possible to invite responsible institutions to the discussion. Committee makes decision whether to conduct public discussion or to consider the arguments of the initiations. Information about the time and place of conducting the discussion is published on the page of petition committee. Public discussions are broadcasted on the parliament channel.

The author of the petition gets detailed and full information about the process of discussing his/her initiative. It is notable that together with complete petition list, web page also provides the conclusions of the parliament regarding petitions. Users are able to download it in PDF format.

Petition forum

Decisions are grouped under categories (A1, A2b … A9) according to the decision made. Issues out of competence of the Federation and requiring decision on the EU level are sent to the EU parliament.

We present several interesting cases:

Petition that had the most, 105 386 supporters and 753 comments was concerning the healthcare system. The discussion was attended by the representative of Ministry of Healthcare. Committee submitted the conclusions and recommendations to the Ministries of Finance as the topic concerned the issue of providing professional liability insurance for the medical personnel and providing competitive legislative conditions.

Committee addressed to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs with the issue taking place in one of the regions of Sudan (Darfur) which requests German participation in conflict resolving and recognition of genocide.

European Parliament became the addressee of a petition which was protesting against simplifying the import of genetically modified food. This initiative gained the support of 1095 persons and had 49 comments.

Petition committee page provides monthly statistics of sent petitions. Detailed information about the committee work is depicted in annual report which is available on the web page.

In 2011 Bundestag Petition Committee received more than 15 000 petitions including 5 112 through electronic form. 6 387 petitions were discussed by parliament and 1 398 petitions were satisfied. 8 749 suggestions were not discussed by parliament as the biggest part of them – 5 182 petitions were solved by providing advice, materials etc. In total, out of 15 135 petitions, 7 852 were satisfied. 7 284 were rejected. 2 295 out of them did not comply with the requirements of the committee.

German Bundestag petition page is different from its analogues. Firstly, it is not necessary to get enough signatures as long as the issue is interesting and problematic. Petition Committee takes responsibility to discuss every interesting initiative of citizens. This displays that the government is ready to take complaints and remarks and pursue the citizen-oriented policy.

The most important service that the page provides is the forum through which every member of the society is given opportunity to express their opinions and exchange views. Publicizing the petition on the page mostly depends on the forum discussion that follows the petition.

Openness and transparency of work of the committee, access to information about the members of the committee and constant notification about the status of petition has positive influence on the citizen level of trust towards the government.

APPENDIX 3: BEST E-CONSULTATIONS PRACTICE

ELECTRONIC SYSTEM FOR PUBLIC CONSULTATIONS OF THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION - "YOUR VOICE IN EUROPE"

Europe.eu is the official website of the European Union that contains the e-services implemented by the EU, among these the electronic system for public consultations of the European Commission - "Your Voice in Europe" (ec.europa.eu) that includes the following tools: **consultation, discussion and other mechanisms**.

Electronic System for Public Consultations of the European Commission - "Your Voice in Europe"

As it is well known, in the European Union for the purpose of getting feedback and expertise the practice of the so called "green and white papers" has been implemented. Different stakeholders are engaged in the procedures - ordinary citizens, NGOs, business sector, corresponding public institutions of the member countries of the EU. According to the EU practices, the "green paper" is viewed as a document for discussion that is published by the European Commission on specific policy direction. The documents are intended for the stakeholders that are invited to participate in the consultation process and debates. In a number of cases the process is intended to initiate relevant legislative changes. The "white papers" of the European Commission are used as the continuation of the "green papers" procedures in a specific

direction. For achieving these goals, the European Commission has developed strategies and concrete guidelines. The electronic system for public consultations, "Your Voice in Europe", is a part of the mentioned strategies. The service was implemented within the frameworks of the "Developing Interactive Policy" initiative. It was created within the frameworks of **the "Minimal Standards for Consultation" document of the European Commission** with the goal of improving governance in Europe and developing better regulations. Below we discuss the mechanisms of this electronic platform, as we consider it one of the best international practices and the implementation of its procedural part in the analogous platform in Georgia (ichange.ge) would be practical and effective.

The system is divided into two parts - one open and one closed. The following procedures and rules regulate the participation in the online consultations:

- Comments can be sent by the citizens, organizations and public institutions of the member countries of the EU;
- The documents and suggestions sent during the consultation are published online in the system. The exception is if the participants of the consultation point out, that their ideas are confidential;
- Users of the system can send their suggestions in any language of the EU;
- The administration of the website accepts documents in both electronic and written forms;
- Ideas received after the deadline of the consultations may not be discussed.

It should be noted that online consultations are held on the changes planned for different policy directions of the EU and for developing policy strategies and documents, as well as regulations. For example, we can discuss some documents being discussed at this date (21.06.2013):

- Development of the list of annual priorities for the development of the codes and guidelines of the network;
- European Taxpayers' Code;
- Public consultation regarding the "green paper" related to plastic waste;
- Development of state and legal instruments in the fishing sector.

The following data related to public consultations is always **published** in the system:

- The topic of public consultation;
- Stakeholders;
- Initiation and completion dates of the consultation;

- Goals of the public consultation;

Documents related to the consultation - apart from the basic text of the documents or policy strategies to be discussed, the description contains the decisions of the EU regarding this issue from at different points in time, the views of the higher officials of the EU regarding the subject, programs developed in this direction in the past, etc. Also, the title, email and address of the agency responsible for this consultation;

Reference documents and other, related consultations
▸ EU-US Joint Statement on enhancing transatlantic cooperation in the area of freedom, security and justice of 28 October 2009 📄
▸ Final Report of the High Level Contact Group (HLCG) on information sharing and privacy and personal data protection 📄
▸ Opinion of the European Data Protection Supervisor on the 2008 HLCG report 📄
▸ Stockholm Programme 📄
Documents related to the consultation

Rules for sending comments - in some cases the system contains online questionnaires, in other cases the comments are sent to the email address of the institutions that initiated the consultation. Receiving suggestions and comments in a questionnaire makes the summary process of the consultation more systematic and organized, thus making the analysis of the comments simpler and more effective. It should be noted that the comments received within the frameworks of a public consultation are not published in an online regime; however, they always become available in the system at the end of the consultation.

Completed consultations are filed by year. In their cases the following information is published:

- Titles of the regulations, policy documents, strategies, regarding which the consultation was held;
- Target group – for example, international organizations, governmental structures, academic circles, civil society and private sector organizations, foundations, persons, etc.;
- Initiation and completion dates of the consultation;
- Goals of the consultation;
- Rules for participation;

Changes in the documents published for consultation - changes made at different points in time are published on the website. Specifically, the administration of the website uses different versions of the initial document modified with Track Change. Based on this the changes made in the working version become evident. With this, it is possible to see the whole process of the work on the document.

