

Conclusions of the Workshop on OIOO and Burden Reduction

on 3 December 2019 in Helsinki

The Workshop dealt with the OIOO and burden reduction measures. It was discussed national approaches and the models to lower or tackle the regulatory burden.

(1) National approaches to tackle the problem vary – and so do the models applied

- Models usually concern national regulation; only direct costs are typically included.
- Benefits, taxes, fees, charges, social security benefits etc. are typically ruled out.
- EU legislation is ruled out or only some of the costs are included.
- Target groups vary: business sector is included, citizens or other groups in some models only.
- There are differences how to organise setting-off between INs and OUTs.
- Primary law drafts are typically included in models, but handling of secondary law drafts varies.

(2) Transparency and accountability of the approach are vital to be recognized by the addressees

- Enterprises usually use a broad definition for regulatory burdens. Approaches for an OIOO rule or to reduce burdens therefore should have a rather broad scope and include e.g. compliance costs.
- Mapping and digitalisation of regulatory burden is one option, enterprises could be better informed about burden.
- Enterprise panel is an option for gathering information.

(3) Models vary – some are simple, some are more sophisticated

- More sophisticated models have a broader scope (administrative burdens, fees, compliance costs, etc.), but are more complicated to use. One option is a multi-level approach to regulatory burden, varying from one law to the next.
- How far does the scope of unnecessary regulatory burden reach? Norms, standards, production regulations etc.
- Is it possible that at some point there is no longer any 'unnecessary' burden?
- Qualitative approach on burden reduction is an option.

(4) Political commitment is vital to ensure consistent application

- Departments typically set off increases in regulatory burden on their own. A whole of government approach (compensation) is also possible, but calls for political commitment.
- OIXO models may lead to 'banking' or 'trading' of outs. Risk of political goals taking priority over regulatory policy goals (though few concrete examples of such behaviour).
- Role of scrutiny bodies is important to verify results of burden reduction efforts.

(5) A change of culture is needed

- It is important to encourage departments to find alternatives to regulation.
- Risk of paying too much attention to OIXO models etc., as other impact assessments and qualitative approaches might be disregarded.
- Vital to understand that better regulation is a key element of good policy making, tools are less important.