PAR Monitor Report North Macedonia

SERVICE DELIVERY AND DIGITALISATION

2024/2025

IMPRESSUM

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Strategy for PAR North Macedonia 2024/2025 report is a product of a month and a half 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 North Macedonia, and other stakeholders in North Macedonia 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), and the Ministry of Public Administration of North Macedonia, as a project associate.

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1 A joint initiative of the European Union and the OECD.

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 expert support, especially for developing citizen-centred methodology for solving PAR issues at local level.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Since the last WeBER monitoring cycle, North Macedonia has made only limited progress in improving public administration and service delivery. The Ministry of Digital Transformation (MDT) is responsible for coordinating services and the digitisation process, but it lacks sufficient capacity. The Public Administration Reform (PAR) Strategy includes measures for improving service delivery, but there is no central policy for administrative simplification.

Although the central portal for administrative services (uslugi.gov.mk) has more users, it serves only a small portion of the population, and service consistency remains a problem. Citizens can submit feedback on the portal, but the process remains unresolved, as it is often unclear which suggestions, comments, or remarks were considered and how they influenced further improvements—particularly in the context of service enhancements.

The National Interoperability Platform has achieved a 20% increase in transactions. In 2024, 8.5 million transactions were made on the platform, which is connected to over 50 institutions and several private companies. By the end of March 2025, the number had reached nearly 900,000 transactions—a figure 20% higher than the average for 2024.[2]

The Law on General Administrative Procedure (LGAP) aligns with good administration principles but is not consistently implemented, and harmonisation with special laws is incomplete. While there have been improvements in service accessibility and information availability, challenges persist, especially in rural areas. While progress has been made in digitising services, significant gaps in infrastructure, digital literacy, and accessibility remain. The government has introduced supportive legal frameworks, and future efforts are expected to focus on expanding digital services, improving infrastructure, and providing digital literacy programmes. Vulnerable groups, including people with disabilities, still face barriers.

The MDT needs to strengthen its administrative capacity to fully manage and coordinate service delivery and the overall digitalisation process. It must also ensure that e-channels are accessible to vulnerable groups and that services are tailored to their needs. In that regard, the Ministry of Public Administration (MPA) should develop training curricula for public sector staff to improve their

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2 The number of transactions on the National Interoperability Platform has increased by 20% (Андоновски: За 20% зголемен бројот на трансакции на Националната Платформа за Интероперабилност)', Official Website of the Ministry of Information Society and Administration, 15 April 2025, https://www.mioa.gov.mk/mk-MK/news/andonovski-za-20-zgolemen-brojot-na-transakcii-na-nacionalnata-platforma-za-interoperabilnost.nspx.

ability to assist vulnerable groups in accessing administrative services and to support these populations effectively.

Additionally, the MDT must equip relevant institutions with the necessary tools for implementation and oversight to ensure consistent policy application across public administration. The MDT, along with the relevant institutions, should offer a variety of channels for accessing administrative services, giving citizens the flexibility to choose the most suitable option for their needs. Furthermore, the MDT should coordinate efforts to ensure administrative services are equally distributed across the country and to improve the accessibility of one-stop shops for all citizens, ensuring they are available nationwide.

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.[3]

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3 For 2022, only developments not covered by the PAR Monitor 2021/2022 are included.

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

CSO	Civil Society Organisation
ENER	Unique Electronic Register of Regulations of the Republic of North Macedonia
EU	European Union
FOI	Freedom of Information
ICT	Information Communication Technology
KDZ	Centre for Public Administration Research
KIs	Key Informants
LGAP	Law on General Administrative Procedure
MDT	Ministry of Digital Transformation
MOI	Ministry of Interior
MPA	Ministry of Public Administration
MSPDY	Ministry for Social Policy, Demography and Youth
PAR	Public Administration Reform
PRO	Public Revenue Office
ReSPA	Regional School of Public Administration
SIGMA	Support for Improvement in Governance and Management
TEN	Think for Europe Network
VAT	Value Added Tax
WCAG	Web Content Accessibility Guidelines
WeBER	Western Balkans Enabling Project for Civil Society Monitoring of Public Administration Reform project

I. WEBER PAR MONITOR: WHAT WEMONITOR 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*[4] 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.[5]

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

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

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: - Strategy and Policy   - Legislation   - Institutional Set-up   - Practice in Implementation, and   - Outcomes and Impact   - Introduction of a 100-point scale, allowing for a more nuanced assessment of progress in each PAR area.

Data sources
- 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.

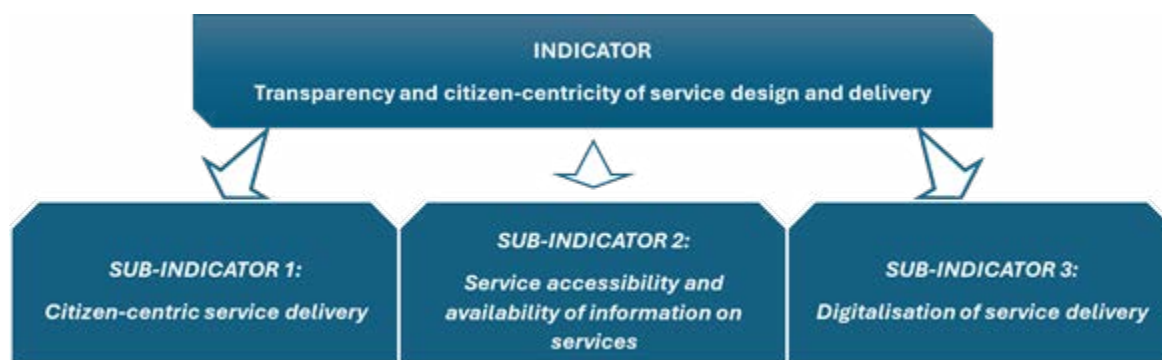| PAR Monitor reporting |
|---|
| Six national PAR Monitor reports, one per PAR area (36 in total for the entire PAR Monitor), in order to facilitate timely publication and advocacy for the monitoring results rather than publishing the results of 18 months of research at the end of the process. Six regional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

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.[6] These sample services include:

1. Property registration
2. Company (business) registration
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

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6 Unless specified otherwise in the methodology of the individual elements.

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 2.

Table 2: Indicator elements under the sub-indicator 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
E1.9 Public service providers implement the once-only principle during service delivery	Practice in implementation
E1.10 Key non-state actors consider service design and delivery as citizen centric	Outcomes and impact
E1.11 Citizens' perception of their ability to influence service design	Outcomes and impact
E1.12 Citizens' perception of their opportunity to provide feedback on public service quality	Outcomes and impact
E1.13 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 3.

Table 3: Indicator elements under the sub-indicator 2

Indicator element - number and title	Type
E2.1 The strategic framework envisages enhancement of accessibility of services and availability of service delivery information	Strategy and policy
E2.2 Regulations stipulate service provision through one-stop shops	Legislation
E2.3 Regulations stipulate that service providers keep key metrics on the use of services	Legislation
E2.4 Regulations stipulate provision of services in the form of life events	Legislation
E2.5 Regulations stipulate mandatory adaptation of service delivery to the needs of vulnerable groups	Legislation
E2.6 Service providers publish basic procedural information on how to access public services online	Practice in implementation
E2.7 Service providers publish citizen-friendly guidance on accessing public services online	Practice in implementation
E2.8 Service providers publish information on services they offer as life events	Practice in implementation
E2.9 Information on services is available in multiple formats to meet diverse users' needs	Practice in implementation

E2.10 Information on public service delivery is available in multiple languages to meet diverse users' needs	Practice in implementation
E2.11 Service providers publish information on the prices of their services	Practice in implementation
E2.12 Service providers publish information on the rights and obligations of users	Practice in implementation
E2.13 Service providers publish precise contact information for service provision	Practice in implementation
E2.14 Data on administrative services are available in open formats	Practice in implementation
E2.15 Service providers train their staff on how to treat vulnerable groups	Practice in implementation
E2.16 Service providers ensure adequate territorial distribution of service delivery	Practice in implementation
E2.17 Key non-state actors consider service delivery as accessible	Outcomes and impact
E2.18 Citizens' perception of the accessibility of information necessary for obtaining services	Outcomes and impact
E2.19 Citizens' perception of the ease of in-person access to services	Outcomes and impact
E2.20 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 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.

Indicator elements that are assessed under the third sub-indicator are listed in the Table 4.

Table 4: Indicator elements under the sub-indicator 3

Indicator element - number and title	Type
E3.1 There is a strategic document in force that envisages digitalisation of service delivery	Strategy and policy
E3.2 Regulations stipulate provision of digital services, digital signature and e-payment in digital service delivery	Legislation
E3.3 Institutional responsibility for steering the digital service delivery at the central administration level is assigned	Institutional setup
E3.4 Online central platform for digital service delivery is established and user-oriented	Practice in implementation
E3.5 Digital signature and digital payment are available to all users	Practice in implementation
E3.6 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)

47.75	53.25

■ 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

[For each sub-indicator, this section starts with a tabular presentation (see below) of sub-indicator elements, element type, score for each element, and total score. It continues with a short "state of play" for each sub-indicator, which contains a short overview of the main developments in the area, supported by, for example, relevant data from the European Commission country reports and other relevant reports where needed (half a page maximum).

The section continues with detailed narrative analysis under the Principle, focusing on the monitoring results by elaborating on relevant findings, highlighting strengths, weaknesses, good practices, or worrisome trends. Sub-indicators should be explained through the analysis, and individual elements need to be logically translated into narrative text focusing on the essence of elements (no need to literally state each element in your analysis - Element 1.1, Element 1.2 etc.). Use references to publications, official documents used in monitoring, and to conducted interviews. In the analysis it should be clear it is our own data. At the end of the analysis for each sub-indicator, place the graphs which show the results achieved within each sub-indicator (see graph below).]

Sub-indicator 1: *Citizen-centric service delivery[7]*

Indicator elements	Element type	Score
E 1.1 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
E 1.2 Regulations stipulate citizen-centric service design and service delivery	Legislation	2/1
E 1.3 Regulations stipulate an obligation of service providers to keep and publish metrics of users' participation in service design	Legislation	0/2
E 1.4 Regulations stipulate application of 'once-only principle'	Legislation	1/1
E 1.5 Institutional responsibility for steering and continuously improving service design and service delivery at the central administration level is assigned	Institutional set-up	2/2
E 1.6 Service providers collect and publish information on users' participation in service design	Practice in implementation	0/3.5
E 1.7 Service providers collect and publish users' feedback on their experience with service delivery	Practice in implementation	1/4
E 1.8 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	0.5/2

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7 Through the first sub-indicator, the following SIGMA sub-principles are monitored: The government establishes and coordinates a whole-of-government policy to continuously improve the 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.

E 1.12	Citizens' perception of their opportunity to provide feedback on public service quality	Outcomes and impact	1/2
E 1.13	Citizens' awareness of the once-only principle	Outcomes and impact	1/2
E 1.14	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, North Macedonia has not made any significant developments, and much remains to be done for further improvement.[8] The Ministry of Digital Transformation (MDT), under the latest amendments to the Law on Organisation and Work of State Administration Bodies, is responsible for coordinating service delivery policy, but it has insufficient capacity. Although the PAR Strategy envisages certain measures for the improvement of service delivery, there is no central policy for administrative simplification.[9] While a central portal for administrative services (uslugi.gov. mk) has experienced an increase in users, it still serves only a small portion of potential users, and the services lack consistency.[10] Citizens can provide feedback on the portal uslugi.gov.mk. However, the feedback process remains unresolved, as it is often unclear which suggestions, comments, or remarks were considered and how they influenced further improvements, particularly in the context of service enhancements. As a result, it becomes difficult to assess whether the same issues continue to arise even after changes have been implemented. The LGAP is aligned with the principles of good administration, but it is not implemented systematically across the administration, and the exercise to harmonise special laws with the Law is still incomplete.[11]

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8 European Commission, North Macedonia 2024 Report, Commission Staff Working Document (Brussels, 30 October 2024), https://enlargement.ec.europa.eu/document/download/5f0c9185-ce46-46fc-bf44-82318ab47e88_en?filename=North%20Macedonia%20Report%202024.pdf.

