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Competitiveness Programme

PEER REVIEW NOTE

Enhancing Public Service Delivery for the Private Sector in Kazakhstan

1 April 2016, Astana

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KAZAKHSTAN REGULATIONS FOR COMPETITIVENESS PROJECT

The OECD Kazakhstan Regulations for Competitiveness Project aims at enhancing Kazakhstan's competitiveness through better regulations and institutions. The project began in December 2011, with the financial assistance of the European Union and the Government of Kazakhstan.

Within the framework of the project, the OECD Eurasia Competitiveness Programme and the Government of Kazakhstan established six working groups to enhance public service delivery for the private sector in Kazakhstan. The OECD Eurasia Competitiveness Programme, with contributions from international experts and peer reviewers of selected OECD member countries, carried out data collection, analysis and consultations with stakeholders in Kazakhstan to identify businesses' priorities for enhancing private sector competitiveness, using the "Life Event Strategy" approach (defined on page 5).

This peer review note makes recommendations for how Kazakhstan could further consolidate the implementation of a Life Event Strategy. It was developed in close collaboration with policy makers of Kazakhstan, international experts and other relevant stakeholders. This note was peer reviewed on 26 November 2015 at the OECD Eurasia Competitiveness Roundtable. The Roundtable is a policy network for sharing knowledge on the implementation of competitiveness reforms, and brings together high-level representatives and technical experts from Eurasian countries, OECD member countries and partner organisations.

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ACRONYMS, ABBREVIATIONS AND GLOSSARY

Acronyms and abbreviations

BISAM	Business Information, Social and Market Research Centre
CJM	Customer Journey Map
ECP	OECD Eurasia Competitiveness Programme
GDP	Gross domestic product
LES	Life Event Strategy
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
P2C	Peer-to-peer capacity building
USD	United States dollar

Glossary

Customer journey mapping	A process of tracking and describing all the experiences that customers have as they use a government service.
Life event	Specific moments in the life of a typical business during which the business interacts with the administration; for example, creating a business, participating in a public tender or exporting goods and services.
Life Event Strategy	A tool aimed at simplifying the interactions between users and the administration.

KEY INDICATORS: KAZAKHSTAN

Country profile	
Population, as of 1 May 2015 (thousand people)	17 498.1
Gross domestic product (GDP), current USD, 2014	212 250 m
GDP per capita, current USD, 2014	12 276
GDP growth (annual %), 2014	4.3%
Services to businesses	
World Bank Doing Business ranking, 2016	# 41 out of 189 countries
Starting a business (as part of the World Bank Doing Business)	# 21 out of 189 countries
Burden of government regulation (as part of the Global Competitiveness Index)	# 46 out of 140 countries
Share of businesses who are satisfied by their interactions with the government	71%
Multi-channel service delivery	
UN E-government Development Index ranking, 2014	# 28 worldwide, # 6 in Asia
Number of one-stop shops	311

Source: OECD analysis; UN (2014), *E-Government Survey 2014: E-government for the future we want*, http://unpan3.un.org/egovkb/Portals/egovkb/Documents/un/2014-Survey/E-Gov_Complete_Survey-2014.pdf, accessed 7 October 2015; World Bank (2016), *Doing Business 2016, Economy Profile: Kazakhstan*, http://www.doingbusiness.org/data/exploreeconomies/~/media/giawb/doing%20business/documents/profiles/country/KAZ.pdf , accessed 3 November 2015; WEF (2015), *Global Competitiveness Report 2015-16*, http://www3.weforum.org/docs/gcr/2015-2016/Global_Competitiveness_Report_2015-2016.pdf, accessed 3 November 2015.

OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES FOR REDESIGNING GOVERNMENT SERVICES FOR THE PRIVATE SECTOR IN KAZAKHSTAN

Kazakhstan has successfully implemented a range of reforms to improve its business climate and services for the private sector. However, interactions between the government and businesses could be improved further to promote competitiveness and boost private sector development. An innovative approach known as the Life Event Strategy – used in OECD member countries, in particular France and the United Kingdom – helps to make public services for businesses more efficient. This section describes the benefits of this methodology and identifies potential challenges in its implementation in Kazakhstan.

Context: Better government services for the private sector could enhance Kazakhstan's business climate and competitiveness

Kazakhstan has emerged as a dynamic economic and political actor in Central Asia.

1. Over the past decade, Kazakhstan has become one of the world's fastest-growing economies. Its ranking in the World Economic Forum's Global Competitiveness Index has risen from 72nd in 2011-12 to 42nd in 2015-16 (WEF, 2015), and its key macro-economic indicators have all improved. For this economic development to be sustained, however, a key challenge will be to improve the country's competitiveness and business climate. Kazakhstan's long-term target is to join the ranks of the top 30 developed economies by 2050. To achieve this ambition, it will be critical to continue to reinforce the efficiency of its public institutions, as rightly stated in the "Kazakhstan Strategy 2050" (Government of Kazakhstan, 15 December 2012).

Kazakhstan has already taken great strides in improving and simplifying its services for businesses

2. The government has recently implemented comprehensive reforms to design, standardise and automate public service delivery. The OECD review of Kazakhstan's central administration documents how the country has strengthened its capacity to provide high-quality services to businesses through various measures (OECD, 2014a).[1] These include reorganising the central administration, creating a registry of public services, simplifying laws and regulations, and creating a specific service of senior executives (Corpus A). Kazakhstan has also recently implemented a framework to involve businesses and citizens in monitoring the quality of public service provision. The government is starting to organise regular user consultations and evaluations of public services; thus both the evaluation of public services and public-private dialogue have improved. Moreover, the government is providing a wide variety of channels for interacting with users, including physical offices, networks of one-stop shops and call-centres. E-government is already well-established in Kazakhstan and is being expanded rapidly. The UN E-Government Development Index ranks Kazakhstan 6th in Asia and 1st in Central Asia. Its global ranking improved from 38th in 2012 to 28th in 2014. Kazakhstan ranks 23rd globally for online service delivery (UN, 2014).

While business satisfaction is high, public services for the private sector could still be better

3. According to OECD data, more than 70% of companies in Kazakhstan feel government services are tailored to their needs and over 50% of companies find it easy to interact with public institutions (OECD, 2012b). However, 25% of businesses are not satisfied with their interactions with the government, mostly because of procedural delays and the high volume of information asked of them.[2] Furthermore, one-third of all surveyed businesses are aware of one-stop shops and electronic

administrative procedures but have never used them (Box 2). For this reason, establishing public-private dialogue and better outreach are still priorities. The OECD regulatory policy review of Kazakhstan confirmed correctly that several measures have been implemented to simplify administrative procedures (OECD, 2014b). Yet there is still a general need for more practical co-operation across government bodies, and increased outreach to external stakeholders. According to the World Economic Forum's Global Competitiveness Index, inefficient government bureaucracy is one of the most pressing issues for the Kazakhstani economy (WEF, 2015).

Overall recommendation: Consider adopting a Life Event Strategy to improve government service delivery to the private sector

4. Governments have various tools at their disposal to improve public services, including public-private dialogue boards, consultation mechanisms, surveys and inter-ministerial working groups. However, the Life Event Strategy is one of the most innovative and comprehensive approaches to making public services for businesses more innovative, efficient and user-focused. Several OECD governments, including France and the United Kingdom, have used the Life Event Strategy to redesign their public service delivery (Box 1).

5. A Life Event Strategy is a user-centric approach to improving service delivery. It is a bottom-up approach that assumes that users often have a more comprehensive and detailed knowledge of government services than the public administration. This tool aims at simplifying the interactions between users and the administration. These interactions are called "life events" as they occur at different stages of the life of a business, from its creation to its closure. They cover a broad range of situations, described as "I obtain public funding", "I pay taxes", "I export", etc.

6. More specifically, the Life Event Strategy provides a framework to help the administration prioritise reform efforts. Using quantitative surveys, governments can identify the most important public services in terms of perceived complexity and frequency of usage by businesses. The objective is to first improve those life events perceived as the most complex and most frequently encountered by users. Each life event is considered as a separate building block that can be reformed independently, with its own timeline. This ensures maximum flexibility, allows governments to focus their limited capacity to reform and generates impacts early on.

7. Further to this, the Life Event approach is a consultation and information-collection mechanism. User experiences are analysed through in-depth qualitative interviews. All the main issues faced by users during an interaction with the administration are described step by step in a systematic way from the perspective of the user, and with a focus on bottlenecks (e.g. lack of clear information, duplication of requested documents, etc.). In this way, sound public-private dialogue underpins this user-centric reform, builds trust between users and the public administration, and gives a voice to users in remote areas.

8. The Live Event Strategy also promotes inter-ministerial co-ordination. Through a resource-light co-operation mechanism (referred to as an "agile approach"), public institutions can improve both the content of a service and its delivery channels (such as physical delivery, one-stop shops, call centres, e-government, mobile services, etc.). Redesigning public services for businesses to ensure greater coherence among several government institutions can be done gradually, beginning with a small pilot at relatively low cost. The pilot should then be upscaled and adapted to other levels and contexts.

Box 1. Experiences with Life Event Strategies in OECD countries

In France in 2008, the General Secretary for Modernisation of Public Action (*Secrétariat général de la Modernisation de l'Action publique*, SGMAP) launched a Life Event Strategy for businesses, called "*Dites-le nous une fois"*. Its impact has been impressive: in 2008, 77% of enterprises were encountering difficulties in export-related administrative procedures. Three years later, after the adoption of the Life Event Strategy approach to refine public service delivery, only 45% of business mentioned such difficulties.

In the United Kingdom, the government launched a Life Event Strategy for citizens, called "Tell Us Once", in 2007. In that context, the Department of Work and Pensions, simplified and centralised administrative procedures for reporting births and deaths of citizens. Prior to 2007, in the public sector alone, a family had 44 contacts over three months to get the services it need. These were reduced to one following the implementation of "Tell Us Once".

In Portugal, the Life Event Strategy was applied to public services provision by one-stop-shops. All the transactions related to a single event are resolved through a consistent protocol called Integrated Services. The approach was launched in 2008, focusing on a few life events (e.g. "I lost my wallet", "I am settling a house" or "I am having a child").

Source : OECD.

Challenges in implementing a Life Event Strategy methodology

9. Implementing this innovative approach in Kazakhstan will mean addressing several challenges at the onset:

- ***Weak inter-ministerial co-ordination.*** A life event typically involves various public institutions that are not necessarily well co-ordinated. Many government agencies and state-owned enterprises provide public services, but their co-operation with ministries is often limited. While several inter-ministerial commissions and councils do exist at a high level, collaboration at the working level is limited. As a result, the same administrative document can be requested many times by different institutions. Furthermore, the various delivery channels are not always coherent, leaving businesses with conflicting data or requests for information.

