

⑦ Stakeholder engagement



KEY INSIGHTS

- Stakeholder engagement is a critical area of GRP which is intrinsically linked to transparency, enhancing legitimacy and trust in government action.
- While the GATS does not cover stakeholder engagement, the SDR Disciplines – similar to many PTAs – contain a defined set of GRPs in this area. These range from publishing draft laws and regulations (or detailed summaries); guaranteeing an opportunity for comments by interested persons; considering the comments collected; publishing final measures with their purpose and rationale; and establishing a reasonable time between the publication of final measures and the date on which compliance is required by services suppliers.
- WTO-World Bank STPD data indicate that 45.6 per cent of surveyed economies legally require publication of draft measures and an opportunity to comment, and 52.7 per cent of these also require the consideration of input collected. However, even in the absence of a legal requirement, many jurisdictions today consult as a matter of policy. Such mechanisms – whether by law or in practice – embed various GRP principles, including leveraging a mix of consultation tools (also online), using plain and concise language, establishing minimum consultation periods, and establishing clear reporting-back systems.

Key features

A high-quality regulatory framework engages all materially affected stakeholders, including services suppliers, consumers, workers and civil society, and gives them meaningful opportunities to contribute to the design and implementation of laws and regulations. A key tool for achieving this objective is well-structured public consultation procedures which strengthen transparency, improve the evidence base, and enhance the legitimacy and compliance of regulatory systems.

“Stakeholder engagement”, as it is often referred to, therefore represents an important area of GRP; it is the process of involving various categories of persons who have an interest in a specific initiative, decision, or action. In the context of services regulation, stakeholders might include services suppliers, investors, government agencies and community members, amongst others – both domestic and foreign alike. The objective of stakeholder engagement mechanisms is to include affected parties in the development of regulation, notably by seeking their inputs, addressing their concerns, and updating them about relevant regulatory developments.

By factoring in different perspectives and interests, stakeholder engagement helps to inform and improve decision-making, delimit expectations, identify risks and consequently achieve higher quality outcomes.¹ The involvement of relevant stakeholders has also been found to encourage innovation and build mutual trust between regulators and those subject to regulation – conferring a greater sense of understanding to regulatory outcomes, thereby also promoting public acceptance and compliance.²

This subsection focuses on stakeholder engagement in the specific context of the drafting and adoption of regulations affecting trade in services. While stakeholder engagement is an important element of and contributes to the objectives of RIA³, it is addressed separately here as it constitutes a participation practice with its own objectives, legal underpinnings and toolset, such as open and targeted consultations, plain language materials, online channels and reporting-back duties; it is often also used in the absence of or outside of RIA. Furthermore, stakeholder engagement also complements the internal coordination among governmental agencies.⁴

Stakeholder engagement involves several elements which are frequently but not always separated in

time. It can start at an early pre-drafting stage, to inform regulators of the various concerns and continue throughout the policy development stage. Typically, the following nine elements are part of stakeholder engagement⁵:

- **Identifying stakeholders:** Determine the relevant stakeholders who will be affected by or have an interest in the proposed regulation. Consultations require the involvement of a variety of stakeholders, with sufficient safeguards to limit undue influence.⁶
- **Planning consultations:** Develop a plan outlining how stakeholders will be engaged, including how information will be shared, groups involved, consultation periods, methods and types of consultation (surveys, meetings, etc.) to be used, as well as objectives. To be effective, engagement will need to take place as early as possible in the policy-making process.⁷
- **Disseminating information:** Publish information (including through gazettes, newspapers, and websites) with respect to (i) the proposed regulation (including objectives and rationale, relevant background materials, etc.); (ii) opportunities and procedures for stakeholder engagement (including which stakeholders can participate, duration of consultation period, managing and consideration of comments, publication and access to comments submitted, etc.); as well as (iii) the authority responsible for the proposed regulation that may be contacted in case of queries. To ensure meaningful participation, information should be provided in a clear and plain way.⁸
- **Gathering input from stakeholders:** Collect comments, feedback, opinions and suggestions from stakeholders. The most common mechanisms for conducting consultations are websites of relevant ministries or regulators, online surveys and polls, focus groups and workshops, public hearings, as well as targeted outreach to specific stakeholder groups (such as business associations). In some instances, consultations are conducted through unified websites where all ministries post their draft regulations, and which provide a platform for stakeholders to submit their comments. It should be noted that highly technical or specialized regulatory areas, such as sectoral regulations, may require more selectivity in consultation than regulatory regimes of wider public interest and impact. In the same way, more contentious areas of regulation (e.g. taxation) may require formal mechanisms for public engagement and maximum transparency.⁹

