WeBER III
WESTERN BALKAN ENABLERS FOR REFORMING PUBLIC ADMINISTRATIONS

PAR Monitor Report Albania

SERVICE DELIVERY AND DIGITALISATION

2024/2025

IDM

CONTENTS:

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Service Delivery and Digitalisation Albania 2024/2025 report is a product of a three-month-long monitoring process, which relied on different data collection techniques and thus resulted in an abundance of findings.

As in the case of the previous editions of the National PAR Monitor reports, published for 2017/2018, 2019/2020 and 2021/2022, special acknowledgements go to members of the WeBER Platform and the National Working Group in Albania, and other stakeholders in Albania that shared their experiences through interviews, who immensely contributed to the content of this report and its quality, and who will not be identified due to the respect of the principle of anonymity.

Lastly, the WeBER3.0 team would also like to thank its main partners and associates, who have supported the project in research and other activities. Most notably, these are the SIGMA (Support for Improvement in Governance and Management)[1], the ReSPA (Regional School of Public Administration), the National Agency for Information Society and the Ministry for Public Adminis-tration and Anti-Corruption of Albania, as a project associate.

ABOUT WEBER 3.0

Building upon the achievements of its predecessors, the WeBER (2015 – 2018) and WeBER 2.0 (2019 – 2023) projects, the **Western Balkan Enablers for Reforming Public Administrations – WeBER 3.0** project is the third consecutive EU-funded grant of the largest civil society-led initiative for monitoring public administration reform (PAR) in the Western Balkans. Its implementation period is February 2023 – July 2026. Guided by the SIGMA/OECD Principles, the first two phases of the initiative laid the foundation for WeBER 3.0's ambition to **further empower civil society organisations (CSOs) to contribute to more transparent, open, accountable, citizen-centric and thus more EU-compliant administrations in the WB region.**

WeBER 3.0 continues to promote the crucial role of CSOs in PAR, while also advocating for broader citizen engagement in this process and inclusive reform measures which are user-tailored and thus lead to tangible improvements. By grounding actions in robust monitoring data and insights, WeBER 3.0 will empower civil society to more effectively influence the design and implementation of PAR. To foster collaborative policymaking and bridge the gap between aspirations and actionable solutions, the project will facilitate sustainable policy dialogue between governments and CSOs through the WeBER Platform and its National PAR Working Groups. Finally, through small grants for local CSOs, WeBER 3.0 bolsters local-level PAR engagement, amplifying the voices of citizens – the final beneficiaries of the public administrations' work.

WeBER 3.0 products and further information about them are available on the project's website at www.par-monitor.org.

WeBER 3.0 is implemented by the Think for Europe Network (TEN), composed of six EU policy-oriented think tanks in the Western Balkans:

By partnering with the Centre for Public Administration Research (KDZ) from Vienna, WeBER 3.0 has ensured EU-level visibility.

PUBLICATION

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The assessment of the transparency and citizen centricity of service design and delivery focuses on three critical aspects – 1) citizen-centric service delivery and design, 2) service accessibility and availability of information on services, and 3) digitalisation of service delivery. The first aspect is devoted to examining the extent and manner in which relevant institutions involve citizens in service design and delivery, focusing on the practice of collecting feedback and incorporating it into the (re)design of services. The second aspect focuses on service accessibility, with the emphasis on citizen-friendly approaches when informing on service provision and accessibility of services to persons with disabilities, vulnerable and marginalised groups. Finally, the last aspect examines the progress of the digitalisation of services, highlighting the practice of establishing user-oriented digital platforms and enablers for the citizens. Findings of this report reflect the period since the publication of the PAR Monitor 2021/2022, starting from the second half of 2022, and until the end of 2024.

The 2024-2025 assessment of public administrative service delivery and digitalization system with the focus on three above critical aspects demonstrates that Albania is improving in terms of transparency and aiming to become fully digital, but yet the country is still struggling to place citizens at the centre of design and delivery. Across the three components measured (citizen-centricity, accessibility, and digitalization) Albania scores 57 points out of 100. While the country achieves almost the maximum available score for digitalization (over 85 percent), it barely secures one third of the points for the citizen-centric service design and feedback indicators.

The Digital Agenda 2022-2026,[2] the main PAR strategic document for the digital roadmap, the governmental interoperability platform and most importantly the "e-Albania" portal, together form the legal and practical network which ensures that citizens have continuous online access to request documents and carry out administrative procedures. Legislation gives electronic documents full legal validity and provides for digital identity, e-signature and e-payment,[3] while the National Agency for Information Society (NAIS) concentrates both

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2   https://www.qbz.gov.al/eli/vendim/2022/06/01/370/8fd7b0cf-6848-431f-8bcb-5d08d16deaa7;q=agjenda%20digjitale

3   The practical implementation side of e-payments services is still not applied properly.

policy supervision and operational control after absorbing the former ADISA[4] one-stop-shop network. These reforms explain why key informants interviewed for the assessment, consistently describe transactional reliability and ease of user accessibility even though much remains to be done for vulnerable groups.[5]

Access to services and to basic procedural information has also improved. Guidance pages, fee information and contact details are now online for almost every sampled service.[6] With the online adaptation of the service delivery the majority of physical counters, also for the sampled services used in the assessment, are now closed. Nevertheless, citizen-friendly formats such as step by step videos, infographics, audio or Braille files, and multilingual content while clearly required by law are still not fully available for every service, leaving persons with disabilities, and digitally struggling citizens partly underserved.

The weakest element of the system is the user feedback and voice. Only three of the seven sampled services currently invite structured feedback, none of the responsible institutions publish aggregate satisfaction data, and there is no evidence that user comments systematically influence redesign decisions. Interviewed stakeholders confirm that co-creation workshops are rare and that working groups tend to rely on expert opinion rather than on end-user testing. The once-only principle clearly illustrates the gap between legal stipulations and actual practice. Although interoperability among registries is and should be achievable, half of surveyed citizens[7] still report being asked for documents already held by the state.

Taken together, the findings suggest that Albania has largely completed the digitalization of administrative service delivery and continues to make efforts to resolve issues related to the transparency of these services. However, the next step should involve building a culture of continuous user involvement, inclusive service design, data-driven performance management, and a clear strategy for improving accessibility and digital literacy among vulnerable groups.

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4   Agency for the Delivery of Integrated Services Albania, which was tasked to help and facilitate the citizens use of public services.

5   Being vulnerable is defined as in need of special care, support, or protection because of age, disability, risk of abuse or neglect. Vulnerable populations include people with disabilities, minority groups, economically disadvantaged persons and elderly people.

6   Sample service observed are property registration, company registration, vehicle registration, passport issuance, ID card issuance, VAT declaration and VAT payment.

7   The public perception survey is based on a questionnaire targeting the public (18+ permanent residents) of Albania. The survey was conducted through computer-assisted telephone interviewing (CATI) in combination with computer-assisted web interviewing (CAWI). The survey was conducted between 11-18 February 2025. The margin of error for the sample of 1026 citizens is +/- 3.49%.

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

ADISA	Agency for the Delivery of Integrated Services Albania
ASPA	Albanian School for Public Administration
CoM	Council of Ministers
CSO	Civil Society Organization
EU	European Union
FOI	Freedom of Information
GTD	General Tax Directorate
KDZ	Centre for Public Administration Research
KIs	Key Informants
KPI	Key Performance Indicators
MPAC	Ministry of Public Administration and Anti-Corruption
NAIS	National Agency of Information Society
PAR	Public Administration Reform
ReSPA	Regional School of Public Administration
SIGMA	Support for Improvement in Governance and Management
TEN	Think for Europe Network
VAT	Value Added Tax
WEBER	Western Balkans Enabling Project for Civil Society Monitoring of Public Administration Reform project

I. WEBER PAR MONITOR: WHAT WE MONITOR AND HOW?

I.1 WeBER's approach to monitoring PAR

The Public Administration Reform (PAR) Monitor methodology was developed in 2015-2016, as part of the first Western Balkans Enabling Project for Civil Society Monitoring of Public Administration Reform (WeBER) project. Since the onset, WeBER has adopted a markedly evidence-based approach in its endeavour to increase the relevance, participation and capacity of civil society organisations (CSOs) in the Western Balkans to advocate for and influence the design and implementation of PAR. The PAR Monitor methodology is one of the main project results, seeking to facilitate civil society monitoring of PAR based on evidence and analysis.

In line with WeBER's focus on the region's EU accession process, once the *SIGMA Principles of Public Administration*[8] were revised in 2023, the WeBER PAR Monitor methodology was also redesigned in 2024. This was done in order to keep the focus of WeBER's recommendations on EU-compliant reforms, thus guiding the governments in the region towards successful EU accession and future membership. The main changes in the revised PAR Monitor methodology are briefly listed below.[9]

Table 1: Main changes in the PAR Monitor methodology

Structure
• Introduction of single indicator per PAR area, divided into sub-indicators, further consisting of several sub-indicator elements (specific criteria assessed)
• Introduction of types of indicator elements, meaning that each element has a specific focus on one of the following aspects of reform: 1) Strategy and Policy   2) Legislation   3) Institutional Set-up   4) Practice in Implementation, and   5) Outcomes and Impact
• Introduction of a 100-point scale, allowing for a more nuanced assessment of progress in each PAR area

8   Available at: https://www.sigmaweb.org/publications/principlesofpublicadministration.htm

9   For detailed information on the scope and process of methodology revision please visit https://www.par-monitor.org/par-monitor-methodology/

- Introduction of interviews with "key informants", i.e. key non-state actors engaged and familiar with the processes. These interviews serve as a data source for the "Outcomes and impact" elements instead of the formerly implemented survey of civil society organisations.
- Use of public perception survey results as a data source for "Outcomes and Impact" elements, and expanding its scope to complement the assessment in five PAR areas, except for "Strategy for PAR"
- Removal of survey of civil servants as a data source due to persistent issues with ensuring adequate response rates across the region's administrations.