- ***Lack of a coherent framework for prioritising policy reforms.*** The Government of Kazakhstan has established a strong basis for service standardisation but does not necessarily have a mechanism to identify businesses' priority needs. For example, while a number of reforms are being made to automate administrative procedures as part of the e-Gov initiative, they do not always simplify the procedure itself, which is often a priority concern for businesses.

- ***Difficulties in seeking user feedback.*** The overall policy monitoring system is not sufficiently efficient. Policy evaluation is mostly done by public administrations, but without including businesses' experience and feedback at each step of the process. In addition, Kazakhstan's large geographical area and low population density[3] can make it hard for all types of users' voices to be heard, especially in remote areas.

- ***Inflexibility in policy making.*** The policy-making process in Kazakhstan is formal and does not encourage testing of innovative ideas. Most policy issues are managed through long-term frameworks that require complex approval processes at a higher level. The use of pilot approaches is limited. This system provides few incentives for exploring new approaches and opportunities, or allowing for experimentation and failure at the operational level.

Notes

[1] Recent efforts also cover public services to citizens. As an example, in May 2015 the President of Kazakhstan announced the creation of the public corporation "Government for Citizens" with the aim of integrating the provision of public services into the areas of social protection, land issues and personal property. The public corporation is inspired by and modelled on international practice, especially the Canada-Service and the Australian Centerlink models.

[2] As an example, to complete export procedures, businesses in Kazakhstan need to provide 10 different documents, compared to 4 on average across the OECD; customs clearance takes 9 days in Kazakhstan compared to an average of 1.2 in OECD countries (World Bank, 2014b).

[3] People living in rural areas represent 47% of the total population (World Bank, 2014d).

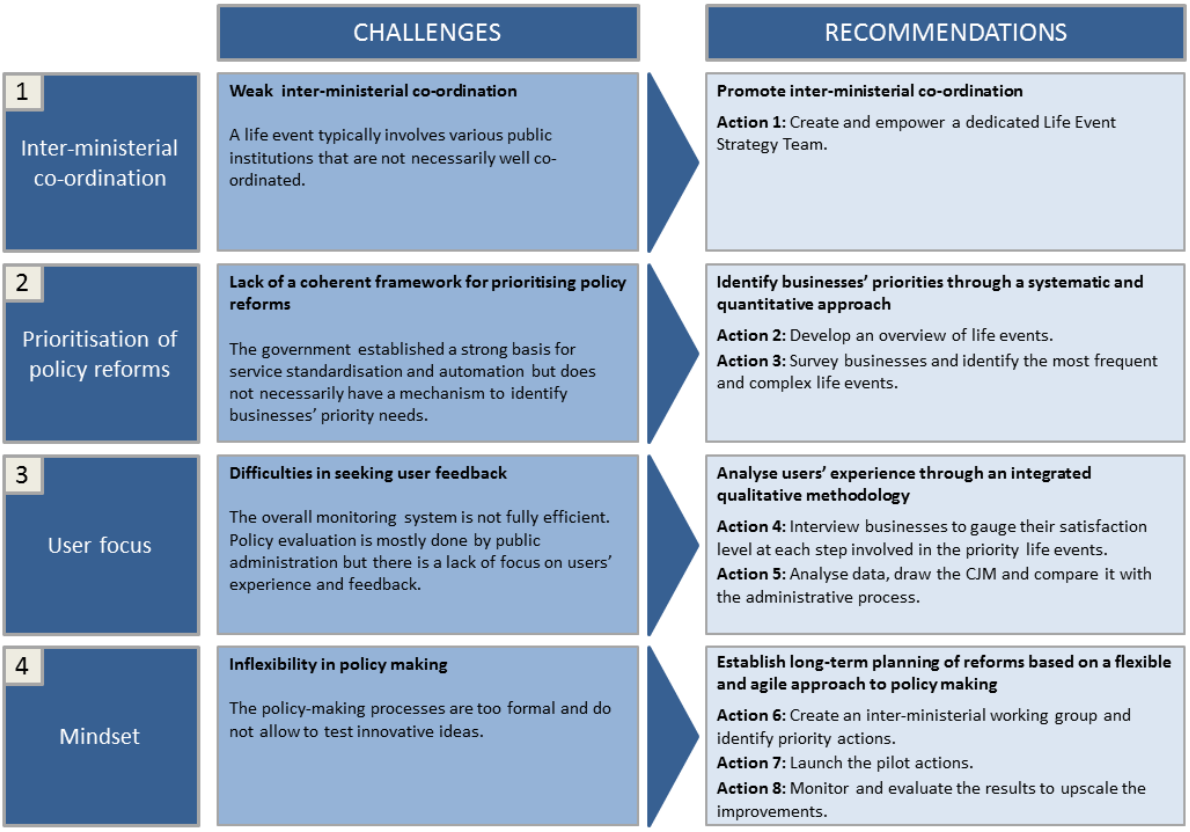
RECOMMENDATIONS FOR IMPLEMENTING A LIFE EVENT STRATEGY FOR BUSINESSES IN KAZAKHSTAN

This section provides the following recommendations to help the Government of Kazakhstan resolve the remaining challenges in delivering public services to businesses:

1. *Inter-ministerial co-ordination:* promote cross-ministerial collaboration in the design, implementation and monitoring of the Life Event Strategy approach.
2. *Prioritisation of policy reforms linked to the Life Event Strategy:* identify businesses' needs through a systematic and quantitative approach.
3. *User focus:* analyse users' experience of the relevant life events through an integrated and qualitative methodology.
4. *Mindsets*: establish long-term planning of reforms based on a flexible and agile approach to policy making.

10. The Life Event Strategy can be implemented through eight concrete actions, discussed below. Figure 1 summarises the main policy challenges and corresponding recommendations for the Government of Kazakhstan.

Figure 1. Overview of challenges and policy recommendations



Source: OECD analysis.

Promote inter-ministerial co-ordination

Action 1: Create and empower a dedicated Life Event Strategy Team

11. Redesigning public services to adopt a Life Event Strategy approach requires setting up a special team in charge of co-ordinating the surveys, interviews and inter-ministerial working groups; suggesting actions; and supporting the implementation of reforms. This dedicated team needs to be hosted by a central body with a cross-government role. In France, this team was hosted by the Prime Minister's Office. In Kazakhstan a dedicated team has already been created within the Ministry of National Economy, but needs to be further empowered. Based on the French experience, this team can be resource-light in the beginning, composed of two or three full-time people, and grow gradually as more actions are implemented and more life events allocated. The role of this team will also include building capacity within the public administrations.

Identify businesses' priorities through a systematic and quantitative approach (business survey)

Action 2: Develop an overview of life events

12. Selecting the priority areas for reform starts by defining and listing the life events occurring throughout an enterprise's lifetime, from creation to closure (e.g. "I start a business", "I innovate", etc.). For some examples, see Figures 7 and 8 in Annex A. The listing process is based on the local experience of companies and is agreed with the ministries and government organisations participating in implementing of the Life Event Strategy.

Action 3: Survey businesses and identify the most frequent and complex life events

13. The final list of life events should be prioritised via a detailed survey of businesses, conducted over the phone. The aim of the survey is to identify important areas for reform to improve public service delivery. This is done by measuring the frequency and complexity of companies' interactions with the public administration at key moments during the life of their business.

14. For each life event, the survey should ask the following questions:

- Has the user performed administrative procedures related to the life event in the last two to three years?
- *If the user has experienced the life event recently*: Were the respective administrative procedures very simple, simple, rather complex or very complex?
- *If the respective administrative procedures are stated by the user as rather complex or very complex:* What constraints did the user encounter? (provide options)

15. Thus the specific objectives of the survey are to answer the following:

- Which life events are most commonly experienced by enterprises?
- Which life events presented businesses with the most difficult administrative procedures?
- Do users' experiences of the most common life events, or life events which raise most administrative difficulties, vary e.g. by region, sector or by size of company?

16. Certain life events might emerge as priorities for reform within a specific category (e.g. type of company, size of company, region, etc.). In Kazakhstan the Business Survey revealed that only 2% of businesses had experienced the life event "I hire foreign employees"; yet of these, one-third had experienced administrative difficulties during this life event (Box 2). Further investigation focused on foreign companies operating in Kazakhstan and revealed that although registering relatively low scores in the overall analysis, the difficulties in hiring foreign employees are a significant obstacle for foreign companies.

17. To deliver reliable results, the survey must be representative in terms of enterprise size, sector, geographical area and origin. It is recommended to ensure a large sample of companies for precise survey results. In order to provide for relevant, accurate and high quality data, only respondents that have recently experienced the life event (two to three years prior to the survey) are selected. Depending on the time and budget constraints, the survey can be contracted to a professional survey company.

Box 2. The Life Event Strategy Business Survey in Kazakhstan (2013)

In 2013, the OECD Eurasia Competitiveness Programme commissioned BISAM Central Asia to survey 1 000 businesses in Kazakhstan to explore their experiences with public services. The survey was carried out between November and December 2013.

The representative sample of 1 000 businesses was made up of both foreign and local companies operating in Kazakhstan. The sample broadly reflected the general profile of companies in Kazakhstan by sector, size and regional location. The sample coverage included Almaty City, Astana City and Kazakhstan's 14 regions (*oblasts*).

The survey revealed that:

- Over 71% of businesses think that government services are tailored to their needs.
- Over half of all medium and large companies find meeting standards easy.
- E-government and one-stop shops are used by 34% and 56% of businesses (respectively).
- One in four businesses is not satisfied with their interaction with the government.

Source : OECD analysis.

18. Prioritising the many life events is essential for efficient reform. Once the survey is concluded, the results are displayed in a prioritisation matrix (Figure 2). Each life event is pinpointed according to the share of users that experienced it in the last two to three years (on the x-axis), and the share of users that found the life event to be complex (on the y-axis). Of particular interest are the life events in the top right corner (see also Figure 9 in Annex A). These are life events commonly experienced by users and, simultaneously, perceived as complex. The prioritisation matrix enables the government to identify critical life events for businesses and prioritise them for reform.