- **Analysing input received from stakeholders:** Review and analyse the input gathered from stakeholders to understand views, concerns, interests and potential impacts of the proposed regulation.
- **Drafting or adapting regulation based on input collected:** Based on the feedback collected, create or modify the proposed regulation.
- **Providing feedback to stakeholders:** Respond to inputs received by stakeholders, including through consolidated responses; make all comments received publicly accessible and report on the overall result of consultations.
- **Publishing final regulation:** Finalize the regulation and communicate it to the general public, together with an explanation of its purpose and rationale.¹⁰
- **Allowing time frame between publication of regulation and date of required compliance:** Establish a transition period prior to entry into force of a regulation, to allow those affected to prepare and adapt to its provisions accordingly.

GATS, SDR Disciplines and other relevant trade agreements

Stakeholder engagement has emerged as a GRP in recent years. Indeed, the GATS does not contain any requirements on advance publication of laws and regulations before their adoption nor on consultations with stakeholders on proposed measures. Article III:1 merely requires final measures of general application that pertain to or affect the Agreement's operation to be published promptly, and at the latest by their time of entry into force.

Recognizing the value of improving the legitimacy and quality of regulatory outcomes, the SDR Disciplines contain a dedicated set of GRPs on stakeholder engagement.¹¹ While the latter encompass contact and dialogue with stakeholders throughout the rule-making process, the SDR Disciplines focus on the stage at which draft laws or regulations have already been formulated. In other words, they do not require an iterative approach to consultations, with multiple rounds of consultations, including with a view to assessing the ongoing need to initiate new regulatory proposals or modifications to existing laws and regulations.

Out of the nine GRP aspects described above, five are reflected in the SDR Disciplines, namely (i) advance publication of relevant laws and regulations; (ii) reasonable

opportunity for comments; (iii) consideration of comments received; (iv) publication of final measures, together with an explanation of their purpose and rationale; and (v) reasonable time between publication of measures and date of required compliance (see Figure 1).

Advance publication of relevant laws and regulations

The SDR Disciplines require WTO members to publish the following elements in advance:

- Their laws and regulations of general application proposed for adoption, and which relate to covered areas (i.e. measures related to licensing and qualification requirements and procedures, and technical standards); or
- Documents that provide sufficient details about such a possible new law or regulation to allow interested persons and other WTO members to assess whether and how their interests might be significantly affected.¹²

Beyond measures of general application, WTO members are also encouraged to publish in advance relevant procedures and administrative rulings of general application.¹³

