

The Federal Tax Ombudsman Office rated as the cleanest and the most efficient public sector organization in Pakistan

The Citizen Report Card Study (CRCS) on the Federal Tax Ombudsman (FTO) Pakistan conducted by a Lahore-based independent research firm, Islamic Countries Society of Statistical Sciences (ICSSS), has found the FTO Office as the cleanest and the most helpful public sector organization in Pakistan.

The research conducted by ICSSS is based on a random sample drawn out of 2027 taxpayers from across Pakistan, who actually interacted with the FTO Office during 2009 and 2010. In addition, respondents from Federal Board of Revenue, trade bodies and tax bar associations are also included in the study.

That research reveals that over 90% of respondents have exceptionally rated the FTO Office not only as the most taxpayer-friendly public sector organization but also the most efficient government office in Pakistan, the fact that the stratified survey sample included taxpayers who had actually lost their cases before the FTO notwithstanding. In the past, Motorway Police was at the top, with approval rating of about 80%.

The research also establishes that the FTO Office is the most corruption-free public office in the country. 'Undoubtedly, it is a great achievement for any government office to have such a positive image from its stakeholders.'

The study establishes that the FTO Office is highly successful in addressing taxpayers' grievances, particularly of small taxpayers.

The study indicates that the FTO Office resolved most taxpayer complaints, on average, in less than 2 month time during 2010. It declares the FTO Office as a role model for all public sector organizations.

The study analyses the various dimensions of maladministration and concludes that 56.7% complaints coming to the FTO Office pertain to delay in tax refunds, while rest of the complaints are about tax officials' arbitrary decision-making, their non-response to taxpayers' correspondence or queries, and harassment of taxpayers for corrupt motives. The highest number of complaints is generated by small-size businesses that play a vital role in the economy of the country.

The study reveals that 71% complaints pertain to systemic issues or issues that are of a recurring nature.

Another significant finding of the study is that all tax officials who took part in the research believe that FTO Office is making a useful contribution in rooting out maladministration from the FBR.

It is further revealed that the first choice of the Chambers of Commerce, and Industry and Tax Bar Associations in Pakistan for resolution of taxpayers' complaints is the FTO Office.

The study concludes that the FTO Office is a blessing for the taxpayers.

The research has been published by the Transparency International-Pakistan.