19. In Kazakhstan, enterprises claimed obtaining public finance to be a difficult process overall. Therefore the life event "I obtain public funding/I participate in a public tender" was selected as the top priority for reform government-wide in the framework of the Life Event Strategy pilot project. Four pilot ministries were involved in the project:

1) the Ministry of Agriculture, in charge of reforming the life event "I obtain public funding/I participate in a public tender"

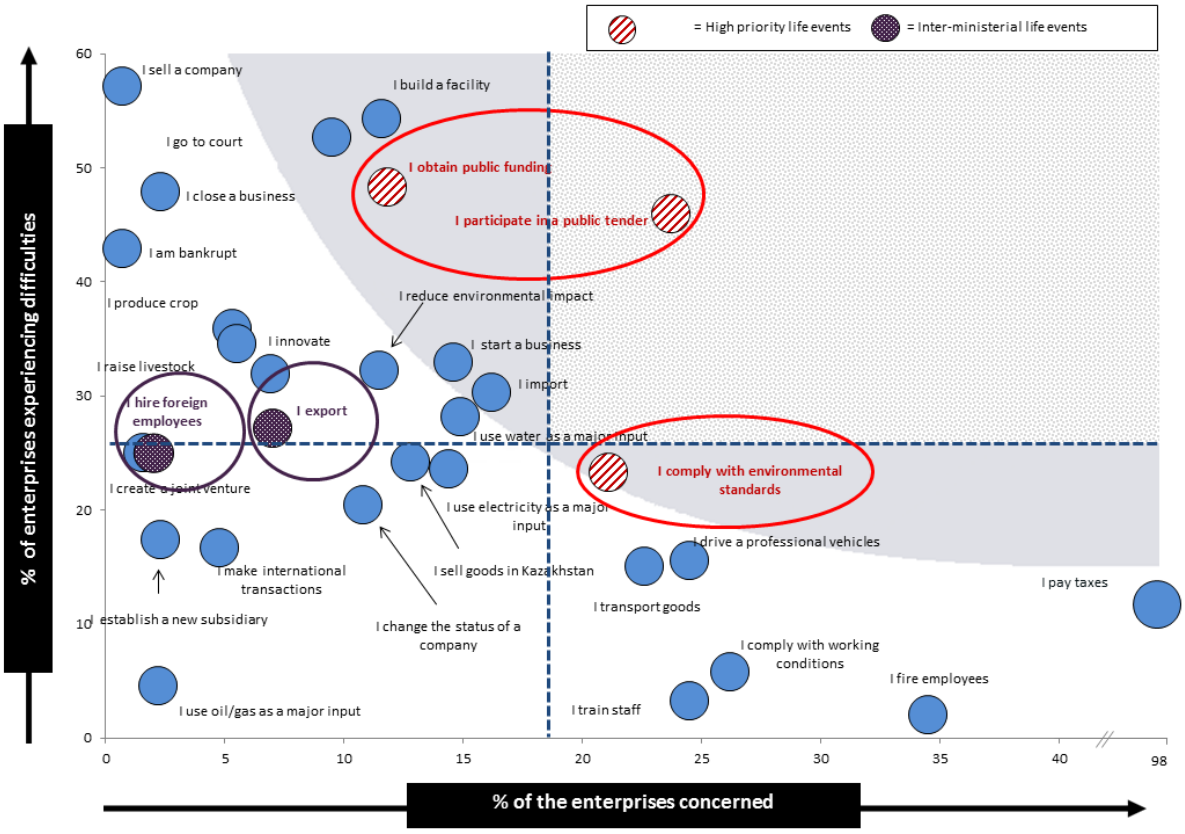
2) the Ministry of Education and Science, responsible for reforming the life event "I obtain public funding/I participate in a public tender"

3) the Ministry of Energy, responsible for reforming the life event "I comply with environmental standards"

4) the Ministry of Investments and Development, responsible for reforming the life event "I obtain public funding/I participate in a public tender".

20. In the case of the life events "I hire foreign employees" and "I export", inter-ministerial working groups were created under the supervision of the Life Event Strategy Team.

Figure 2. Priority life events for reform, as identified by businesses in Kazakhstan



Source: Based on the results of the Life Event Strategy Business Survey in Kazakhstan.

Analyse users' experience through an integrated qualitative methodology (Customer Journey Mapping)

Action 4: Interview businesses to gauge their satisfaction at each step of the priority life events

21. These interviews aim to provide detailed and sufficient practical information in order to draw an aggregated Customer Journey Map (CJM) for each priority life event (Figure 3). The interviews should only involve those businesses that experienced the life event during the year prior to the interview, so as to reflect current procedures. It is sufficient to interview only 10 candidates. Unlike the business survey, which is conducted over the phone and is designed to gather quantitative information on the life events, these business interviews should last approximately two hours and be conducted through face-to-face interviews. Questions relate to the description of each step taken by the company, the time involved, and the documents requested by the public administration.

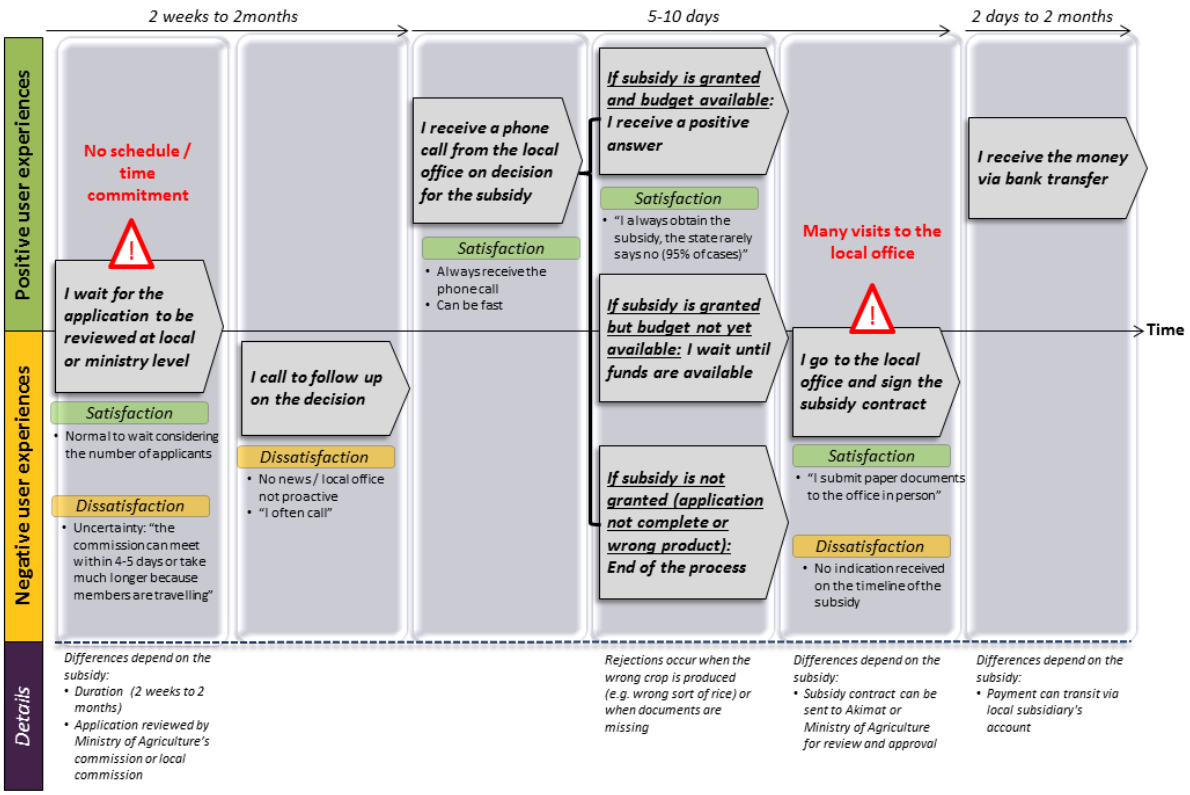
22. At the end of each interview, the user can be asked to suggest possible solutions to overcome any difficulties they experienced. Detailed guidelines for performing the Customer Journey Mapping interviews are provided in Annex A (Figures 11 to 15).

Action 5: Analyse data, draw a Customer Journey Map and compare it with the administrative process

23. The data obtained from the interviews will help map the entire process and visualise the journey from the user's perspective. A typical process flow ("customer journey") is mapped. The Customer Journey Map allows any recurrent difficulty (or satisfaction) at each step of the process to be summarised in a schematic representation.

24. Figure 3 shows an example of a Customer Journey Map. The complete map is included in Annex A (Figures 12 to 15).

Figure 3. Example of a Customer Journey Map for the life event "I obtain public funding for agriculture"



Source: OECD analysis.
Notes: The CJM can be read as follows: *From left to right* it unrolls the chronological evolution of the process. It names each step, indicates the related strengths and/or weaknesses mentioned by businesses, and includes respondents' comments on the delays. *From the bottom to the top* it positions the steps according to the satisfaction/dissatisfaction felt by businesses and provides additional details (e.g. list of documents). The lower a step is located on the map, the greater the user dissatisfaction.

25. The Customer Journey Map is then compared with the same process from the point of view of the government. This is done for each priority life event and serves to provide the entire context. For example, while a public institution might state that a certificate is delivered within 10 days, a company might answer 15 days to the same question. While the administration will deliver the certificate within 10 days, it might take the company 5 additional days to prepare the necessary documents for the application.

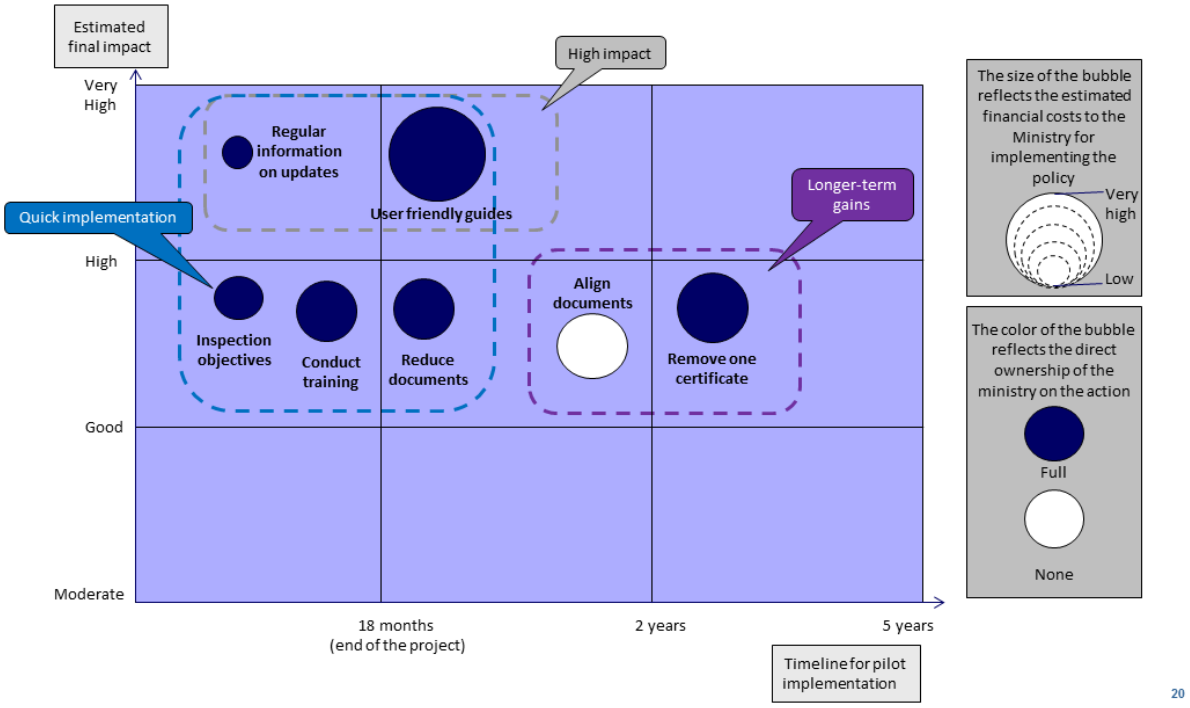
Establish long-term planning of reforms through a flexible and agile approach to policy making (Pilot Action Plan)

Action 6: Create an inter-ministerial working group and identify priority actions

26. Many life events can involve more than one ministry or government agency. Establishing an inter-ministerial working group under the supervision of the Life Event Strategy Team is essential for creating a sound framework for co-operation and for harmonising the actions to be implemented by each ministry and agency.