9 OECD (2025), Public Administration in the Republic of North Macedonia 2024: Assessment against the Principles of Public Administration, SIGMA Monitoring Reports, OECD Publishing, Paris, https://www.sigmaweb.org/en/publications/public-administration-in-the-republic-of-north-macedonia-2024_071bad9d-en.html

10 Ibid.

11 European Commission, 'North Macedonia 2024 Report'.

The PAR Strategy 2023–2030[12] and the National Strategy for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities 2023–2030[13] envisage measures/activities for providing citizen-centric service design and citizen-centric service delivery, with clear assignment of responsibilities. Namely, the fourth priority area from the PAR Strategy— Service delivery and Digital Transformation—contains a specific objective: 4.2. Increased quality and accessibility of services. Within this objective's framework, several measures focus on citizen-centric service design and delivery, including: M4.2.4. Improved accessibility of institutions for people with disabilities, adults, as well as people with a low level of digital literacy; and M4.2.5. Improved application of quality management system models and measurement of user satisfaction with state services. Responsibilities are clearly assigned to the MDT and the Ministry for Social Policy, Demography and Youth (MSPDY) for all designated measures/activities in the tables contained in the Action Plan.[14]

The National Strategy for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities 2023–2030 also contains citizen-centric service design and delivery objectives. The third strategic objective aims to improve digital accessibility by implementing the WCAG standard and Directive 2102/2016 on the accessibility of websites and applications of public institutions. The measures envisage familiarising institutions with the WCAG standard, amending the legal regulations, and adapting websites and portals to apply the standard. In addition, accessibility and availability are envisaged to be part of the criteria for assessing the quality of public services. This will help address existing shortcomings and ensure that all citizens have adequate access to high-quality public services.[15] The National Strategy and its Action Plan[16] also clearly envisage the responsible institutions, such as the MDT, the MSPDY, the Employment Agency, the Agency for Audio and Audio Visual Services, and CSOs working in the area of the protection of rights of persons with disabilities for all designated measures/activities.[17]

12 Ministry of Information Society and Administration, 'Public Administration Reform Strategy 2023–2030 with Action Plan 2023–2026 (Стратегија за реформа на јавната администрација 2023-2030 со Акциски план 2023-2026)', 2023, https://kvalitet.mioa.gov.mk/wp-content/uploads/2024/05/strategija-za-reforma-na-javna-administraczija-2023-2030-so-akcziski-plan.pdf.

13 Ministry of Labor and Social Policy, 'National Strategy on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities 2023–2030 (Национална Стратегија за правата на лицата со попреченост 2023 – 2030)', December 2023, https://bit.ly/3Yjmb8w.

14 Ministry of Information Society and Administration, 'Public Administration Reform Strategy 2023–2030 with Action Plan 2023–2026 (Стратегија за реформа на јавната администрација 2023-2030 со Акциски План 2023-2026)'.

15 Ministry of Labor and Social Policy, 'National Strategy on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities 2023–2030 (Национална стратегија за правата на лицата со попреченост 2023 – 2030)'.

16 Ministry of Labor and Social Policy, 'Action Plan of the National Strategy on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities 2023–2026 (Акциски План на Националната стратегија за правата на лицата со попреченост 2023 – 2026)', December 2023, https://bit.ly/44PakTw

17 Ibid.

Regarding the regulations which stipulate citizen-centric service design and service delivery, the LGAP[18] represents the general legal framework for service delivery in North Macedonia. However, it does not contain specific provisions regarding citizen-centric service design. Moreover, the Law on Electronic Management and Electronic Services,[19] which regulates public institutions' provision of electronic services, also fails to regulate citizen-centric service design.

The LGAP lists the following relevant principles for citizen-centric service delivery:

- The principle of cost-effectiveness and efficiency of the procedure: "The procedure should be conducted in the simplest possible manner, without delay and with the least possible cost to the parties, while ensuring full respect for the rights and legal interests of the parties and a complete determination of the factual situation."[20]

- The principle of service orientation of public bodies: "When public bodies decide on administrative matters, they shall be service-oriented towards the exercise of the rights and interests of the parties."[21]

- The principle of active assistance to the party: "(1) The public body shall be obliged to enable all parties to the procedure to exercise and protect their rights and legal interests in the most effective and easy manner possible. The public body shall inform the parties of the legal provisions that are of importance for the resolution of the administrative matter, of their rights and obligations, including all information related to the procedure, and shall warn them of the legal consequences of their actions or omissions. (2) The public body shall provide the party with access to the public body electronically as well."[22]

In addition, the Law on Electronic Management and Electronic Services,[23] in Article 5, also facilitates service delivery for the citizens of North Macedonia. Article 5 regulates the one-time collection of data and access to it:

"(1) Electronic service providers are obliged to provide, ex officio, data from the controller and data processor of the Central Population Register. (2) By exception to paragraph (1) of this Article, if the Central Population Register does not contain the necessary data, they shall be provided from the source of data that has already been collected for natural and legal persons, in accordance with the

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18 'Law on the General Administrative Procedure', Official Gazette of the Republic of Macedonia, no. 124/2015, https://www.refworld.org/legal/legislation/natlegbod/2015/en/124106

19 'Law on Electronic Management and Electronic Services (Закон за електронско управување и електронски услуги)', Official Gazette of the Republic of North Macedonia, nos. 98/19, 244/19, and 3/25, https://gazibaba.gov.mk/wp-content/uploads/2023/04/04_zakon-za-elektronsko-upravuvanje-i-elektronski-uslugi.pdf

20 'Law on the General Administrative Procedure', Article 7.

21 'Law on the General Administrative Procedure', Article 9.

22 'Law on the General Administrative Procedure', Article17.

23 'Law on Electronic Management and Electronic Services'.

law. (3) The electronic service provider is obliged to provide access to natural and legal persons to the data collected for them, in accordance with the law."[24]

Article 6 of the same law provides for ex officio provision of data: "The controller and data processor of the Central Population Register and the source of data in accordance with the provisions of the Law on the Central Population Register, is obliged to provide ex officio data upon prior request from electronic service providers, if they are necessary for the performance of their duties in accordance with the law."[25]

Finally, Article 7 regulates automatic submission of data: "(1) Requests for submission of data by natural and legal persons to the authorities, and notifications by the authorities, shall be made electronically. (2) In the absence of technical possibilities for submitting data electronically, and in cases where the law provides for registers to be kept manually, the data shall be submitted as electronic documents in a format with unstructured content."[26]

According to the freedom of information (FOI) response received from MDT,[27] the Law on Electronic Management and Electronic Services[28] has already determined the work of the institutions in their exchange of data and documents in electronic form. In order to promote the uslugi.gov.mk portal, raise awareness, and bring the portal closer to citizens, the MDT took concrete steps by changing the interface of the portal and introducing new services (increasing the number of services).[29] A questionnaire was sent to 179 institutions to obtain data on the five most requested services, the five most requested services from the business sector, and the frequency of the most requested services. After receiving the information—that is, by identifying the real needs and priorities of the public—appropriate measures will be determined to address these needs, in order to achieve a greater effect with fewer resources and improved accessibility.[30] At the same time, each institution that provides a service regulates its costs. However, there is no requirement or obligation for institutions or service providers to keep and publish metrics on users' participation in service design in the abovementioned law.

Regarding the regulations which stipulate the application of the 'once-only' principle, LGAP 31 establishes the principle of establishing the material truth in Article 10: "(1) The public body shall establish all facts and circumstances that are of essential importance for the correct establishment of the factual situation in the administrative procedure. (2) The public body shall be obliged, ex officio,

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24 Ibid.

25 Ibid.

26 Ibid.

27 Freedom of information (FOI) request sent to the MDT on 21.01.2025; response received on 11.02.2025.

28 'Law on Electronic Management and Electronic Services'.

29 Freedom of information (FOI) request sent to the MDT on 21.01.2025; response received on 11.02.2025.

30 Freedom of information (FOI) request sent to the MDT on 21.01.2025; response received on 11.02.2025.

to obtain, review, and process the information kept in the official records and registers, provided that access to this information is not prohibited by a special law. (3) The public body may request from the party only those data or documents that are necessary for establishing the facts and circumstances, and for which no official records referred to in paragraph (2) of this Article are kept."

In addition, Article 28[31] stipulates that a procedure should be conducted through a single public body when possible: "(1) Where the law provides that an administrative procedure may be conducted through a single public body, at the request of a party, all administrative actions shall be conducted through that public body. The designation or establishment of a single public body to conduct the procedure shall not affect the order of competence of the public bodies, nor the right of the parties to communicate directly with the competent public body. (2) The public body competent to conduct the procedure shall have the following duties: to advise the applicant in the same manner as the competent public body, and to provide the party, or make available, all information necessary for the administrative action requested. This shall include the means and conditions for access to public registers and databases, and the means of legal remedies against an administrative action; to receive requests for issuing administrative acts or for performing other necessary administrative actions, as well as all other submissions, and forward them to the competent public authority; to communicate with the parties during the procedure regarding all procedural requests; to notify the parties of any administrative act or action issued by the competent body.[32]

The services referred to in paragraph (2) must be provided directly at the premises of the public body conducting the procedure, as well as by mail or electronically, if they are not services that require the direct presence of the party. Unless otherwise provided by law, of all public bodies involved, the one that is competent to decide on the administrative work related to the party's request shall be the one that conducts the procedure.[33] Furthermore, the law stipulates the obligation of public bodies to collect evidence ex officio when it is available through the registers of other public bodies.[34]

1. "The public body shall be obliged to establish the facts and circumstances that are of importance for the administrative action by collecting the necessary evidence and data.

2. 'Evidence and data', within the meaning of this Law, shall mean the documents (certificates, confirmations, etc.) issued by a competent body for which it keeps official records, and which serve to establish the factual situation on the basis of which the rights, obligations, or legal interests of the parties are decided.

31 Ibid.

32 Ibid.

33 Ibid.

34 'Law on the General Administrative Procedure' Article 56.

3. The evidence and data, for which the body competent for making the decision keeps official records, shall be deemed to have been submitted by the party along with the request.

4. The evidence and data shall be deemed to have been submitted by the party with the request even if another body keeps official records of them, and the body competent for the decision shall be obliged to obtain them ex officio electronically if the party has given prior consent for his or her personal data to be used in the procedure for the exercise of a certain right or legal interest."

The procedure for obtaining evidence ex officio is also regulated as follows:[35]

1. "The official conducting the procedure shall be obliged, ex officio, to obtain electronically the evidence and data on the facts for which official records are kept by the public body competent for making the decision.

2. The official shall act in accordance with paragraph (1) of this Article even in the case where official records are kept by another public body, i.e. another entity that maintains a data register, in relation to the facts.

3. The public body, i.e. the entity that keeps official records, is obliged to submit the requested evidence and data electronically within three days from the date of receipt of the request.

4. The official shall obtain the personal data of the party that submitted the submission to initiate a procedure, which is necessary for resolving the request.