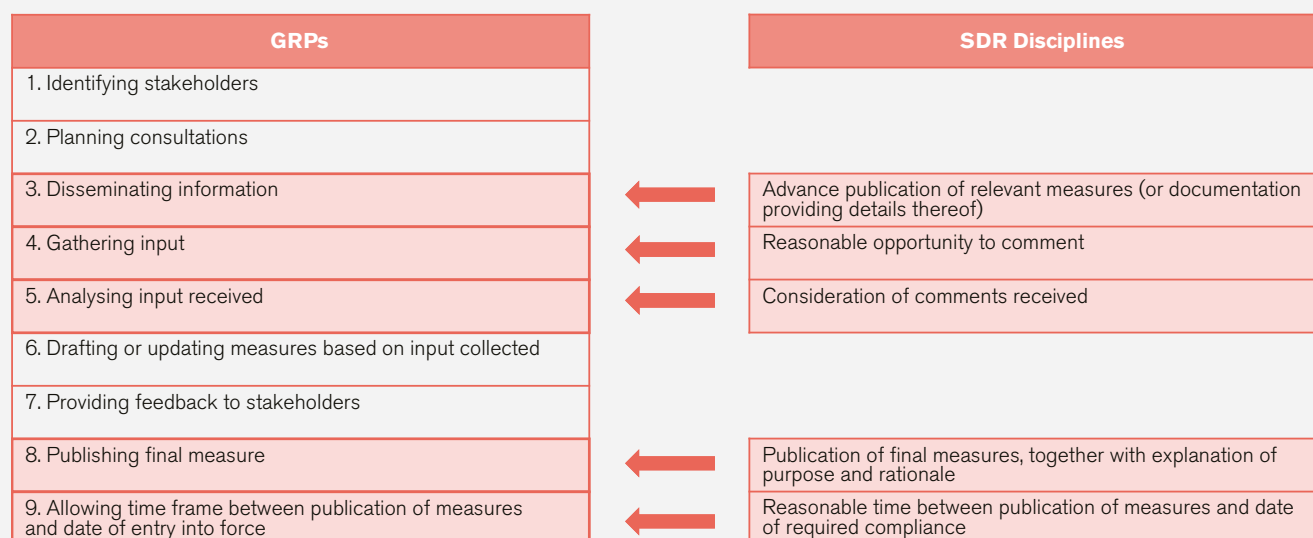
It is also worth noting that, alongside publishing draft texts of laws or regulations, WTO members are encouraged to explain their purpose and rationale.¹⁴ In this context, the term “publish” is defined as “to include in an official publication, such as an official journal, or on an official website”.¹⁵ Overall, the publication requirement is meant to lead to the broad availability of measures, so as to allow all interested persons to consult and get acquainted with them.

Reasonable opportunity to comment

The SDR Disciplines require that WTO members provide a reasonable opportunity to interested persons and other WTO members to comment on proposed laws and regulations, or documents providing details on those measures.¹⁶

The beneficiaries of the stakeholder engagement are identified as “interested persons and other members”. This encompasses both natural and juridical persons¹⁷ which may be affected by a measure. “Interested” persons denominate a broader group than “affected” persons, and includes individuals, groups, or entities

Figure 1: Linkages between GRPs on stakeholder engagement and the SDR Disciplines



Source: WTO/World Bank.

that have a stake, concern, or interest in a regulation, regardless of whether they are directly impacted by it. In addition to services suppliers, it would encompass industry associations, advocacy groups, or academics. It should be noted that, in contrast to most domestic stakeholder engagement processes, the SDR Disciplines also explicitly include foreign governments (“other WTO members”) among the beneficiaries of the public comment procedures.¹⁸

The process for providing “reasonable opportunity” to comment would require authorities to demonstrate a general openness to receiving such comments.¹⁹ This would encompass a reasonable time frame for interested persons to review the proposed measures and prepare and submit their inputs through the established channels. Whether a time frame is reasonable would critically depend on the length and complexity of the proposed regulation; other factors, such as the urgency of the regulatory proposal, and the user-friendliness of response mechanisms may also play a role. A common minimum time frame would be between 30 to 60 days, but shorter or longer periods may be appropriate depending on urgency or on the breadth of impact. Notably, in trade in goods, a Decision adopted by WTO members in the Technical Barriers to Trade Committee (TBT Committee) recommends granting a period of no less than 60 days – and

whenever possible even longer (such as 90 days) – for the presentation of comments on proposed technical regulation and conformity assessment procedures.²⁰

Reasonable opportunity for comment would also require the establishment of easy and accessible methods for submitting comments, such as submitting comments online, via email, or by mail. The possibility of holding focus group discussions and oral public hearings may also be envisaged, depending on the subject matter and level of technicality of the regulation under consideration.

