In the spirit of Hayek (1945), this paper explores in survey data how knowledge on rule-of-law institutions is distributed among experienced and inexperienced individuals. Relying on the 102 national surveys used by the World Justice Project’s Rule of Law 2015 Index, it first identifies which factors determine the demand for rule-of-law services in contract, criminal, administrative, and labor law. It then observes that those individuals who have had experience with such services evaluate more negatively their performance than the general population, what causes substantial changes in cross-country rankings. Results support that experienced respondents do hold substantial additional knowledge, arguably valuable when evaluating and designing institutions. Furthermore, the impact of experience on stated performance perceptions is bigger than those of more general factors such as education and relative wealth.

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