

BIMER

(Prime Ministry Communication Centre)



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Organisation: Prime Ministry, Department of Public Relations

Country: Turkey

Level of government: Central government

Sector: General public services

Type: Communication, Digital

Launched in: 2006

Overall development time:

10 months

Link to the innovation's website

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Description

BIMER (Prime Ministry Communication Centre) is a tool of citizen engagement and open government. It allows for identifying problems and collecting complaints, ideas or suggestions from both citizens and residents.

BIMER is a communication tool which enables the Prime Ministry to centralise all inquiries from citizens throughout the country and send these to the appropriate Ministries and Governorships. The base of the innovation is an information processing programme with a call number (150) which can be dialled all over the country. Citizens can also send submissions via Internet or mail.

Citizens can use the system to exercise their legal rights of petition and information and to submit any ethical violations of public servants and human rights violations.

Before this innovation, citizen users had trouble finding a point of access to convey their opinion to the government. However today, there is a central general platform where they can easily reach by phone, mail or internet applications. The public bodies are obliged to reply to citizens in 15 days.

Why the innovation was developed

Previously, there was no central point for citizens to easily submit their problems, suggestions or ideas. The public bodies were all receiving feedback from citizens separately from each other. Citizens were experiencing difficulties in finding the right contact point to contact the administration. The communication centre project has been initiated to fill in this gap as an innovative response.

Objectives

Enhance public trust, Enhance transparency, Improve access, Improve effectiveness, Improve efficiency, Improve service quality, Improve user satisfaction

- BIMER aims to improve service quality by taking into account feedback and suggestions from citizens, businesses, NGOs etc.
 - Achieve openness and transparency as two important political priorities by providing access to government data unless they are official secrets.
 - Provide communication with citizens 24/7.
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Main beneficiaries

Civil Society, General population, Government bodies, Government staff

The service is addressed to the entire population of the country. From the year 2006 (in which the innovation was launched) to the year 2012, there have been over 5 million submissions.

Existing similar practices

Linea Amica

In other countries' public administrations

Formez PA, Italia operating under the Italian Department for Public Administration of the Presidency of the Council of Ministers

BIMER shows similarities with the system of Italia (Linea Amica). Like BIMER, Linea Amica also provides information and assistance to citizens about the public administration's services by telephone, email, and internet.

<http://www.lineaamica.gov.it/>

Results

Service quality

Accessibility:

Citizens were always able to communicate with public offices, but with the BIMER system, this service has become more accessible. Citizens can access the service even late in the evening or on weekends.

The service is used widely by citizens. In 2012, BIMER received 1 743 293 submissions, which means that the number of submissions had increased 22% when compared with the year 2011. The number of users for each year are:

- 2010: 926 955
- 2011: 1 415 336
- 2012: 1 743 293

7% of the applications were made through internet, 7% through mail and 4% via telephone.

Responsiveness:

According to the Right to Information Law, the public bodies are obliged to respond to any applicant within 15 days. All of the submissions in the system of BIMER have been responded to within the mentioned period.

User satisfaction

User satisfaction has also increased. Every year, more applications to the BIMER are being replied to in a shorter period of time.

The official deadline to respond to applications is 15 days, however response times are usually less than the mentioned time frame.

Evaluation

The innovation is evaluated periodically. There are monthly reports and annual reports about the BIMER. The most important indicator is the number of applications received.

Development

Design

The innovation was initiated by policy planning staff but it has been upgraded with the help of frontline staff.

There have been individual efforts by public bodies to communicate with service users. In order to have a comprehensive nation-wide system, the Prime Ministry initiated BIMER.

Design time: 6 months

Implementation

Tools used:

The link to access BIMER has been embedded to all Ministries' web sites and also in the e-Government gateway. Therefore, if any citizen has any problems with the services given, they can easily reach the system.

A training and introduction seminar was held to the personnel.

Resources used:

New equipment has been purchased and new staff has been hired with extra training expenses.

Implementation cost is nearly EUR 990 000 and its yearly cost is EUR 49 299 000.

Implementation time: 2 months

Challenges and solutions

- The adequacy of the staff. When compared with the workload the number of employees was inadequate. However, new hiring has been done and now nearly 32 000 people are working for BIMER.
 - Untrained personnel. The newly hired employees were selected from the departments of public relations and the former staff was trained.
 - The risk from ICT. The system was quite open to the attacks from outside and therefore there existed the risk of losing or data being stolen. The system has been upgraded with firewalls but the risk always exists.
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Partnerships

All public bodies in Turkey

Other Public Sector

This is a central system involving all public bodies. The system is launched centrally.

Lessons Learned

Lessons Learned

- The problem of reaching users was an important part of the project. In the initial part of the project just a small part of society was aware of BIMER.
 - As the statistics show, the number of submissions gets higher each year as it is publicised more broadly. Therefore, the announcement of the innovation and the communication is as important as the innovation itself.
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Conditions for success

In order to ensure the success of the innovation there must be:

- Institutional capacity (human resources, infrastructure etc.) should be increased. Qualified human resources are the key for the success of the innovation.
 - Since it is a communication tool, the best methods of communication are extremely important.
 - Infrastructure (computers, functioning online system etc.) is very significant for the success of the innovation.
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Other information

The BIMER was founded in 2006 in its basic terms. It took approximately 6 months to develop the first version of the system. But developments continued within the process.

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