(Text with EEA relevance)

I.   INTRODUCTION

1.   This Notice sets out a simplified procedure under which the Commission intends to treat certain concentrations pursuant to Council Regulation (EC) No 139/2004 of 20 January 2004, on the control of concentrations between undertakings[1] (the 'EC Merger Regulation') on the basis that they do not raise competition concerns. This Notice replaces the Notice on a simplified procedure for treatment of certain concentrations under Council Regulation (EECEC) No 4064/89139/2004 published in 2005.[2] The Commission's experience gained in applying the Merger Regulation, including Council Regulation (EEC) No 4064/89 of 21 December 1989 on the control of concentrations between undertakings[3], which preceded the current Merger Regulation, has shown that certain categories of notified concentrations are normally cleared without having raised any substantive doubts, provided that there were no special circumstances.

2.   The purpose of this Notice is to set out the conditions under which the Commission usually adopts a short-form decision declaring a concentration compatible with the commoninternal market pursuant to the simplified procedure and to provide guidance in respect of the procedure itself. When allthe necessary conditions set forth at point 5 or 6 of this Notice are met and provided there are no special circumstances, the Commission adopts a short-form clearance decision within 25 working days from the date of notification, pursuant to Article 6(1)(b) of the EC Merger Regulation.[4]

3.   However, if the safeguards or exclusions set forth at points 6 to 11 of this Notice are applicable, the Commission may launch an investigation and/or adopt a full decision under the EC Merger Regulation. for any proposed concentration, in particular if the safeguards or exclusions set forth at points 8 to 17 of this Notice are applicable.

4.   By following the procedure outlined in the following sections, the Commission aims to make CommunityUnion merger control more focused and effective.

Document reflecting the changes

- In case of focus group surveys conducted with the citizens, public institutions and organizations, the questionnaire is available;
- The whole package of the strategy, regulations or planned changed, in which the problem will be stated and described, as well as the purpose of the change, goals, potential alternatives and the evaluation of their influence. The issues and problems around which the suggestions and comments of the citizens, the nongovernmental sector, different public institutions and stakeholders are desirable will be defined.
- Press release regarding the initiation of the public consultation;
- Contacts: address, email;
- Body responsible for the public consultation;
- Number of comments;
- Comments – in case of closed consultations, the suggestions and ideas sent to the organizer of the discussion by given physical and legal entities are given completely. In particular, in most cases the comments are divided into categories (citizens, organizations, public institutions, unregistered organizations, representatives of the scientific community, religious groups, representatives of the private sector, research centers, professional unions, etc.) and the comments of each citizen, organization or union is attached in the PDF or archived format.

Public authorities

- ❯ Article 29 Data Protection Working Party and Working Party on Police and Justice 💬
- ❯ Bureau of the Consultative Committee of the Convention for the Protection of Individuals with Regard to Automatic Processing of Personal Data [ETS 108] (T-PD-BUR) 💬
- ❯ European Data Protection Supervisor 💬
- ❯ Österreichische Datenschutzrat 💬📄

Registered Organisations

- ❯ Arbeitsgemeinschaft Konsumentenbund 💬📄
- ❯ Association européenne pour la défense des Droits de l'Homme (AEDH) 💬📄
- ❯ British Bankers Association 💬
- ❯ Ebay 💬
- ❯ ECTAA (European Travel Agents' and Tour Operators' Associations) 💬
- ❯ ESGB (European Savings Banks Group) 💬
- ❯ ETNO (European Telecommunications Networks Operators' Association) 💬
- ❯ European Association of Co-operative Banks (EACB) 💬
- ❯ European Banking Federation (EBF) 💬
- ❯ European Privacy Association 💬
- ❯ Fédération Bancaire Française 💬 , French Banking Association 💬

Database of received comments

Contributions

- Individuals 🖥 [201 KB]
- International Institutions 🖥 [8 MB]
- Local authorities 🖥 [721 KB]
- NGOs & Foundations 🖥 [17 MB]
- Private Sector 🖥 [2 MB]
- Public Bodies 🖥 [13 KB]
- Religious Groups 🖥 [794 KB]
- Research Institutes - Think Tanks - Academia 🖥 [3 MB]
- Trade Unions - Professional Organisations 🖥 [740 KB]

Received comments arranged by categories

It should be underlined that only the first and last names of the persons who chose to remain anonymous. Despite the concealment of identity, the contents of the comment are available to anyone. In cases of institutions and organizations, the names are given in full.

Unknown

_____

Here is my comment on future EU-US agreements on personal data sharing. With apologies that time pressure prevents me from answering all of the questions in your questionaire individually.

The quick answer is: No agreement can possibly find my support.

The reason is simple: The US is not our friend[1], and even if they somehow could be trusted they are not under EU jurisdiction ensuring any guarantees the EU makes towards its citizens are null and void. Worse, even feeble promises become laughable on their faces, and with it, the entire EU polity. It is a direct attack on that most precious virtue of leadership, integrity.

EBF European Banking Federation

EBF Ref.: D0353C-2010
Brussels, 12 March 2010

Set up in 1960, the European Banking Federation is the voice of the European banking sector (European Union & European Free Trade Association countries). The EBF represents the interests of some 5000 European banks: large and small, wholesale and retail, local and cross-border financial institutions. The EBF is committed to supporting EU policies to promote the single market in financial services in general and in banking activities in particular. It advocates free and fair competition in the EU and world markets and supports the banks' efforts to increase their efficiency and competitiveness.

EBF answer to the Consultation of the European Commission on the future EU – US international agreement on personal data protection and information sharing for law enforcement purposes

Key points

1. The EBF is grateful to be given the opportunity to share its answer to the Commission's consultation on the future EU – US international agreement on personal data protection and information sharing for law enforcement purposes.

2. As recently stated by the EBF at the occasion of the Commission's consultation on data protection[i], **legal certainty** is of utmost importance for banks' processing data. From a banking perspective, the most important challenges for data protection consist of requirements which should be consistent with each other and should, as much as possible, be interpreted in a uniform manner.

Comment template

- **Statistical data of the received responses** - along with the publication of received viewpoints, complete quantitative data is published. In particular, how many initiatives originated from specific countries; who (meaning physical or legal entity, including different types of unions and organizations) left how many comments. The report also contains the detailed responses received as a result of the initial questionnaire. Accordingly, the attitude of the Europeans towards the subject of discussion becomes clear. Along with this, open comments are attached at the end of the document and anybody can read them.