PAR Monitor reporting

- Six national PAR Monitor reports, one per PAR area (36 in total for the entire PAR Monitor), in order to facilitate timely publication and advocacy for the monitoring results rather than publishing the results of 18 months of research at the end of the process.
- Six regional Western Balkan overview reports, one per PAR area (6 in total)

I.2 Why and how WeBER monitors the "Service Delivery and Digitalisation" area

WeBER's focus on transparency and citizen centricity of service design and delivery is crucial for several reasons. Public administration services serve as the primary point of interaction between institutions and citizens, making their accessibility, responsiveness, and quality critical to effective governance. In order to achieve these standards, public services should be designed based on citizens' needs and preferences rather than bureaucratic convenience. A user-centered approach helps reduce inefficiencies and improves satisfaction while simultaneously enhancing the legitimacy of public institutions. Monitoring developments in this area provides data-driven insights that support evidence-based advocacy for improving how public institutions design and deliver services, as well as how they engage with citizens throughout these processes. Moreover, the focus on inclusivity ensures services are designed and delivered in a way that enables all individuals – regardless of their socio-economic background, geographic location, gender, disability status, or other factors – to access and benefit from them. By tracking progress and challenges, the monitoring provides for actionable recommendations for sustainable, citizen-oriented reforms in public service delivery.

Monitoring in the Service Delivery and Digitalisation is based on all four SIGMA Principles in this area:
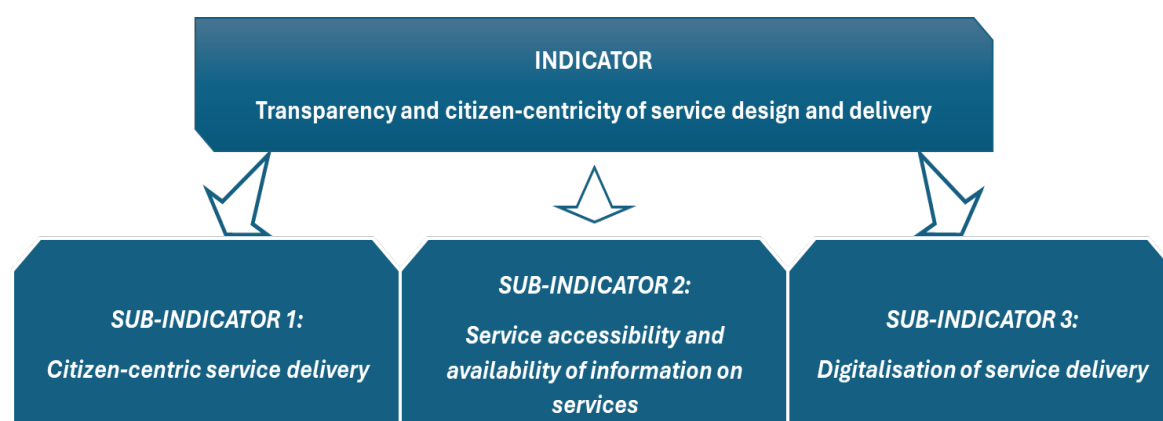
> **Principle 19:** Users are at the centre in design and delivery of administrative services.
>
> **Principle 20:** The public administration delivers streamlined and high-quality services
>
> **Principle 21:** Administrative services are easily accessible online and offline, taking into account different needs, choices and constraints.
>
> **Principle 22:** Digitalisation enables data-driven decisions and effective, efficient and responsive policies, services and processes in the whole of government.

These Principles are assessed from the perspective of public involvement in the processes of service design and delivery and the outward-facing aspects of administration that are crucial for the daily provision of administrative services and contact with the administration. A focus on transparency and citizen-centricity aims to determine the extent to which stakeholders' needs and views are consulted and taken into consideration by authorities when developing and providing administrative services, both in the electronic form and in person.

INDICATOR

Transparency and citizen-centricity of service design and delivery

SUB-INDICATOR 1:	SUB-INDICATOR 2:	SUB-INDICATOR 3:
Citizen-centric service delivery	*Service accessibility and availability of information on services*	*Digitalisation of service delivery*

The monitoring period for the Service Delivery and Digitalisation covers developments since the last PAR Monitor cycle, which lasted from January until November 2022. Thus, this report focuses primarily on 2023 and 2024, as well as the end-of-2022 developments not covered in the previous cycle. Although this report provides a comparison of findings with previous PAR Monitor editions, country scores are incomparable to the previous monitoring results due to methodological changes described above.

For the Practice type of elements based on a sample throughout all three sub-indicators, the same seven administrative services are observed to allocate points.[10] These sample services include:

1. Property registration
2. Company (business) registration

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10 Unless specified otherwise in the methodology of individual elements.

3. Vehicle registration
4. Passport issuance
5. ID card issuance
6. VAT declaration
7. VAT payment.

The first sub-indicator focuses on the existence of mechanisms that provide for citizen-centric service design and delivery. WeBER assesses whether relevant public policy documents in this area envisage specific measures and activities that put citizens at the centre of service design and delivery and whether the relevant legislative framework enables such an approach. Additionally, it examines the existence of feedback mechanisms and the practice of relevant authorities in terms of analysis and use of gathered feedback in designing new and improving existing services.

Monitoring of strategy and policy, legislation and practice aspects is performed by combining data sources to ensure reliability of results, including qualitative analysis of strategic documents, and official data that is publicly available or obtained from responsible institutions through FOI requests. For the assessment of the outcomes and impact, researchers conduct key informants' interviews with non-state actors who possess significant expertise in the area and use the findings from the public perception survey conducted within the scope of the assessment.

Indicator elements that are assessed under the first sub-indicator are listed in the Table 1.

Indicator element - number and title	Type
E1.1 There is a strategic document in force that envisages the provision of citizen-centric service design and service delivery	Strategy and policy
E1.2 Regulations stipulate citizen-centric service design and service delivery	Legislation
E1.3 Regulations stipulate an obligation of service providers to keep and publish metrics of users' participation in service design	Legislation
E1.4 Regulations stipulate application of 'once-only principle'	Legislation

E1.5 Institutional responsibility for steering and continuously improving service design and service delivery at the central administration level is assigned	Institutional setup
E1.6 Service providers collect and publish information on users' participation in service design	Practice in implementation
E1.7 Service providers collect and publish users' feedback on their experience with service delivery	Practice in implementation
E1.8 The administration uses citizens' feedback to improve administrative services	Practice in implementation
E 1.9 Public service providers implement the once-only principle during service delivery	Practice in implementation
E 1.10 Key non-state actors consider service design and delivery as citizen centric	Outcomes and impact
E 1.11 Citizens' perception of their ability to influence service design	Outcomes and impact
E 1.12 Citizens' perception of their opportunity to provide feedback on public service quality	Outcomes and impact
E 1.13 Citizens' awareness of the once-only principle	Outcomes and impact
E1.14 Citizens' reported experience with the implementation of the once-only principle	Outcomes and impact

The second sub-indicator assesses the accessibility of services, both online and in person, and the availability of information necessary to obtain a service. Specifically, the assessment focuses on the extent to which service providers take into consideration the needs of vulnerable and minority groups in the process of delivering services, the format and territorial distribution of services and the availability of necessary guidance and information.

Monitoring of this sub-indicator is based on the review of official documents and websites of institutions in charge of service delivery, in order to assess different aspects related to issues of accessibility, while also taking into account official documents and data obtained from responsible institutions through

FOI requests. For the assessment of outcomes and impact, researchers conduct key informants' interviews with non-state actors who possess significant expertise in the area and use the findings from the public perception survey conducted within the scope of the assessment.

Indicator elements that are assessed under the second sub-indicator are listed in the Table 2.

Table 3: Indicator elements under the sub-indicator 2

Indicator element - number and title	Type
E 2.1 The strategic framework envisages enhancement of accessibility of services and availability of service delivery information	Strategy and policy
E 2.2 Regulations stipulate service provision through one-stop shops	Legislation
E 2.3 Regulations stipulate that service providers keep key metrics on the use of services	Legislation
E 2.4 Regulations stipulate provision of services in the form of life events	Legislation
E 2.5 Regulations stipulate mandatory adaptation of service delivery to the needs of vulnerable groups	Legislation
E 2.6 Service providers publish basic procedural information on how to access public services online	Practice in implementation
E 2.7 Service providers publish citizen-friendly guidance on accessing public services online	Practice in implementation
E 2.8 Service providers publish information on services they offer as life events	Practice in implementation
E 2.9 Information on services is available in multiple formats to meet diverse users' needs	Practice in implementation
E 2.10 Information on public service delivery is available in multiple languages to meet diverse users' needs	Practice in implementation

E 2.11 Service providers publish information on the prices of their services	Practice in implementation
E 2.12 Service providers publish information on the rights and obligations of users	Practice in implementation
E 2.13 Service providers publish precise contact information for service provision	Practice in implementation
E 2.14 Data on administrative services are available in open formats	Practice in implementation
E 2.15 Service providers train their staff on how to treat vulnerable groups	Practice in implementation
E 2.16 Service providers ensure adequate territorial distribution of service delivery	Practice in implementation
E 2.17 Key non-state actors consider service delivery as accessible	Outcomes and impact
E 2.18 Citizens' perception of the accessibility of information necessary for obtaining services	Outcomes and impact
E 2.19 Citizens' perception of the ease of in-person access to services	Outcomes and impact
E 2.20 Citizens' perception of the ease of online access to services	Outcomes and impact

Finally, the third sub-indicator is devoted to the provision of services in the electronic format and the process of service digitalisation. The assessment focuses on the relevant strategic framework that ensures a smooth and stable digitalisation process; the legislative framework regulating all key aspects of electronic service delivery; institutional responsibilities; the user orientation of the e-service platform; and the availability of digital tools and enablers necessary to access e-services.