In order to obtain comments from marginalized or under-represented groups, as well as foreign suppliers, authorities may also consider making relevant documents and consultation procedures available in multiple languages, provide accessible formats for individuals with disabilities (e.g. braille, large print, or audio formats), and provide simplified language versions for the public, especially where technical jargon is prevalent.²¹

Consideration of comments received

The SDR Disciplines require the consideration of comments received on proposed laws and regulations or the documents providing details on those measures.²² “Consideration” means that the comments

should have some sort of influence on the final decision. The regulatory authority would not have to adopt specific suggestions, but it should review and factor comments into the analysis. Decision makers should weigh up the pros and cons raised by the public or stakeholders before finalizing the law or regulation.

The SDR Disciplines do not explicitly require authorities to take any outward actions that demonstrate that the comments received have been given due consideration, for example, by requiring authorities to respond to the comments. Neither do they require the publication of the comments, the preparation and publication of summaries, or replies to them.

For a competent authority to consider the comments received would nonetheless require an internal process to:

- Analyse the comments in detail, ensuring that they are understood;
- Assess the relevance and substance of the comments, and consider whether the feedback provides useful information, suggestions, or objections that could improve, adjust, or refine the proposed measure;
- Balance differing opinions and decide which course best aligns with the policy objectives, while taking into consideration the strength of evidence or reasoning behind different viewpoints.

Throughout the process, internal documentation or records should be kept that demonstrate that comments have been considered. This could include notes or reports summarizing the comments received and explaining how they were evaluated.

To allow space for different types of stakeholder engagement mechanisms, the SDR Disciplines provide special flexibilities for such obligations, set out in the terms “to the extent practicable and in a manner consistent with its legal system for adopting measures”.²³ The latter element ensures that the method and process of implementing the obligation must align with the specific domestic legal framework and established procedures for creating laws and regulations. This flexible obligation recognizes WTO members’ varying levels of economic development, administrative frameworks, or resources that may pose challenges to uniform implementation of stakeholder engagement processes.

Publication of final measures, together with an explanation of their purpose and rationale

The SDR Disciplines contain two additional obligations with the objective of ensuring the informed and effective participation of stakeholders in regulatory processes and decisions.

Building on GATS Article III:1 which requires the prompt publication of final measures at the latest by their entry into force, the SDR Disciplines encourage WTO members to explain the purpose and rationale of laws or regulations.²⁴

Reasonable time frame between publication of measures and date of required compliance

Furthermore, the SDR Disciplines provide that reasonable time must be allowed between publication of the text of a law or regulation and the date on which services suppliers must comply with it.²⁵ The objective is to balance regulatory needs for change with legitimate interests of predictability and business continuity for suppliers. What constitutes a reasonable period may differ from case to case, depending on the difficulty and time needed by services suppliers to adapt to the mandated regulatory change. Notably, in the area of trade in goods, the TBT Committee agreed that a “reasonable” period is to be understood to normally mean a period of no less than six months for the entry into force of technical regulations and conformity assessment procedures so producers and exporters can adapt their products to the new requirements, except where such a delay would be ineffective for the measure’s legitimate objective.²⁶

PTA practice

A requirement to have mechanisms in place for stakeholder engagement is incorporated in a good number of PTAs. The elements of (i) advance publication of information on laws and regulations of proposed measures for adoption and (ii) opportunity for interested persons to comment, appear in several PTAs, even predating the SDR Disciplines.

For example, a PTA that embodies these two elements is the 2011 Malaysia-India CECA. This agreement incorporates the requirement for the parties to (i) publish laws, regulations, procedures, and administrative rulings of general application before their

adoption; and (ii) provide a reasonable opportunity, where appropriate, to interested persons and the other party to comment on such proposed measures.²⁷

An agreement which goes further than the SDR Disciplines is the 2018 CPTPP. In the “Transparency” Chapter, Article 26.2 requires the parties to endeavour to (i) publish the proposed measure no less than 60 days in advance of the date when comments can be submitted; and (ii) set out a period which provides sufficient time for an interested person to evaluate the proposed regulation and formulate and submit comments.