5. The manner of obtaining and exchanging the data referred to in paragraph (4) of this Article shall be carried out in accordance with the regulations on the protection of personal data.

6. (The public body competent for deciding shall charge the fee for the issued evidence and data on behalf and for the account of the institution from which the evidence and data were obtained, ex officio, in the amount determined by a tariff prescribed in accordance with the law.

7. The service for obtaining and exchanging evidence and data ex officio between the public body competent for deciding and the institution from which the evidence and data are obtained shall be provided free of charge."

According to the Law on Organisation and Work of State Administration Bodies,[36] the MDT is the central authority responsible for steering and continuously improving service design and service delivery. Namely, Article 26-a lists the Ministry's responsibilities: development and promotion of the information society; technological development and technological culture; preparation of

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35 'Law on the General Administrative Procedure' Article 57.

36 'Law on Organisation and Work of State Administration Bodies' , Official Gazette of the Republic of Macedonia no. 58/00, 44/02, 82/08, 167/10, and 51/11 and Official Gazette of the Republic of North Macedonia nos. 96/19, 110/19, and 121/24.

strategic documents in the field of digitalisation; organisation and implementation of digital skills training; security of networks and information systems; digitalisation of public services; administration of an integrated database of personal data of the population of the Republic and the relevant records; creation and maintenance of a register of information and communication systems and information equipment within the state administration bodies; integrated information and communication network, databases, interconnection and exchange of information, security aspects and the development of the infrastructure of state bodies, legal entities and other persons entrusted by law to exercise public powers; monitoring the situation with information and telecommunication technologies and the introduction of international standards; telecommunications and telecommunication infrastructure; broadcasting and broadcasting infrastructure; achievement of international cooperation on issues within its competence; supervision within its competence, and performing other tasks determined by law.[37]

The researchers reviewed the relevant official websites/governmental portals on administrative services[38] to determine the collection and availability of information on users' participation in service design or redesign, in the two years prior to the assessment. Since there was no public information, an FOI was sent to the MDT.[39] The MDT responded that the service providers are using the uslugi.gov.mk portal to collect information on users' participation in service design and to use it to improve their respective services. However, the metrics on such participation are not published online, and in that regard, no points were awarded.

As mentioned above, seven sample services were used[40] to review whether service providers collect and publish users' feedback on their experience with service delivery. The researchers reviewed the relevant official websites/e-governmental portals on administrative services[41], to determine the collection and publication of information on users' feedback on service delivery and sent FOI requests to service providers of the sample services to verify the existence of the practice of collecting feedback and information on users' participation in service delivery.[42]

On the first criterion, "Channels for collecting users' feedback are available", the state of play is as follows:

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37 Ibid.

38 National e-Services Portal (Национален портал за е-Услуги), https://uslugi.gov.mk/

39 Freedom of information (FOI) request sent to the MDT on 21.01.2025; response received on 11.02.2025.

40 Property registration, company (business) registration, vehicle registration, passport issuance, ID card issuance, VAT declaration, and VAT payment.

41 National e-Services Portal (Национален портал за е-Услуги), https://uslugi.gov.mk/

42 FOIs requests submitted to the Cadastre, the MoI, the Central Registry and Public Revenue Office on 21.01.2025. Responses received as follows: from the Cadastre on 24.01.2025; from the MoI on 29.01.2025; from the Central Registry on 06.02.2025; and from the Public Revenue Office on 19.02.2025.

Regarding service property registration with the Cadastre, there is a free info line available to all citizens to give feedback on the services received and report any corruption or malicious behaviour by civil servants.[43] In addition, there is a specific info line for professional users and companies.[44] However, these channels are not specifically intended to collect users' feedback as such.

For company (business) registration with the Central Registry, there is a contact form through which citizens can express their opinion on the received services,[45] as well as a number of e-mail addresses that the Central Registry has listed in the FOI[46] where citizens can send their feedback. In addition, according to the received FOI response, there is a questionnaire that the Unit for Marketing and Public Relations sends to the users in order to evaluate and analyse the services with a view to improvement; there is also a publicly available questionnaire regarding users' feedback.[47]

For vehicle registration, passport issuance, and ID issuance in the Ministry of Interior, there is a survey questionnaire published on the MoI's website intended to collect citizens' feedback, according to ISO standards.[48] In addition, each unit for administrative affairs provides a physical mailbox where citizens can submit complaints or commendations.

For the VAT declaration and VAT payment in the Public Revenue Office, every year, the PRO conducts a survey on the satisfaction of the users of its services through a questionnaire/survey that is available for 30 days a year on the PRO's website. An email notification is sent to randomly selected taxpayers who use the services.

Regarding the second criterion, "Basic information/data on users' feedback", the situation in the sampled services/institutions is as follows:[49]

For property registration, information on citizens' feedback is published in the Cadastre's half-year and annual reports.[51] However, basic information is provided, without disaggregation by gender, disability, or other relevant factors (only the categories "user" and "information seeker" are included).

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43 Available at: https://www.katastar.gov.mk/%D0%B8%D0%BD%D1%84%D0%BE-%D0%BB%D0%B-D%D0%B8%D0%B8/

44 Ibid.

45 Available at: https://www.crm.com.mk/mk/za-tsrrsm/kontakt

46 FOIs requests submitted to the Cadastre, the MoI, the Central Registry and Public Revenue Office on 21.01.2025. Responses received as follows: from the Cadastre on 24.01.2025; from the MoI on 29.01.2025; from the Central Registry on 06.02.2025; and from the Public Revenue Office on 19.02.2025.

47 Available at: https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSczsNBp2gqvzeaHdN4m7dJbPkJHhRejEsbDQf-wUvmgiplPZRw/viewform

48 Available at: https://mvr.gov.mk/anketa/ ; https://mvr.gov.mk/anketa2/AnketaMk

49 FOIs submitted to the Cadastre, the MoI, the Central Registry, and the Public Revenue Office on 21.01.2025. Responses to the FOIs were received as follows: from the Cadastre on 24.01.2025; from the MoI on 29.01.2025; from the Central Registry on 06.02.2025; and from the Public Revenue Office on 19.02.2025.

For the company (business) registration service in the Central Registry, data on users' feedback is collected according to ISO standards in a specific registry. However, this is an internal document and is not publicly available. There is also no disaggregation of data by gender, disability, or other relevant factors (only the categories "user" and "information seeker" are included).

For vehicle registration, passport, and ID issuance in the MoI, the data from users' feedback is available without disaggregation by gender, disability, or other relevant factors.[50] Foror VAT declaration and VAT payment, the results of the research/survey are used internally by the PRO.[51]

Regarding the third criterion, "Advanced information/data on users' feedback is publicly available", none of the sampled institutions/services provides advanced information.[52]

The situation in the seven sampled services regarding the use of citizens' feedback to improve administrative services is as follows:

In its Annual Report for 2023, the Cadastre stated that: "Experiences and opinions of citizens are used for the improvement of services. Improvements are conducted continuously with each submitted application and by systemic/automatic *ex officio* data cleaning."[53]

According to the FOI response by the Central Registry,[54] the feedback collected from users is used to design the development strategy of the institution: the upgrades and projects implemented to improve the work of this institution, and in this strategy, it is described how feedback is used in different project development phases to support improvement.[55] It is also stated in the Annual Work Plan for 2025 that citizen feedback is regularly collected to improve all services of the Central Registry.[56] There was no publicly available information on the websites of the MOI and the PRO on the use of citizen feedback for improving service delivery, as well as no concrete FOI response regarding this matter.

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50 Available at: https://mvr.gov.mk/anketa2/RezultatitMk

51 FOIs submitted to the Cadastre, the MoI, the Central Registry, and the Public Revenue Office on 21.01.2025. Responses to the FOIs were received as follows: from the Cadastre on 24.01.2025; from the MoI on 29.01.2025; from the Central Registry on 06.02.2025; and from the Public Revenue Office on 19.02.2025.

52 Ibid.

53 'Annual Report of the Agency for Real Estate Cadastre for the Period January–December 2023 (Годишен извештај за работата на Агенцијата за Катастар на недвижности за периодот јануари–декември 2023 година)'. page 23.

54 FOIs submitted to the Cadastre, the MoI, the Central Registry, and the Public Revenue Office on 21.01.2025. Responses to the FOIs were received as follows: from the Cadastre on 24.01.2025; from the MoI on 29.01.2025; from the Central Registry on 06.02.2025; and from the Public Revenue Office on 19.02.2025.

55 Central Registry of the Republic of North Macedonia, 'Development Strategy 2023–2027 (Стратегија За Развој 2023-2027)', https://www.crm.com.mk/CRMPublicPortalApi/api/files/ee08f16f-8ac7-ea11-a82c-000d3a28d0e4?ln=1.

56 Central Registry of the Republic of North Macedonia, 'Work Plan of the Central Registry of the Republic of North Macedonia for 2025 (План за работа на Централен Регистар на Република Северна Македонија за 2025 година)', January 2025, https://www.crm.com.mk/CRMPublicPortalApi/api/files/668f199a-9c75-44b5-ac52-4c12d9a0f8bb?ln=1.

In the fact-checking process, the MDT responded that the portal uslugi.gov.mk could get citizens' feedback. However, the feedback remains an open issue, because it is rarely possible to see which of the suggestions/comments/remarks were taken into account and how they impacted further improvement—in this case, the improvement of the services. That being said, it is impossible to analyse whether the same complaints are recurring even after the changes have been made.[57]

The researchers reviewed the official websites/e-governmental portals on administrative services for the same sample of administrative services to determine whether the public service providers implement the once-only principle in service delivery. This principle refers to the reuse of citizens' and businesses' data and documents across different services, reducing redundancy and administrative burdens. Hence, the situation in the sampled services is as follows:

The form for property registration is published on the Cadastre's website, and it clearly states the evidence and documents acquired by the Cadastre.[58]

Regarding the company (business) registration, the instructions for company registration published on the Central Registry's website imply the use of a digital certificate but require different documentation to be submitted by the service user, depending on the type of company.[59]

For vehicle registration[60] and passport issuance,[61] the instruction on the website of the MOI clearly implies that the authority collects documents via official channels; however, for ID card issuance, there are documents that should be submitted by the user of the service, rather than obtained ex officio.[62]

VAT declaration and VAT payment are provided entirely by the PRO, which calculates the VAT, issues the VAT declaration, and users pay VAT by submitting their declaration electronically via the e-Taxes platform (http://etax.ujp.gov.mk).[63]

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57 The preliminary findings in Excel format were sent to the MDT on April 7, 2025. The factchecking comments from the MDT were received on 23.04.2025.

58 Available at: https://www.katastar.gov.mk/wp-content/uploads/nasi_uslugi/Prilog_3_prijava_za_nezapisani_prava_06_08_2015___1126.pdf

59 Independent Application for Registration of Establishment in the Trade Register and the Register of Other Legal Entities (Самостојна пријава за упис на основање во трговски регистар и регистарот на други правни лица), available at: https://www.crm.com.mk/mk/uslugi/izvrsham-upis-ili-zavrsham-obvrska/osnovaj-nov-subjekt/samostojna-registratsija-na-subjekt?idV=9494

60 Vehicle Registration—Ministry of Interior (Регистрација на возила – Министерство за внатрешни работи) https://mvr.gov.mk/upravni-rab/22

61 Passport Issuance—Ministry of Interior (Издавање на патна исправа – Министерство за внатрешни работи) https://mvr.gov.mk/upravni-rab/

62 Issuance of an ID card—Ministry of Interior (Издавање на лична карта – Министерство за внатрешни работи) https://mvr.gov.mk/upravni-rab/10

63 VAT Filing and Payment—Public Revenue Office (Пријавување и плаќање на ДДВ – Управа за јавни приходи) http://www.ujp.gov.mk/mk/pravni_lica/category/575

The researchers conducted interviews with key informants (KIs)[64] to assess whether service design and delivery are citizen-centric in practice. Additionally, they evaluated whether channels for citizens' feedback are available for users to share their experience and whether such feedback is used for improving service delivery.