Monitoring is based on the review of official documents and websites of institutions relevant to electronic service design and delivery, while also taking into account official documents and data obtained from responsible institu-

tions through FOI requests. For the assessment of the outcomes and impact, researchers conduct key informants' interviews with non-state actors who possess significant expertise in the area.

Indicator elements that are assessed under the third sub-indicator are listed in the Table 3.

Table 4: Indicator elements under the sub-indicator 3

Indicator element - number and title	Type
E 3.1 There is a strategic document in force that envisages digitalisation of service delivery	Strategy and policy
E 3.2 Regulations stipulate provision of digital services, digital signature and e-payment in digital service delivery	Legislation
E 3.3 Institutional responsibility for steering the digital service delivery at the central administration level is assigned	Institutional setup
E 3.4 Online central platform for digital service delivery is established and user-oriented	Practice in implementation
E 3.5 Digital signature and digital payment are available to all users	Practice in implementation
E 3.6 Key non-state actors consider digital services as easy to use	Outcomes and impact

II. TRANSPARENCY AND CITIZEN-CENTRICITY OF SERVICE DESIGN AND DELIVERY

Transparency and citizen-centricity of service design and delivery (score 0-100)

57.25	45

■ Awarded ■ Not achieved
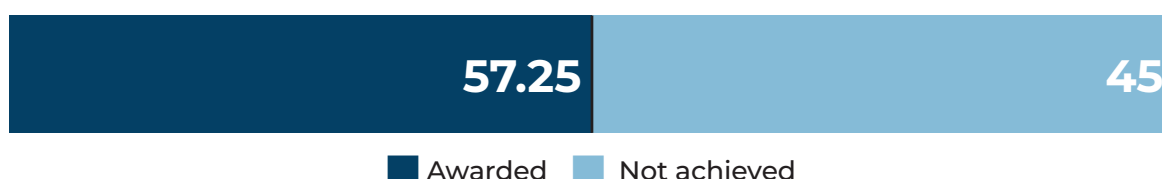
II.1 Citizen-centric service delivery

Principle 19: Users are at the centre in design and delivery of administrative services.

Principle 20: The public administration delivers streamlined and high-quality services

Sub-indicator 1: Citizen-centric service delivery[11]

Indicator element - number and title	Type	Score
E1.1 There is a strategic document in force that envisages the provision of citizen-centric service design and service delivery	Strategy and policy	0.5/0.5
E1.2 Regulations stipulate citizen-centric service design and service delivery	Legislation	1/2

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11 Through the first sub-indicator, the following SIGMA sub-principles are monitored: The government establishes and co-ordinates a whole-of-government policy to continuously improve design and delivery of public administrative services, based on evolving user needs; Public administration bodies engage users to understand their needs, expectations and experiences and to involve them actively in the (re)design of public administrative services (co-creation); The public administration regularly monitors service quality against delivery standards and other metrics, to learn lessons and improve service design and delivery; and Users have the legal right to provide the public administration with information and documents only once. The public administration applies this right consistently.

E1.3 Regulations stipulate an obligation of service providers to keep and publish metrics of users' participation in service design	Legislation	0/2
E1.4 Regulations stipulate application of 'once-only principle'	Legislation	1/1
E1.5 Institutional responsibility for steering and continuously improving service design and service delivery at the central administration level is assigned	Institutional setup	2/2
E1.6 Service providers collect and publish information on users' participation in service design	Practice in implementation	0/3.5
E1.7 Service providers collect and publish users' feedback on their experience with service delivery	Practice in implementation	0/4
E1.8 The administration uses citizens' feedback to improve administrative services	Practice in implementation	0/3
E 1.9 Public service providers implement the once-only principle during service delivery	Practice in implementation	3/3
E 1.10 Key non-state actors consider service design and delivery as citizen centric	Outcomes and impact	0/3
E 1.11 Citizens' perception of their ability to influence service design	Outcomes and impact	1/2
E 1.12 Citizens' perception of their opportunity to provide feedback on public service quality	Outcomes and impact	1.5/2
E 1.13 Citizens' awareness of the once-only principle	Outcomes and impact	1/2
E1.14 Citizens' reported experience with the implementation of the once-only principle	Outcomes and impact	0.5/2
Total score for sub-indicator 1		**11.5/32**

Since the previous WeBER monitoring cycle several key structural changes have taken place most notable the closure of ADISA and the takeover of its functions by the National Agency for Information Society as well as the incorporation of more than 90% of all administrative public services in the governmental online platform e-Albania. What remains persistent, even though with its struggles and flaws, are the decisive steps Albania has taken to redesign public services around the needs of users and a push to streamline and optimize the bureaucracy by digitalizing service delivery, thus shortening the time needed for any output and the costs as well.

During the period[12] covered by this assessment, two key PAR strategic framework strategies set the tone into organizing citizen-centric service delivery: The Public Administration Reform (PAR) Roadmap 2023 2030, which elevates citizen centricity to a core objective of its "Service Delivery and Digitalization" pillar, and The Digital Agenda 2022 2026. The Roadmap emphasizes service delivery redesign through administrative streamlining, technological integration, and reduction of bureaucratic burdens while clearly assigning oversight responsibilities to the Department of Public Administration under the Ministry of State for Public Administration and Anti-Corruption.[13] The Digital Agenda further specifies the government's ambition, setting clear targets to ensure that at least 95% of public services are digitally accessible, convenient, and based on explicit user feedback, with NAIS leading technical implementation and guaranteeing user-friendly and accessible digital interfaces.[14]

The legal framework reinforces this strategic vision. Law No. 43/2023 "On Electronic Governance" mandates digital-first service delivery by requiring public institutions to utilize the e-Albania portal as the primary point of access, thus embedding a citizen-centric approach to service delivery.[15] This is complemented by the Code of Administrative Procedures, which institutionalizes the one-stop-shop model under Article 74, effectively streamlining citizen interactions.[16] However, a notable gap remains, since no regulations clearly

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12 With the 2024–2030 PAR Strategy nearing finalization, the above-mentioned Roadmap continues to serve as the primary PAR strategy document until its official adoption.

13 The Roadmap for Public Administration Reform 2023–2030, Section IV "Service Delivery and Digitalization"; https://www.qbz.gov.al/eli/vendim/2023/12/13/737/01303320-3536-4f02-991f-7f59fcde80b3;q=udherrefysi

14 The Digital Agenda 2022–2026, Section 2.3 "Services for Citizens", Section 9 "Digital Agenda Indicators Passport"; https://www.qbz.gov.al/eli/vendim/2022/06/01/370/8fd7b0cf-6848-431f-8bcb-5d08d16deaa7;q=agjenda%20digjitale

15 Law No. 43/2023 "On Electronic Governance", Article 13 "Electronic communication for electronic services", Article 14 "Government portal 'e-Albania"; https://www.qbz.gov.al/eli/ligj/2023/06/15/43/9fb689d7-75d3-4621-a5a4-dab6e3a52d93;q=P%C3%8BR%20QEVERISJEN%20ELEKTRONIKE

16 Law No. 44/2015 "Code of Administrative Procedures", Article 74 "One-stop service points", https://www.qbz.gov.al/eli/ligj/2015/04/30/44/49b2fb39-de15-4b0b-a030-487b57c57a85;q=KODI%20I%20PROCEDURAVE%20ADMINISTRATIVE%20I%20REPUBLIK%C3%8BS%20S%C3%8B%20SHQIP%C3%8BRIS%C3%8B

stipulate requirements for citizen-centric service design. Institutionally, Albania has consolidated responsibility for steering service design and delivery within the National Agency for Information Society (NAIS).[17] With the abrogation of Law no. 13/2016 which designated ADISA with the primary role now passed to NAIS, the latter became the primary authority responsible not only for the technical infrastructure of digital services but also for overseeing continual service improvements as well development, administration of digital service platforms, including the e-Albania platform.[18] Additionally, NAIS's role is further strengthened through its various responsibilities including the provision of digital public services, authentication, digital signatures, and interoperability services.[19]

Despite these effective institutional arrangements, the practical implementation of citizen-centric service design and delivery remains partially fragmented. While the e-Albania platform effectively integrates user analytics[20] and incorporates basic feedback mechanisms such as a star-rating system, systematic publication of detailed user participation metrics in service design processes is lacking. Moreover, legal stipulations requiring the recollection and publication of user participation metrics are not clearly defined.

The Code of Administrative Procedures encourages user involvement but does not impose a duty to maintain or publish quantitative data on participation in service design processes.[21] Although NAIS has indicated plans for broader transparency in user involvement and is actively working toward it, these have not yet materialized into concrete publicly available metrics.[22]

Another fundamental feature of service delivery area in the context of its optimization for the benefit of the citizens, is the once-only principle. This "one-time submission" principle prohibits public institutions from requesting documents or data that are already available in state databases and it is explicitly mandated by the law "On Electronic Governance" and generally has been

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17 Law No. 43/2023 "On Electronic Governance", Article 22 "Responsible authority for e-governance"; https://www.qbz.gov.al/eli/ligj/2023/06/15/43/9fb689d7-75d3-4621-a5a4-dab6e3a52d93;q=P%C3%8BR%20QEVERIS-JEN%20ELEKTRONIKE

18 Ibid., Article "Article 24 "Responsibilities of NAIS"

19 Ibid., Article 25 "Tasks of NAIS as a service provider"

20 https://e-albania.al/Pages/MostRatedServices.aspx

21 Law No. 44/2015 "Code of Administrative Procedures", Article 10 "Active assistance", https://www.qbz.gov.al/eli/ligj/2015/04/30/44/49b2fb39-de15-4b0b-a030-487b57c57a85;q=KODI%20I%20PROCEDURAVE%20ADMINISTRATIVE%20I%20REPUBLIK%C3%8BS%20S%C3%8B%20SHQIP%C3%8BRIS%C3%8B