27. The inter-ministerial working group meets to discuss the CJM steps that had the highest degree of user dissatisfaction, identify the reasons for this dissatisfaction and decide on shared actions to improve the situation. Figure 4 shows how the results are analysed. Actions are plotted on a matrix showing "time to implement" on the x-axis and "estimated final impact" on the y-axis. The matrix is thus divided into "quick wins", "high-impact solutions" and "long-term gains". These can also be evaluated in terms of balancing user improvement expectations with implementation constraints, such as financial and human resources, technical complexity and inter-ministerial involvement.

Figure 4. Example of prioritisation matrix for improving the life event "I comply with environmental standards"



Source: OECD analysis.

28. The prioritisation matrix allows the working group members to agree on the pilot action(s) to be implemented. Actions with a high estimated impact and quick implementation timeline should be chosen first, taking into account the estimated costs of implementation. It is important to combine process simplification along with digitalisation of procedures. The pilot actions that are being implemented in Kazakhstan in the framework of the Life Event Strategy are detailed in Figure 5.

Figure 5. Pilot actions implemented in Kazakhstan in the framework of the Life Event Strategy

Life Event	Ministry	Selected action	Main case study
4 pilot life events			
I obtain public funding for agriculture	Ministry of Agriculture	Create an interactive database of existing grants and set up a single electronic file	France
I obtain public funding for education and science	Ministry of Education and Science	Establish a dedicated unit for businesses in the Ministry of Education and Science	UK
I comply with environmental standards	Ministry of Energy	Implement a user-friendly "how to" guide for businesses to comply with environmental standards	UK
I obtain public funding for investment and development	Ministry on Investments and Development	Improve the information diffusion and automation	France
2 inter-ministerial life events			
I export	Ministry of Finance, Ministry of Investment and Development, National Railway Company, Kaznex Invest, etc.	Redesign customs processes to simplify documents and certificates to be produced by road exporters	TBC
I hire foreign employees	Ministry of Health and Social Development, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Internal Affairs, Akimats of the Oblasts, etc.	Simplifying some requirements and processes to hire foreign employees	Australia, EU, Singapore

Source: OECD analysis.

29. Another important step in implementing the pilot actions is to learn from international good practice. Many innovative efforts to improve public administration service delivery have already been undertaken in other countries. Their experience could serve to inspire and shape appropriate pilot actions to be implemented in the framework of Kazakhstan's Life Event Strategy. Some relevant case studies are listed in Figure 5.

Action 7: Launch the pilot actions

30. The implementation process for each pilot action is detailed in a formal action plan. Action plans include detailed assignments, timelines for implementation and the allocation of tasks between ministries and government agencies (see Figures 16 to 21 in Annex A for some examples). The Life Event Strategy Team co-ordinates implementation, in collaboration with the dedicated working groups. The action plan will also provide for the appointment of a dedicated team in charge of implementing the pilot action.

31. Along with the action plan, the working group will also develop guidelines for implementing the selected pilot actions. These guidelines provide a detailed step-by-step process and build on international experience.

Action 8: Monitor and evaluate the results to upscale the improvements

32. The pilot and laboratory testing involved in the Life Event Strategy represents a process of continuous improvement sequenced in short six-month phases and each with a concrete outcome. The implementation process is closely monitored to ensure it follows the initial targets and answers the specific demands identified by users. It is important to keep in mind the user perspective throughout the entire development of the Life Event Strategy. Once implemented, the pilot actions are constantly improved through users' feedback (see Figure 23 in Annex A).

IMPLEMENTATION GUIDELINES

33. This section outlines some guiding principles for the successful implementation of a Life Event Strategy in Kazakhstan, as well as a proposed implementation timeline spanning 1.5 years (Figure 6).

Key success factors

34. Key success factors for successful implementation include the following principles:

- **Ensure strong political endorsement and raise awareness.** To maximise the impact of the Life Event Strategy, sound, continuous and high-level political support (e.g. from the Prime Minister) is crucial. In France, the "*Simplification Choc*" was launched in March 2013 by the President, including addresses to his government and to the media. Raising awareness at all levels, including within the public administration and businesses themselves, ensures fast and seamless implementation.

- **Start small and scale up**. A major message from the Life Event Strategy experience is that starting with small pilot actions builds momentum for larger reforms. These pilot actions need to be tested in "laboratory mode", exploring new possibilities in a very limited area of work. For example, when improving the life event "I obtain public funding", the government needs to start by simplifying a few public subsidies, concentrating on short-term solutions. Upscaling the simplification measures to other public subsidies needs to be done at a later stage, once the success of the pilot subsidies has been monitored, evaluated and confirmed. At a more macro-level, each life event can be considered as an independent building block.

- **Involve the relevant stakeholders, including the private sector and public servants at national and sub-national levels, at all stages of implementation**. Constant consultation with a broad range of actors is one of the most important elements of the strategy. Working groups should include a wide array of institutions, often at both the national and sub-national levels, as *Akimat*/local offices are often the first contact point for users. Moving from an administration to a user-centric mindset requires continuous testing of ideas and projects with all the relevant people. An iterative feedback process will help to identify and learn from any mistakes.

- **Draw on international experience in policy design and implementation**. International simplification and automation measures can be reproduced in Kazakhstan. This can be achieved through a broad range of instruments, such as peer-to-peer capacity building, bringing in international experts to advise cross-government working groups. Temporary staff secondments can also be a valuable opportunity to learn from other countries.

- **Assess regularly the overall impact of the life event strategy.** Kazakhstan has already made significant improvements to its performance assessment of public organisations. However, the indicators appear to be too numerous, and often focus on outputs and process. To ensure the successful implementation of the life event strategy, it will be critical to regularly evaluate its outcome through user feedback.

Potential extensions of the methodology

35. The Life Events Strategy is a flexible and adaptable approach that can be extended in a variety of ways:

- **Extension to more life events**
  Once applied to those life events considered by businesses as the most frequent and complex, the methodology can then be extended to a second tier of life events that are slightly less frequent and complex. Gradually, the strategy can be used for any interaction between public administrations and businesses: the Life Event Strategy can be developed to underpin a comprehensive sectorial reform or a national reform to modernise and simplify public service delivery across the board.

- **Extension to specific types of businesses**
  The strategy can target a single category of businesses, such as multinational companies, small and medium-sized enterprises, sector-specific companies, etc. For example in Kazakhstan, the life event "I hire a foreign employee" was considered a priority by international companies. A specific inter-ministerial working group was created to work on this life event, involving the Ministry of Health and Social Development, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Internal Affairs, *Akimats* of the *Oblasts*, etc.

- **Extension to other categories of users**
  While this peer review note has focused on a specific type of user (businesses), other user groups, such as citizens, could also benefit from a redesign of public services based on the Life Event Strategy methodology (e.g. for life events such as "I am going to hospital", "I search for a job", "I access basic utilities", etc.).

- **Extension to other scales**
  The strategy can be implemented at the national level by a central administration, but it can also be useful at other geographical levels, such as the local administration (*Akimats*, *rayons*, etc.). At a more macro level, the strategy could be used by other countries in Central Asia to improve public services for cross-border life events (e.g. "I export", "I work in a foreign country").

Figure 6. Proposed timeline for implementing a Life Event Strategy in Kazakhstan

Source: OECD analysis.

ANNEX A: SUPPORTING ANALYSIS

This annex provides additional data and information on the Life Event Strategy methodology and the implementation of the Kazakhstan Life Event Strategy pilot project.

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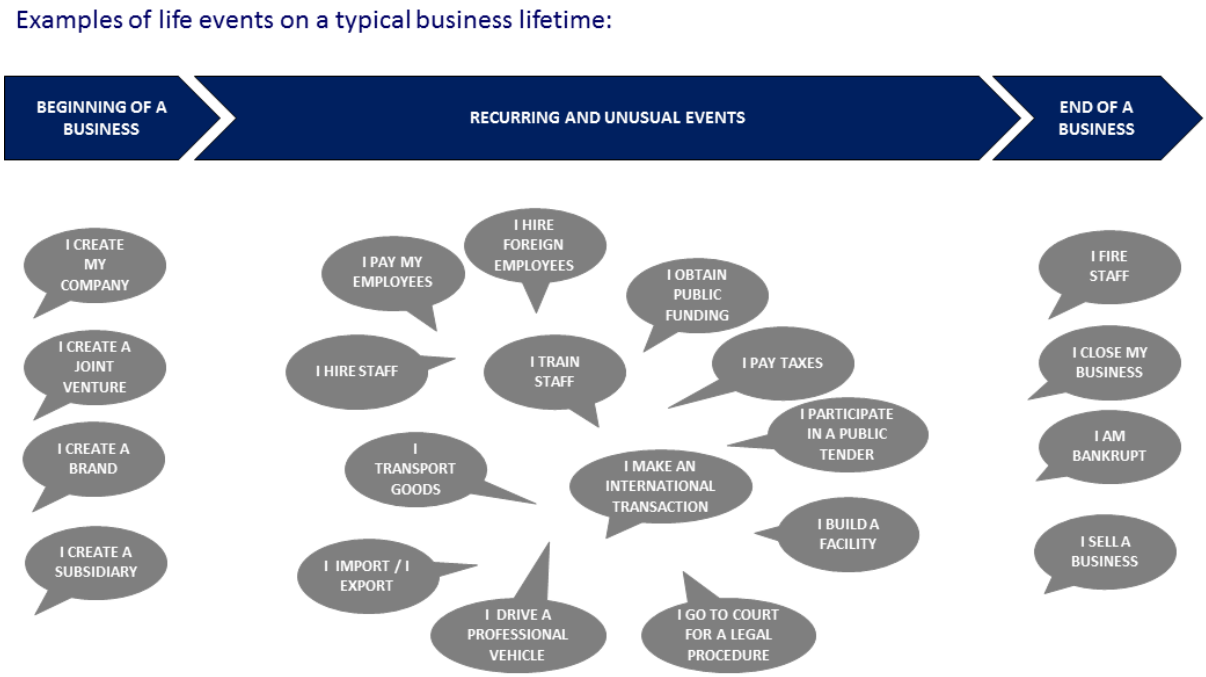
Figure 7. A life event is an interaction between businesses and a public administration



Source: OECD analysis.