The first KI generally agrees that service design and delivery are citizen-centric, with channels for citizen feedback in place and feedback being used to improve services. However, the KI identifies several barriers to fully achieving citizen-centric service delivery, including a lack of resources, resistance to change, inadequate training, and insufficient mechanisms for citizen engagement. The KI highlights participatory budgeting as an example of good practice in citizen-centric service delivery. The most effective feedback channels for citizens are online surveys, community meetings, and social media platforms, though these channels are not always accessible to all population groups. Barriers like differences in digital literacy, language challenges, and limited outreach hinder access for marginalised communities. While citizens' feedback is sometimes analysed, prioritised, and integrated into service plans, delays or a lack of action can occur. The KI notes that citizens' feedback has led to noticeable improvements, such as in the online payment systems for public utilities. Systemic changes are needed to strengthen the citizen-centric approach, including stronger accountability frameworks, more inclusive participation methods, and investments in digital tools. Non-state actors can contribute by advocating for citizen engagement, building capacity, monitoring service delivery, and facilitating forums for citizen input.

The second KI generally agrees that service design and delivery are citizen-centric, and that citizens' feedback is used to improve service delivery. However, the KI disagrees that channels for citizen feedback are readily available. The KI highlights the main barrier to achieving citizen-centric service design as the tendency for service providers to design services independently, without consulting citizens. This approach often fails to meet the needs of all user groups. Services should instead be designed in collaboration with citizens, considering the diverse needs of different groups, such as youth, the elderly, people living in urban or rural areas, and those with disabilities. Services should be tailored to these needs based on a thorough analysis.

Regarding good practices, the KI mentions that in 2011, the municipalities of Shtip and Vinica created a poster detailing the services they provided, required documents, service costs, payment accounts, and delivery timelines. This initiative was visible in both urban and rural areas, but eventually phased out. More recently, institutions have worked to improve accessibility according to their capabilities and locations. Many institutions now have designated staff

64 The interviews were conducted on 30.12.2024, 31.12.2024, and 21.01.2025.

to assist citizens with disabilities, and in larger municipalities in the Eastern planning region, some institutions offer a "one-stop shop" service point.

The most effective feedback channels, according to the KI, should include annual surveys to measure citizens' satisfaction with services and collect suggestions for improvements. These surveys should be available on institutional websites, allowing citizens to fill them out anonymously. However, despite institutions having feedback mailboxes, these are rarely used, indicating that current feedback mechanisms are not effectively reaching citizens. Institutions need to find better ways to engage with citizens and gather feedback.

There is currently no systematic feedback from service providers on how many services they deliver, how they communicate with citizens, or what obstacles exist in service delivery. Citizens' feedback has led to notable improvements, such as the introduction of the electronic building permit process and creating a catalogue for obtaining building permits, as well as the online services offered through www.uslugi.gov.mk.

The KI suggests that a systemic change could occur if service providers were legally required to communicate with citizens about the services they offer within a specific timeframe (e.g., three months) and, based on feedback, propose improvements to service design and delivery. These changes should be communicated to citizens, CSOs, and other stakeholders. Finally, the KI believes that non-state actors could contribute to the process, but only if they were properly consulted.

The third KI strongly disagrees with the notion that service design and delivery are citizen-centric, that channels for citizen feedback are available, or that citizens' feedback is used to improve service delivery. According to the KI, the main barriers to achieving citizen-centric service design are the lack of open, inclusive processes and the absence of precise data. The KI believes that the most effective feedback channels for citizens would be simple digital tools that require minimal formalisation, such as chatbots. To ensure these feedback mechanisms are accessible to all population groups, including vulnerable or marginalised communities, it is crucial to address digitally illiterate individuals. In this case, physical complaint boxes could be an alternative to digital tools.

The KI stresses that systemic changes are necessary to improve citizen-centric service delivery. These changes should involve establishing clear procedural rules and obligations for institutions to conduct thorough research and engage in deliberative decision-making while drafting laws and designing public services. Lastly, the KI suggests that non-state actors can contribute by sharing their experience, expertise, and data to help ensure that citizen feedback is effectively integrated into service improvement processes.

The results of the public perception survey[65] were used as a basis for point allocation under this element. Researchers award points based on the percentage of citizens who responded with "agree" and "strongly agree" to the following statement: "I have the opportunity to influence the development of public administration services".[66] The percentage of citizens who selected "agree" or "strongly agree" is 37.5%. Regarding the statement, "I have the opportunity to share my opinion on the quality of public administration services I received with the relevant state authorities," 48.9% of citizens selected the "agree" or "strongly agree" option. For the statement, "When requesting public administration services, I am not required to provide documents already held by the state (such as birth, citizenship, unemployment certificates, etc.)," 56.7% of citizens selected the "agree" or "strongly agree" option. In response to the statement, "The last time I requested a public administration service, I had to submit documents already held by the state," 25.4% of citizens expressed disagreement by choosing "disagree" or "strongly disagree."

How does North Macedonia do in regional terms?

Sub-indicator 1: Citizen-centric service delivery
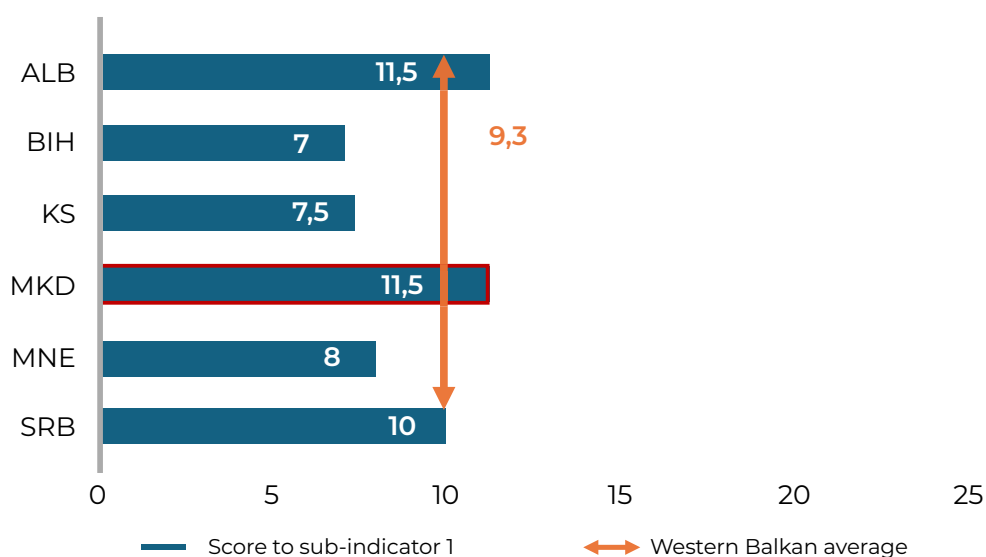
65 The public perception survey was conducted from 1st February until the 22nd February 2025, on the sample of 1,008 participants.

66 If 20%–40% of respondents responded with "agree" or "strongly agree", 0.5 points are awarded. If 40%–60% of respondents responded with "agree" or "strongly agree", 1 point is awarded. If 60–80% of respondents responded with "agree" or "strongly agree", 1.5 points are awarded. If more than 80% of respondents responded with "agree" or "strongly agree", 2 points are awarded.

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.

Sub-indicator 2: Service accessibility and availability
of information on services[67]

Indicator elements	Element 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

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67 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 the 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 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 the administration, if desired; all potential users have physical access to high-quality public services within a reasonable distance, through collaboration between 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 funds, to boost a collaborative ecosystem for the provision and use of digital services across the economy.

E 2.3 Regulations stipulate that service providers keep key metrics on the use of services	Legislation	0/1.5
E 2.4 Regulations stipulate provision of services in the form of life events	Legislation	0/1
E 2.5 Regulations stipulate mandatory adaptation of service delivery to the needs of vulnerable groups	Legislation	0/2
E 2.6 Service providers publish basic procedural information on how to access public services online	Practice in implementation	4/5
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	4/4
E 2.9 Information on services is available in multiple formats to meet diverse users' needs	Practice in implementation	0/3
E 1.10 Information on public service delivery is available in multiple languages to meet diverse users' needs	Practice in implementation	0/3
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	0/3
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	1/2

E 2.19 Citizens' perception of the ease of in-person access to services	Outcomes and impact	1/2
E 2.20 Citizens' perception of the ease of online access to services	Outcomes and impact	1/2
Total score for sub-indicator 2		25/52.5

Since the previous monitoring cycle, service accessibility and the availability of information in North Macedonia have improved, particularly through government efforts to digitise additional services. However, there are still challenges. While the online platform uslugi.gov.mk provides access to services, not all are digitised, and language barriers may affect access. Digital literacy is also an issue in rural areas. The digital divide, service fragmentation, and rural access issues remain significant barriers. Efforts to improve digital infrastructure and align with EU standards are underway to enhance service delivery.[68] Hence, while progress has been made in service accessibility and information availability, disparities between urban and rural areas and gaps in digital literacy continue to pose challenges. Moreover, there is still much work to be done to effectively address the needs of vulnerable populations and people with disabilities.[69]

The researchers reviewed valid government strategic documents to determine whether they envisage enhancing service accessibility and the availability of information on service delivery.

Within the PAR Strategy 2023–2030, the fourth priority area, "Service delivery and digital transformation," contains specific objective 4.2: "Increased quality and accessibility of services." Within the framework of this objective, there is measure M4.2.4: "Improved accessibility of institutions for people with disabilities, adults, as well as people with a low level of digital literacy," aimed at enhancing the accessibility of services and the availability of information on service delivery. Responsibilities are clearly assigned to the Ministry for Digital Transformation and the Ministry for Social Policy, Demography and Youth for all designated measures/activities in the tables contained in the Action Plan.[70]

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68 OECD (2025), Public Administration in the Republic of North Macedonia 2024: Assessment against the Principles of Public Administration, SIGMA Monitoring Reports.

69 Ibid.

70 Ministry of Information Society and Administration, 'Public Administration Reform Strategy 2023–2030 with Action Plan 2023–2026 (Стратегија за реформа на јавната администрација 2023-2030 со Акциски План 2023-2026)'.

The National Strategy for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities 2023–2030 also contains objectives aiming to enhance the accessibility of services and the availability of information on service delivery. The third strategic objective aims to improve digital accessibility by implementing the WCAG standard and Directive (EU) 2102/2016 on the accessibility of websites and applications of public institutions. The measures envisage familiarising institutions with the WCAG standard, amending the legal regulations, and adapting websites and portals to apply the standard. In addition, accessibility and availability are envisaged to be part of the criteria for assessing the quality of public services. This will enable the overcoming of shortcomings and ensure adequate access to and quality of public services for all citizens.[71] The National Strategy and its Action Plan also clearly envisage the responsible institutions (such as the MDT, the MSPDY, the Employment Agency and the Agency for Audio and Audio Visual Services, as well as CSOs working in the area of protection of rights of persons with disabilities) for all designated measures/activities.[72]

In the four-year Government Work Programme 2024–2028, priorities are listed regarding the further development of services available to all citizens. The focus will be on the development of modern digital infrastructure, the development of an artificial intelligence platform, strengthening the capacities of the public sector for working with data, full digitalisation of public services, the introduction of mobile services, training of citizens in the use of digital services, the digital inclusion of people with disabilities, and cybersecurity. Since this is a Government Work Programme and not an Action Plan designating separate ministries as responsible institutions, the Government is responsible for the listed measures.[73]

In addition, the researchers reviewed the valid regulations at the time of measurement to determine whether there is a requirement for the establishment of either digital or physical one-stop shops for service delivery. Namely, the LGAP[74] stipulates that a procedure should be conducted through a single public body when possible (Article 28):

"(1) Where the law provides that an administrative procedure may be conducted through a single public body, at the request of a party, all administrative actions shall be conducted through that public body. The designation or establishment

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71 Ministry of Labor and Social Policy, 'National Strategy on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities 2023–2030 (Национална Стратегија за правата на лицата со попреченост 2023–2030)'.