22 FOI response from NAIS confirms that general consultations with civil society and citizens have taken place in the context of designing electronic services (GovTech and the Law on Electronic Governance). However, NAIS explicitly states that the publication of detailed metrics regarding the participation of users in service design is not yet implemented systematically. They plan to implement this and say in the FOI response: "As part of efforts to ensure transparency and broad public participation, notifications and other information regarding the project's progress will be published continuously. These will be made available in full compliance with the institutional transparency program, ensuring open access to all citizens, civil society representatives, and interest groups wishing to contribute to this process."

effectively implemented, significantly reducing administrative burdens.[23] When assessing the application of this principle, as well as the feedback collected and published by service providers from the users experience with service delivery, the report has reviewed 7 key services. These sample services include property registration, company (business) registration, vehicle registration, passport issuance, ID card issuance, and VAT declaration and payment. For most of these services feedback mechanisms are available,[24] and interoperability to reuse citizen data is effectively leveraged, thus fulfilling the once-only requirement. Nonetheless, services like vehicle registration which is still done in person at regional directorates of the General Directorate of Road Transport Services continue to require repetitive data submissions, highlighting ongoing gaps. Furthermore, no data is publicly available on users' feedback on the specific pool of the monitored services.[25]

Insights from key non-state actors underscore persistent systemic challenges. These non-state actors and experts in public administration reform to a large extent indicated skepticism toward genuine citizen-centricity, pointing to top-down decision making, bureaucratic obstacles and insufficient inclusion of vulnerable groups. Additionally, they highlighted deficiencies in feedback integration and accessibility, especially for elderly citizens and digitally marginalized groups[26], underscoring the need for systematic reforms and stronger civil society involvement.

Public perceptions regarding citizen influence and feedback opportunities reflect mixed experiences.[27] Approximately half of the surveyed citizens believe they had the opportunity to influence the development of public administration services[28], indicating balanced satisfaction but also emphasizing significant room for improvement. The majority of surveyed citizens stated that they had the opportunity to provide feedback on the quality of public services.[29] Awareness and experiences with the once-only principle indicate

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23 Law No. 43/2023 "On Electronic Governance", Article 6 "The principle of one-time submission"; https://www. qbz.gov.al/eli/ligj/2023/06/15/43/9fb689d7-75d3-4621-a5a4-dab6e3a52d93;q=P%C3%8BR%20QEVERISJEN%20 ELEKTRONIKE

24 Feedback mechanism (1–10-star rating system and comment box) are embedded within the e-Albania portal, covering almost all digital services. But due to the specific services mentioned and the requirements to obtain the full points for this criteria (5 out of 7 of the listed services) the assessment has found that for three of them, as explained below, there are no feedback mechanisms available. One needs to log in as a user to be able to see the feedback mechanism for the below assessed services. VAT services have their own e Portal called e-Filing made available by the General Tax Directorate.

25   NAIS's FOI also confirms no centralized systematic publication of feedback data on the specific pool of monitored services.

26 They recognized ADISA as initially positive, though its effectiveness reportedly declined following digitalization.

27 The survey was conducted between 11-18 February 2025.

28 Survey results: strongly disagree 31.1%, disagree 15.7%, agree 29%, strongly agree 19.9%, do not know/no opinion 4.3%.
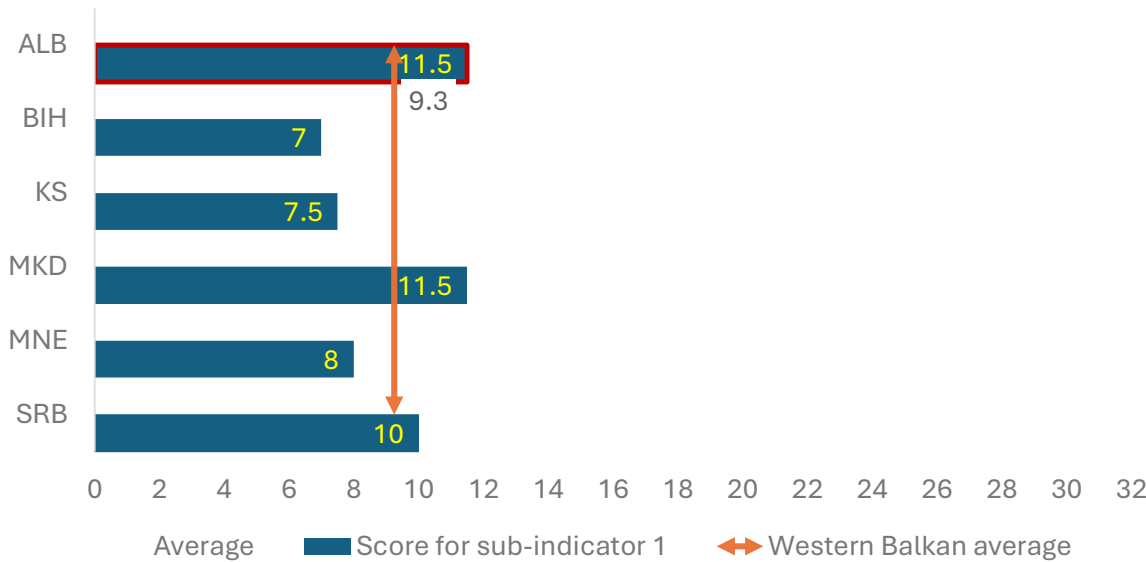
29 Survey results: strongly disagree 16.3%, disagree 11.3%, agree 33.5%, strongly agree 36.2%, do not know/no opinion 2.6%.

partial implementation, with half of the surveyed citizens agreeing that they were not required to provide documents already held by the state (such as birth, citizenship, unemployment certificates, etc.).[30]

Overall, Albania has built a solid strategic, legislative, and institutional foundation for citizen-centric service delivery, but significant challenges remain in fully realizing this vision. Priorities moving forward include developing binding secondary regulations for citizen co-design participation, and to systematically publishing detailed feedback and participation metrics.

How does Albania do in regional terms?

Sub-indicator 1: Citizen-centric service delivery

Horizontal bar chart with values:
- ALB: 11.5 (average marker 9.3)
- BIH: 7
- KS: 7.5
- MKD: 11.5
- MNE: 8
- SRB: 10

Legend: Average — Score for sub-indicator 1 — Western Balkan average

II.2 Service accessibility and availability of information on services

Principle 19: Users are at the centre in design and delivery of administrative services.

Principle 20: The public administration delivers streamlined and high-quality services.

Principle 21: Administrative services are easily accessible online and offline, taking into account different needs, choices and constraints.

Principle 22: Digitalisation enables data-driven decisions and effective, efficient and responsive policies, services and processes in the whole of government.

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30 Survey results: strongly disagree 20.8%, disagree 13.5%, agree 34.9%, strongly agree 22%, do not know/no opinion 8.7%

Sub-indicator 2: Service accessibility and availability of information on services[31]

Indicator element - number and title	Type	Score
E 2.1 The strategic framework envisages enhancement of accessibility of services and availability of service delivery information	Strategy and policy	0.5/0.5
E 2.2 Regulations stipulate service provision through one-stop shops	Legislation	1/1
E 2.3 Regulations stipulate that service providers keep key metrics on the use of services	Legislation	1.5/1.5
E 2.4 Regulations stipulate provision of services in the form of life events	Legislation	1/1
E 2.5 Regulations stipulate mandatory adaptation of service delivery to the needs of vulnerable groups	Legislation	1.5/2

31 Through the second sub-indicator, the following SIGMA sub-principles are monitored: The government establishes and co-ordinates a whole-of-government policy to continuously improve design and delivery of public administrative services, based on evolving user needs; The public administration regularly monitors service quality against delivery standards and other metrics, to learn lessons and improve service design and delivery; The public administration ensures that service delivery is streamlined for the maximum convenience of the service users; The public administration organises and offers public services in the form of "life events"; The public administration applies omni-channel service delivery, combining online and (digitally-assisted) offline channels, so users have a seamless user journey with the possibility to interact digitally with any part of administration, if desired; All potential users have physical access to high-quality public services within reasonable distance, through collaboration of involved public administration bodies and co-ordination across and within levels of government; The public administration takes account of the diverse needs of different user groups in delivering services (including with respect to physical and intellectual ability, digital skills and language) and ensures there are no barriers to service access; The public administration ensures that users can easily find their preferred channels and have easy access to information about their rights, obligations, services and the institutions providing them, for example through a service catalogue; In their communication tools (websites, leaflets, forms, etc.) and in the context of administrative decisions, public administration bodies use concise and understandable language that conveys all relevant information in a manner appropriate to the diverse circumstances of service users (minority languages according to the law, visual and hearing impairments, etc.); Public registries are digital by design, and data governance is coherent and systematic, to ensure the trustworthiness and high quality of data and access to it, with active use and sharing of data within the public administration and beyond; and The public administration actively collaborates with relevant stakeholders to enhance the re-use of digital solutions developed with public budget to boost a collaborative ecosystem for the provision and use of digital services economy-wide.