Figure 1: Country distribution of responses

Statistics by country

Figure 8: Rating of the proposed policy options

Survey of the citizens regarding the necessary activities
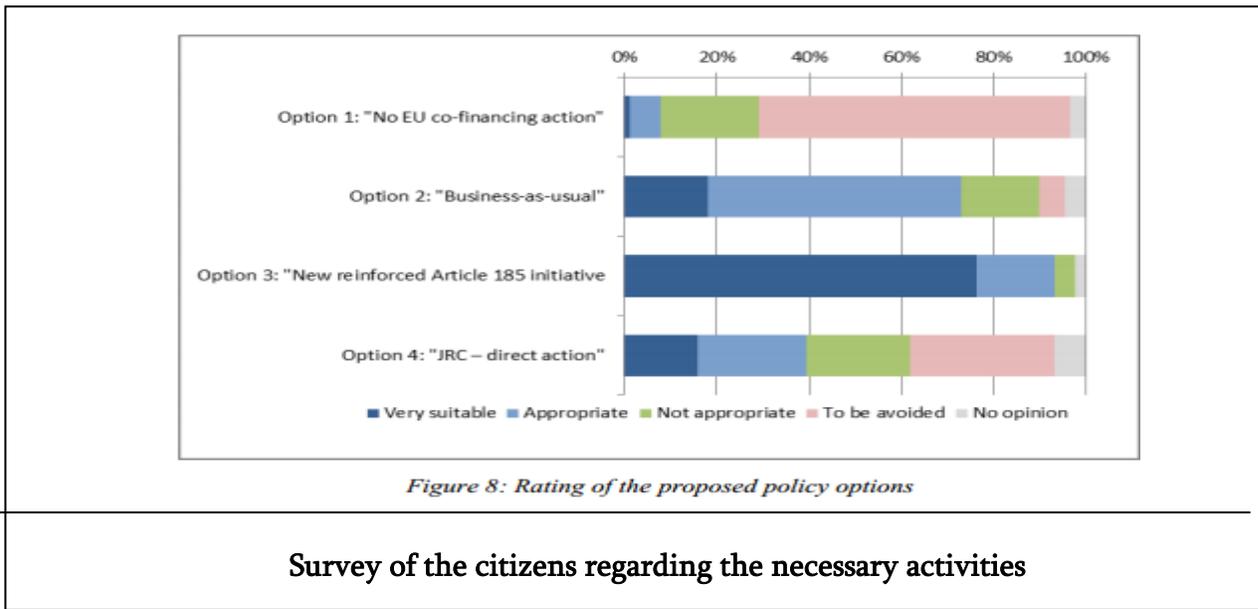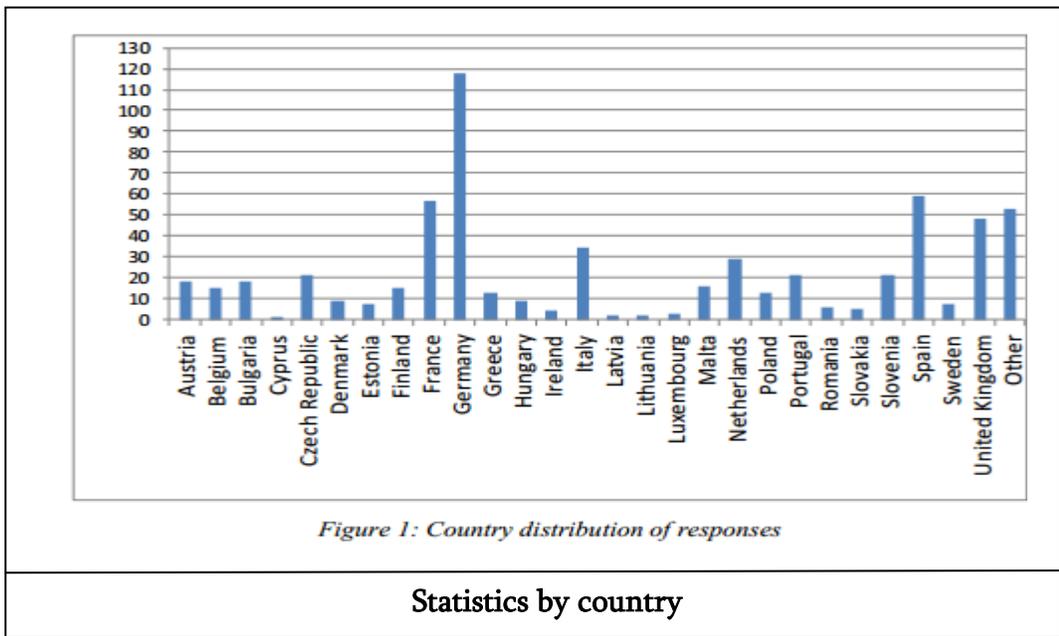
- **Results of the consultations** - In some cases the final reports of the discussion is attached to the description of a closed consultation. In cases when the mentioned document did not become public, how the suggestion was used will always be mentioned.

GREAT BRITAIN

Great Britain pays special attention to the engagement of the citizens in public policy and holding public consultations about different issues. Electronic consultation mechanisms are integrated into the websites of most of the ministries of the country. For example, in the case of the Ministry of Justice, a special category "Consultations" (http://www.justice.gov.uk/consultations) is available on the main page and encompasses a variety of subjects and issues.

The Ministry identifies concrete issues that will benefit greatly from public engagement in its discussion. Each consultation is initiated by a specific department and this department then discusses the submitted initiatives. The contact details, such as land phone number and e-mail of the department or its sub-structure is indicated.

Besides, the terms of the public consultations, such as the deadlines of questions, comments and views of the stakeholders, acknowledged by the corresponding authority is applicable on the web-site. The anticipated audience is defined to receive the initiatives by the corresponding authority including the contacts of the responsible person of the public consultations and discussions.

As for the format of receiving the citizens' perspectives, in some cases the users are offered to express their views with the special form or fill out the questioners.

Punishment and reform: effective probation services

Overview

Reference number: CP7/2012

This consultation paper sets out the conclusions of an internal review by the Secretary of State of how probation services in England and Wales can be improved. The intention is to ensure probation services are better able to achieve the outcomes in justice that matter to victims and communities: protecting the public, reducing reoffending and ensuring that offenders are properly punished.

The consultation paper sets out clear proposals to meet these aims whilst also achieving better value for money to the taxpayer.

Why we are consulting

We need services of the right quality and price that are delivered in the right place and at the right time to punish and reform offenders. As such, our proposals directly support our plans to make sentences in the community more credible and effective.

They also help to take forward the vision for transforming justice set out by the Government in its Green Paper: Breaking the Cycle: Effective Punishment, Rehabilitation and Sentencing of Offenders.

Give Us Your Views
Online consultation

Contact
Richard Chapman
Effective Probation Services
020 3334 6584
effectiveprobationservices@justice.gsi.gov.uk

Dates
Consultation is Open
Runs from 27 Mar 2012 to 22 Jun 2012

Other Information
Audience:
Businesses,
Citizens,
Voluntary organisations,
Local authorities,
Charities,
Government departments,
Legal professionals

Interests:
Public Bodies

One of the public discussions published on the website of the Ministry of Justice of Great Britain

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| Consultation Hub | Find Consultations |

Consultation questions

Progress [   ] Page 1 of 2

A What is your name?
Name
[   ]

B What is your email address?
This is optional, but if you enter your email address then you will be able to return to edit your consultation at any time until you submit it. You will also receive an acknowledgement email when you complete the consultation.
Email
[   ]

C What is your organisation?
Organisation
[   ]

1 Do you agree that the Information Commissioner should be given powers under the Data Protection Act 1998 to carry out non-consensual assessments of data of NHS bodies for compliance with the Act?