Several other PTAs contain obligations that go beyond these two key elements and include a commitment on the “consideration of comments received”.²⁸ In many PTAs, like in the SDR Disciplines, this element is expressed as a best endeavour commitment, such as in the case of the 2020 Indonesia-Australia CEPA,²⁹ the 2020 EU–Vietnam FTA,³⁰ and the 2009 United States–Oman FTA.³¹ Instead, other agreements impose hard obligations on the parties to consider the comments received by interested stakeholders. Examples are found in the EU–Mexico Modernized Global Agreement,³² the 2020 USMCA,³³ and the 2018 CPTPP.³⁴

In contrast to the above agreements, the more recent 2021 United States–Ecuador Protocol has more extensive commitments on stakeholder engagement and goes further than the elements envisaged by the SDR Disciplines. The Protocol recognizes the role of GRPs to support the development of compatible regulatory approaches among the parties, as well as to reduce or eliminate unnecessarily burdensome, duplicative, or divergent regulatory requirements, thereby promoting international trade, investment and economic development.³⁵

The Protocol encapsulates the following elements of stakeholder engagement: (i) online publication of draft regulations, including (ii) an explanation of their objective and rationale; (iii) an opportunity to comment for interested stakeholders; and (iv) appropriate consideration of comments received on draft regulations by interested persons.³⁶ Going beyond the SDR Disciplines, the Protocol further envisages (v) obligations to conduct RIA before and after adoption of measures; (vi) disclosure of the data, other information, and scientific and technical analyses it relied on in support of the regulation, including any risk assessment; (vii) explanation of the data, other information, and analyses that the regulatory authority

relied on as a basis for the regulation; as well as (viii) the name and contact information of an individual official from the regulatory authority responsible for developing the regulation that may be contacted regarding questions before the entry into force of the regulation.³⁷ With respect to the SDR Disciplines, the Protocol is missing only one key aspect of stakeholder engagement, namely allowing reasonable time between the date of publication of a new measure and the required date of compliance by services suppliers.

Several PTAs also incorporate the obligation to allow a reasonable period of time between publication and entry into force of laws and regulations, in line with the SDR Disciplines. For example, Article 26.2 of Chapter 26 of the 2018 CPTPP, as well as Article 14.6 of the 2021 ATISA require, to the extent possible, that reasonable time is provided between publication of regulations and the date on which they enter into effect.

Implementation at the domestic level

At the domestic level, numerous jurisdictions have set up different stakeholder engagement mechanisms. The latter are either set out in a legal instrument – either the constitution or a primary or secondary legislation – or carried out as a common practice. The WTO–World Bank STPD data show that 45.6 per cent of the economies surveyed legally require the publication of measures in draft form and opportunities for comments for interested persons, of which 52.7 per cent also require the consideration of such comments, either in their respective constitutions or in primary or secondary legislations (for another source of data on stakeholder engagement, see Box 1).³⁸ However, elsewhere, such as in Canada or the UK, stakeholder engagement does not exist under a legal mandate. Rather, it constitutes a common practice built on codes of conduct or policy guidance frameworks.³⁹

Across the board, two key trends appear to be developing. First, in recent years, there has been an increase in the use of digital technologies to call for and receive stakeholders’ input, including through online centralized portals. For example, Canada has introduced an online platform to allow stakeholders to engage on regulatory issues, including by participating in polls and surveys, and reacting to comments by other stakeholders as well as consultation administrators.⁴⁰ Furthermore, it appears that governments are expanding consultation periods with a view to enhancing participation.

