The Legal Services Consumer Panel

Segmentation Roundtable - Segmenting consumers for better regulation in legal services.

15 November 2017, 15:00 to 17:00, One Kemble Street, London

Points raised by the attendees during the Roundtable:

- Regulators around the table agreed that consumer segmentation could assist them to identify the consumers' levels of confidence in engaging with the legal services market. Segmentation would create solutions for different consumer groups who experience barriers in accessing the market, but also would help Regulators classify consumers' market perceptions and what is driving their behaviour.

- There was also consensus around the opportunity to use segmentation to inform the Action Plans they have developed to implement the Competition and Markets Authority's recommendations, especially how consumers expect to compare and understand prices.

- The Legal Services Consumer Panel suggested that the starting points for Regulators in using segmentation should be making the market work better for consumers and understanding how segmentation could help improve their risk analysis.

- Some Regulators raised concerns about the barriers they might face in using segmentation, such as having low number of staff and resources. Other Regulators pointed to the benefits of using segmentation, such as to improve regulatory outcomes, and encourage providers to deliver products and services that meet consumers' diverse needs.

- Some Regulators said they would find it useful to consider the common issues they face in relation to consumers and how they might pool resources to deliver segmentation. This approach could help all Regulators have a better understanding of what the issues are.

- There are multiple sources of data available online. The Citizens Advice Bureau pointed to their cluster of data available (here) on what problems consumers are facing. Additionally, the Legal Services Board (LSB) pointed out different data resources available to help Regulators, as a basis for segmentation (links to the Civil and Social Justice Panel survey data here).

- The LSB offered to provide more support to Regulators, especially smaller ones. The LSB said it would continue to update the data set every three years and share it with the Regulators.

- Segmentation should not benefit some groups to the detriment of others. Segmentation should assist different consumer groups to identify the support they need to access services and then offer tailored solutions.

- It was suggested that profiles or personas of different consumer groups could be developed by Regulators using segmentation.

- Regulators were encouraged to combine both online and offline methods to collect data for segmentation. Online collection is cheaper and faster, but runs the risk of excluding some consumers, especially those who don't have internet access.

Action points:

- The LSB offered to bring Regulators together to support each other to develop their own models of segmentation instead of a single model for all Regulators that would be unlikely to reflect the diverse market.

- It was agreed that segmentation would be discussed at the next Regulators Forum, including what data could be shared between Regulators, common issues they could address, and what support can be offered.

- It was also agreed that segmentation would be discussed at the next Chief Executive Officer's group meeting.