E 2.6 Service providers publish basic procedural information on how to access public services online	Practice in implementation	5/5
E 2.7 Service providers publish citizen-friendly guidance on accessing public services online	Practice in implementation	0/3
E 2.8 Service providers publish information on services they offer as life events	Practice in implementation	0/4
E 2.9 Information on services is available in multiple formats to meet diverse users' needs	Practice in implementation	0/3
E 2.10 Information on public service delivery is available in multiple languages to meet diverse users' needs	Practice in implementation	3/3
E 2.11 Service providers publish information on the prices of their services	Practice in implementation	3/3
E 2.12 Service providers publish information on the rights and obligations of users	Practice in implementation	3/3
E 2.13 Service providers publish precise contact information for service provision	Practice in implementation	3/3
E 2.14 Data on administrative services are available in open formats	Practice in implementation	0/4
E 2.15 Service providers train their staff on how to treat vulnerable groups	Practice in implementation	2/3
E 2.16 Service providers ensure adequate territorial distribution of service delivery	Practice in implementation	3.5/3.5
E 2.17 Key non-state actors consider service delivery as accessible	Outcomes and impact	0/3
E 2.18 Citizens' perception of the accessibility of information necessary for obtaining services	Outcomes and impact	2/2

E 2.19 Citizens' perception of the ease of in-person access to services	Outcomes and impact	2/2
E 2.20 Citizens' perception of the ease of online access to services	Outcomes and impact	2/2
Total score for sub-indicator 2		**32.5/52.5**

Since the previous monitoring cycle, Albania has made modest but measurable improvements in how service-related information is provided to users, particularly through the centralization of procedural details, pricing, and contact data for most high-volume services on the e-Albania portal. While this demonstrates continuity in the digital approach previously assessed, accessibility remains uneven. Multilingual content is only partially available, alternative formats for persons with disabilities are rarely implemented, and open data on service delivery is still absent in most sectors. Training for staff on assisting vulnerable users has begun, but remains limited in scale. Overall, the legal obligations are more clearly codified, but practical implementation remains fragmented and partial.

Albania's strategic framework clearly prioritizes improving service accessibility and the availability of service-related information. The Digital Agenda 2022–2026 explicitly commits to expanding digital accessibility, emphasizing citizen-centric electronic services, with responsibilities clearly assigned to the National Agency for Information Society (NAIS).[32] Specific measures outlined include ensuring online and mobile-friendly access through the e-Albania portal and app, and the systematic improvement of service information via structured "service passports".[33] These include structured frameworks to systematically organize and clearly present information related to each digital service provided through the e-Albania portal. It again states the responsibility of NAIS for the ongoing management, improvement, and implementation of these passport indicators to enhance transparency, usability, and user-friendliness of digital service information.[34]

Another important component of citizen-friendly service delivery is the establishment and functioning of one-stop shops for public service delivery. In

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32 Digital Agenda 2022–2026, Section 5, Sub-Section 5.1, Section 8, Sub-Section 8.1; https://www.qbz.gov.al/eli/vendim/2022/06/01/370/8fd7b0cf-6848-431f-8bcb-5d08d16deaa7;q=agjenda%20digjitale

33 Ibid., Sub-Section 5.3, Section 9 "Passport of indicators of the Digital Agenda"

34 Ibid., Section 9, Indicator 1 "Digital Governance"

Albania the legislative basis for delivering public services through these one-stop shops is solid. The Code of Administrative Procedures explicitly mandates the establishment and operation of both physical and digital one-stop service points, significantly streamlining citizen interactions.[35]

Also, the Law "On Electronic Governance" reinforces this by designating the e-Albania portal as the primary digital one-stop shop, effectively centralizing administrative transactions.[36] Another important standard which public service providers should maintain and report, is key performance metrics. Regulations stipulate maintaining and reporting these key performance metrics, including service volume, processing times, and costs incurred by users. The Public Service Standards Policy Document mandates agencies to establish and monitor these metrics, enabling the evaluation of service effectiveness and transparency, although detailed implementation reports remain limited.[37]

Albania's legal framework also establishes the administrative services which should be reorganized and delivered according to "life events", as indicated in the Public Service Standards Policy Document.[38] In their response to the FOI sent, NAIS explained: "In cooperation with 14 institutions tasked by the Government, they have entered a significant phase of reorganizing public services according to the "life-events" model. This approach aims to deliver a simpler, more accessible, and citizen-centric experience during crucial life moments, such as the birth of a child, school registration, starting a business, retirement, etc. To this end, the work carried out thus far has been guided by Prime Minister's Order No. 72, dated 09.06.2023, which established the inter-institutional working group responsible for reorganizing and digitalizing public services based on the "life-events" model, accessible through the e-Albania portal." These plans about the creation of at least 6 "life events" were also reinforced during a presentation given by the director of e-Albania portal Ms. Nevila Repishti when outlining the plans and forthcoming updates for the platform.[39] Despite these clear strategic commitments, no administrative services have yet been fully implemented or publicly structured as life events.

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35 Law No. 44/2015 "Code of Administrative Procedures", Article 74 "One-stop service points", Article 75 "Responsibilities of one-stop service points", https://www.qbz.gov.al/eli/ligj/2015/04/30/44/49b2fb39-de15-4b0b-a030-487b57c57a85;q=KODI%20I%20PROCEDURAVE%20ADMINISTRATIVE%20I%20REPUBLIK%C3%8BS%20S%C3%8B%20SHQIP%C3%8BRIS%C3%8B

36 Law No. 43/2023 "On Electronic Governance", Article 14 "Governmental Portal e-Albania". https://www.qbz.gov.al/eli/ligj/2023/06/15/43/9fb689d7-75d3-4621-a5a4-dab6e3a52d93;q=P%C3%8BR%20QEVERISJEN%20ELEKTRONIKE

37 Decision of the Council of Ministers No.204, date 7.4.2023 "The Public Service Standards Policy Document", Section 3.6 "Planning of interventions", Section 3.5 "Key interventions for achieving standards", Annex 1 "Linkage principle–dimension–indicator–sub-indicator"; https://www.qbz.gov.al/eli/vendim/2023/04/07/204/db1126c8-c1d6-4281-8d7b-5a5b45d7f465;q=P%C3%8BR%20MIRATIMIN%20E%20DOKUMENTIT%20T%C3%8B%20POLITIKAVE%20P%C3%8BR%20STANDARDET%20E%20SH%C3%8BRBIMEVE%20PUBLIKE%20N%C3%8B%20REPUBLIK%C3%8BN%20E%20SHQIP%C3%8BRIS%C3%8B

38 Ibid., Section 2.4, Point 1, Part 2

39 Statement given on 04.02.2025 during the Sigma Report presentation for Albania.

Further crucial factors toward making the service delivery effective and inclusive to all groups of citizens are fulfilling requirements that make the services adaptable to the needs of vulnerable groups. Several specific criteria were assessed which monitored whether physical accessibility of service providers' buildings was regulated, if information is available in multiple formats and official languages and if free assistance for targeted population is also legally mandated. The regulations in force do address mandatory adaptation of services to vulnerable groups effectively in most areas.[40]

The same Decision No.1074 requires public entities to guarantee a communication and information process for individuals with vision impairments or blindness, clearly requiring information materials to be published in Braille, large print, and audio formats. It prioritizes services related to law enforcement, tax, education, health, employment, and transportation.[41] Also, Article 24 of this CoM decision requires institutions to progressively ensure digital accessibility measures for persons with intellectual disabilities by building and adapting internet communication media according to their specific needs.[42]

The information is available in the only official language in the Republic of Albania which is Albanian. The Code of Administrative Procedures clearly mandates the use of Albanian language and script in all administrative procedures and public service communication. No further concrete obligations exist for multilingual communication.[43] Nonetheless, while the majority of the above requirements are regulated by law, the free assistance for vulnerable groups is not explicitly mandated, leaving gaps that could impact service access for these groups of the population. Article 12 of CoM Decision no.1074/2015 mandates assistance for persons with hearing/speech impairments, in terms of providing sign-language interpretation services and associated adaptations.[44] However, this article does not directly mention that the assistance must be provided free of charge.

When assessing the 7 sampled services[45] in terms of providing necessary

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40 Decision of the Council of Ministers No.1074, date 23.12.2015, Article 1,3,4,5,6,10; https://www.qbz.gov.al/eli/vendim/2015/12/23/1074/f88d9e96-da78-42fa-b3c5-8fc5415ddd8e;q=P%C3%ABr%20p%C3%ABrcaktimin%20e%20masave%20p%C3%ABr%20m%C3%ABnjanimin%20e%20pengesave%20n%C3%AB%20komunikim%20dhe%20infrastruktur%C3%AB%20n%C3%AB%20ofrimin%20e%20sh%C3%ABrbimeve%20publike%20p%C3%ABr%20personat%20me%20aft%C3%ABsi%20t%C3%AB%20kufizuara

41 Ibid., Article 3

42 Ibid., Article 24

43 Law No. 44/2015 "Code of Administrative Procedures", Article 20; https://www.qbz.gov.al/eli/ligj/2015/04/30/44/49b2fb39-de15-4b0b-a030-487b57c57a85;q=KODI%20I%20PROCEDURAVE%20ADMINISTRATIVE%20I%20REPUBLIK%C3%8BS%20S%C3%8B%20SHQIP%C3%8BRIS%C3%8B

44 Decision of the Council of Ministers No.1074, date 23.12.2015, Article 12; https://www.qbz.gov.al/eli/vendim/2015/12/23/1074/f88d9e96-da78-42fa-b3c5-8fc5415ddd8e;q=P%C3%ABr%20p%C3%ABrcaktimin%20e%20masave%20p%C3%ABr%20m%C3%ABnjanimin%20e%20pengesave%20n%C3%AB%20komunikim%20dhe%20infrastruktur%C3%AB%20n%C3%AB%20ofrimin%20e%20sh%C3%ABrbimeve%20publike%20p%C3%ABr%20personat%20me%20aft%C3%ABsi%20t%C3%AB%20kufizuara

45 Property registration: https://e-albania.al/eAlbaniaServices/UseService.aspx?service_code=9472. Company

information as service description, online and physical accessibility, helpline telephone number and information on required documentation predominately essential data is comprehensibly provided online. Detailed descriptions, procedural steps, required documentation, physical locations, and helpline contacts are systematically published, significantly enhancing transparency and citizen convenience. However, citizen-friendly formats such as video tutorials and infographics remain limited.

The information on these sampled services is predominantly available only in written formats and only passport and ID issuance services offer extensive audio-visual support, while other essential services lack these accessible resources, indicating room for improvement in facilitating citizen understanding and ease of use.[46] This limited availability across multiple formats restricts accessibility for users with special needs, such as visual impairments or literacy barriers, highlighting a significant area for improvement and adjustment.