Box 1: Public engagement in policy making in the World Bank GovTech Maturity Index (GTMI)

Under the GTMI,⁴¹ the Digital Citizen Engagement Index (DCEI) covers various aspects related to public engagement in policymaking. In particular, the GTMI survey asks the following three questions (I-30 to I-32):

- Are there national platforms that allow citizens to participate in policy decision-making?
- Are there government platforms that allow citizens to provide feedback on service delivery?
- Does the government publish its citizen engagement statistics and performance regularly?

The 2022 GTMI update shows that, in recent years, more than 150 governments (out of 198) have worked on their interaction with citizens and have progressively improved their engagement systems. Furthermore, around 50 per cent of jurisdictions have implemented mechanisms or digital platforms to enable citizen feedback. The average [DCEI index](#) appears highest in the South Asian region, followed by East Asia and the Pacific and the Middle East and North African economies. However, only about 30 per cent of the economies publish information or data about the performance of their public engagement platforms, showing that there is room for improvement, especially with respect to transparency and reporting-back procedures.

In light of this, the *2025 OECD Regulatory Policy Outlook* highlights that over 75 per cent of OECD member countries are progressively introducing minimum consultation periods, with 49 per cent providing at least four weeks.⁴² However, the Policy Outlook notes that, across OECD member countries, there is still some space for improvement, notably with respect to better planning of consultations; this includes making information about upcoming consultations more timely and widely available, as well as providing feedback to stakeholders on a more systematic basis, about how their input has been considered. In fact, currently, only 33 per cent of OECD member countries provide direct feedback to stakeholders, potentially dissuading them from participating and making the exercise more meaningful.⁴³

Across OECD member countries, there is also space to make stakeholder engagement more inclusive by diversifying communication channels and involving under-represented groups, thereby avoiding potential undue influence from more resourced stakeholders.⁴⁴

One instructive example is Spain, through its Law 40/2015, which mandates regulatory bodies to conduct consultations through the web portals of competent authorities, even prior to making a regulatory proposal. Article 26 of the Law stipulates that a consultation procedure shall address (i) the problems that are intended to be solved with the new rule; (ii) the need and opportunity for comments; (iii) the objectives of the rule; and (iv) possible regulatory and non-regulatory alternative solutions. The consultation procedure is aimed at giving

potentially affected persons or entities the opportunity to comment on the need for a regulation, how they may be impacted, and whether a solution may be developed without adopting a regulation.

The results of this procedure shape the way an eventual regulatory proposal, if considered appropriate, would be worded and presented to the public. The Law mandates competent authorities to give interested persons sufficient time to comment during consultations, i.e. a minimum of 15 days. The requirements established for the consultation procedure can only be waived in specific circumstances, including where (i) there are serious reasons related to public interest to justify it; or (ii) the proposed regulation does not have a significant impact on economic activity; or (iii) it does not impose relevant obligations on the addressees; as well as (iv) in case of an urgent need to process a regulatory initiative.

Another notable example is Mexico. Pursuant to Articles 69-H and 69-J of Mexico's Federal Law on Administrative Procedures (*Ley Federal de Procedimiento Administrativo*), the government is required to collect comments and feedback on proposed regulations. To this end, Mexico has established a dedicated regulatory oversight body known as the National Commission for Regulatory Improvement (*Comisión Nacional de Mejora Regulatoria* – CONAMER).⁴⁵ CONAMER publishes all regulatory proposals on its website⁴⁶ and provides the opportunity for interested stakeholders and the general public to comment.

This practice ensures that the regulatory authority receives impartial advice on proposed regulations, thereby contributing to improved regulatory quality in Mexico. Over the years, this system has been effective in enhancing transparency, reducing regulatory burdens and fostering a collaborative environment between the government and stakeholders. For instance, the consultation process contributed to reducing regulatory costs from 4.25 per cent to 2.71 per cent of Mexico's GDP between 2012 and 2016.⁴⁷

In South Africa, it is the constitution itself that mandates both the National Assembly and provincial legislature to involve relevant stakeholders in their legislative processes.⁴⁸ As a result, the government has, over the years, set up various mechanisms of public consultation run by State or independent organizations. One such mechanism is instituted by the National Economic Development and Labour Council which provides a platform for stakeholders to negotiate policies affecting labour and the economy, and facilitates consultations between business, trade unions, civil society and the government through its ministries.