Questionnaire

After completion of the public discussions, the Ministry analyses the public discussions and citizens' proposals to prepare the final report of the E-consultations that is considered as the feedback document. In result, the e-resource comprised of outcomes of the public discussions, final evaluation document, the citizens' opinions concerning the issues of discussion, raised questions and answers of the corresponding authorities are available.

The web-site of the Ministry of Justice of the Great Britain – Template of the results of the Consultations

Adding up, based on the preliminary criteria, the evaluation of the outcomes of the e-consultations is available, in particular citizens' opinions are analyzed, their problems and concerns of the corresponding issues are indentified and the government's responses on citizens' questions are described. Furthermore, citizens' approaches towards the ongoing issues are summarized, and based on their approaches, The ministry's or corresponding sub- structure's strategy/ position to the e-consultations is developed.

The users are offered to navigate among the e-consolations sections in an easy manner, using the following categories: Open, Closed- awaiting responses and closed- with responses.

Categories of the Consultations
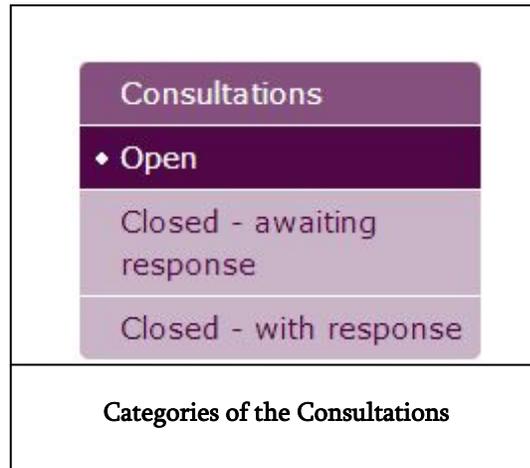
The Archive of the E-Consultations is separated on the e-resource of the Ministry, recommending the users to search for the pubic consultations and corresponding reports by dates. In the sections, the user can subscribe the newsletters which make them more informed and systematically receive the information of their own interests.

Archive of the Consultations and Subscriptions

SCOTLAND

Similar to the Central Government of Great Britain, e-Communication tradition is carried out in the local authorities of Scotland to encourage the citizens' involvement by the special section, "Consultations" posted on the e-resource: (http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Consultations/Current). There are completed and planned consultation sub-sections. Through e-communication the Government of Scotland promotes consideration of citizens' viewpoints and demands in the policy planning.

Under the sub-section of ongoing consultations the ongoing problem is defined, also, description of the activities planned by Government in this regard is available. In addition, the sub-structure/department of the authority, initiator of the issue, together with the contact person, e-mail, the start and finish dates of the consultations, key questions and the forms related to the feedback for interested individuals concerning the issue are given. The filled out forms are sent to particular public officials responsible for the consultation.

Current Consultations		
	Title	**Consultation Period**
Details...	**SSI on Requirements for Community Learning and Development** The SSI will set out requirements on local authorities to deliver CLD as a cons...	25/03/2013 to 26/04/2013
Details...	**Beyond 2011 Consultation: user requirements for future population and socio-demographic information (ID 1612)** The census currently provides the basis for population and socio-demographic st...	18/03/2013 to 09/06/2013
Details...	**A Healthier Scotland: Consultation on Creating a New Food Body** Proposals to extend the roles and responsibilities of the new food body Ministe...	28/02/2013 to 22/05/2013
Details...	**Making Justice Work - Courts Reform (Scotland) Bill - A consultation paper** This consultation invites views on proposals to restructure the way civil cases...	27/02/2013 to 24/05/2013
Details...	**Consultation on Ethical Standards in Public Life: Proposals for amendments to be made to the Model Code of Conduct for Members of devolved public bodies** The Ethical Standards in Public Life etc. (Scotland)Act 2000 requires the Scott...	01/02/2013 to 26/04/2013
Details...	**CONSULTATION ON THE GLASGOW COMMONWEALTH GAMES ACT 2008 (COMPENSATION FOR ENFORCEMENT ACTION) (SCOTLAND) REGULATIONS 2013** Glasgow will host the 2014 Commonwealth Games. The Glasgow Commonwealth Games ...	23/01/2013 to 18/04/2013
Details...	**Consultation on Proposal to Restructure the Commission for Ethical Standards in Public Life in Scotland: the Public Services Reform (Commissioner for Ethical Standards in Public Life in Scotland etc.) Order 2013** Consultation on the proposed draft Public Service Reform (Commissioner for Ethi...	18/01/2013 to 29/03/2013

Ongoing consultations section of the Government of Scotland on the web-site

The information related to the consultations, the topic and terms of planned consultations are available on the web-site which offers the users to learn about the issues and problems that the

Government plans to address by means of e-consultation tools. Moreover, this way government receives feedbacks from citizens.

The following category is Closed Consultations, where reports, summaries and relevant documents of each issue are available. The detailed descriptions of the current problems and goal of the consultations as well as the governmental position related to the raised issue along with the planned activities are published. The main focus is made on the analysis and overview of the citizens' questions and proposals about the initiative of the governmental authority. The final decisions and citizens' reflections concerning the raised issue are published. Such proactive strategy promotes the high level participation of citizens in the decision making process.

Completed section of consultations of the Government of Scotland on the web-site

Another category is "Archive of the Consultations", where final reports, description and accompanying documentations of each e-consultation starting from 2003 are available on the web-site.

Consultations	Consultations Archive	
▸ Current	Consultations that pre-date 2004.	
▸ Forthcoming		
▸ Closed	Consultations that pre-date 2004.	
▸ Archive		
▸ About Consultations	**Title**	**Date**
▸ seConsult	**A New Complaints Landscape For Further and Higher Education in Scotland** Consultation paper on extending the remit of the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman to further and higher education establishments	30/12/2003
Subscribe to seConsult	**Strategic Environmental Assessment: A Consultation on Proposed Legislative Measures to Introduce Strategic Environmental Assessment in Scotland** A consultation on the implementation of the Partnership Agreement, Green Thread commitment and EU Directive 2001/42/EC on Strategic Environmental Assessment	18/12/2003
Register here for regular email newsletters. seConsult provides a weekly update on all consultations begining and ending that week.	**Consultation on Land Reform (Scotland) Act 2003 Part 3: Crofting Community Right to Buy Consultation on Draft Regulations** Consultation on 4 Regulations/Orders required to implement Part 3 of the Land Reform (Scotland) Act	17/12/2003
	Scottish Commission for the Regulation of Care: Proposals for Maximum Fees 2004-05 Consultation paper	16/12/2003
	Health for All Children: Guidance on Implementation in Scotland - A Draft for Consultation This draft guidance describes a revised programme for child health surveillance, screening and child health promotion.	16/12/2003
	Reducing Landfill: A Landfill Allowance Scheme Consultation A consultation paper seeking views on proposals for allocating allowances to local authorities for the landfilling of biodegradable waste in Scotland	16/12/2003
	Consultation on the Transposition of the 24th Amendment to Council Directive 76/769/EEC Relating to Restrictions on the Marketing and Use of Pentabromodiphenyl Ether, Octabromodiphenyl Ether in Scotland Consultation on regulations relating to restrictions on the marketing and use of Penta BDE and Octa BDE in Scotland	10/12/2003

Archive of the Consultation

Besides, subscription of newsletters is attached on the e-resource. This service offers every citizen opportunity to receive news and be informed about the achievements and updates of concrete consultations via email.