Multilingual information provision meets requirements effectively, with services such as property registration, business registration, passport and ID issuance, and VAT services available both in Albanian and English.[47] This multilingual accessibility significantly enables service utilization by non-Albanian speakers and international users, although vehicle registration information remains exclusively in Albanian. Service providers do also consistently publish clear and systematic information regarding service prices across all sampled services on official websites and the e-Albania portal. Transparent and accessible pricing information is available, effectively meeting transparency standards and aiding citizens' needs. Information regarding users' rights and obligations is thoroughly published online for all sampled services, detailing documentation requirements and clarifying users' responsibilities.

Other important data as precise contact details, including physical addresses, telephone numbers, and email addresses, are comprehensively available for all reviewed services.[48] This consistent accessibility significantly improves administrative responsiveness and user convenience. Nevertheless, administrative service data remain largely unavailable in open, machine-readable formats,[49] except for detailed vehicle registration data provided by the General Directorate of Road Transport Services.[50] Expanding open data availability remains a

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(business) registration: https://e-albania.al/eAlbaniaServices/UseService.aspx?service_code=15186; Vehicle Registration: https://www.dpshtrr.al/mjete/regjistrimi-i-mjetit; Passport and ID Card issuance: https://e-al-bania.al/eAlbaniaServices/UseService.aspx?service_code=13851; https://identitek.al; VAT declaration and VAT payment: https://www.tatime.gov.al/c/7/154/per-sipermarresit.

46 Ibid.

47 Information on e-Albania services is available in English by using Chatbot after the user logs in.

48 Check sampled services websites as provided on reference nr.14.

49 Machine-readable formats include: XML, XLSX, XLS, ODS, CSV, TSV, JSON.

50 https://www.dpshtrr.al/open-data-dpshtrr-english; https://lookerstudio.google.com/reporting/01cc295b-4aee-409b-9026-48f57c807175/page/CU40B

critical area for improvement to strengthen transparency and accountability.

Regarding efforts to train the public administration staff on handling vulnerable groups, it should be pointed out that activities have been initiated. In 2023, the ASPA[51] developed a specialized training curriculum addressing the phenomenon of anti-gypsyism[52] titled "Anti-Gypsyism and the Role of Public Administration Against This Phenomenon". This training focused on the Roma and Egyptian minorities, as part of the National Action Plan for Equality, Inclusion, and Participation of Roma and Egyptians (2021-2025).[53] In 2024, ASPA conducted 3 training sessions on this topic, which included two online certification courses and one informational webinar session. A total of 83 civil servants participated in these training programs. While this is noteworthy, expanding and regularizing such training programs could further enhance public administration attentiveness and reaction to vulnerable groups.

The territorial distribution of administrative services is effectively ensured, with municipal-level access provided for all reviewed services. Physical municipal offices nationwide adequately facilitate in-person interactions when digital transactions are impractical or the services still require physical interactions, maintaining broad territorial coverage.

Feedback from non-state expert and CSOs members always draws attention to persistent physical and digital accessibility barriers, including inadequate infrastructure, insufficient digital literacy, and fragmented service improvements. Despite recognizing fragmented improvements, like ADISA's centralized service model, and isolated initiatives such as audio-equipped buses in one municipality[54], the experts described these as limited and insufficiently integrated. Also, inadequate internet infrastructure and lack of dedicated support were strongly underlined. Recommended improvements consistently included legislative reform, increased digital literacy, systemic integration of accessibility standards, and stronger collaboration between public institutions and civil society to establish balanced and fair service access, particularly for rural residents, elderly individuals, and persons with disabilities.

The citizen perceptions[55] generally reflect balanced and generally positive views with service accessibility. On the question of accessibility of information necessary for obtaining services the majority of the surveyed citizens finds essential information and guidance easily accessible.[56] In relation to the question of the ease of in-person access to services also the majority of the citizens expressed

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51 Albanian School of Public Administration, https://aspa.gov.al/en/
52 The information was obtained from their response to the FOI request.
53 https://www.undp.org/albania/publications/national-action-plan-equality-inclusion-and-participation-roma-and-egyptians-albania
54 Municipality of Kamza
55 Public perception survey conducted from 11th of February until 18th of February 2025. Sample used, N=1026
56 strongly disagree 16.8%, disagree 17.8%, agree 41%, strongly agree 22.2%, do not know/no opinion 2.2%

favourable views.[57] The same rate of approval was expressed also about the question of the ease of online access to services, highlighting significant progress.[58] Notwithstanding, the considerable minority still encountering barriers underscore the necessity for ongoing efforts to reduce exclusion and develop further the overall service accessibility.

How does Albania do in regional terms?

Sub-indicator 2: Service accessibility and availability of information on services
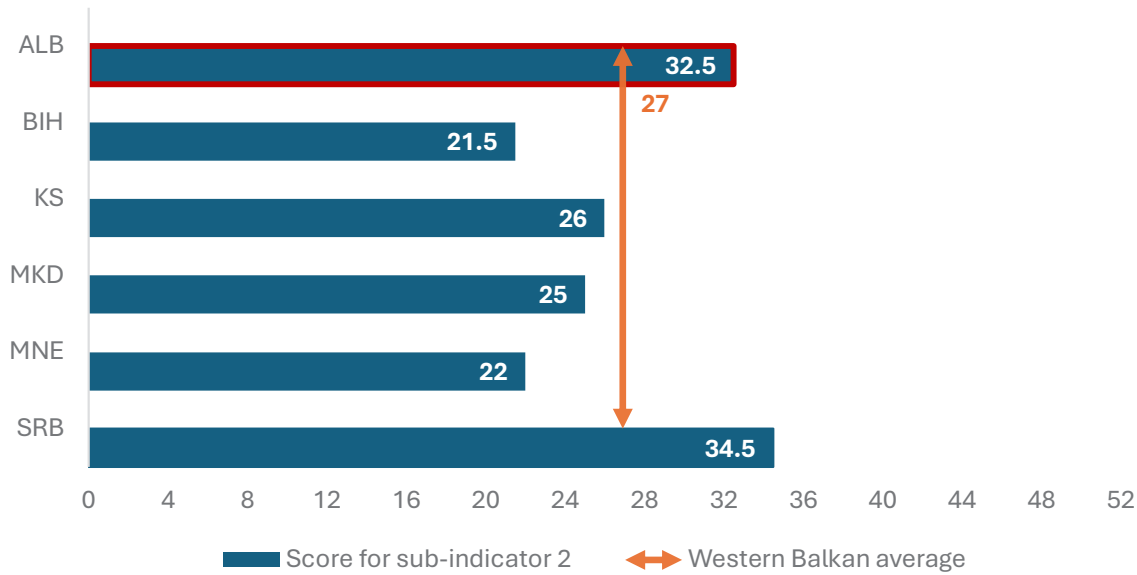
II.3 Digitalisation of service delivery

Principle 19: Users are at the centre in design and delivery of administrative services.

Principle 22: Digitalisation enables data-driven decisions and effective, efficient and responsive policies, services and processes in the whole of government.

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57   strongly disagree 17.4%, disagree 18.6%, agree 36%, strongly agree 25%, do not know/no opinion 2.9
58   Survey results: strongly disagree 15.5%, disagree 15%, agree 32.3%, strongly agree 34.6%, do not know/no opinion 2.7%

Sub-indicator 3: Digitalisation of service delivery[59]

Indicator element - number and title	Type	Score
E 3.1 There is a strategic document in force that envisages digitalisation of service delivery	Strategy and policy	0.5/0.5
E 3.2 Regulations stipulate provision of digital services, digital signature and e-payment in digital service delivery	Legislation	1.5/1.5
E 3.3 Institutional responsibility for steering the digital service delivery at the central administration level is assigned	Institutional setup	2/2
E 3.4 Online central platform for digital service delivery is established and user-oriented	Practice in implementation	4/4
E 3.5 Digital signature and digital payment are available to all users	Practice in implementation	2/4.5
E 3.6 Key non-state actors consider digital services as easy to use	Outcomes and impact	3/3
Total score for sub-indicator 3		**13.25/15.5**

Since the previous monitoring cycle, Albania has established a strong strategic and legislative framework that solidifies the commitment to digital public service delivery. Centralized institutional responsibilities and user-oriented digital platforms significantly enhance administrative efficiency and accessibility. Nevertheless, completing the integration of digital payment capabilities and systematically addressing inclusivity challenges remain essential priorities to ensure equitable access and usability of digital services for all citizens.

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59 Through the third sub-indicator, the following SIGMA sub-principles are monitored: The government establishes and co-ordinates a whole-of-government policy to continuously improve design and delivery of public administrative services, based on evolving user needs; The public administration ensures leadership, co-ordination and capacity for the creation of effective, integrated and digital government strategies and services; and User-friendly digital identity, digital signature and trust services, digital payment and digital delivery solutions are easily available to everyone, legally enacted, technically functional and widely used.

Albania's strategic commitment to digitalizing public service delivery is clearly articulated, as outlined in the other report areas through the Digital Agenda 2022–2026. This foundational document explicitly sets priorities toward digital transformation, aiming to provide comprehensive and citizen-accessible electronic services exclusively through the e-Albania platform.[60] It assigns clear responsibilities to the National Agency for Information Society (NAIS) for full digitalization of public services, emphasizing interoperability, seamless integration, and eliminating the need for citizens to physically interact with multiple public institutions. NAIS manages critical components such as digital signatures, authentication, interoperability infrastructure, and the digital services catalogue, thus ensuring unified and coherent delivery of digital services across the Albanian public administration.

