

# DEMSTAR

Democracy, the State, and Administrative Reforms

## State of the State in Latvia

Appendix 2:  
Questionnaire (English version)

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with

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## ***Questions about policy-initiation and formulation***

### ***The bureaucracy***

#### **1. How do you begin the preparation for decisionmaking?**

(insert mark)

Do you begin with the search for relevant information

Do you follow prepared guidelines by government

Do you follow prepared guidelines by another ministry

Do you follow prepared guidelines by parliament

What else

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Difficult to say

#### **2. In most cases were/are you in your ministry able to trust that your ministerial officials would/will provide reliable information about both technical and political matters?**

	Technical	Political
Yes	:	
No	:	

#### **3. If you can't rely on your ministerial officials, who would you rely on, or have you relied on, to get the information you need?**

Political advisors  
Political Parties  
Academic specialists  
NGO specialists  
Others: (specify)  
mass media

#### **4. Concerning ministries, would you say that the quality of the civil servants has declined in the time since independence, regarding their ability to give technical and political advice?**

(insert mark)

Agree      Disagree

5. If declined, what are the main reasons?

They are not qualified to handle new tasks  
They have second jobs for economic reasons  
The best have left for jobs in the private sector  
The best have left for jobs in international organizations or are working abroad  
They are not motivated to perform a good job  
Other:

6. In your own ministry, is/was it common practice that ministerial officials have a close working relationship with the significant organizations (Business, NGO, or state) in the field of the ministry?

Yes :  
No :

If answer is no, then why? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

7. Is/was this a common practice in other ministries?

Yes :  
No :  
Don't know :

8. In your time as minister how many of your top officials (Deputy ministers, Assistants, Advisors, Press Secretary, Parliamentary Secretary, State Minister) were members of a governing coalition party?

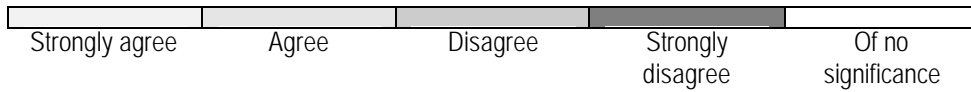
More than two-third  
About half  
Less than a third  
Don't Know

9. In general how many of the general administrative staff are (were) replaced when a new minister appears/-ed in the ministry from another party?

Most  
About half  
Less than half  
Don't Know  
Comments:

10. Do you agree that it is better if civil servants are members of a governing coalition party?

(pause before you mention the last category)

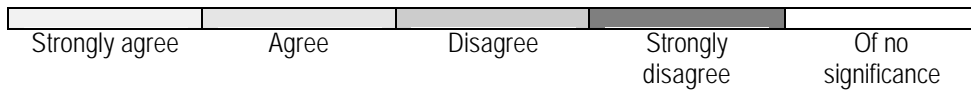


11. Ministerial officials should advise:

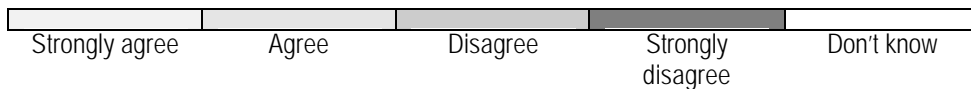
- |                                |       |          |
|--------------------------------|-------|----------|
| A. On technical matters?       | Agree | Disagree |
| B. And political strategy?     | Agree | Disagree |
| C. They should advise on both? | Agree | Disagree |

12. In your opinion, it is better when ministers themselves can appoint their civil servants

(pause before you mention the last category)



13. It is said in law that civil servants in one ministry should be allowed to give information concerning a matter to other ministries without prior permission, how do you agree to this position?



14. If agree, was/is this a common occurrence between yours and other ministries?

Yes :  
No :

The influence of outside actors

15. Name the three most influential local political players (organizations and/or persons) in Latvia before and after independence in general; (for example: legislature, executive power field, political parties, "Grey Cardinals", private business etc.)

Before independence:	After independence:
1	1
2.	2.
3. -	3.

16. Name the three most influential political actors in the field you are (were) responsible for as minister after independence;

1.

\_\_\_\_\_

2.

\_\_\_\_\_

3.

\_\_\_\_\_

17. Which ministry do you consider to be the core ministry in terms of influence on decisionmaking in other ministries?

\_\_\_\_\_

18. If other ministries tried/tries to influence proposals in your own ministry and you would have to lose competence or resources to the benefit of the whole country, would you perceive it?

Generally acceptable :

Generally not acceptable :

19. In your perception when other ministries interfered in your business, could it be that a third part outside the political realm, has interfered in the decision-making?

Agree : \_\_\_\_\_ If agree, give an example of who this third part may be:

Disagree :

Don't know :

20. In the cases when other ministries or parliamentary fraction of other parties tried to influence proposals in your own ministry, who did that most often?