72 Ministry of Labour and Social Policy, 'Action Plan of the National Strategy on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities 2023–2026 (Акциски План на Националната стратегија за правата на лицата со попреченост 2023–2026)'.

73 Government of the Republic of North Macedonia, 'Work Program of the Government of the Republic of North Macedonia 2024–2028 (Програма за Работа на Владата на Република Северна Македонија 2024–2028)', June 2024, https://vlada.mk/sites/default/files/dokumenti/programa-na-vlada-ta-2024-2028.pdf.

74 Law on the General Administrative Procedure'.

of a single public body to conduct the procedure shall not affect the order of competence of the public bodies, nor the right of the parties to communicate directly with the competent public body.

(2) The public body competent to conduct the procedure shall have the following duties:

- to advise the applicant in the same manner as the competent public body and to provide the party or make available all information necessary for the administrative action requested. This shall include the means and conditions for access to public registers and databases, and the means of legal remedies against an administrative action;

- to receive requests for issuing administrative acts or for performing other necessary administrative actions, as well as all other submissions and forward them to the competent public authority;

- to communicate with the parties during the procedure regarding all procedural requests;

- to notify the parties of any administrative act or action issued by the competent body.

(3) The services referred to in paragraph (2) must be provided directly at the premises of the public body conducting the procedure, as well as by mail or electronically, if they are not services that require the direct presence of the party.

(4) Unless otherwise provided by law, of all public bodies involved, the one that is competent to decide on the administrative work related to the party's request will be the one that will conduct the procedure."

A review of the applicable regulations at the time of assessment was conducted to determine whether service providers are required to track essential service delivery metrics. At a minimum, the following key metrics were monitored:

1. Service Volume: The total number of service units provided by the service provider.

2. Processing Time: The time it takes for the service provider to deliver a service to users.

3. Service Cost: The expense incurred by users to obtain the service.

According to the FOI response received from the MDT, as mentioned under II.1,[75] the Law on Electronic Management and Electronic Services already governs the exchange of data and documents between institutions in electronic form. To enhance the uslugi.gov.mk portal, improve public awareness, and

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75 The FOI was sent to the MDT on 21.01.2025, and the response was received on 11.02.2025.

make it more accessible, the MDT has taken steps such as redesigning the portal's interface and adding new services. Additionally, a questionnaire was sent to 179 institutions to gather data on the five most requested services, the top five services requested by the business sector, and the frequency of service requests. Based on this information, the MDT will identify the public's needs and priorities and take appropriate actions to address them, aiming for greater efficiency with fewer resources and improved accessibility. While each institution determines the costs for its services, there is no requirement in the law for institutions or service providers to track or publish metrics related to user participation in service design.

An examination of the current regulations was conducted to assess whether service providers are obligated to deliver administrative services based on life events.

While the Law on Civil Registry[76] regulates the issuing of extracts and certificates for birth, death, and marriage from the Master Register of Births, the Master Register of Marriages, and the Master Register of Deaths, and the LGAP[77] stipulates the once-only principle, there is no provision explicitly stipulating life-event-type service or cross-agency collaboration in this regard. In the fact-checking process, the MDT has responded that they are unaware of any "life-event regulation" covering all services.[78]

A review of the current regulations was conducted to assess whether there are requirements for service delivery to be tailored to the needs of vulnerable populations[79] and people with disabilities. At a minimum, the following criteria must be met:

1. Physical accessibility of service providers' buildings.

2. Information in multiple formats, such as written, audio/video, or Braille.

3. Information in all official languages of the country.

4. Free assistance for the targeted population (e.g., telephone lines, personal assistance/guidance).

The researchers were trying to identify any relevant regulations requiring these provisions and to reference the specific sections, articles, or paragraphs that outline such obligations.

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76 'Law on Civil Registry', Official Gazette of the Republic of Macedonia no. 8/95, 38/02, 66/07, 67/09, 13/13, 43/14, 148/15, 27/16, and 64/18 and, Official Gazette of the Republic of North Macedonia nos. 14/20, 129/23, and 255/24, https://www.refworld.org/legal/legislation/natlegbod/1995/en/124335

77 Law on the General Administrative Procedure'.

78 The preliminary findings in Excel format were sent to the MDT on April 7, 2025. The fact-checking comments from the MDT were received on 23.04.2025.

79 "Vulnerable populations" are defined as those needing special care, support, or protection due to age, disability, risk of abuse, or neglect. This includes people with disabilities, minority groups, economically disadvantaged individuals, and the elderly.

According to the MDT's response to the FOI,[80] the MDT is working on a law to enable people with disabilities to access websites and mobile applications from the public sector (transposition of EU Directive 2016/2012). The draft law was published on ENER,[81] and a public debate was held. However, there is no mandatory adaptation of service delivery to the needs of vulnerable groups in the Law on Electronic Management and Electronic Services at the moment.[82]

Furthermore, the relevant official websites/ e-governmental portals for service delivery for the same sample of administrative services were reviewed to determine if basic procedural information on how to access public services is publicly available online. Basic procedural information is interpreted as: description of the service; information on how to access it online and steps of the process; information on how to access the service in the physical location, by issuing the address, and working hours; free telephone helpline for further assistance; and required documentation (including downloadable or online forms to be filled).

In all sampled services, there was the following: a description of the service;[83] information on how to access it online and steps of the process;[84] information on how to access the service in the physical location, by issuing the address, and working hours;[85] as well as a free telephone helpline for further assistance.[86]

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80 The FOI was sent to the MDT on 21.01.2025, and the response was received on 11.02.2025.

81 Single National Electronic Register of Regulations of the Republic of North Macedonia (Единствен национален електронски регистар на прописи на Република Северна Македонија) https://ener.gov.mk/Default.aspx?item=pub_regulation&subitem=view_reg_detail&itemid=8338

82 'Law on Electronic Management and Electronic Services'.

83 Registration of Real Estate in the Real Estate Cadastre with Unrecorded Rights—Agency for Real Estate Cadastre (Запишување на недвижности во катастарот на недвижности кои останале со незапишани права - Агенција за катастар на недвижности), available at: https://bit.ly/42B11Fn ; Independent Application for Registration of Establishment in the Trade Register and the Register of Other Legal Entities (Самостојна пријава за упис на основање во трговски регистар и регистарот на други правни лица); Vehicle Registration—Ministry of Interior (Регистрација на возила – Министерство за внатрешни работи); Passport Issuance—Ministry of Interior (Издавање на патна исправа – Министерство за внатрешни работи); Issuance of an ID card—Ministry of Interior (Издавање на лична карта – Министерство за внатрешни работи); Payment under PIT-GDP—Public Revenue Office (Плаќање по ДЛД-ГДП - Управа за јавни приходи), http://www.ujp.gov.mk/mk/plakjanje/category/1990

84 E-Services Portal—Agency for Real Estate Cadastre (Портал за електронски услуги - Агенција за катастар на недвижности), available at: https://e-uslugi.katastar.gov.mk/; Independent Application for Registration of Establishment in the Trade Register and the Register of Other Legal Entities (Самостојна пријава за упис на основање во трговски регистар и регистарот на други правни лица), Ministry of Interior (Министерство за внатрешни работи,https://termin.mvr.gov.mk/; Public Revenue Office (Управа за јавни приходи),https://e-pdd.ujp.gov.mk/ppf/login.seam?cid=52763

85 Agency for Real Estate Cadastre (Агенција за катастар на недвижности), available at: https://www.katastar.gov.mk/; Customer Care—Central Registry of the Republic of North Macedonia (Грижа за корисници – Централен регистар на Република Северна Македонија),available at: https://www.crm.com.mk/mk/za-tsrrsm/grizha-za-korisnitsi; https://mvr.gov.mk/upravni-rab/34; Contact—Public Revenue Office (Контакт - Управа за јавни приходи), available at:http://ujp.gov.mk/mk/kontakt

86 Info Lines—Agency for Real Estate Cadastre (Инфо-линии - Агенција за катастар на недвижности) available at:https://www.katastar.gov.mk/%D0%B8%D0%BD%D1%84%D0%BE-%D0%BB%D0%B8%D0%B-D%D0%B8%D0%B8/; Customer Care—Central Registry of the Republic of North Macedonia (Грижа за корисници – Централен регистар на Република Северна Македонија); Ministry of Interior (Министерство за внатрешни работи), available at:https://mvr.gov.mk/default; Contact – Public Revenue Office (Контакт - Управа за јавни приходи)

Regarding required documentation (including downloadable or online forms to be filled), it was available for three sampled services,[87] except for vehicle registration, the issuing of passports and ID.

Regarding the publishing of citizen-friendly guidance on accessing public services online, information on company registration, VAT payment, and VAT declaration was available. Namely, the method of registering a company is described in detail in three sections: procedure and instructions, manner of obtaining the service, and receiving the final document.[88] There is also a section with brochures and videos for company registration.[89] There is a brochure published on PRO's website that explains in detail the process of VAT declaration and VAT payment, together with relevant links and examples for easier understanding of the process.[90]

This was not the case for property registration, although the method of submitting a request is explained. The required documentation is listed on the Cadastre's website,[91] as well as a link to the Cadastre's YouTube channel, which features videos about the services and overall activities of the Cadastre, but not specifically for the sample service[92].

Additionally, the researchers reviewed the relevant official websites/e-governmental portals for service delivery to determine if service providers publish information on services designed as "life events". A life event refers to a forward-thinking and citizen-centric approach to service delivery. A life event is an important change in a person's life (childbirth, marriage, loss of a loved one, etc.) that prompts a need for relevant public services to help them through this change. Life event service delivery requires linking services—and costs—across multiple agencies and levels of government. Specifically, the e-services portal

87 Application for Registration of Real Estate with Unrecorded Rights—Agency for Real Estate Cadastre (Пријава за запишување на недвижности со незапишани права – Агенција за катастар на недвижности), available at: https://www.katastar.gov.mk/wp-content/uploads/nasi_uslugi/Prilog_3_prijava_za_nezapisani_prava_06_08_2015__1126.pdf; Independent Application for Registration of Establishment in the Trade Register and the Register of Other Legal Entities (Самостојна пријава за упис на основање во Трговски Регистар и Регистарот на Други Правни Лица); Public Revenue Office (Управа за јавни приходи), available at: http://www.ujp.gov.mk/mk/obrasci/opis/34

88 Independent Application for Registration of Establishment in the Trade Register and the Register of Other Legal Entities (Самостојна пријава за упис на основање во Трговски Регистар и Регистарот на Други Правни Лица).

