

Final Plenary Session: Jeroen Nijland, Director, Regulatory Reform Group, Ministry of Finance/Economic Affairs, Netherlands; Chair, OECD Regulatory Policy Committee

Key Points

- It's clear from listening to the questions, the panellists and the sessions that the challenges are about completing the cycle, in which consultation and ex post evaluation are the weakest parts; about institutions and the relationships among them in governance that crosses the border internationally; and about the importance of demonstrating benefits. Because of fiscal constraints, there will be an upward pressure to regulation. Countering that takes strong institutions, capacity and resources. We must demonstrate the benefits of this work, not just of regulation.
- We need to “walk where we talk” when we revise the Principles. I hope we have the courage to be self-critical, a little more explicit about what we didn't achieve. If we advocate Consultation, let's open the discussion beyond this community - with businesses, trade unions, consumers, interest groups. We say keep a close eye on impacts in practice. Regulation should be user-centred, easy to understand, easy to comply with. We should apply those principles to *our* work.
- Words I often heard during the Conference: *ex post review, accountability, transparency, user-centred approach, behaviourism, human rules, human benefits, social media*. The common denominator with these words is that we are making a plea to let the outside world in. Apparently we feel it is time for a reality check on the intellectual concepts we use, the theoretical or maybe even idealistic assumptions underlying our work. It's a reality check not of colleagues who have to work with our instruments and tools but of citizens, businesses and politicians - not to replace what's in place but to complement it.
- In the upcoming months we have to try to create a dynamic picture, because the historic contexts of our countries differ, as do their current positions and cultures - there's no one-size-fits-all. The new Principles should be more than a static overview of an ideal situation, more than a horizon. It should also capture transition: how to move from A to B and further, on our way to the horizon.