

Executive summary

The phrase “one-stop shop” has an immediate political attraction. It sounds like a way to sweep away unnecessary paperwork and create a streamlined and easy-to-use interface between government and citizens or business. Indeed, one-stop shops can be a very effective way to communicate regulatory requirements more clearly. However, achieving this goal requires upfront and ongoing investment, as well as a change in government mind-set about the way in which regulations affect everyday life.

Delivering services well is a critical facet of the regulatory environment. The passage of a law or regulation is just the beginning of a process. Laws do not serve the community when they are poorly delivered. Being required to provide the same information to different government agencies is an unnecessary burden that distracts citizens from engaging in other activities. The poor delivery of regulations can result in potential businesses not being created, and put unnecessary strains on those that exist. In particular, small and medium-sized enterprises acutely feel the brunt of poor delivery – they often operate on thin profit margins and the resulting increased costs may force some to cease operating.

One frequent lament by both citizens and business is the difficulty of accessing relevant information on administrative procedures. The report helps to demonstrate that citizens and business do not – and, more importantly, should not – have to be experts in the operations of government to complete necessary administrative tasks such as passport applications or tax returns. One important conclusion from the report is that separate government agencies need to work together to ensure that administrative procedures are established in a way that best serves users, which may not necessarily be the way in which governments internally operate.

When done well, one-stop shops can provide “win-win” outcomes for governments and clients by improving both service and compliance with regulations. Citizens and business can more easily locate forms, supply information once for multiple purposes, and do business more easily. Governments can receive better quality information in the first instance, and improved compliance rates that reduces the amount of resources needed for enforcement.

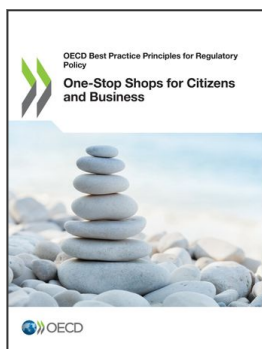
There is no universal one-stop shop model for all circumstances. While governments have invested more and more in improving digital services, there is still a need for more traditional one-stop shops. Government needs to communicate in ways that are of most use to citizens and business.

The report provides real-world insights into the difficulties in designing and operating one-stop shops across a range of OECD member countries. At the same time, the principles have been devised in part around well-established tenets of sound public governance. The principles thus reflect good public policy as well as the actual experiences of various one-stop shops.

One-stop shops should form part of broader administrative simplification strategies. They are a critical component of regulatory delivery and can help maximise the potential gains of regulatory reduction programmes. One-stop shops should be user-centred and based on life events. In this way, they can help bring government closer to citizens and business in the least burdensome way possible.

The Best Practice Principles for One-Stop Shops cover 10 areas:

1. Political commitment – one-stop shops need continual support from the top in order to flourish.
2. Leadership – managers need to be openly committed to a culture of experimentation. Mistakes will be made, but it is most important that these form the basis of improved service delivery in the future.
3. Legal framework – the early identification of legal barriers to establishing and potentially expanding one-stop shops are crucial to avoid rollout delays.
4. Co-operation and co-ordination – the extent to which government agencies can (and are permitted to) work together to better serve citizens and business is a critical component of one-stop shops.
5. Role clarity – establishing one-stop shops with a clear objective is central to managing both internal and external expectations.
6. Governance – the overarching arrangements are important, particularly for one-stop shops across various levels of government, but should not drive the design of one-stop shops from an operational perspective.
7. Public consultation – Citizen and business clients are an important source of information about what may or may not work and may also offer solutions to identified problems.
8. Communication and technological considerations – the standard industry communication means should emulated wherever possible. Interoperability opportunities should also be identified early in the design of one-stop shops.
9. Human capital – at the heart of a well-functioning one-stop shop are its people. Like any other part of the organisation, they require investment. They also have valuable insights on the day-to-day operations.
10. Monitoring and evaluation – it is important to assess whether one-stop shops continue to meet clients' needs, as these may change over time. Gathering views from citizens and business can help establish what is working well and what can be improved, and foster a culture of continuous improvement in one-stop shop staff.



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