Although many life events are common for businesses worldwide, some can be more relevant to businesses in a specific region or country. For example, in Kazakhstan, the life events "I transport goods" and "I drive a professional vehicle" were selected for analysis during the Business Survey (while the life events selected in France are shown in Figure 8). The importance of these life events in Kazakhstan can be explained by the large surface area of the country and the relatively poor infrastructure: although Kazakhstan's land area is almost five times that of France,[1] its road network[2] is 10.7 times shorter than in France.[3]

[1] Own calculations based on data from the World Bank World Development Indicators database.

[2] Total road network includes motorways, highways, and main or national roads, secondary or regional roads, and all other roads in a country.

[3] Own calculations based on data from the International Road Federation, World Road Statistics and electronic files

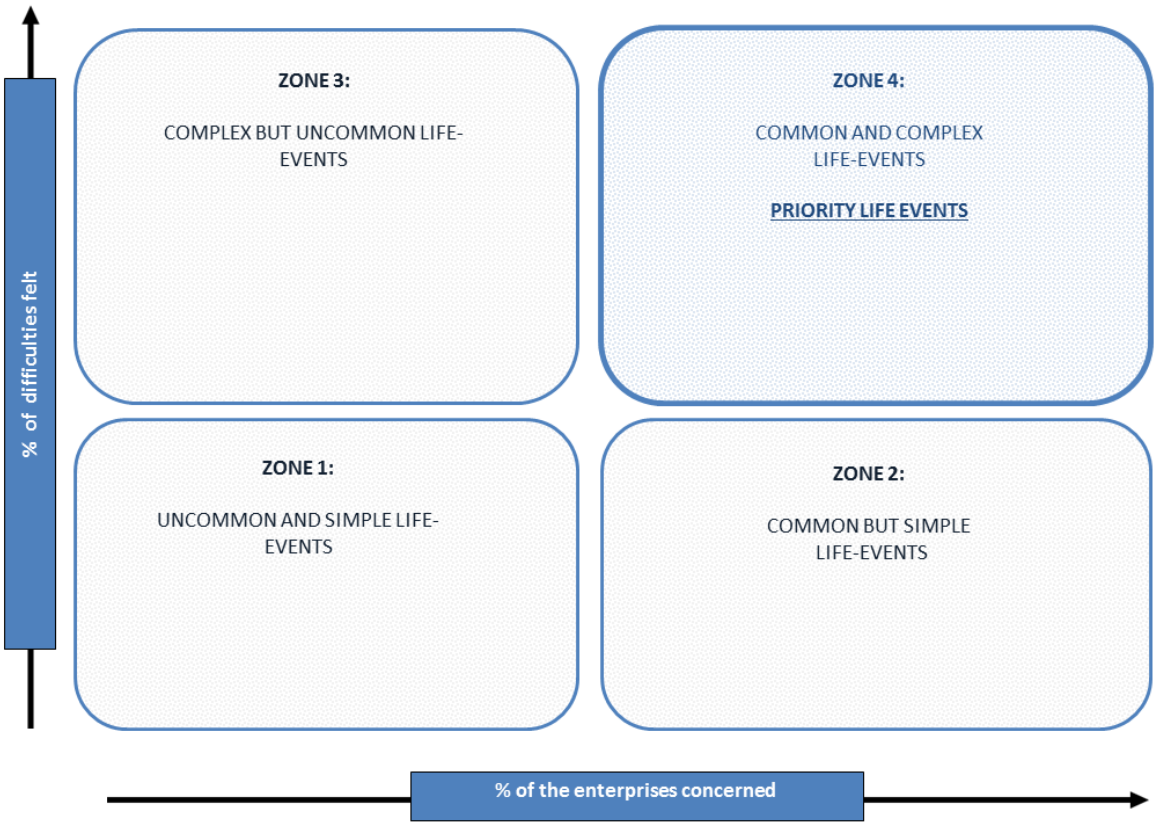
Figure 8. List of life events selected in France for of implementing a Life Event Strategy (2012)

1	I protect the brand	**12**	I pay taxes
2	I sell products in France	**13**	I pay social contributions
3	I participate in a public tender	**14**	I close the accounts
4	I comply with environmental norms	**15**	I pay employees
5	I face a legal procedure	**16**	I apply for public financing
6	I face payment denial/default	**17**	I recruit
7	I create a business	**18**	I train employees
8	I change the business status or I establish a new social headquarter	**19**	I change working conditions
9	I do construction works	**20**	I dismiss employees
10	I import/export	**21**	I buy property/materials for my company
11	I sell the business	**22**	I establish a new subsidiary

Source: SGMAP (2013), *Suivre Pas à Pas l'Usager pour Améliorer le Service au Public*, *Cahiers du SGMAP*, Secrétariat Général de la Modernisation de l'Action Publique.

The first step in implementing a Life Event Strategy is to create a list of life events. France selected 22 life events.

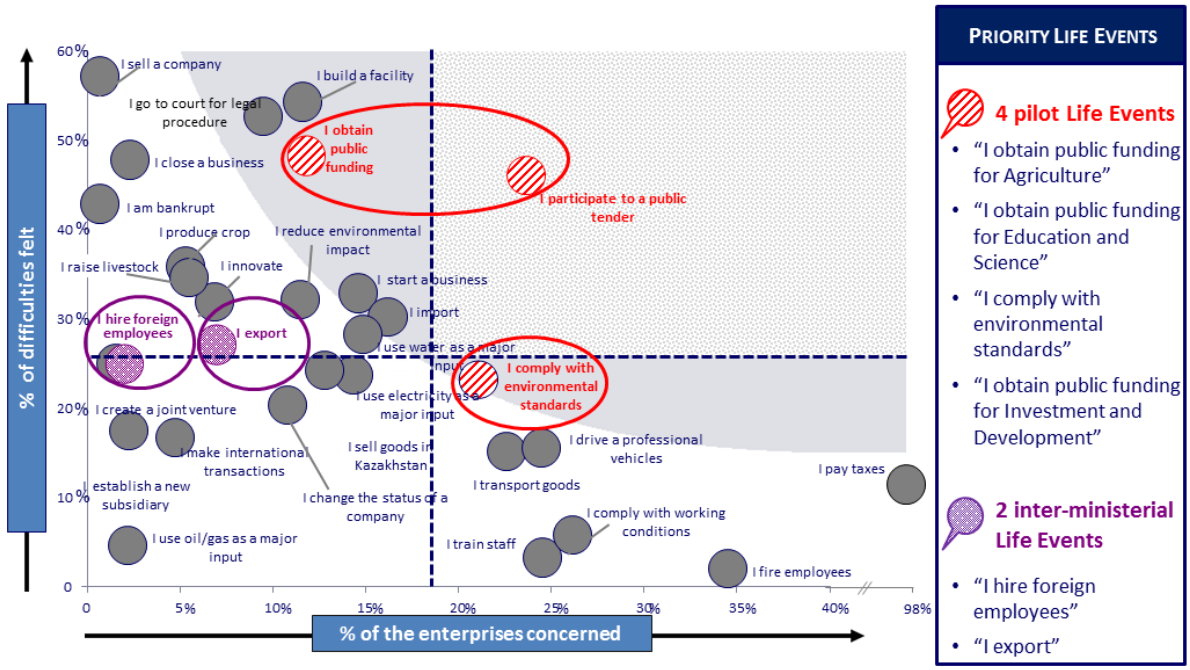
Figure 9. Classification of the life events by complexity and frequency



Source: OECD analysis.

This matrix represents the perceived frequency and complexity of each life event. The priority life events are the most frequent and most complex ones, in the top right corner.

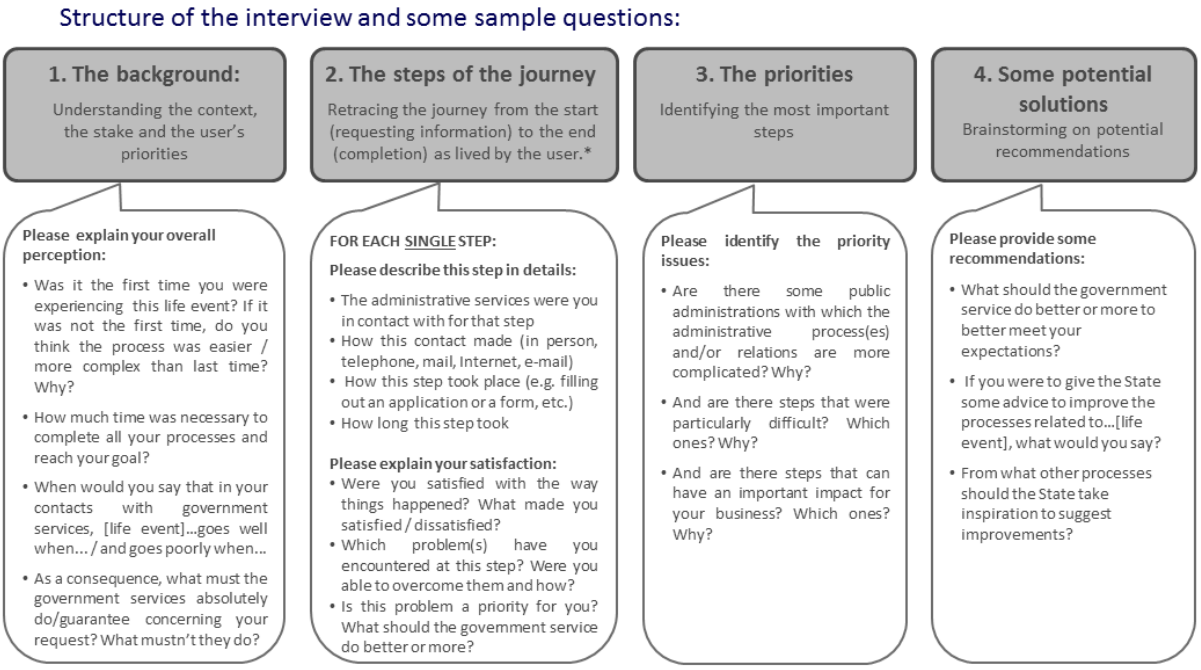
Figure 10. The business survey identifies priority life events



Source: OECD analysis.

The survey helps focus on the most crucial life events: the most frequent and complex ones.