Subscribe to seConsult

Register here for regular email newsletters.

seConsult provides a weekly update on all consultations begining and ending that week.

Subscribe the Consultations

Similar to Great Britain, the Government of Scotland pays significant attention to preparation of the final report summarizing citizens' questions with reference to particular problems raised

through e-consultation. It becomes obvious that sending initiatives via e-communication is effective tool and illustrates government's readiness to consider citizens' initiatives or questions. Most importantly, preparing the final report demonstrates that the Ministries develop strategies and plan activities regarding specific issues with the consideration of citizens' interests.

AUSTRALIA

On the web-site of the Government of Australia, sub-section of consultation contains three categories: open consultations, closed consultations and planned consultations.

Ongoing public discussions are available in the Open Consultations' Section, where title, description of the issues, references, name and address of the corresponding authority, deadlines of consultations, procedures and templates of e-form for the citizens to propose their suggestions are published. The latter tool offers a citizen to propose his/her initiative, strategy, presentation and comment on the related issue. Besides, the citizen indicates whether his question can be public in the questionnaire form. In other case, the government reserves a right to publish citizens' proposals on the web-site. It is mentionable that citizens can deliver hard copies of proposals/ comments to the corresponding authority.

Procedures of the Consultations

In the section of closed consultations, a wide range of information related to the implemented public discussions is available. In particular, the following types of data and documents for each issue are published:

- Goal of the Consultations;

- Definition of the problem and terms and regulations of the public discussions;

- Citizens' Proposals - filled out forms;

- Responses of the corresponding authority or position developed after the public discussion.

Proposals of the Citizens

TGA response

- Advisory statement: If you are pregnant or breastfeeding, check with your doctor or pharmacist before using this medicine
- Proposing additional statements for inclusion on the labelling of unscheduled loratadine preparations

1. Advisory statement: If you are pregnant or breastfeeding, check with your doctor or pharmacist before using this medicine

Summary of issues

A respondent supported the proposed advisory statement.

TGA response

The TGA acknowledges this response.

2. Proposing additional statements for inclusion on the labelling of unscheduled loratadine preparations

Summary of issues

RASML statements 77 and 6 are proposed by the respondent for inclusion on the labelling of unscheduled loratadine preparations. These statements are shown below:

- RASML Statement 77: 'If symptoms persist, seek advice from a health care practitioner.'
- RASML Statement 6: 'Do not give to children under 12 years of age.'

TGA response

- The TGA considers that the safety profile of this medicine is such that the mandatory inclusion of the proposed warning statement is not required. However, the TGA acknowledges the intent of the proposed addition of Statement 77, would not object to the sponsor of a product choosing to include RASML statement 77; the inclusion of which would then be considered by the TGA on its own merit for each application.
- Statement 6 does not apply to OTC loratadine. The SUSMP scheduling exemption already specifies that unscheduled loratadine is only for administration to adults and children 12 years and over. The directions for use approved for unscheduled loratadine will be required to state that the product should not be given to children under 12 years of age (for consistency with the schedule entry).
- Thus the TGA considers these additional advisory statements are not required for inclusion in the RASML document.

Response of the Governmental Authority

The abovementioned category is followed by the section of planned consultations, where the timetable of public consultations planned for the next month is published. Also, the issues and policies to be discussed during the online consultation are specified.

The archive of the online consultations is also published on the web-site. Each issue includes the description of the topic as well as the context and the goal of public discussions initiated by the government in order to resolve the problem. Initiatives and suggestions submitted by citizens are analyzed and displayed. Afterwards, identifying of e-consultation outcomes are followed by the political alternatives together with financial calculations. Apart from this, scales of the impact of each problem and elaborated recommendations are available.

Archives of the Consultations

KAZAKHSTAN

Kazakhstan takes the third place at the United Nation's e-participation survey for the relatively good quality of public involvement in the political processes. This county is an important case for the Georgian reality due to the common post-soviet background, and e-governance principals are recently emerging there.

Kazakhstan created an incorporated government platform, with different integrated services, implemented by the government. It is noteworthy that the applications and useful information on the web-site are divided, on the one hand, for citizens and on the other hand, for business representatives. In the framework of our survey, the core focus was made on the "citizens' service" posted on the electronic resource – labeled "a Citizen and the Government", where effective and interesting communication services for two parties are developed:

1. **Internet Conference**: From time to time, online conferences are held with the heads of the local authorities in different regions. Information about the topic of particular conference, the start and finish dates of each online consultation, number of citizens' questions, expressed opinions and received feedbacks from public authorities are published on the web-site.

   Most importantly, including statistical data, the questions and comments shared by users are publicly disclosed on the e-platform of Kazakhstan. The content of the public authorities' responses are accessible, aside responses of the Government to the questions and comments of citizens are separately posted. The search system concerning the actual topics is available as well, so that a citizen can search for his question using the particular ID number to learn who responds his inquiries, how many citizens commented and expressed their views on the raised question and who supported them by voting system. The services make the communication between two parties more transparent and effective for building up the trust.