89 Informational Materials—User Assistance for Using the Systems and Services—Central Registry of the Republic of North Macedonia (Информативни материјали – Помош за корисници при користење на системите и услугите – Централен регистар на Република Северна Македонија), available at: https://www.crm.com.mk/mk/za-tsrrsm/korisni-informatsii/informativni-materijali-pomosh-za-korisnitsi-pri-koristenje-na-sistemite-i-uslugite

90 Registration, Filing, and Payment of Value Added Tax (Регистрација, Пријавување и Плаќање На Данокот На Додадена Вредност)', 3 February 2022, http://www.ujp.gov.mk/files/attachment/0000/0774/08-831_1_Registracija__prijavuvanje_i_plakanje_na_danokot_na_dodadena_vrednost_03.02.2022.pdf.

91 Application for Registration of Real Estate with Unrecorded Rights—Agency for Real Estate Cadastre (Пријава за запишување на недвижности со незапишани права – Агенција за катастар на недвижности).

92 Agency for Real Estate Cadastre's YouTube channel, https://bit.ly/44hCuGG

lists a larger number of available services categorised as life events related to the following: new-born, education, marriage/divorce, housing and residence, employment, starting a business, retirement, death, illness/disability, natural disaster, vehicles and travel, and personal documents.[93]

A review of relevant official websites/e-governmental portals for service delivery was conducted for the same sample of administrative services to determine if information on service delivery is provided in multiple formats to meet the needs of diverse service users, such as written formats, audio/visual formats, and Braille formats.

For property registration, the information was available in written and visual formats.[94] For company (business) registration, information was available in written and audio-visual format.[95] For VAT declaration and VAT payment, the information is also available in written and visual formats, with pictures depicting the overall process/steps of VAT declaration/payment.[96] For vehicle registration, passport and ID issuance, only written formats are available online.[97]

Regarding the availability of information in the official languages of the country, as well as international languages, this is only available for two sampled services: property registration and business registration. Since both Macedonian and Albanian are official languages of the Republic of North Macedonia, only the Cadastre and the Central Registry have an entirely functional websites in both languages.[98] Also, only the Cadastre and the Central Registry have an entirely functional website in English.[99] In contrast, the PRO's website has some

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93 Available at: https://uslugi.gov.mk/services-by-life-event.nspx?lifeEventId=novorodenche-106)

94 Registration of Real Estate in the Real Estate Cadastre with Unrecorded Rights—Agency for Real Estate Cadastre (Запишување на недвижности во катастарот на недвижности кои останале со незапишани права - Агенција за катастар на недвижности); Agency for Real Estate Cadastre's YouTube channel.

95 Independent Application for Registration of Establishment in the Trade Register and the Register of Other Legal Entities (Самостојна пријава за упис на основање во Трговски Регистар и Регистарот на Други Правни Лица); Informational Materials—User Assistance for Using the Systems and Services—Central Registry of the Republic of North Macedonia (Информативни материјали – Помош за корисници при користење на системите и услугите – Централен регистар на Република Северна Македонија).

96 Payment under PIT-GDP – Public Revenue Office (Плаќање по ДЛД-ГДП - Управа за јавни приходи); Public Revenue Office of the Republic of North Macedonia, 'User Guide for Using E-Taxes (Упатство За Користење Е-Даноци)', 15 January 2015, http://www.ujp.gov.mk/files/attachment/0000/0658/Upatstvo_za_Koristenje_15012015.pdf.

97 Vehicle Registration —Ministry of Interior (Регистрација на возила – Министерство за внатрешни работи); Passport Issuance—Ministry of Interior (Издавање на патна исправа – Министерство за внатрешни работи); Issuance of an ID card—Ministry of Interior (Издавање на лична карта – Министерство за внатрешни работи).

98 Official website of the Agency for Real Estate Cadastre in Macedonian language https://www.katastar.gov.mk/; Official Website of the Agency for Real Estate Cadastre in Albanian language, https://www.katastar.gov.mk/sq/ne-fillim/; Official website of the Central Registry of the Republic of North Macedonia in Macedonian language https://www.crm.com.mk/; Official website of the Central Registry of the Republic of North Macedonia in Albanian language https://www.crm.com.mk/sq

99 Official website of the Agency for Real Estate Cadastre in English language https://www.katastar.gov.mk/en/home/; Official website of the Central Registry of the Republic of North Macedonia in English language https://www.crm.com.mk/en

information on international taxation available in English, and the rest of the website is not functional in English.[100]

All sampled service providers publish information on the prices of their services.[101] Also, service providers of the sampled services publish information on the rights and obligations of users.[102]

In addition, contact information is published on the respective websites of the institutions providing all sampled services, with telephone assistance either free of charge or charged at regular rates (without additional charges).[103]

The researchers also reviewed whether documents or datasets related to sampled administrative services are available in machine-readable formats (e.g., XML, CSV, XLSX, JSON). These should be accessible via the national open data portal or a dedicated section on the respective bodies' websites for delivering maximum points.

Namely, only the Central Registry from the sample service providers' bodies publishes data related to the delivery of the sample services in a machine-readable format.[104] The open datasets related to the sampled administrative services are inaccessible on the uslugi.gov.mk national open data portal. Furthermore, the review involved checking if central state administration service providers train their staff on how to assist vulnerable groups. The researchers examined reports and data from the past two years, and since that information was not publicly available, they submitted FOI requests to

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100 Official website of the Public Revenue Office in English language http://www.ujp.gov.mk/en/plakjan-je/category/137

101 Agency for Real Estate Cadastre, 'Fee Schedule—Services for Unregistered Rights', https://bit.ly/42TW89a ; Vehicle Registration—Ministry of Interior (Регистрација на возила – Министерство за внатрешни работи); Passport Issuance—Ministry of Interior (Издавање на патна исправа – Министерство за внатрешни работи); Issuance of an ID card—Ministry of Interior (Издавање на лична карта – Министерство за внатрешни работи); Independent Application for Registration of Establishment in the Trade Register and the Register of Other Legal Entities (Самостојна пријава за упис на основање во трговски регистар и регистарот на други правни лица); Certificate of Tax Status, Contributions, and Other Public Revenues and Charges – Public Revenue Office (Уверение за состојба на даноци, придонеси и други јавни приходи и давачки – Управа за јавни приходи), http://www.ujp.gov.mk/mk/plakjanje/category/1822.

102 Application for Registration of Real Estate with Unrecorded Rights—Agency for Real Estate Cadastre (Пријава за запишување на недвижности со незапишани права – Агенција за катастар на недвижности); Independent Application for Registration of Establishment in the Trade Register and the Register of Other Legal Entities (Самостојна пријава за упис на основање во Трговски Регистар и Регистарот на Други Правни Лица); Vehicle Registration—Ministry of Interior (Регистрација на возила – Министерство за внатрешни работи); Passport Issuance—Ministry of Interior (Издавање на патна исправа – Министерство за внатрешни работи); Issuance of an ID card—Ministry of Interior (Издавање на лична карта – Министерство за внатрешни работи); VAT Filing and Payment—Public Revenue Office (Пријавување и плаќање на ДДВ – Управа за јавни приходи).

103 Official website of the Agency for Real Estate Cadastre; Customer Care—Central Registry of the Republic of North Macedonia (Грижа за корисници – Централен регистар на Република Северна Македонија); Ministry of Interior, available at: https://mvr.gov.mk/Upload/Documents/Adresi-i-kontakt-telefoni.pdf; Contact—Public Revenue Office (Контакт - Управа за јавни приходи)

104 Statistical Bulletin—Central Registry of the Republic of North Macedonia https://www.crm.com.mk/en/open-data/statistical-bulletin?t=0&v=0&y=2025,2024,2023&r=1&s=23

the relevant institutions for the same period. Since the MPA is responsible for training civil servants, the FOI request was directed to them. However, the MPA's response indicated that they have not conducted any training for civil servants on how to assist vulnerable groups.[105]

The researchers also examined official websites and e-government portals to assess if the territorial distribution of the sampled administrative services is adequate at the national and municipal levels. Researchers checked if services were available at either or both levels, with services at the municipal level scoring higher due to their closer proximity to users. It is assessed that all sampled services are provided at the municipal level within the local offices of the respective institutions providing those services.[106]

As already mentioned under the previous element, the researchers conducted interviews with KIs to establish whether, in practice, they consider service delivery accessible.[107] In particular, KIs were asked to reflect on whether they agree or disagree with the following statements:

1. The territorial network for all citizens to access administrative services is adequate.
2. The premises of the service are physically accessible to all citizens.
3. Services offered online are easily accessible to all citizens.

The first KI fully disagrees with the following: 1. The territorial network for accessing administrative services by all citizens is adequate and tends to disagree that 2. the premises of the service are physically accessible to all citizens, and 3. that services offered online are easily accessible to all citizens. The KI thinks there are challenges, such as uneven distribution of resources and insufficient infrastructure in rural or remote areas, which hinder efforts to ensure an adequate territorial network for administrative service access. There are areas or groups particularly underserved by the current network, such as rural communities, marginalised groups, and people with disabilities. Regarding physical access to service provider premises, KI pointed out that there are barriers, such as poor locations of offices, lack of ramps or elevators, and inadequate public transport. However, there are a few good practices, such as mobile service

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105 The FOI was submitted to the MPA on 11.02.2025, and the response was provided verbally over the phone on 12.03.2025.

106 Departments—Agency for Real Estate Cadastre (Одделенија - Агенција за катастар на недвижности) https://www.katastar.gov.mk/%d0%b7%d0%b0-%d0%bd%d0%b0%d1%81-2/%d0%ba%d0%b0%d1%80%d1%82%d0%b8/; Organisational Structure—Central Registry of the Republic of North Macedonia (Организациска поставеност – Централен регистар на Република Северна Македонија) https://www.crm.com.mk/mk/za-tsrrsm/osnovni-informatsii-za-institutsijata/organizatsiska-postavenost; Ministry of Interior, available at: https://mvr.gov.mk/Upload/Documents/Adresi-i-kontakt-telefoni.pdf; Public Revenue Office of the Republic of North Macedonia, 'Tax Departments 2024 (Даночни одделенија 2024)', 9 February 2024, http://www.ujp.gov.mk/uploads/File/%D0%A3%D0%88%D0%9F-%D0%A1%D0%94-%D0%97.1-02-6_4.pdf.

107 Interviews were conducted on 30.12.2024, 31.12.2024, and 21.01.2025.

units, co-located services in community centres, and retrofitting buildings with accessible infrastructure.

The primary barriers that citizens face when accessing online services are as follows: digital illiteracy, lack of internet access, language barriers, and complex website navigation. Service providers can improve the accessibility and usability of online platforms by simplifying website design, offering multilingual support, ensuring compatibility with assistive technologies, and providing digital literacy training. There is a need for systemic improvements to ensure that all citizens have equitable access to administrative services, and these would include expanding infrastructure in underserved areas, enhancing funding for accessibility, and enforcing inclusive policies. CSOs and other non-state actors can support better accessibility by advocating for inclusive policies, delivering training programmes, and monitoring the accessibility of services.

The second KI tends to agree that 1. the territorial network for accessing administrative services by all citizens is adequate, and 2. the premises of service providers are physically accessible to all citizens but tends to disagree that 3. services offered online are easily accessible to all citizens. On the challenges in ensuring an adequate territorial network for administrative service access, the KI pointed out that all institutions provide administrative services over the counter. Still, at the moment, the biggest challenge is the digitisation of all administrative services and overcoming the problems in that regard. The KI thinks that there are groups of underserved citizens, especially those with disabilities. Also, there are specific barriers to physical access in service provider premises, depending on the existing location and infrastructure. However, there are some good practices. Most institutions have built access ramps (where possible) to the institution, but not all are built according to standards.