A. Which ministry?

B. Which party?

21. Did foreign actors (governments, international organizations) during your time in government try to influence policy and regulations in your ministry? Name the three most important international actors;

1.

\_\_\_\_\_

2.

\_\_\_\_\_

3.

\_\_\_\_\_

22. In general, in those cases when foreign actors had an influence, would you say that their influence on the decisions to be made had an positive or negative effect on the solutions of local problems?

	Always	Most cases	Seldomly	Never
Positive effect				
Negative effect				
No effect				

Comments: \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

23. Have you ever felt a pressure from outside actors (non-state organizations, peak level business etc.) to initiate new legislation?

Often  
 Often, but not concerning really important issues  
 Sometimes  
 Rarely  
 Never

24. If often, did you feel that this pressure was good or wrong for the country:

	Always	Most cases	Seldomly	Never
Good				
Wrong				
Its difficult to answer				

25. In my time as minister my civil servants had a close working relationship with peak business organizations of the ministry's resort;

Yes, most of the time :  
 Yes, but only concerning important issues :  
 No :

26. Considering lobbying, the procedure in which certain outside interests tries to make their views influence on the political process, how would you in most cases agree to the following statements?

(choose maximum two statements: A or B and C or D)

In terms of providing information	In terms of generating support
A. Lobbying is positive because it provides the information you need to make the right decision	C. Lobbying is positive because you get the support form the concerned groupings
B. Lobbying is negative because the information you recieve is biased	D. Lobbying is negative because it erodes the impartiality of the ministry
Answer:	Answer:

Comments:

27. Do you believe that decisions get better when the concerned interests are incorporated or heard in the process of formulation?

- Yes, mostly
- Yes, sometimes
- No, only rarely
- No, worse

Comments:

***decision-making process***

28. Try to rank the most important formal decision-makers affecting decisions in your ministry: The Minister; the president; the prime minister; formal ministerial advisers; administrative advisers; chairmen of parliamentary committees; individual members of parliament

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_
6. \_\_\_\_\_

29. Try to rank the following fora with regard to decision-making with relevance for your ministry; the cabinet; council of ministers; committees of the cabinet; parliamentary committees, courts

- 1. \_\_\_\_\_
- 2. \_\_\_\_\_
- 3. \_\_\_\_\_
- 4. \_\_\_\_\_
- 5. \_\_\_\_\_
- 6. \_\_\_\_\_

30. Name the most important informal fora for decision-making affecting your ministry in general

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31. In your time as minister, how important were your party (party leaders meetings, party organisations, party donors) for government decision-making?

- Very important
- Important
- Of little importance
- Of no importance

32. If very important or important, how would you rank the following in your party for decision-making?

(number each category from 1-4 upon the ranking by the respondent)

- |                                   |                      |
|-----------------------------------|----------------------|
| Decision of party leaders         | <input type="text"/> |
| Opinion of the party organisation | <input type="text"/> |
| Opinion of rank and file members  | <input type="text"/> |
| Opinion of financial donors       | <input type="text"/> |

33. What is the usual financial structure of a party

(Apply crosses according to the answering and mark the category placed as most important by the respondent)

- |                                  |                      |
|----------------------------------|----------------------|
| Membership fees                  | <input type="text"/> |
| Donations by organization        | <input type="text"/> |
| Donations by private individuals | <input type="text"/> |
| Income from business activities  | <input type="text"/> |
| Other                            | <input type="text"/> |
| Don't know                       | <input type="text"/> |

34. In your opinion, must parties be financed from budget?

Yes :  
No :

35. Often the process of making decisions is often too long and troublesome. In such cases as from your experience could you name the three (or less) most important reasons why this is so?:

1. \_\_\_\_\_  
2. \_\_\_\_\_  
3. \_\_\_\_\_

36. If legislation has prevented the solution of acute problems, what do you believe has been the general response in ministries?

- A. To solve the problems by administrative measures, disregarding current legislation
- B. To solve the problem by administrative measures, and at the same time initiate revision of the relevant legislation
- C. To initiate a change of legislation before addressing the problem
- D. Other: please comment:

Answer:

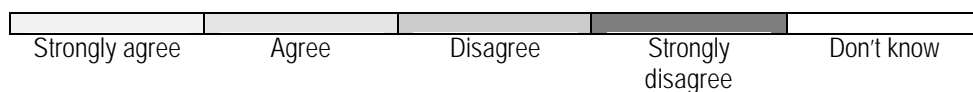
**Implementation**

37. Were you in general able to trust that the decisions of your ministry would be carried through as intended by your staff?

Yes :  
No :

38. How do you agree to the following proposition:

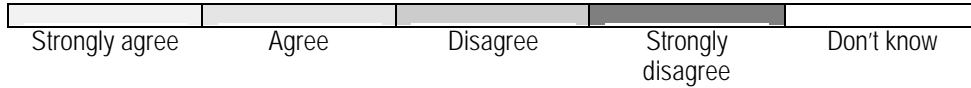
It is positive when private business organizations participate as undertakers in the process of implementation of decisions?