The considered questions

12517	Уважаемый глава Восточно-Казахстанской области...Собираетесь ли Вы "пересесть" на авто отечественных товаропроизводителей? Если да, то в какие сроки Вы планируете это сделать?
	Answers to the questions
8019	Мой служебный автомобиль импортного производства приобретен два года назад, до поручения Президента поддержать казахстанское машиностроение. Как только закончится срок эксплуатации - сразу же пересяду на «казахстанца». Акимы городов и районов и начальники областных управлении ездят на автомобилях отечественного производителя «Азия-Авто».
12555	В Курчатове одно учреждение здравоохранения - городская больница. В "скорой помощи" работает только один автомобиль УАЗ, просим Вас оказать содействие по выделению на нашу больницу еще одного автомобиля (машины скорой помощи).
	Answers to the questions
8052	Касательно санитарного автотранспорта для КГКП «Городская больница г.Курчатов» ГУ «Управление здравоохранения Восточно-Казахстанской области» сообщает, что приобретение автотранспорта будет предусмотрена в 2013 году при выделении средств из местного бюджета.
12556	Добрый день, уважаемый Бердыбек Машбекович! у нас молодая семья, пока воспитываем только одну доченьку 1 год 3 месяца, стоим в очереди на получение места в детском саду. скажите пожалуйста, в каком году будет строится детский сад в нашем городе (Шемонаиха) и на сколько мест?
	Answers to the questions
8031	В области развивается сеть дошкольных учреждений. функционирует 178 детских садов, при школах работают 1142 мини-центра. Общий охват детей дошкольным образованием составляет 94,8% (58029 детей), по сравнению с 2011 годом (86,0%) охват возрос на 8,8 %, в сравнении с 2010 годом (71,9%) охват возрос на 22,9%, в сравнении с 2009 годом (59,8 %) возрос на 35,0% . В Восточно-Казахстанской области в целях реализации программы «Балапан» на период с 2010 по 2012 год: - Построено 8 детских садов на 2010 мест, возвращены 15 зданий детских садов на 2005 мест, реорганизованы 19 школ в комплекс детский сад на 1030 мест: открыто 11 частных детских садов на 1210 мест, выкуплено 3 здания на 275 мест, восстановлены 2 здания на 190 мест. В Шемонаихинском районе работает 8 детских садов,19 мини-центров при школах, в которых воспитывается и обучается 1720 детей. В 2013 году планируется возврат детского сада на 280 мест, в 2014 году строительство детского сада на 280 мест.
12560	Какого состояние дел по больницы села Глубокого? Будет ли она сдана в намеченные сроки?
	Answers to the questions
8027	На территории п. Глубокое генеральным подрядчиком ТОО «Кумаров и К» ведется строительство центральной районной больницы. Заказчик строительства: Управление строительства ВКО, технический надзор: ТОО «Облжилкомхозстрой», Авторский надзор: ТОО «ПИИ «Семстройпроект». Кроме этого на объекте имеются 3 субподрядные организации. На данный момент идут свайные работы, заливка монолитных ростверков, монтаж фундаментных блоков, укладка систем водоснабжения и канализации, так же ведутся работы по разбору старого здания больницы. На строительстве работают 82 человека, на разборе 12 человек. Со стороны акимата Глубоковского района принимаются все меры по сдаче больницы в намеченные сроки.

Questions endorsed by the Government

2. **Online meeting with the Minister**: On the web-site, comprehensive regulations are given to set up the appointment with the Minister such as a citizen must register on the platform web-site. The following procedures are to undertake while registering for the online conference: a user selects a public institution, gets acquainted with the schedule of the public servant, selects the date, and indicates the contact information and preferable location, where he would participate in the video conference. The web-administration reserves the right to refuse the request of participation in case the seats are filled or the questions of the citizen are not under the competences of the head of the public authority referred. A citizen receives the final confirmation about the appointment of the meeting via e-mail during one working day.

3. **Through the discussions about the projects aiming at developing e-services**, citizens are offered to participate in the development of various e-services initiated by the government. In particular, in this section the list of planned initiatives are posted with the following information: the title of the project, discussion start time, estimated date of the proposed initiative to enter into force, content of the initiative, detailed description of the procedures of the implemented project. It is remarkable that citizens can express their opinions on each project and propose the government their initiatives.

Online discussions about the Governmental Services on the Platform

The description of rules of participation is given on the e-resource. Also, it is defined that the administrator moderates all comments of citizens. Moreover, it is stressed that web-administration reserves the right not to publish particular comments.

4. **Blogs of the members of the Executive Government:** in the mentioned section, blogs of all high officials are integrated. Kazakhstan high officials write their posts concerning the ongoing developments in the country. This fact illustrates their readiness to build up direct contact with citizens, share their views and receive citizens' feedback concerning the ongoing processes. Along with the blog posts, the biography, position and competencies of each public authority are given, which enables users to send online questions. In addition, the number of sent and published questions is available.

Information about the Minister of Defence on the Kazakhstan Platform: Biography, Blog-Posts, Number of questions

5. **Electronic Mail:** the service offers users to communicate with every public institution via email. Such service offers a citizen to contact with the Ministry via the integrated service as all e-mails are in one format and the user does not need to search for the definite email address of the ministry.

Apply

| Conditions and agreements | Application | Confirmation | Status of application |

Your name: [   ]   E-mail [   ]

Blog: [▼]

Category: [Select the category   ▼]

Application text

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Next

Form of A letter to the Prime Minister of Kazakhstan

Study of civil engagement oriented services, demonstrated the main goal of the mentioned e-portals/ resources is to develop effective communication tools between citizens and the governmental officials, exchange their views and involve the stakeholders in the policy planning. The cooperation between the parties is even more simplifies by the fact, that through creation of common platform, users can easily navigate and obtain desired information. Most importantly, in order to achieve higher transparency, posted comments, including statistical data about how many initiatives were forwarded by citizens, how many have been discussed, considered or rejected, are published on the platform. This will enhance confidence and create greater motivation for engagement among users.

ESTONIA

For ensuring citizen engagement in decision making process, Estonia provides web-page www.osale.ee, which is managed by state chancellery. The home page of the mentioned platform notifies that the web site has four major aims:

- To submit ideas and suggestions to the government;
- To collect signatures for supporting certain ideas;
- To express opinions about draft projects;
- To elaborate legislative and strategic documents.

There are two main initiatives displayed on the portal. First one is addresses of citizens to the government with their ideas. In this section each user can submit his/her idea about any issue. Together with describing the idea, user also indicates category and searching terms. This way it becomes easier for the users, as well as for the government, to find and analyze ideas.

Under special section, web page administrators publish the description of the idea, name of the initiator, date of submission and the deadline for collecting signatures. Every user can share the idea, which is interesting for him/her: each idea is provided with the share button. This idea can be shared on social networks and via e-mail.

Citizens can support the idea by voting for or against the initiative, as well as write their opinion about the initiative. It is notable that web page also provides statistical data of the support or objection for each idea receive from the users. Data also display the name of those who support or oppose to the idea. All the comments that citizens post are public and visible.

Most importantly, each idea is provided with the answers section where government posts its own position regarding the idea of the citizen. It is mentionable that providing citizens with the feedback does not depend on the number of supporters. Even the ideas with small amount of signatures get response from the ministries.

Indicator for attention from administrators of web-page is providing statistical data based on the comments and opinions of the citizens. Portal provides the following information: how many ideas were initiated, how many citizens voted, how many ideas were responded by the government and how many of them were satisfied.

OSALE.EE

Home > View ideas

Take the time to celebrate the National Day of days in the history of English

Andres Laiapea
Entered: 18 February 2013
ended Responses

Print
Send invitation

| View ideas | Record | For answers | Comments (1) |

I propose to take up in July each year to celebrate the national day deadline for the English history, which could match the birthday of Carl Robert Jakobson (July 26, OS. Jul. 14) or close to the day of the week, as the United States celebrated Martin Luther King Jr. Day. This day would stress equality of all people and nations, which also includes the right to have its own history.