A similar role is played in the environmental policy sphere by the National Environmental Management Act. This Act mandates the participation of all interested and affected persons in environmental governance. It requires the government to take into account the interests, needs and values of such persons in decision-making.⁴⁹ For large-scale projects that require environmental impact assessments, the following is required before approval of any measures: (i) conducting a public participation process; (ii) creating a register of interested and affected persons; and (iii) recording the comments of interested and affected persons in reports and plans.⁵⁰

Aside from these statutory and government-enabled channels of stakeholder engagement, non-governmental organizations also play a key role in fostering

stakeholder engagement in South Africa. One such organization that has been operating since 1995 is the Parliamentary Monitoring Group.⁵¹ The Group provides a platform for interested persons to write directly to parliamentary committees on topical issues and other policy and legislative matters. These committees, consisting of relevant ministries and departments, consider the comments which may become a critical source, with influence on national policies.

In conclusion, public engagement in policymaking is integral to trust in government action and a strong signal of good governance. Transparency only delivers its benefits when stakeholders have the opportunity to act on the information made publicly available – not merely view it. For this reason, the SDR Disciplines, like many modern PTAs, include core GRP commitments in this area, notably with respect to publishing draft laws and regulations, guaranteeing the opportunity for comment, considering comments collected, publishing final measures together with their purpose and rationale, and establishing a reasonable time frame between the publication of final measures and the date on which compliance is required by services suppliers. Building on international commitments, many jurisdictions have institutionalized public consultation mechanisms and implemented various other practices, such as using online tools and plain language, establishing minimum consultation periods, and providing a reasonable time period before the entry into force of new laws and regulations. To strengthen this practice further, authorities can engage early in the policy cycle; tailor engagement to different stakeholder groups and improve inclusivity by using a mix of consultation channels and formats (including online portals); establish clear reporting-back procedures showing how input was considered; and keep transparent records of the analysis. Implementing and tracking these steps in a consistent way enhances accountability and improves the quality and effectiveness of regulatory outcomes.

