



9th annual meeting of Working Group IV of the MENA-OECD Governance Programme: “Better Regulation for Better Lives,” Tunis, March 17-18, 2016

The quality of regulations rests upon its ability to respond to the needs of citizens and businesses. By definition, this can only be achieved if regulations are based on stakeholder engagement in the process of developing and monitoring public policy. The legal security for citizens and businesses is one of the cornerstones for building trust and a State based on the rule of law. The Working Group IV aims to contribute to the process. It shares the objectives of the G7 Deauville Partnership and its compact for economic governance, and is aligned with the Sustainable Development Goals.

The purpose of this meeting of Working Group IV, chaired by Tunisia and co-chaired by France and Italy, was to encourage a policy dialogue on good practices for processes, tools, and actors to improve the effectiveness of laws and regulations, and to ensure their conformity with the public interest. The dialogue also served to generate ideas on how better regulations can provide greater transparency and accountability.

The meeting was opened by Mr. Ahmed Zarrouk, Minister in charge of the Government’s General Secretariat. More than 70 delegates participated in the discussions, including representatives of MENA and OECD countries¹, as well as representatives of civil society.



Opening speech by Mr. Ahmed Zarrouk, Minister in charge of the Government’s General Secretariat, surrounded by Ms. Asma Labidi (Tunisia), Mr. Pascal Schuster (France), and by the OECD Secretariat



Participants at the 9th annual meeting of Working Group IV of the MENA-OCDE Governance Programme

Conclusions of the meeting:

- Based on the MENA Regional Charter for Regulatory Quality, the Recommendation of the OECD Council on regulatory policy and governance (2012), and the OECD Report on regulatory reform

¹ Algeria, Bahrain, Belgium, Germany, France, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco Mauretania, and Oman, Saudi Arabic, Spain, Tunisia and the United Arab Emirates.

in the MENA region, delegates discussed recent developments in regulatory policies in their countries. Delegates concluded that progress has been made; however, challenges to improve regulatory quality remain and are often related to delays in consultation, the lack of impact analyses, or unsystematic ex-post evaluations.

- Delegates emphasized the commitment to open government as part of the implementation of regulatory policies. There was consensus on the importance of a participatory approach, the inclusion of all segments of society (including youth and women), and transparency for implementing laws and fighting corruption. Legislative frameworks consultation mechanisms are developing so that citizens may be well-informed according to their rights and contribute usefully to the decision-making process.

- The delegates underlined the importance of reinforcing institutional capacities for the implementation of quality regulation:

- The Center of Government in its missions for coordination, consultation and analysis to ensure government coherence in the regulatory domain, the quality of the texts of the laws, and to respond to citizen expectations in their variety.
- The Council of State (or Administrative Tribunal) in its role as advisor to the Government in preparing draft laws, ordinances, and certain decrees.
- The Parliament as a key institution to improve regulatory quality.

Follow-Up Measures:

The OECD Secretariat was encouraged to follow up on:

- ✓ For the Ministerial Conference of the MENA-OECD Initiative on Governance and Competitiveness (October 2016):
 - Update the *Regional Charter for Regulatory Quality* so that it reflects principles of Open Government and takes greater account of the need to include woman and youth in public life.
 - Update the report on *Regulatory Reform in the MENA Countries*
- ✓ Prepare activities to reinforce capacities that will be associated with the next annual meeting of Working Group IV
- ✓ Expand the mandate of Working Group IV to include the issue of the rule of law which provides a more comprehensive framework to address the challenges faced by the region in establishing legal certainty and predictability to foster inclusive growth and good governance
- ✓ Contribute to the implementation of the goals of the Deauville Partnership and its compact for economic governance, and to the achievement of the UN's Sustainable Development Goals.