Keywords: national anniversaries
Category: Other

Idea of one of the citizens

OSALE.EE

Home > View ideas

Amend the Local Government Election Act

Andres Laiapea
Entered: 25 October 2012
Received 27th December 2012

SHARE
Print
Send invitation

| View ideas | Record | For answers | Comments (0) |

Department of Internal
Entered: 27 December 2012

Attached files: ❓

»2874 Vastus participatory web ideele.pdf (217.33 KB)

Idea of one of the citizens and the feedback of the government

Apart from citizen engagement-oriented services, web-site provides the consultation section. As mentioned above, this platform is managed by the state chancellery and the consultation issues are initiated by the ministries.

In case of each open consultation, page provides the following information:

- Institution which announced the consultation
- starting and closing date of the consultation
- Contact information
- The name and description of the initiative or a strategic plan which was presented on the public discussion. In most cases page provides previously approved and just elaborated plans in PDF format.
- Document with additional information about consultations which explains the issue, sets problems and gives detailed statistical data around the issue. Such information makes the government policy comprehensible for everybody.
- Primary document of the legislative of other type of initiative.

Under separate issues of consultation, registered users are given comment space to express their position regarding the political initiative or a problem. This way it is possible to interact with the public institutions who were the initiators of public discussion and on the other hand, the issue is discussed among the citizens as well.

Consultations Search Tool

In order to simplify navigation, web page provides the e-consultation search tool where users can find discussion around certain issues by indicating particular terms, status (current, complete, closed), issue, institution and date.

BAHRAIN

Bahrain is one of the leading countries according to the e-participation index – it takes the eighth place in UN e-governance ranking system. Bahrain provides different types of services for its citizens using e-government portals, mobile portal, kiosks, national contact center and e-service center. In this case the main focus will be on first two e-services.

On the first page of e-portal of Bahrain special section called "Your Opinion Matters" is displayed, which contains the explanation of governmental policy in the direction of e-participation and e-consultations. Moreover, it is noted that, one of the main objectives of the web–site and general of the state is to raise awareness of citizens in this matter and expand availability of the implemented services.

E-Platform of Bahrain. Marked section "Your Opinion Matters"

This section, first of all, contains detailed information about governmental policy of e-consultations, in particular, explanation of the term "e-consultation", all the challenges around this issue, policy and strategy developed by the government, expected benefits after the implementation of the policy.

In addition, section shows detailed approach of the Government with regard to e-governance. In particular, it highlights government's expectations from the e-governance, for example, getting feedback and recommendations from the interested parties in order to ensure the highest transparency and efficiency in the decision-making process. For this reasons, government offers them numbers of possibilities: public opinion polls, discussion forums, blogs and direct connection with the page administrators for sharing their initiatives.

Administration of the page periodically monitor written comments on the portal and will interact with users. Administrators reserve the right to delete or adjust some opinions, if the author of the comment breaks rules of utilization of the portal. Besides, it is defined for constant users of e-sources, that some of their offers can be used in policy planning process. In most cases, web-site administration publishes consultation results.

At the same time, web-page specifies all type of suggestions that government gets from citizens, particularly, consultations on the issues that need some improvements, offers, opinions or new ideas. E-consultations are open, except if government wants to get references from the specific group about specific policy. In case of the latter web-page administration utilize special electronic tools to communicate with this focus group for their suggestions.

Besides the description of the general policy, web-page provides users with the main procedures of e-consultation. It contains six stages:

Publication of the documents: Consultations about some issues are published on governmental portal. The application includes following data:

- A brief description of the issue;
- Possible impact of the issue on citizens;
- Information about decision makers;
- Schedule of consultations;
- Recourses needed for the effective participation;

Section "Your Opinion Matters"

Rules of usage of electronic resource and appropriate language are defined for users. These rules will contribute to creating healthy public discussions, constructive criticism and culture of active debates. It also is explained how citizens will benefit from active involvement on the platform and expressing their opinions about every topic. Finally, in most cases, the age of the group from whom the administration is waiting initiatives and responses is determined.

Raising awareness about the issue: For broader involvement of the society, government spread information about published consultations by using television, radio, magazines, conferences, different web-pages and blogs. Information shortly describes the issue, importance of public involvement in discussions about the topic, agenda of the consultations and expectations.

Collecting Feedback and Responses: Together with making the issue public, administration of the E-resource is monitoring received suggestions and comments. The most important is providing answers to the questions of citizens in time. Interesting initiatives will be examined by the Government.

Analyzing Proposals: Government considers proposals shared by citizens and selects ones which can be useful in decision-making process. After making the final decision, government sends citizens the final results and status of their initiatives.

Communication and Publishing Results: Government publishes decisions by using appropriate online devises.

Closure and Archive: For each initiative, after successful completion of online-communication, discussion is finished and following information is archived:

- Original description of the issue and Evaluation
- Documents and Communication system created especially for the topic
- Decisions made regarding received proposals
- Statistical Data: number of participants and responses of the citizens
- Emerged challenges/problems during the consultation period and measures taken to resolve them.

The sequence of procedures can be changed according to the actuality, needs and peculiarities of the topic.

Besides, government offers citizens the following electronic services for e-consultations:

- Blog of the e-government: here, different officials working on the issues of e-governance are writing posts about future services implemented by the government and about future plans. Moreover, almost in all posts, authors encourage readers to express their opinion about the topic. And bloggers systematically react on comments, opinions and questions asked by the citizens. Also, it is possible to rate responses of the administrators (buttons: "like"/"don't like"), so user can evaluate the level and comprehensiveness of feedbacks received from one or another public officials.

> **Information Security**
>
> Dr. Zakareya Ahmed Al Khaja, Director of Policies and Business Processes Re-Engineering, eGovernment Authority
>
> The eGovernment Authority successfully applied an information security plan in several stages over a period of 18 months, and achieved the internationally Recognised ISO 27001 certification on the 19th, October, 2010. This achievement makes the eGovernment Authority of the Kingdom of Bahrain, the first GCC eGovernment to receive the ISO 27001 certification. Currently through its various channels, the eGovernment Authority implements a strategy that ensures delivering the best services with the highest security level to all clients. ISO 27,001 certification highlights the Authority's determination to keep improving processes in order to provide the best services and support for eServices to the highest global standards. Security is an important priority to everyone and it is my pleasure to take the blog as an opportunity communicate directly with you on all your thoughts and feedback on this topic. I invite you all to participate to have a one on one discussion on any of the following topics that might be of interest to you: • **Citizens trust level, and concerns on eGovernment Authority** • **Confidentiality of the data which is entered by the users through the eGovernment Channels** • **Cyber Threats and Security Procedures** • **The criteria and measurement used to ensure the security and privacy**
>
> Posted by Zakareya - 27-04-2011 18:58
>
> **Add Comment**

Blog post written by the one of the member of the Government

Among the topics raised on portal for discussion, the following issue is significant: "New strategy of e-governance (2011-2014)", which states that government was creating a long-term strategy for implementation of e-services. Citizens were given unique opportunity to express their opinion, make suggestions to the government and participate in formation of this document. Obviously, government of Bahrain took into consideration opinions of ordinary citizens while creating the strategy of e-governance. Moreover, monitoring of the comments of citizens showed that administration of e-resource was not only reading all initiatives, but was answering as well. This once again demonstrates openness and readiness of the government to listen to citizens and take into account their opinions.