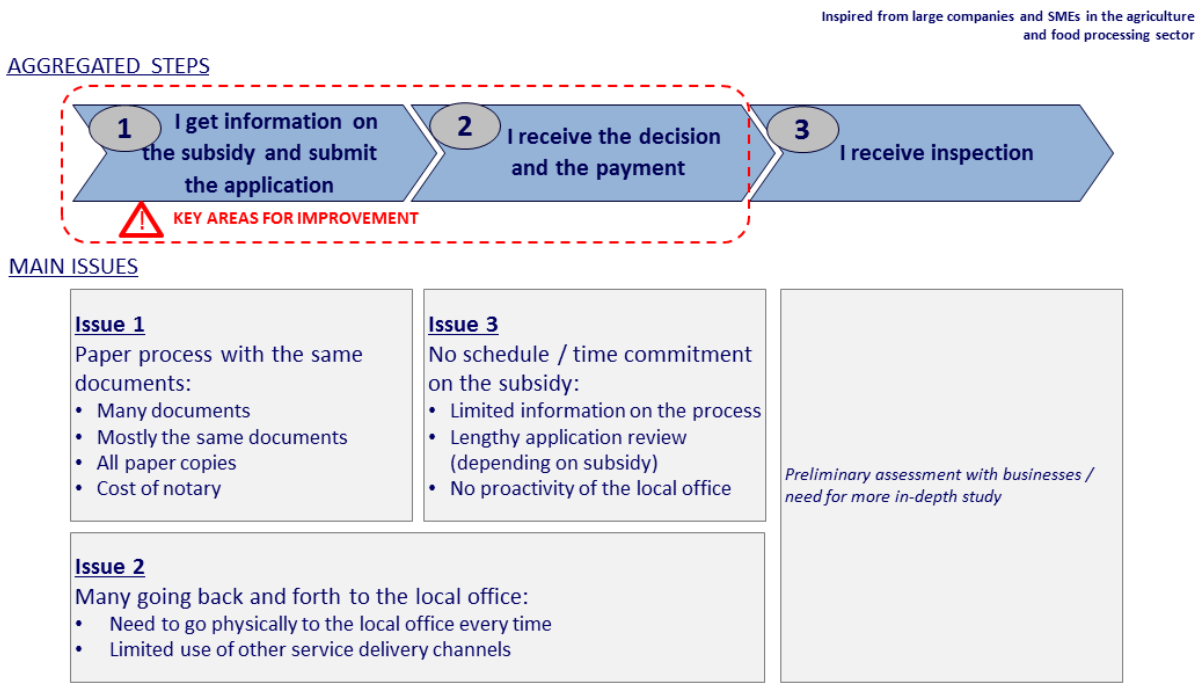
Figure 11. The Customer Journey Mapping interviews identify the background, the steps of the journey, the priorities and potential solutions



Source: OECD analysis.

To gain an in-depth insight into businesses' perceptions, the interviews follow a clear structure and use a few standard questions.

Figure 12. Example of a customer journey map for the life event "I obtain public funding for agriculture"



Source: OECD analysis.

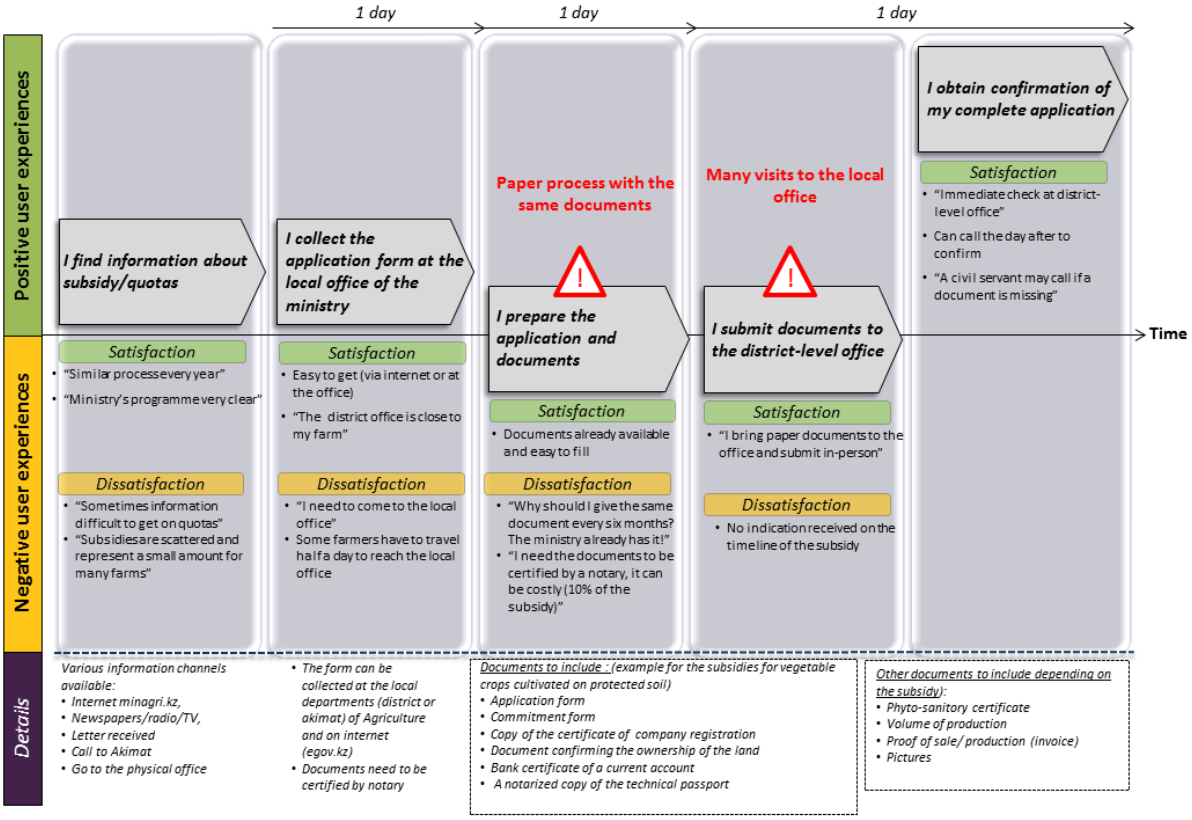
Depending on the complexity of procedures involved, the customer journey map can be divided into separate sub-maps to reflect a series of steps in the process. These aggregated steps can often address specific issues which might be overlooked by a general analysis.

The life event "I obtain public funding for agriculture" in Kazakhstan is divided into three aggregated steps, each mapped in Figures 13 to 15:

1. from getting information to submitting the application
2. from receiving the decision on subsidy to payment of the subsidy
3. inspection and reporting on the subsidy.

Figure 13. Example of a customer journey map: "I obtain public funding for agriculture"

(Step 1/3: From getting information to submitting the application)

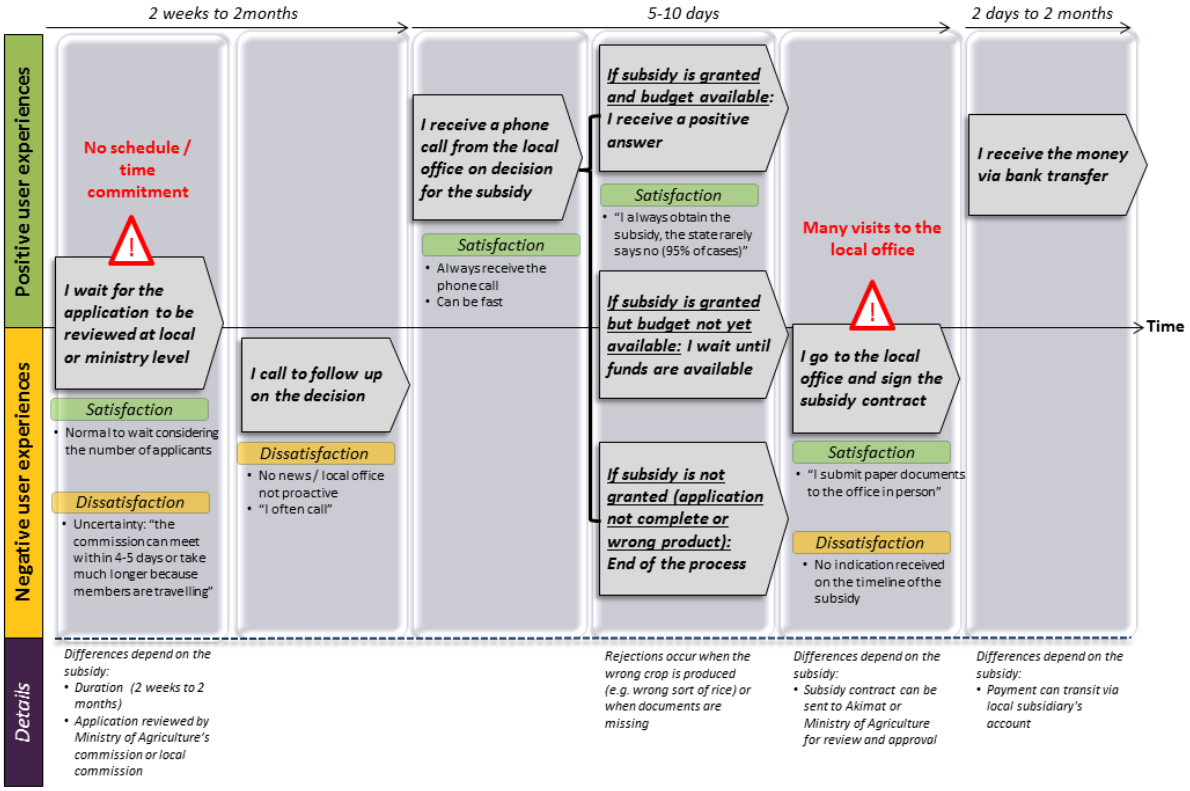


Source: OECD analysis.

The first aggregated step covers the users' experience in finding information on the available subsidies and applying for a subsidy. This step analyses the public service before the actual interaction with the public administration. It can thus be seen that even before the first contact with the public service provider, the users experience difficulties in applying for agricultural subsidies. The main issues revealed for this step concern access to information.