Additionally, Law No. 43/2023 "On Electronic Governance" firmly establishes the provision of digital services as a statutory obligation for public bodies, mandating the use of secure electronic channels for public service delivery.[61]

It further specifies the implementation of digital signatures and electronic seals, ensuring the legal validity and legitimacy of electronically issued documents.[62] Additionally, the law requires the availability of electronic payment facilities directly through the e-Albania portal, a measure that would significantly boost the efficiency of transactions for users.[63] However, the implementation rate of e-payments shows little progress and remains limited in practical use. When assessing the seven sample services, property and business registration services fully utilize digital signatures and electronic payments,[64] providing end-to-end digital processes. Vehicle registration, passport and ID card issuance, and VAT services employ digital signatures consistently, but still require in-person interactions for payment processes, reflecting partial digital payment availability.

The central online platform for digital service delivery, the "e-Albania" portal, is mostly stable and user-oriented. It adheres strictly to national data protection regulations, clearly detailing data collection, processing, and storage policies in its published "Privacy Policy" and "Terms of Use".[65] The portal also includes advanced user-oriented features, notably an AI-based interactive chatbot available in both Albanian and English.

Feedback from key informants confirms general satisfaction with the ease of

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60 The Digital Agenda 2022–2026, Point 2, Section 2.2. (https://www.qbz.gov.al/eli/vendim/2022/06/01/370/8fd-7b0cf-6848-431f-8bcb-5d08d16deaa7;q=agjenda%20digjitale)

61 Law No. 43/2023 "On Electronic Governance", Article 1 "Purpose of the law"; https://www.qbz.gov.al/eli/lig-j/2023/06/15/43/9fb689d7-75d3-4621-a5a4-dab6e3a52d93;q=P%C3%8BR%20QEVERISJEN%20ELEKTRONIKE
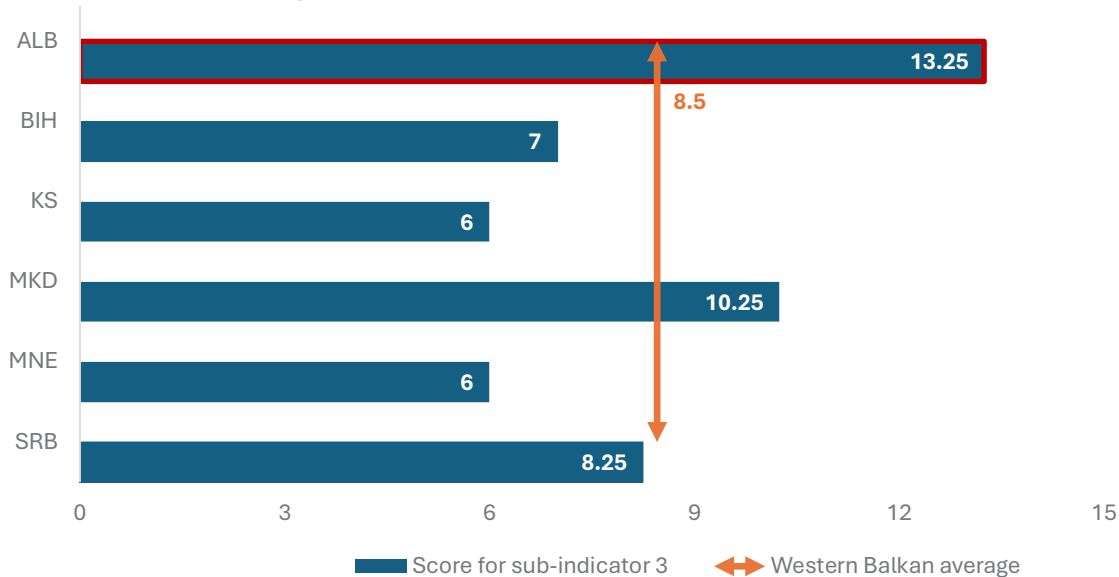
62 Ibid., Article 37, 48, 49

63 Ibid., Article 51

64 At least the possibility to pay electronically is an option at the "e-Albania" dedicated page for these services after the user logs in. Nevertheless, in most cases this does not mean that the user can actually proceed to pay electronically because usually it does not work.

65 Privacy Policy; https://e-albania.al/Pages/PrivacyPolicy.aspx; Terms of Use; https://e-albania.al/Pages/TermO-fUse.aspx

use of Albania's digital services, marking a significant improvement from traditional in-person, paper-based methods. However, CSO experts interviewed consistently highlight persistent challenges for certain groups, including elderly citizens, rural residents, minorities, and economically disadvantaged populations.
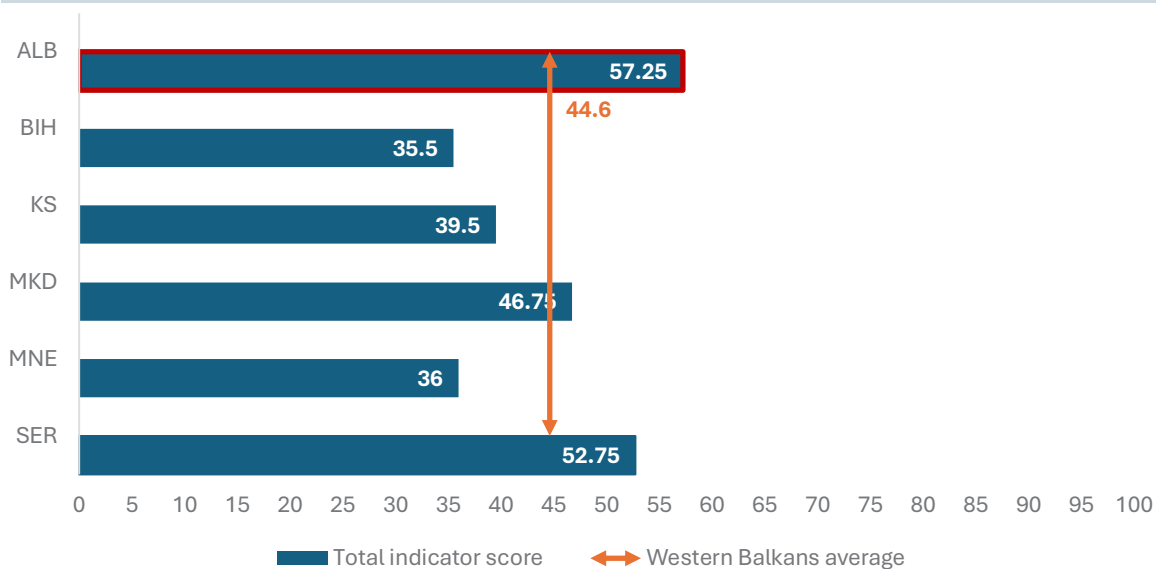
How does Albania do in regional terms?

Sub-indicator 3: Digitalisation of services

Legend: Score for sub-indicator 3 ◆ Western Balkan average

	Score for sub-indicator 3
ALB	13.25
BIH	7
KS	6
MKD	10.25
MNE	6
SRB	8.25

Western Balkan average: 8.5

Overall scores comparison in the Service Delivery and Digitalisation

Indicator: Transparency and citizen-centricity of service design and delivery

	Total indicator score
ALB	57.25
BIH	35.5
KS	39.5
MKD	46.75
MNE	36
SER	52.75

Western Balkans average: 44.6

Legend: Total indicator score ◆ Western Balkans average

Regional overview report for Service Design and Digitalisation area, with results for all WB administrations is available at: www.par-monitor.org

II.4 Recommendations for the Service Delivery and Digitalisation

II.4.1 Tracking recommendations from PAR Monitor 2021/2022

Recommendations	Type (short term/ medium term/long term)	Status	Explanation
ADISA should identify gaps in the implementation of service delivery policy, particularly regarding the following divides: (a) rural vs. urban; (b) center vs. periphery; (c) educated vs. less educated; (d) socially included vs. socially excluded groups. To this end, ADISA should closely engage CSOs working on the rights of persons with disabilities and socially excluded groups to improve service delivery for these groups.	Short term	Partially Implemented	Following the absorption of ADISA by NAIS, measures and initiatives have been undertaken to address service delivery gaps and increase engagement with civil society organizations focused on persons with disabilities and marginalized groups. Despite notable improvements, ongoing challenges remain, particularly in rural areas and among digitally marginalized populations.
ADISA should prioritize the development of a comprehensive policy framework on quality management models in public administration. To this end, data collection and reporting on citizen experience while obtaining services is paramount.		Partially Implemented	Overall, this recommendation is implemented because feedback channels, such as rating systems and comment boxes, have been embedded within the e-Albania portal. However, some key services offered outside e-Albania portal still lack feedback channels such as such as vehicle registration or VAT services.
Service providers should enable and promote on their websites feedback channels aimed at improving administrative services.		Implemented	Overall, this recommendation is implemented because feedback channels, such as rating systems and comment boxes, have been embedded within the e-Albania portal. However, some key services offered outside e-Albania portal still lack feedback channels such as such as vehicle registration or VAT services.
Service providers should proactively publish basic data regarding citizens' feedback on administrative services.		Not implemented	No systematic or comprehensive publication of feedback data is available. Only limited, aggregated data such as "top-rated services" on e-Albania is published without detailed insights or broader feedback analysis.

Recommendations	Type (short term/ medium term/long term)	Status	Explanation
The government should promote inclusive monitoring of service delivery by civil society and citizens.		Partially Implemented	Inclusive monitoring mechanisms involving civil society and broader citizen participation are actively promoted, and there is a push to further enhance the process, but it still remains limited. Key informants continue to highlight a lack of systematic inclusion and consultation, particularly affecting vulnerable groups.
Service providers should ensure that their staff are adequately trained about communication with and assistance to people with disabilities and other vulnerable groups.		Partially Implemented	Training programs have been initiated (83 civil servants trained in 2024), yet these initiatives are not yet widespread or regularly integrated into ongoing public administration training schedules.
ADISA and specific service providers should make available information on administrative services in open data formats.		Not implemented	Except for vehicle registration, open data availability remains highly limited. Administrative services generally do not provide data in machine-readable, openly accessible formats.
ADISA and the Agency for Dialogue and Co-governance should have distinct competencies. There are currently overlaps between the two institutions regarding monitoring, evaluation, and reporting, which are counterproductive to an effective service delivery policy.		Implemented	The abolition of ADISA and the integration of its responsibilities into NAIS resolved institutional overlaps. NAIS clearly oversees digital services, while the Agency for Dialogue and Co-governance maintains distinct competencies related to accountability and transparency.
The Agency for Dialogue and Co-governance should have its own website and produce its Transparency Program in accordance with the Law on the Right to Information.		Implemented	The Agency for Dialogue and Co-governance now maintains its dedicated website and complies with transparency obligations under the Law on the Right to Information, regularly updating its Transparency Program.