By : anonymous - 3-11-2010 12:33

Dear Mr. Alqaed, Thanks a lot first of all for your work. I would like to know if the eGA is planning to create a public data bank akin to data.gov or data.gov.uk, and with it a plethora of APIs to access government services.

> Blog Owner Reply : We thank you for your pro-activeness and appreciation of such leading edge developments in the field of e-Government. We at the eGA have considered such functionalities as part of our 2011-14 e-Gov strategy and will offer a range of APIs & data sources enabling users to create their own mash-ups

Did you find this comment useful? (2), (2)

By : anonymous - 5-9-2010 12:00

أخ محمد يعطيكم العافية ، بدأت فى استعمال الخدمات الإلكترونية مؤخرا بعد رؤية إعلاناتكم فى الانترنت وأنا الآن استخدم خدمة فاتورة الكهرباء والماء بصورة مستمرة كما واستعملت ولأول مرة خدمة تجديد رخصة القيادة ووصلتنى خلال أيام معدودة إلى باب البيت (وداعا لمخلصى الإجراءات الحكومية والعشر دنانير)، أعتقد أن أقوى وسيلة لنشر ثقافة الحكومة الإلكترونية هى (نصيحه مجرب) ، أصبحت سفيرا للحكومه الالكترونية بين أقربائى واصدقائى وبدأوا هم ايضا باستعمال الخدمات الالكترونية ، لكم جزيل الشكر والتقدير – سلمان سلمان

> Blog Owner Reply : الله يعافيك يا أخ سلمان، حقيقة شاكر لك مشاركتى تجربتك مع الخدمات الإلكترونية .. نهتم ونستفيد ونفرح كثيرا بآرائكم وتجاربكم .. أكرر شكري الجزيل وأتمنى التواصل معنا

Did you find this comment useful? (3), (3)

By : anonymous - 28-8-2010 13:20

I can not understand why i seem to be "Violating The Laws of the Kingdom of Bahrain" when all it is that am trying to do is use Google's language tool in order to help me translate a website from German to English. Can someone please assist me with this matter?

> Blog Owner Reply : i tried it and it worked. can please send your contact details to my email ceo@ega.gov.bh and i will let someone contact you to make sure resolve the problem.

Did you find this comment useful? (2), (2)

By : anonymous - 23-8-2010 2:24

Dear Mohamed, Thanks for the great effort.We want to reach a day that I dont leave home or office to do gov. paper.Anyway, I just want to ask, do ou follow any best practices in Service Management? If you do,what methodology you are following? If you are not then a project to start such kind of thing will be exactly what you need. It will make sure all services are controlled and monitored and there are Service Owners looking always for improvements,ITIL is one of those great frameworks to apply

> Blog Owner Reply : Dear Sender, Thank you for your note and suggestion. I'm pleased to inform you that we, at eGA, are implementing many best practices as well as adhering to a number of international standards. Precisely and to address specifically your suggestion regarding monitoring & control and services improvements, we are indeed adhering to the Information Technology Infrastructure Library (ITIL) framework and the Capability Maturity Model Integration (CMMI). We have built an in-house Service Delivery Lifecycle (SDLC) based on ITIL, CMMI, Project Management Institute (PMI) and International Organization for Standardization (ISO). The SDLC helps us manage the eServices and projects from the inception throughout the rollout and support.

Consumer's reactions and answers of the Administration about the e-consultation strategy

▪ **Customer's online survey:** There is a section for public opinion polls on the web-site. Polls generally refer to applications and services implemented by the Government. In this way, government is able to understand whether citizens are satisfied with the services provided by them. At the same time, government checks the quality and efficiency of the implemented services.

Customer's Opinion Poll

It is noteworthy that, together with current survey, it is possible to see results of the past surveys.

- **Form to reach government on e-governance portal:** Citizens can reach page administration and government by filling the contact form. Most notable is that, they specify the type of message: comment, complaint, question or proposal. Also, citizens note the service, to which their opinion or question is connected. Such categorization is beneficial for both sides. First of all, it is easier for public bodies to sort delivered letters and distribute them among the responsible departments. This is reflected on the quality and speed of the provided feedback for citizens. And such format makes easier for costumer's to elaborate their own comments or questions.

Form to reach Government on Web-page

In addition, on the web-page, the number of days, necessary for government to provide appropriate response on the messages and requests send by citizens, is specified that are.

▪ **Online chat** – Online chat service is quite important, as citizens can get online consultation. It is notable, that e-resource specifies consultation days and hours.

▪ **Subscription** – Users are able to indicate their e-mails, after what they will constantly be updated about news of the web-page and their e-mails will be added to the administration contact list.

▪ <u>**Mobile Portal**</u> - The government of Bahrain is actively using Mobile Applications. In particular, citizens can use 55 services on their mobile phones. Those services are weather broadcast, information about aircraft routs, results of school exams, different communal bills, information about mailing packages, registered complaints in public institutions and etc.

Mobile Portal

Web-page includes detailed guidebooks for using each application. To understand the rules of services utilization is very simple, as guidebooks contain not only narrative but also visual materials. Users can watch video, which is created for demonstrating the importance of using implemented applications in easy understandable visual format. It seems that government supports the distribution of integrated and established services. It is important for them to make these services popular and raise the awareness of citizens.

▪ **Feedback on Mobile Portal of E-Governance:** This section lists the implemented services by the government, and users registered on the portal can evaluate each of them. This way government is informed how citizen are satisfied with the developed innovations and what kind of problems and flaws appeared after their realization. That kind of attitude demonstrates government willingness to monitor and improve effective operation of their services.

Innovations connected to e-consultations in Bahrain, shows that government's main goal is to provide citizens with various types of services easily and quickly. And most importantly citizens are able to openly express their opinion and attitude towards these services. Moreover, government developed communication strategy according to the initiatives of the society. This approach increases opportunities for achieving the set goals of the project and indicates creation of citizen-oriented policy.

Finally, one more important fact should be marked. Administrators of the Bahrain e-portal, always answer the comments of citizens. As a result, it is clear that provision of feedback is essential if government wants to create mutual, intensive and effective communication with society. Moreover, representatives of society confide government when they encounter openness of the officials towards the comments and remarks of citizens. In this case, users of e-resources are guaranteed by government that their initiatives will be discussed and they will be informed about the final decision.