ENDNOTES

- 1 World Bank (2017), pp. 3, 10.
- 2 Johns and Saltane (2016).
- 3 For more information, see subsection 2.12 on “Regulatory Impact Assessment”.
- 4 For more information, see subsection 2.13 on “Domestic Inter-agency coordination”.
- 5 These elements are identified including based on the indicators utilized by the World Bank’s Global Indicators of Regulatory Governance in the area of public consultation.
- 6 OECD (2025).
- 7 OECD (2025).
- 8 OECD (2025). For the requirement to use plain and concise language, see also subsection 2.3 on “Online Publication of Information”.
- 9 OECD (2020), p. 46.
- 10 See AccountAbility (2015), Section 4: Stakeholder Engagement Process.
- 11 SDR Disciplines (WTO, 2021), paras. 14-18.
- 12 SDR Disciplines (WTO, 2021), para. 14.
- 13 SDR Disciplines (WTO, 2021), para. 15.
- 14 SDR Disciplines (WTO, 2021), para. 18.
- 15 SDR Disciplines (WTO, 2021), fn 12 to para. 13.
- 16 SDR Disciplines (WTO, 2021), para. 16.
- 17 The term “person” is defined in GATS Article XXVIII(j) as either a natural or juridical person.
- 18 SDR Disciplines (WTO, 2021), para. 16.
- 19 The GATS requires, in the context of recognition measures under Article VII, to “afford adequate opportunity” for other interested WTO members to negotiate their accession to a recognition agreement, or in the case of autonomous recognition, “to demonstrate that education, experience, licenses, or certifications obtained or requirements met in that other member’s territory should be recognized”. This requirement has been understood to require at least a general willingness to include other members in the recognition process. See Pitschas (2003), 495-564, p. 527, para. 93.
- 20 WTO (2022).
- 21 OECD (2025).
- 22 SDR Disciplines (WTO, 2021), para. 17.
- 23 SDR Disciplines (WTO, 2021), paras 14-18
- 24 SDR Disciplines (WTO, 2021), para. 18.
- 25 SDR Disciplines (WTO, 2021), para. 19.
- 26 WTO (2022).
- 27 India-Malaysia CECA (2011), Article 13.2.
- 28 Note that the agreements cited thereafter may either contain three elements or more of stakeholder engagement.
- 29 Indonesia-Australia CEPA (2020), Article 19.2.
- 30 EU-Viet Nam FTA (2020), Article 13.3.
- 31 United States-Oman FTA (2009), Article 11.8(3).
- 32 EU-Mexico Modernized Global Agreement, Chapter X, Article X.7 (as published on its political conclusion in April 2018 and updated in April 2020 and January 2025, https://policy.trade.ec.europa.eu/eu-trade-relationships-country-and-region/countriesand-regions/mexico/eu-mexico-agreement/text-agreement_en).
- 33 USMCA (2020), Article 28.9.
- 34 CPTPP (2018), Article 26.2.
- 35 United States–Ecuador Protocol on Trade Rules and Transparency (2021), Annex II: Good Regulatory Practices, Article 2.
- 36 United States–Ecuador Protocol on Trade Rules and Transparency (2021), Annex II: Good Regulatory Practices, Article 9.
- 37 United States–Ecuador Protocol on Trade Rules and Transparency (2021), Annex II: Good Regulatory Practices, Article 9.
- 38 Sections 59(1)(a), 72(1)(a), and 118(1)(a) of the Constitution of South Africa mandate both the National Assembly and provincial legislatures to involve the public in their legislative processes, <https://www.gov.za/documents/constitution/constitution-republic-south-africa-04-feb-1997>; Article 10 of the Constitution of Kenya recognizes public participation in its legislative and policy processes as one of its national values, https://www.parliament.go.ke/sites/default/files/2023-03/The_Constitution_of_Kenya_2010.pdf. Additionally, Kenya adopted a specific Public Participation Bill in 2019 to further regulate public engagement, [https://parliament.go.ke/sites/default/files/2019-10/The%20Public%20Participation%20\(No.1\)%20Bill%202019.pdf](https://parliament.go.ke/sites/default/files/2019-10/The%20Public%20Participation%20(No.1)%20Bill%202019.pdf).
- 39 Bteddini (2013); DBT (2023).
- 40 OECD (2025).
- 41 For more information on the World Bank GTMI, please refer to the box in subsection 2.4 on “Single windows”.
- 42 OECD (2025).
- 43 OECD (2025).
- 44 OECD (2025).

45 CONAMER was established as a result of the reform and enactment of the Regulatory Improvement General Law in 2018; see World Bank (2017).

46 <https://www.gob.mx/conamer>.

47 Government of Mexico, "COFEMER puts the procedures, services and regulations of the Federal Government up for public consultation" (in Spanish), press release, 21 June 2017, <https://www.gob.mx/conamer/prensa/cofemer-pone-a-consulta-publica-los-tramites-servicios-y-regulaciones-del-gobierno-federal?idiom=es>.

48 See the Constitution of South Africa (1996), Sections 59(1)(a), 72(1)(a), and 118(1)(a).

49 Government of South Africa, National Environmental Management Act No. 107 of 1998, Sections 2.(4)(f), 2.(4)(g), https://www.saflii.org/za/legis/consol_act/nema1998331/.

50 Government of South Africa, Amendments to the Environmental Impact Assessment Regulations 2014, Chapter 6, <https://www.gov.za/documents/national-environmental-management-act-regulations-environmental-impact-assessment-7>.

51 For more information, please see <https://pmg.org.za/page/what-is-pmg>.



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