II.4.2 Recommendations from the 2024/2025 Monitor report

1. Within a medium-term horizon, the Ministry of Public Administration and Anti-Corruption (MPAC), in close cooperation with NAIS, should draft and submit to Parliament the necessary amendments to the public service legislation that will make user-satisfaction metrics compulsory. The revised provisions should require every central provider to collect and publish quarterly data, disaggregated by gender, disability and region, and to explain how the results are used to improve their services.

2. Over the medium-term, MPAC and NAIS should issue a national methodology for citizen-centric service design that requires institutions to co-create, prototype, test and step-by-step refine every new or redesigned service in direct collaboration with end-users.

3. In the medium-term, NAIS, working with the competent line ministries, should group services around "life events" and publish them as unified processes on e-Albania, supported by simple language guidance in Albanian and English, and in accessible formats (audio, PDF, videos with signing or subtitles).

4. To effectively implement the once-only principle, NAIS, MPAC and Albania's municipalities should, within a long-term timeframe, connect local registries to the national data exchange platform. They should also maintain an online counter that shows how often citizens are still asked to provide documents already held by the state.

5. Over the medium-term, NAIS and municipal authorities should establish and finance dedicated help-desks and assisted digital support points where civil servants, trained for this task, guide elderly citizens, rural residents and persons with disabilities through online processes free of charge.

6. NAIS should, in the short-term, publish an open data hub for service KPIs, processing times, costs and usage volumes, so that CSOs, media, and all interested stakeholders can monitor trends and performance metrics across agencies.

METHODOLOGY APPENDIX

For producing this report for Albania, the following research methods and tools were used for data collection and calculation of elements:

- Analysis of official documentation, data, and official websites
- Requests for free access to information
- Interviews with stakeholders and key informants
- Public perception survey.

Monitoring heavily relied on the analysis of official documents publicly available on the websites of administration bodies and on the data and information contained therein. However, in cases where the data was not available, researchers sent requests for free access to information to relevant institutions in order to obtain information necessary for awarding points for the elements.

Table 5. FOI requests sent in Albania

Institution	Date of request	Date of reply to the request
National Agency for Information Society	25.02.2025	10.03.2025
Albanian School of Public Administration	25.02.2025	26.02.2025
General Tax Directorate	25.02.2025	06.03.2025

Interviews with key informants were conducted and used as a base for point allocation for elements 1.10, and 2.17 and 3.6. Additionally, they were used to collect qualitative, focused, and in-depth inputs on monitored phenomena. Interviews with other stakeholders (such as representatives of public administration bodies) were additionally used in the research to complement and verify otherwise collected data and findings. Selection of interviewees was based on purposive, non-probability sampling, targeting interlocutors based on their expertise on the topic.

Key informant interviews were comprised of a set of up to four questions where the participants expressed their agreement on a four-point scale: fully disagree, tend to disagree, tend to agree and fully agree. Points under elements 1.10, 2.17

and 3.6 were allocated if all key informants stated that they tend to agree/fully agree with the statement. Additionally, a set of open-ended questions was used, allowing for a discussion with interviewees and on-the-spot sub-questions rather than strictly following a predetermined format. Interviewees were given full anonymity in terms of personal information and institutional/organisational affiliation.

Table 6. Interviews conducted in Albania

Date	Interviewees
19.02.2025	CSO Director
21.02.2025	CSO Director
27.02.2025	CSO Expert/Researcher

List of interview questions

• **Element 1.10**

1. To what extent do you agree with the following statement: Service design and service delivery are citizen centric.

   a) fully disagree
   b) tend to disagree
   c) tend to agree
   d) fully agree

2. To what extent do you agree with the following statement: Channels for citizen feedback are available.

a) fully disagree

   b) tend to disagree
   c) tend to agree
   d) fully agree

3. To what extent do you agree with the following statement: Citizens' feedback is used to improve service delivery.

   a) fully disagree
   b) tend to disagree
   c) tend to agree
   d) fully agree

Additional guiding questions (not used for point allocation, but relevant for

providing qualitative insight necessary for the assessment):

1. What are the main barriers to achieving citizen-centric service design and delivery in your experience?

2. Can you share examples of good practices in citizen-centric service delivery?

3. What feedback channels do you perceive most effective for citizens to communicate their needs and experiences?

4. Are these feedback mechanisms widely accessible to all population groups (e.g., vulnerable or marginalized groups)?

5. How do you think citizen feedback is processed and acted upon by service providers?

6. Can you provide examples where citizen feedback led to visible improvements in service delivery?

7. In your opinion, what systemic changes are needed to strengthen the citizen-centric approach in service design and delivery?

8. How can non-state actors contribute to ensuring that citizen feedback is integrated into service improvement processes?

- **Element 2.17**

1. To what extent do you agree with the following statement: The territorial network for accessing administrative services by all citizens is adequate.

   a) fully disagree
   b) tend to disagree
   c) tend to agree
   d) fully agree

2. To what extent do you agree with the following statement: The premises of service provides are physically accessible by all citizens.

   a) fully disagree
   b) tend to disagree
   c) tend to agree
   d) fully agree

3. To what extent do you agree with the following statement: Services offered online are easily accessible by all citizens.

   a) fully disagree
   b) tend to disagree
   c) tend to agree
   d) fully agree

Additional guiding questions (not used for point allocation, but relevant for

providing qualitative insight necessary for the assessment):

1. What challenges exist in ensuring an adequate territorial network for administrative service access?

2. Are there areas or groups particularly underserved by the current network?

3. Are there specific barriers to physical access in service provider premises (e.g., infrastructure, location)?

4. Can you identify good practices in improving physical accessibility?

5. What are the primary barriers citizens face when accessing online services?

6. How can service providers improve the accessibility and usability of online platforms?

7. In your opinion, what systemic improvements are needed to ensure that all citizens have equitable access to administrative services?

8. How can civil society and other non-state actors support better accessibility?

- **Element 3.6**

  1. To what extent do you agree with the following statement: Digital services are easy to use by all citizens.

     a) fully disagree
     b) tend to disagree
     c) tend to agree
     d) fully agree

Additional guiding questions (not used for point allocation, but relevant for providing qualitative insight necessary for the assessment):

1. What are the most significant challenges citizens face when using digital services?

2. Are there specific population groups (e.g., older adults, rural residents, individuals with disabilities) for whom digital services are less accessible?

3. What features or support mechanisms could make digital services more user-friendly for all citizens?

4. Can you provide examples of good practices or successful digital service implementations?

5. How (can) service providers ensure that digital services are accessible to citizens without reliable internet or digital literacy skills?

The public perception survey is based on a questionnaire targeting the gen-

eral public (18+ permanent residents) of Albania. The survey was conducted through computer-assisted telephone interviewing (CATI) in combination with computer-assisted web interviewing (CAWI).

The survey was conducted between 11th and 18th of February 2025. The margin of error for the sample of 1026 citizens is ±3,49 %, at the 95% confidence level.

Table 7: public perception survey questions in the area of Service Delivery and Digitalisation[66]

Statement 8					
In the past two years, have you interacted with the administration in Albania to receive any public administration services? (such as renewal of personal ID documents, applying for unemployment benefits or any other social financial support, registering marriage or the birth of a child, registering a new business, vehicles etc.)				a. Yes	b. No
Statement 9	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	Don't know/No opinion
I have the opportunity to influence the development of public administration services (such as issuing personal documents, vehicle registration, paying taxes, etc.).	1	2	3	4	99
Statement 10	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	Don't know/No opinion

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66 The following statements from this section were not used to allocate points within the methodology for the Service Delivery and Digitalisation area: statement 8, statement 10, statement 15, statement 16 and statement 19.

Public administration should use citizens' experience to improve public administration services	1	2	3	4	99
Statement 11	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	Don't know/No opinion
I have the opportunity to share my opinion on the quality of public administration services I received with the relevant state authorities.	1	2	3	4	99
Statement 12	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	Don't know/No opinion
I can easily find the information and guidance that helps me obtain public administration services.	1	2	3	4	99
Statement 13	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	Don't know/No opinion
I can easily obtain public administration services at the offices and service counters of the relevant authorities.	1	2	3	4	99

Statement 14	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	Don't know/No opinion
I can easily obtain public administration services online (e.g., via the eGovernment Portal, the portal of the Tax authority, etc.).	1	2	3	4	99

Statement 15	a. Access to services online	b. Access to services at the offices and service counters of relevant authorities	c. I have no preference
How do you prefer accessing public administration services?			

Statement 16	a. Never	b. Rarely	c. Sometimes	d. Often	
Thinking about the past two years how often have you used e-services of the public administration?					

Statement 17	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	Don't know/No opinion

When requesting public administration services, I am not required to provide documents already held by the state (such as birth certificates, etc.).	1	2	3	4	99
Statement 18	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	Don't know/No opinion
The last time I requested a public administration service, I had to submit documents already held by the state (such as birth, citizenship, unemployment certificates, etc.).	1	2	3	4	99
Statement 19	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	Don't know/No opinion
In the past two years, citizens or civil society have been involved in the monitoring of public administration services.	1	2	3	4	99

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