The primary barriers citizens face when accessing online services are: lack of information, lack of appropriate skills, lack of a digital signature, etc. Service providers could improve the accessibility and usability of online platforms by launching a good information campaign, preparing of appropriate guides (on paper and video) for using the online platforms (with a description of each step), working systematically to improve citizens' digital skills, etc.

The KI suggested the following systemic improvements to ensure that all citizens have equitable access to administrative services: adoption of a regulation by which institutions will commit to providing equal access to administrative services within a certain period (up to two years), and for all institutions in this period to adapt/unify their web pages. CSOs and other non-state actors can support better accessibility by organising public debates in the country and engaging in advocacy.

The third KI tends to agree that the territorial network for accessing administrative services by all citizens is adequate; the premises of service providers

are physically accessible to all citizens, and services offered online are easily accessible to all citizens. Challenges exist in ensuring an adequate territorial network for administrative service access, considering that rural areas are underserved. Digital illiteracy prevents wider access to public services, and the current network particularly underserves those areas/groups. There are specific barriers to physical access in service provider premises (e.g., infrastructure, location), considering that some public service institutions do not have a physical presence in every populated area, such as rural areas. Hence, different methods of providing public services should be developed, such as home services, which include healthcare and social care services.

The primary barriers citizens face when accessing online services are digital illiteracy and sometimes distrust in the online systems, since most of them are partially digitalised, the physical aspect is still present. Service providers can improve the accessibility and usability of online platforms by unifying and centralising them to deliver public services, rather than creating separate online platforms for different sectors. There are systemic improvements needed to ensure that all citizens have equitable access to administrative services such as complete digitalisation of public services while retaining the option for physical access to public services; ensuring that public servants are service-oriented, which is crucial to the quality of service delivery; and enhancing the digital literacy of both citizens and the public servants. Civil society can contribute by conducting well-defined research based on a solid methodology, and the business sector can contribute by sharing experiences and expertise on effective and efficient service delivery.

The results of the public perception survey were used as a basis for point allocation as per this element. The researchers awarded points under this element based on the percentage of citizens who responded with "agree" and "strongly agree" to the following statement: "I can easily find the information and guidance that helps me obtain public administration services".[108] The percentage of citizens who agree or strongly agree is 48.2%.[109] To the statement: "I can easily obtain public administration services at the offices and service counters of the relevant authorities", the percentage of citizens who agree or strongly agree is 45.3%.[110] Regarding the statement: "I can easily obtain public administration services online" (e.g. uslugi.gov.mk portal, or other relevant portals/websites), the percentage of citizens who agree or strongly agree is 49%.[111]

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108 The public perception survey was conducted from the 1st of February until the 22nd of February 2025, on a sample of 1,008 participants.

109 Strongly disagree: 14.4%; disagree: 34%: agree: 36.9%; strongly agree: 11.3%; do not know/no opinion: 3.3%.

110 Strongly disagree: 18.6%; disagree: 33.5%; agree: 35.2%; strongly agree: 10.1%; do not know/no opinion: 2.6%.

111 Strongly disagree: 12.4%; disagree: 25.4%; agree: 38.4%; strongly agree: 10.7%; do not know/no opinion: 13.1%.

How does North Macedonia do in regional terms?

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

| | Score to sub-indicator 2 | Western Balkan average |
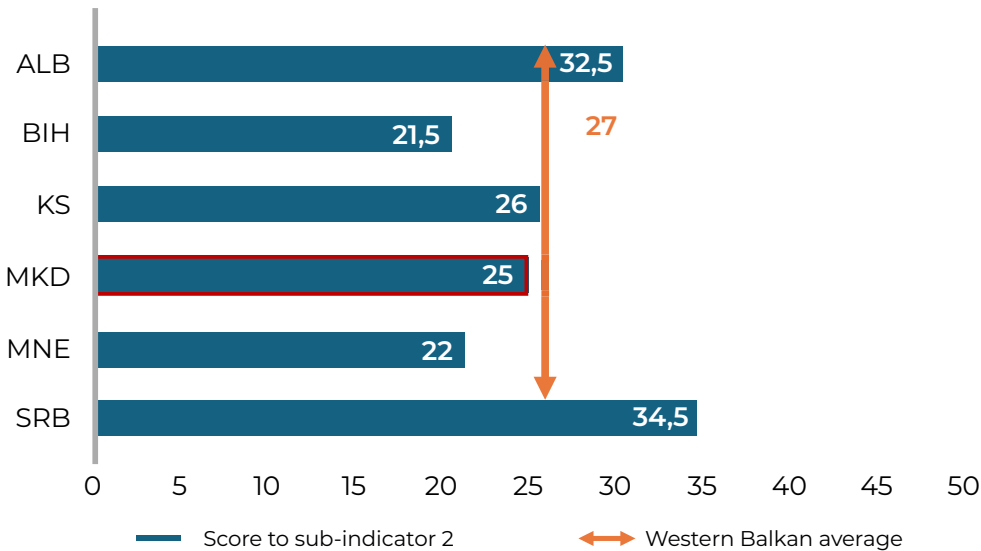
II.3 Digitalisation of service delivery

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

➡️ **Principle 19:** Digitalisation enables data-driven decisions and effective, efficient and responsive policies, services and processes in the whole of government.

Sub-indicator 2: Digitalisation of service delivery[112]

Indicator elements	Element type	Score
E 2.1 There is a strategic document in force that envisages digitalisation of services	Strategy and policy	0.5/0.5
E 2.2 Regulations stipulate provision of digital services, digital signature and e-payment in digital service delivery	Legislation	1.5/1.5
E 2.3 Institutional responsibility for steering the digital service delivery at the central administration level is assigned	Institutional set-up	2/2
E 2.4 Online central platform for digital service delivery is established and user-oriented	Practice in implementation	4/4
E 2.5 Digital signature and digital payment are available to all users	Practice in implementation	2/4.5
E 2.6 Key non-state actors consider digital services as easy to use	Outcomes and impact	0/3
Total score for sub-indicator 3		10.5/15.5

112 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 the 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.

Since the previous monitoring cycle, overall, while North Macedonia has made substantial progress in digitalising its service delivery, continued efforts are needed to address existing gaps in infrastructure, digital literacy, and accessibility. The government has introduced supportive legal frameworks, including digital signatures and data protection laws. Plans focus on expanding services, improving infrastructure, enhancing accessibility, and providing digital literacy programmes. Key initiatives include a central platform for citizens to access a variety of administrative services online, a solution for secure online access to public services, and the promotion of paperless interaction between citizens and the government. Also, services like tax declarations and business registration have been digitised, though rural areas face limited access. Mobile apps offer convenient access to government services, such as paying fees and accessing information. Despite progress, challenges remain. These include limited digital literacy, meaning many citizens—especially in rural areas and among older generations—lack the skills to use online services; limited service availability in remote areas; barriers to access for marginalised groups, including people with disabilities; and difficulties some institutions face in integrating new technologies, which affecting service delivery.[113]

The researchers reviewed the valid PAR strategic documents (strategy, programme, policy documents, or similar) at the time of measurement to determine whether the digitalisation of service delivery is envisaged within the service delivery strategic document or a broader strategy, such as the public administration reform strategy or similar. The researchers identified relevant sections in the analysed strategic documents that contain information on specific measures or activities, with a clear assignment of responsibilities.

Within the PAR Strategy 2023–2030, the fourth priority area, service delivery and digital transformation, has a general objective: digitalised public administration. The first specific objective, 4.1: Digital environment for better operation of the administration, contains three relevant measures for the digitalisation of service delivery:

- M4.1.1. Improvement of electronic communication channels;
- M4.1.2. Introduction of the SMART environment in the operation of the administration;
- M4.1.3. Improvement of the institutional and legal framework for ICT.

Responsibilities are clearly assigned to the MDT as the main responsible institution and to designated state administration institutions for each envisaged

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113 OECD (2025), Public Administration in the Republic of North Macedonia 2024: Assessment against the Principles of Public Administration, SIGMA Monitoring Reports, OECD Publishing.

activity (e.g. the Personal Data Protection Agency, the MOI, the Health Fund, etc.) in the tables contained in the Action Plan.[114]

Within the four-year Government Work Programme 2024–2028, priorities are listed regarding further digitalisation and the development of services available to all citizens, as well as measures for supporting the digital transformation of the business sector. The focus will be on the development of modern digital infrastructure, the development of an artificial intelligence platform, strengthening the capacities of the public sector for working with data, full digitalisation of public services, the introduction of mobile services, training for citizens in the use of digital services, digital inclusion of people with disabilities, and cybersecurity. The government will assist municipalities in digitalisation towards a smart city system. Since this is a Government Work Programme and not an Action Plan designating separate ministries as responsible institutions, the Government is responsible for the listed measures.[115]

In addition, the relevant regulations were reviewed to assess whether they stipulate the provision of digital services, the use of digital signatures, and the implementation of e-payment systems. The researchers cited sections/articles/paragraphs that contain such requirements.

As the general framework for service provision, the LGAP stipulates the possibility for digital services in Article 28 paragraph 3: "The services referred to in paragraph (2) must be provided directly at the premises of the public authority conducting the procedure, as well as by mail or electronically, unless they are services that require direct presence at the location".[116]

The Law on Electronic Governance and Electronic Services, in Article 1, regulates the work of state administration bodies and local self-government units, courts, public prosecutors' offices, and the state attorney's office, legal entities entrusted by law to exercise public authorisations, legal entities that provide and secure services of public interest (i.e. entities in the field of education, healthcare, social protection, finance, banking, insurance, energy, water supply, electronic communications, postal services, and utility services) in the exchange of data and documents in electronic form, i.e. the provision of electronic services. It also regulates matters related to the establishment and functioning of the National Portal for Electronic Services, the Catalogue of Services, and the Single Point for Services.[117]

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114 Ministry of Information Society and Administration, 'Public Administration Reform Strategy 2023–2030 with Action Plan 2023–2026 (Стратегија за реформа на јавната администрација 2023-2030 со Акциски План 2023-2026)'.

115 Government of the Republic of North Macedonia, 'Work Program of the Government of the Republic of North Macedonia 2024–2028 (Програма за работа на Владата на Република Северна Македонија 2024–2028)'.

116 'Law on the General Administrative Procedure'.

117 'Law on Electronic Management and Electronic Services (Закон за електронско управување и електронски услуги)'.

The Law on Electronic Documents, Electronic Identification and Trust Services, in Article 1, regulates the creation, storage and processing of electronic documents, electronic identification and trust services, as well as the use of electronic documents, electronic signatures and electronic seals, and electronic trust services in administrative and judicial procedures.[118]

It can be concluded that the provision of digital services, digital signatures, and e-payments is legally stipulated.

As mentioned above, the institutional responsibility for steering digital service delivery at the central administration level is assigned to the Ministry of Digital Transformation.[119]

Also, an online central platform for digital service delivery is established and user-oriented.[120] The following criteria were met to allocate points for user orientation:

1. Adherence to data protection policies on the portal (service providers declare their compliance with data protection regulations and policies, ensuring that data is collected, processed, and stored securely);

2. Inclusion of at least one interactive or two-way communication tool (such as chatbots, feedback mechanisms, a personalised dashboard, etc.).