If strongly agree or agree, please name some examples:

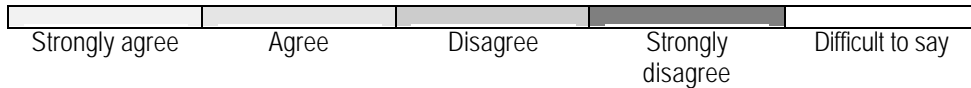
39. How do you agree to the following proposition:

Powerful non-state actors (individuals, organizations, business etc.) can escape regulatory measures directed toward their business?



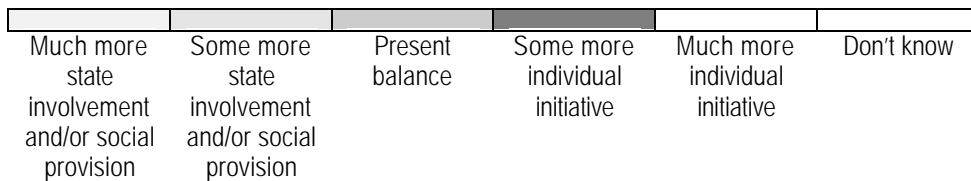
If strongly agree or agree, please name some examples:

40. In your opinion, under the communist soviet system, political decisions were implemented more loyally by the bureaucracy than now?



***Questions about State – society relations***

41. In general, what is your preferred degree of state involvement in the economy and society?



**Concerning the attitude and role of the public**

42. What should be the role of the public generally in politics and government?

- A. The public should elect its representatives and let them run the country
- B. The public should show an interest in politics and communicate it to the representatives
- C. The public should engage itself actively in parties, associations, local government etc. to gain more influence on politics

Answer:

43. The misuse of status positions in order to serve own or other particular interests is common in Latvian politics?  
(pause before you mention the last category)

Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Difficult to say
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44. At which level of government do you perceive that this phenomenon occurs most often?

(Multiple marks allowed)

- Top level (ministers and their deputies)
- State secretaries and their deputies
- Medium level (departmental directors)
- Lower level officials
- Parliament
- Don't know

45. Did you in your time as minister receive any knowledge about people engaged in such activities on governmental level?

- Yes, in my own ministry
- Yes, in other ministries
- No, but I assume it
- No, not at all

Comments: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

46. During your time as minister did you experience any attempts to bribe you to favour specific groups or an individual?

- Often
- Sometimes
- A few times
- Never
- No answer

47. During your time as minister did you receive any threats from non-state actors (peak level business, interest groups etc.)?

- Often
- Sometimes
- A few times
- Never
- No answer

If yes, then in which cases?

48. If such pressure was exerted in any of ministries, what is your opinion, did it have effect on the decisions or the implementation?

(Open answer)

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49. In your opinion, do you believe that the legal requirements for combating corruption and self promotion are sufficient?

(Open answer)

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50. In your opinion, what are the main cause(s) for corruption in the state administration?

(please rank these options, if possible)

- To low salaries for employees
- Low moral quality of civil servants
- Legacy of the soviet system (nomenclatura networking)
- Illegal organizations (Mafia)
- Other: please comment:

***Background Questions***

51. Which party were/are you member of while being minister?

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52. What were/is your position in this party?

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53. What is your age? (years)

Sex: ( )

54. What is your marital status?

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55. What is your ethnic status?

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56. If married, what is the ethnic status of your spouse?

57. In which country were you born?

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58. Were you resident in Latvia under the Soviet system?

Yes

No

59. If other than Latvia, when did you arrive in Latvia? \_\_\_\_\_ (year)

60. If resident in Latvia under the Soviet system:  
Were you member of a party under the Soviet system?

- Yes, the Communist Party
- Yes, the Young Communist League
- Yes, other party/movement
- Non-member

61. What was your occupation under the Soviet system?

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62. What is your education?  
(insert mark)

- Primary
- Secondary
- Secondary, special
- Higher
- Scientific Degree: specify beneath:
  - Bachelor
  - Master
  - Doctoral
  - abroad
  - Aftergraduate
  - studies

63. In which field do you have your education?

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64. Have you completed any supplementary education after independence in 1991, eg. courses or masters degree?

65. Where did you receive your education, before and after independence?

Before	After
Latvia	Latvia
Russia	Russia
Western Europe	Western Europe
USA	USA
Other: (specify)	Other: (specify)
_____	_____

***Interviewers remarks***

66. Has the respondent been charged or sentenced in matters of corruption in his time as minister?

\_\_\_\_\_

67. Did you consider the answers reliable in general?

\_\_\_\_\_

68. If not, in which questions in particular do you think that the answers of the respondent were unreliable?

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

69. Regarding the questionnaire, which questions did you perceive to be the most difficult for the respondent to understand?

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

70. Regarding the questionnaire, did you feel that some of the questions went too far terms of violating the discretion of the respondent?(if yes, please specify)

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_