Figure 14. Example of a customer journey map: "I obtain public funding for agriculture"

(Step 2/3: From receiving the decision on the subsidy to payment of the subsidy)

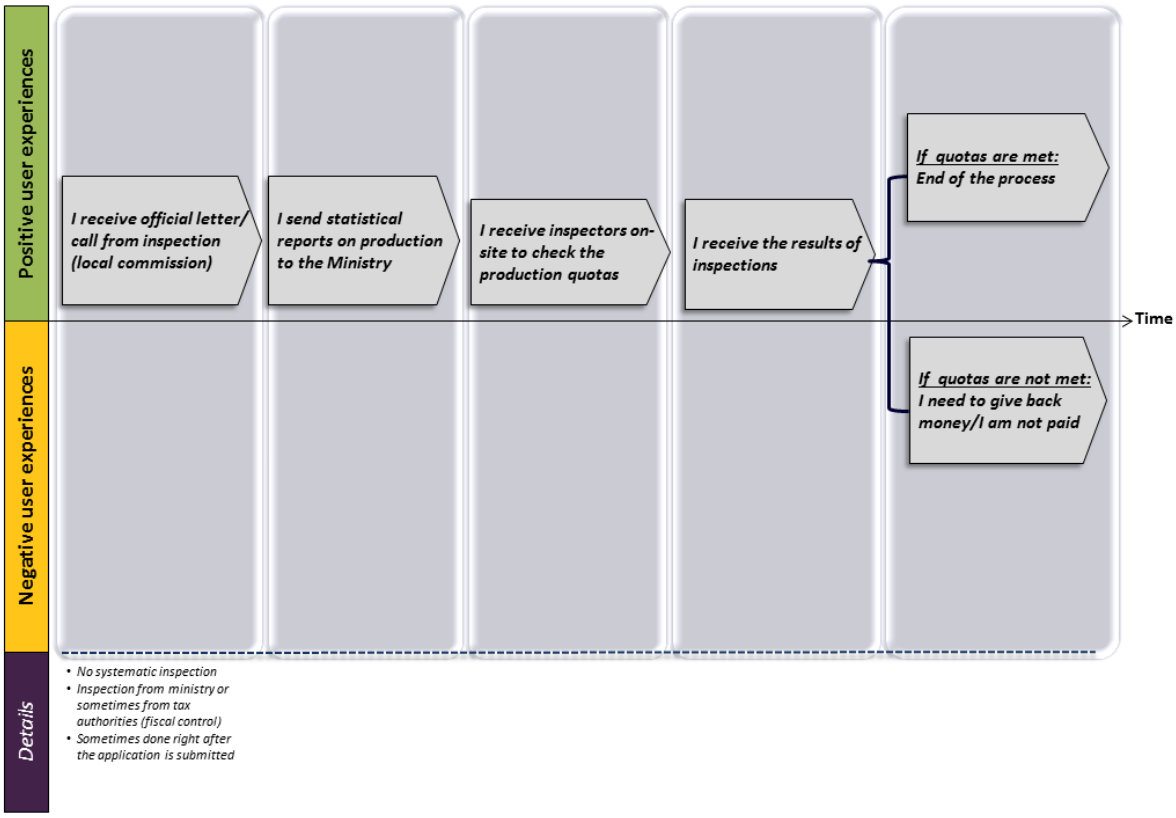


Source: OECD analysis.

The second aggregated step of the CJM covers the users' experiences while the application is being reviewed internally by the administration. This step finds the main issues to be delays and redundancy of procedures.

Figure 15. Example of a customer journey map: "I obtain public funding for agriculture"

(Step 3/3: Inspections and reporting on the subsidy)



Source: OECD analysis.

The last aggregated step of the CJM details the inspections and reporting after the allocation of the subsidy.

Figure 16. Example of an action plan for the Ministry of Agriculture for life event "I obtain public funding for agriculture"

Selected action: Create an interactive database of existing grants and set up a single electronic file

MAIN PROPOSED ACTIONS

1. Develop a database of existing grants

- Collect exhaustive information on all existing public funding (Geographic + sectorial)
- Create the pilot database, with filters for each criteria
- Test the pilot database with a selected group of users
- Launch the final version

2. Develop the Single Electronic File

- Create a project group, with weekly meetings
- For each public funding: identify the requested documents: recurrent ones + specific ones
- Contact other public institutions to integrate the information they already have
- Develop the technical solution: 1. Data sharing + 2. Data request application + 3. Front office linked to the back office
- Test a pilot version with a selected group of users
- Gradually continue to develop the tool with new bricks of data

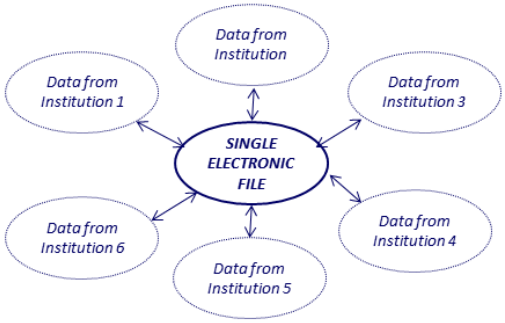
Example of government functions to be involved:
E-gov platform, Taxation Department, E-licensing Department, Legal Entities Department, Inspection certificates , Public finance Department , etc.

Criteria to identify a relevant pilot grant:

- Information is already electronically available somewhere
- High volumes of funding
- Information is complex for the user

EXAMPLE OF RESULTS

- Once data and documents are provided to the public administration, they can be:
  - ✓ **Stored** by the public administration
  - ✓ **Shared** between various public institutions
  - ✓ **Used for future applications** without asking again the same information



- **Businesses will only provide one identification number and a limited number of specific documents.**

Please enter your ID number

5424454558758454 | ENTER

Source: OECD analysis.

Figure 17. Example of an action plan for the Ministry of Education and Science for the life event "I obtain public funding"

Selected action: Create a dedicated unit for businesses within the Ministry of Education and Science (MES)

MAIN PROPOSED ACTIONS

1. Provide specific services of high interest for businesses

Public service delivery

- Assist businesses in applying for public funding
- Answer enterprises' enquiries on the public services provided by the MES and other relevant public institutions.
- Promote the relationship of businesses in education with key foreign and local investors and international organisations.

Education and training

- Inform businesses on available training, VET programmes and specialisation study opportunities.
- Collect information from the private sector on current and future skill requirements, to support the design and update of the education system, occupational standards, academic curricula and VET diplomas.
- Advice enterprises on staff recruiting and development.

Innovation and R&D

- Promote knowledge production and technology commercialisation.
- Be a bridge between the R&D world and the private sector.
- Inform enterprises on innovation and new technology opportunities

2. Further develop a portfolio of services

- Draft thematic analytic reports on R&D worldwide, available innovative technologies, education opportunities, etc.
- Publish business handbooks on how to start a business, recruit and develop staff, develop an enterprise, innovate, etc.
- Reduce red tape by advocating businesses' needs.
- Organise education fairs and promotional events.
- Design and maintain a dedicated website of the unit.

EXAMPLE OF RESULTS

A Unit for Businesses structures and conducts the interactions between the Ministry and businesses on a wide range of topics

Interface and co-ordination within the Ministry

Specific tools: surveys, boards, programmes, events

Co-operation with local education institutions

This unit can:

- Collect the needs of enterprises,
- Better respond to needs,
- Increase the quality and efficiency of interactions,
- Guide the enterprises to the relevant Ministry's departments,
- Reduce the number of contacts of businesses with the Ministry.

Source: OECD analysis.

Figure 18. Example of an action plan for the Ministry of Energy for life event "I comply with environmental standards"

Selected action: Create a user-friendly "how to" guide for businesses in Kazakhstan to comply with environmental standards

MAIN PROPOSED ACTIONS

1. Decide on designing and implementing a book format guide

2. Assign dedicated staff to be in charge of the implementation

3. Decide on the structure and contents of the guide:
- General overview chapter (permits, licences, certificates)
- Chapters with focus on industrial sectors specific requirements
- Technical assistance chapter
- Financial assistance and going beyond compliance chapter

4. Analyse and compile available information on environmental compliance for businesses and draft the guide content

5. Decide on how often to update the guide based on the periodicity of:
- Legal updates in environmental compliance
- User feedback updates

EXAMPLE OF RESULTS

User friendly "how to" guides provide businesses with easy to understand information on the most common environmental standards that must be complied with, along with detailed information on the process to apply for permits.

- "How to" guides focus on the most common environmental standards faced by businesses.
- For all uncommon procedures, contact details are provided directing businesses for more information.
- Information provided is regularly updated, user friendly and interactive.

Example of an online guide Hong Kong's "Environmental Guide for Smart Business"

Source: OECD analysis.

Figure 19. Example of an action plan for the Ministry of Investments and Development for life event "I obtain public funding for investment"

Selected action: Improve information diffusion and automation

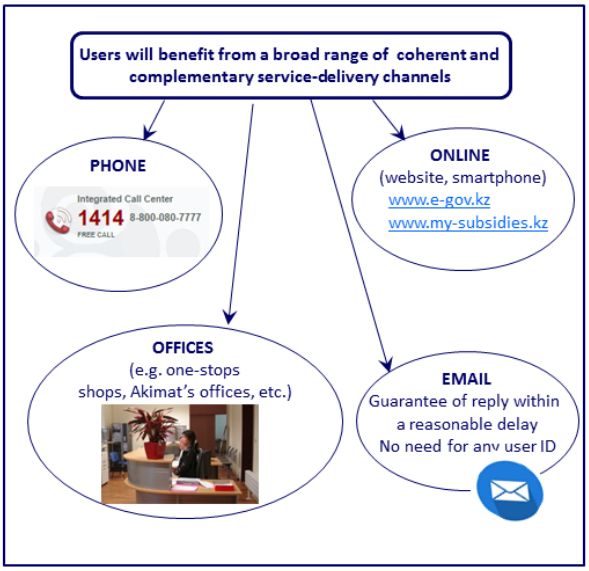
MAIN PROPOSED ACTIONS

1. Develop a database of existing grants
- Collect exhaustive information on all existing public funding (Geographic + sectorial)
- Create the pilot database, with filters for each criteria
- Test the pilot database with a selected group of users
- Launch the final version

2. Develop multi-channel service
- Provide all agents with access to the database (including IT equipment)
- Train all agents to use the database
- Promote a harmonised visual identity through all channels (logo, colours, etc.)
- Co-ordinate a network of involved stakeholders
- Participate in local events where governments and businesses can interact (business associations, etc.)
- Create pragmatic and innovative leaflets

3. Develop the Single Electronic File
- Create a project group, with weekly meetings
- For each public funding: identify the requested documents: recurrent ones + specific ones
- Contact other public institutions to integrate the information they already have
- Develop the technical solution: 1. Data sharing + 2. Data request application + 3. Front office linked to the back office
- Test a pilot version with a selected group of users
- Gradually continue to develop the tool with new bricks of data

EXAMPLE OF A RESULT:



Example of partners to be involved:
All local suppliers of public funding, Local Akimats (oblasts + rayons), One-stop shops, E-gov platform, Chamber of Commerce and Industry, National Chamber of Entrepreneurs, etc.

Source: OECD analysis.

Figure 20. Example of an inter-ministerial action plan for the life event "I export"

Selected action: Redesign customs processes to simplify documents and certificates to be produced by road exporters

MAIN PROPOSED ACTIONS

1. Simplify access to information about exports requirements
- Create a single platform to presents procedures step-by-step
- Allow data-filtering by type of product and destination country

2. Set up a Single Electronic File to integrate all Customs administrative documents
- Facilitate information-sharing between customs offices and other State agencies by ensuring inter-operability of systems.
- Replace all the paper documents by electronic versions

3. Modernise transportation services
- Harmonise the customs systems within the Eurasian Economic Union
- Implement ASYCUDA World for the customs clearance procedures
- Improve trade flows of containers

4. Further promote the Authorised Economic Operator status
- Allow companies that comply with international standards to have "fast track" access to simplified customs procedures.
- Enhance the mutual recognition of this status by partner countries

5. Further involve businesses in Customs reforms
- Create a consultation and dialogue platform to involve businesses in all on-going reforms
- Set up a feedback system to monitor and evaluate the impact of reforms every three months, for example with "mystery-exporters"

EXAMPLE OF A RESULT:

Source: OECD analysis.