When users access the portal, a notification regarding the privacy policy is displayed.[121] There is a possibility to select "cookies" and change those settings. For all questions regarding the use of the portal, there are several available telephone lines in Macedonian and Albanian, and the support function includes a form for posing questions, and a form for reporting issues, and a form for checking the status of submissions.[122]

The portal page "Terms of Use"[123] and "Privacy Policy" clearly state which data is entered, the purposes for collecting such data, that the data is not stored permanently, and that information security measures are applied. The portal page "Help Centre" offers instructions for the use of the website and user registration in written and visual form, as well as the possibility to ask a question via a contact form.[124]

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118 'Law on Electronic Documents, Electronic Identification and Trust Services', Official Gazette of the Republic of North Macedonia no. 101/19, 275/19 and 3/25, https://www.refworld.org/legal/legislation/natleg-bod/2019/en/124112

119 'Law on Organisation and Work of State Administration Bodies', (Official Gazette of the Republic of Macedonia nos. 58/00, 44/02, 82/08, 167/10, 51/11, and Official Gazette of the Republic of North Macedonia no. 96/19, 110/19 and 121/24), Art. 26-a.

120 National e-Services Portal (Национален портал за е-Услуги), https://uslugi.gov.mk/

121 Privacy Policy—National e-Services Portal, https://uslugi.gov.mk/privacy-policy.nspx

122 National e-Services Portal (Национален портал за е-Услуги).

123 Terms of Use—National e-Services Portal, https://uslugi.gov.mk/terms-and-conditions.nspx

124 How can we help? —National e-Services Portal https://uslugi.gov.mk/help-center.nspx

How does North Macedonia do in regional terms?

Sub-indicator 3: *Digitalisation of services*

ALB	13,25
BIH	7
KS	26
MKD	10,25
MNE	6
SRB	8,25

8.5

— Score to sub-indicator 3   ↔ Western Balkan average
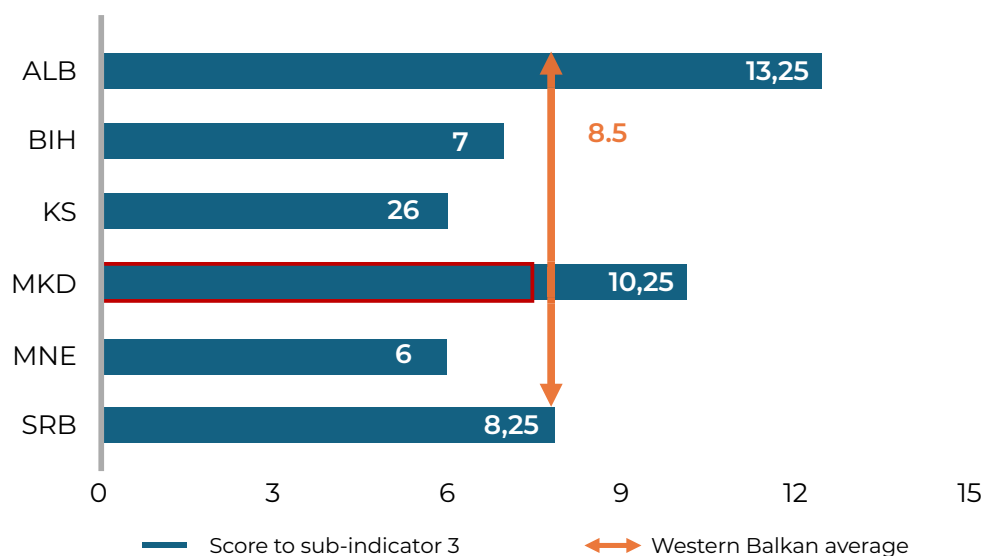
Overall scores comparison in the Service Delivery and Digitalisation

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

ALB	57,25
BIH	35,5
KS	39.5
MKD	46,75
MNE	36
SRB	52,75

44,6

— Total indicator score   ↔ Western Balkan average
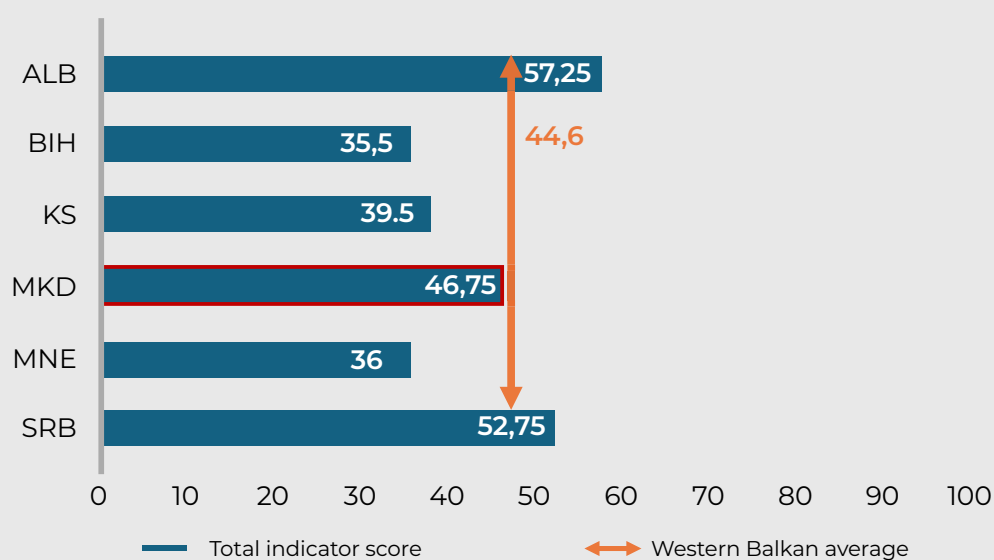
Regional overview report for Service Design and Digitalisation area,

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	(short term/medium term/long term)[125]	Status	Explanation
E-channels should be easily accessible to vulnerable groups, service provision should be adapted to their needs, and the staff delivering administrative services should be trained to work with vulnerable groups.	Long-term	Partially implemented	In North Macedonia, there is a growing emphasis on making e-channels for public services more accessible to vulnerable groups.\n\nThe country is adapting service provision to meet the specific needs of these groups, ensuring that digital platforms and services are user-friendly for people with disabilities, elderly citizens, and other vulnerable populations.
Institutions should provide different channels of access for obtaining administrative services.	Long-term	Partially implemented	Although there are efforts to enhance digital access to administrative services in North Macedonia, significant gaps remain. Most services are still not available online, especially at the local level, and vulnerable groups face additional barriers due to limited digital literacy and access. A more inclusive and comprehensive approach is needed to ensure equitable access to public services for all citizens.

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125 Recommendations for which the time needed for implementation is deemed to be up to one year are labelled as short-term. Medium-term recommendations are those that can be implemented within a period of one to three years. Long-term recommendations require more than three years to be implemented.

Service providers should publish information about administrative services in open data formats	Long-term	Not implemented	There was a broad consultative process in the early phase of developing the SPAR 2023–2030, given that in April 2022, MISA sent an invitation to all CSOs to become involved in the thematic working groups for the preparation of the SPAR and later in the administrative coordination and monitoring structure. However, this should be a continuous practice.
Administrative services should be adequately distributed across the country.	Long-term	Partially implemented	While North Macedonia has made strides in decentralising administrative services, significant challenges remain in achieving equitable distribution across the country. Addressing financial constraints, clarifying competencies, and strengthening local capacities are essential steps towards ensuring that all citizens have access to quality administrative services, regardless of their location.
One-stop shops should be made accessible to all and available throughout the entire country.	Long-term	Partially implemented	While North Macedonia is making progress in establishing one-stop shops for administrative services, significant gaps remain in ensuring their accessibility across the entire country. Addressing infrastructure disparities, promoting digital literacy, and clarifying governance structures are essential steps towards achieving equitable access to public services for all citizens.

II. 4.2 Recommendations from the 2024/2025 Monitor Report

- The Government should strengthen central steering and coordination of service delivery, i.e. strengthen the MDT's administrative capacity (short-term recommendation).[126]

- The MDT should enhance transparency and accountability in how citizen feedback submitted via the uslugi.gov.mk portal is handled. Clear information should be provided on which suggestions, comments, or remarks have been considered, and how they have contributed to service improvement (short-term recommendation).

- The MDT should ensure that e-channels are easily accessible to vulnerable groups. Service provision must be tailored to meet their specific needs, and administrative staff should receive specialised training to assist and engage with vulnerable populations effectively. The MDT should give the relevant institutions sufficient implementation and oversight tools to implement this policy systematically across the public administration[127] (long-term recommendation).

- The MDT, along with the relevant institutions, should offer a variety of channels for accessing administrative services, giving citizens the flexibility to choose the most suitable option for their needs (long-term recommendation).

- The MDT should coordinate the process to ensure that all service providers publish information about administrative services in open data formats (long-term recommendation).

- The MDT should coordinate efforts to ensure that administrative services are effectively and evenly distributed nationwide (long-term recommendation).

- The MDT should enhance the accessibility of one-stop shops for all citizens and ensure they are available nationwide (long-term recommendation).

- The MPA should develop training curricula for public sector staff to enhance their ability to engage with and support vulnerable groups accessing administrative services. This will help bridge the digital divide and promote greater inclusivity in public service delivery (short-term recommendation).

- The MDT should implement existing plans to offer all citizens free electronic identities and signatures through a user-friendly mobile app[128] (short-term recommendation).

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126 https://www.oecd.org/content/dam/oecd/en/publications/reports/2025/01/public-administration-in-the-republic-of-north-macedonia-2024_03a4d4f2/071bad9d-en.pdf

127 Ibid.

128 Ibid.

METHODOLOGY APPENDIX

For producing this report for North Macedonia, 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 North Macedonia

Institution	Date of request	Date of reply to the request
Ministry for Digital Transformation	21.01.2025	11.02.2025
Cadastre	21.01.2025	24.01.2025
Ministry of Interior	21.01.2025	29.01.2025
Central Registry	21.01.2025	06.02.2025
Public Revenue Office	21.01.2025	19.02.2025
Ministry for Public Administration	11.02.2025	the response was provided verbally over the phone on 12.03.2025

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 North Macedonia

Date	Interviewees
30.12.2024	Pro Local
31.12.2024	INI
21.01.2024	CUP

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

The survey was conducted between 1st of February until the 22nd of February 2025. The margin of error for the sample of 1008 citizens is ±3,52 % at the 95 % confidence level.

Table 7: public perception survey questions in the area of Service Delivery and Digitalisation[129]

Statement 8	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	Don't know/ No opinion
In the past two years, have you interacted with the administration in North Macedonia 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
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

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

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	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	Don't know/ No opinion
How do you prefer accessing public administration services? a. Access to services online b. Access to services at the offices and service counters of relevant authorities c. I have no preference.					
Statement 16	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	Don't know/ No opinion
Thinking about the past two years how often have you used e-services of the public administration? a. Never b. Rarely c. Sometimes d. Often					
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, citizenship, unemployment certificates, etc.).	1	2	3	4	99
Statement 12	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 15	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

LIST OF REFERENCED SOURCES IN THIS REPORT

- Draft Law on Accessibility of Websites and Mobile Applications of Public Sector Institutions
- EC Country Report for North Macedonia 2024
- eGovernment Benchmark 2024—Factsheets
- Government Work Programme 2024–2028
- Law on Civil Registry
- Law on Electronic Documents, Electronic Identification and Trust Services
- Law on Electronic Management and Electronic Services
- Law on General Administrative Procedure
- Law on One-Stop Shop System and Keeping a Trade Register and a Register of Other Legal Entities
- Law on the Organisation and Work of State Administration Bodies
- National Strategy for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities 2023–2030
- Rulebook on the Method of Electronic Payment for Administrative Services Provided Electronically
- SIGMA/OECD, Public Administration in the Republic of North Macedonia 2024
- Strategy for Public Administration Reform 2023–2030 and Action Plan