Figure 21. Example of an inter-ministerial action plan for the life event "I hire foreign employees"

Selected action: Improve businesses' perception of the new system

MAIN PROPOSED ACTIONS

1. Continue to facilitate the procedures to hire foreign employees

- Encourage the on-going simplification of requirements (reduction of local staff quotas, geographical constraints of working permits, adaptation to a project's life-cycle, etc.)
- Continue to promote one-stop shops and electronic applications

2. Create a clear web-based platform dedicated to hiring foreign employees

- Launch a new online tool to inform businesses about the recent improvements of the application system
- Ensure the platform is visible on search engines
- Advertise the platform on embassies' websites

3. Raise awareness about on-going reform among all relevant stakeholders

- Promote the new system through efficient communication campaigns
- at the national and international level
- Make sure various public institutions convey coherent and consistent messages

EXAMPLE OF RESULTS:

A new online platform can inform businesses about the recent improvements of the application system

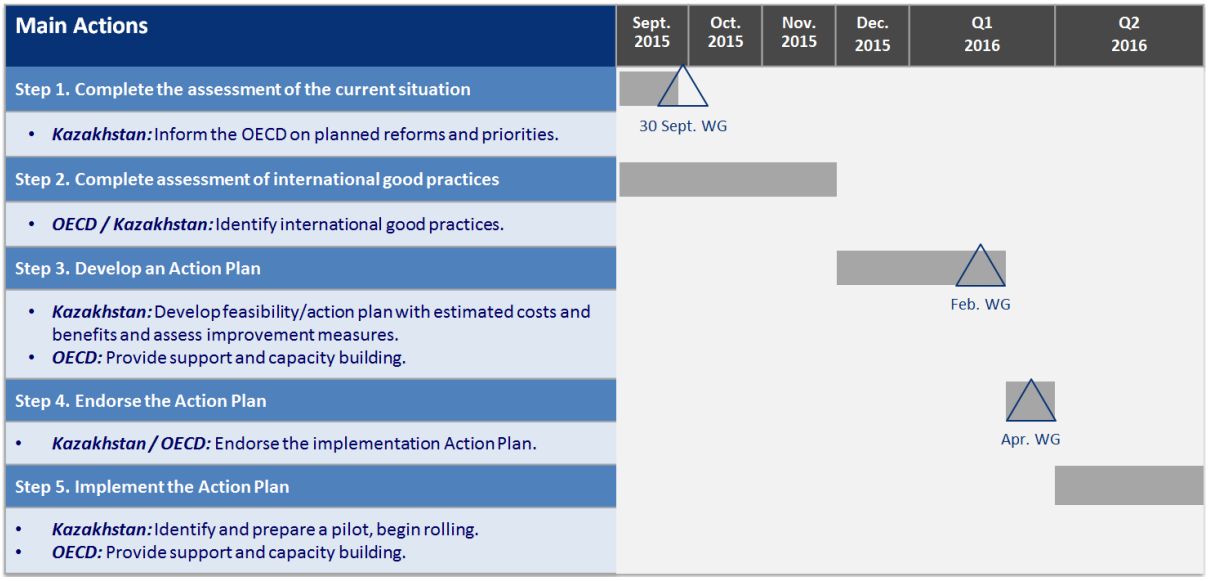
- ✓ What type of visa do I need?
- ✓ How to apply?
- ✓ What documents need to be provided?
- ✓ What are the delays?
- ✓ What are the costs? (if any)

All relevant national and international stakeholders will be informed about on-going reforms of visa procedures

- Involvement of key stakeholders: network of embassies and consulates, Air Astana, Kaznex Invest, Business Associations, international media, international organisations, etc.
- Communication tools: search engines, embassies' websites
- Exposure in highly-visible events: Astana Economic Forum, Expo 2017, etc.

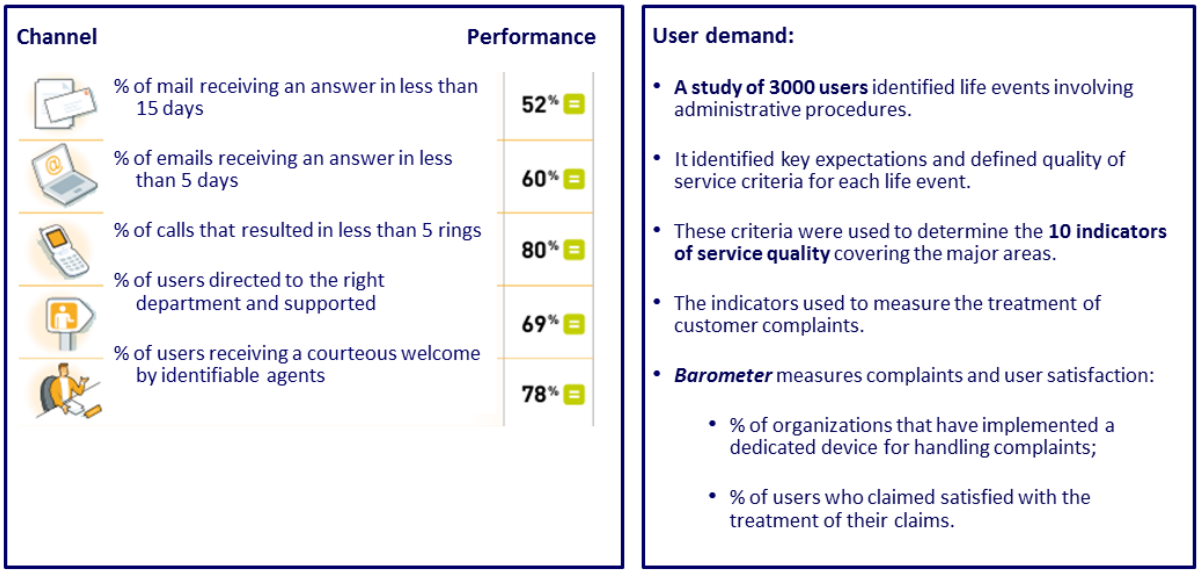
Source: OECD analysis.

Figure 22. Example of a timeline for implementing the Action Plan for life event "I export"



Source: OECD analysis.

Figure 23. A barometer for performance evaluation by users in France



Source: SGMAP (2013), *Suivre Pas à Pas l'Usager pour Améliorer le Service au Public*, *Cahiers du SGMAP*, Secrétariat Général de la Modernisation de l'Action Publique.

The French "Barometer" measures user complaints and user satisfaction with the performance of public administration. Customer complaints are measured by 10 indicators of service quality.

ANNEX B: METHODOLOGY AND PROJECT APPROACH

Within the framework of the project, the OECD Eurasia Competitiveness Programme and the Government of Kazakhstan established six working groups to enhance public service delivery for the private sector in Kazakhstan. The OECD Eurasia Competitiveness Programme, with contributions from international experts and peer reviewers of selected OECD member countries, carried out data collection, analysis and consultations with stakeholders in Kazakhstan to identify businesses' priorities for enhancing private sector competitiveness, using the "Life Event Strategy" approach.

Several missions took place in preparation for the peer review of Kazakhstan:

- **10-27 February 2014**: fact-finding mission to Astana, Atyrau, Kyzylorda and East Kazakhstan to interview businesses using the Customer Journey Mapping methodology.

- **22-25 April 2014:** Working Group meetings of the 4 pilot ministries in Astana to present the customer journey maps.

- **11-14 May 2014:** fact-finding mission to Astana and workshops of the 4 pilot ministries to identify relevant pilot actions.

- **15-20 September 2014**: fact-finding mission to Astana to meet relevant public and private stakeholders and prepare the guidelines for an action plan for the 4 pilot ministries.

- **27-31 October 2014**: fact-finding mission to Astana to meet relevant public and private stakeholders and prepare the guidelines for an action plan for the 4 pilot ministries;

- **8-12 December 2014:** fact-finding mission to Astana and Working Group meetings of the 4 pilot ministries to present guidelines for an action plan and to present French good practice by a French expert.

- **17 December 2014:** launch of the *Kazakhstan: Review of the Central Administration* in Astana.

- **23-27 February 2015:** fact-finding mission, with a focus on implementing the action plan for the 4 pilot ministries.

- **20-24 April 2015:** fact-finding mission on implementing the action plan of the 4 pilot ministries, launch of the *OECD Regulatory Policy Review of Kazakhstan*, and launch of the Working Group on the "I hire foreign employees" life event.

- **10-12 June 2015:** fact-finding mission on the "I export" life event and implementation of the action plans for the 4 pilot ministries, meeting of the Working Group on the "I hire foreign employees" life event.

- **29-30 September 2015:** fact-finding mission on implementing the action plan of the 4 pilot ministries, 3rd meeting of the Working Group on the "I hire foreign employees", launch of the Working Group on the "I export" life event.

This report was submitted for peer review on 26 November 2015 at the third session of the OECD Eurasia Competitiveness Roundtable, a policy network that brings together high-level representatives and technical experts from Eurasian and OECD member countries and partner organisations. The roundtable meets annually and serves as a platform for peer review and knowledge sharing on the implementation of competitiveness reforms in the Eurasia region.

The peer review is expected to help Kazakhstan define further steps for policy reform implementation. In particular, the roundtable discussion was be facilitated by two experts who provided an overview of the current situation in Kazakhstan and insights into the policy experience in OECD and Eurasian countries:

- Ms. Clara Sorin, Project Manager, "Tell Us Once" project, Prime Minister's Office, France

- Mr. Andy Carroll, Expert on the "Tell Us Once" Initiative in the United Kingdom

Progress towards implementating these recommendations will be discussed in two years' time at the 2017 OECD Eurasia Competitiveness Roundtable meeting.

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Enhancing Public Service Delivery for the Private Sector in Kazakhstan

Better government services for the private sector can improve Kazakhstan's competitiveness. Kazakhstan has made great strides recently to improve its business climate and public service delivery. Nevertheless, interactions between the government and businesses could still be improved to enhance competitiveness and boost private sector development. The experience of OECD member countries (e.g. France and the United Kingdom) shows that implementing a Life Event Strategy (LES) can significantly improve the public administration's performance in servicing the private sector.

This Peer Review Note outlines an implementation framework for redesigning public services for the private sector in Kazakhstan. The framework involves focusing on user feedback, small-scale piloting and agile implementation. The ultimate goal is to make public services more user-focused, efficient and simple.

This note was peer reviewed on 26 November 2015 at the OECD Eurasia Competitiveness Roundtable. The Roundtable is a policy network for sharing knowledge on the implementation of competitiveness reforms, and brings together high-level representatives and technical experts from Eurasia countries, OECD member countries and partner organisations.

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