

## PAR Monitor Report Serbia

# SERVICE DELIVERY AND DIGITALISATION

2024/2025



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## 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](http://www.par-monitor.org).

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



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



## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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

As in the case of the previous editions of the National PAR Monitor reports, published for 2017/2018, 2019/2020 and 2021/2022, special acknowledgements go to members of the WeBER Platform and the National Working Group in Serbia, and other stakeholders in Serbia 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)<sup>1</sup>, the ReSPA (Regional School of Public Administration), and the Ministry of Public Administration and Local Self-Government, as a project associate.

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<sup>1</sup> A joint initiative of the European Union and the OECD.

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

*The assessment of the transparency and citizen centricity of service design and delivery focuses on three critical aspects – 1) citizen-centric service delivery and design, 2) service accessibility and availability of information on services, and 3) digitalisation of service delivery. The first aspect is devoted to examining the extent and manner in which relevant institutions involve citizens in service design and delivery, focusing on the practice of collecting feedback and incorporating it into the (re)design of services. The second aspect focuses on service accessibility, with the emphasis on citizen-friendly approaches when informing on service provision and accessibility of services to vulnerable 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.<sup>2</sup>*

Despite clear strategic commitments to citizen-centric service design and delivery in Serbia, articulated through the PAR Strategy, eGovernment Development Programme, and the ePaper Programme, their practical implementation remains limited. While the strategic documents outline measures that emphasise user involvement, feedback mechanisms, and service optimisation, these intentions are insufficiently embedded in the legislative framework, particularly regarding service design. Key gaps include the absence of legal obligations for public administration bodies to involve users in designing services or to publish data on such participation. In contrast, citizen-centric delivery is better regulated, notably through provisions such as the once-only principle and one-stop shops. However, in practice, persistent issues are visible in the gathering of and responsiveness to user feedback. Moreover, fragmented institutional responsibilities indicate a lack of a coordination mechanism which would steer the translation of citizen-centric principles into service delivery practices, as jurisdiction is divided between the Ministry of Public Administration and Local Self-Government, Office for IT and eGovernment and the Public Policy Secretariat, while individual service providers have jurisdiction over their respective services. Assessment of the sample of services<sup>3</sup> further highlight deficiencies: lack of data on user involvement in service design; feedback mechanisms exist for most services but the institutional follow-up on feedback is not published, making it unclear

<sup>2</sup> For 2022, only developments not captured by the PAR Monitor 2021/2022 are included.

<sup>3</sup> For the Practice type of elements based on a sample, the same seven administrative services are observed to allocate points. These sample services include property registration, company (business) registration, vehicle registration, passport issuance, ID card issuance, VAT declaration and VAT payment.

how the inputs are treated or are they considered by the relevant authorities. Furthermore, citizens and key informants both perceive limited opportunities to influence service design or provide meaningful feedback, and inconsistent application of the once-only principle, with 54% of citizens reporting that the last time they requested a public administration service, they had to submit documents already held by the state.

In the accessibility area, the PAR Strategy promotes the development of adaptive, user-oriented administration that ensures accessible, timely, and inclusive services, with special attention to vulnerable and minority groups. Key measures include improving service accessibility and transparency, enhancing human and technical capacities, and strengthening digital infrastructure. While the legislative and strategic framework supports initiatives like one-stop shops, multilingual service provision, and service organisation around life events, implementation often remains voluntary and uneven. Legal obligations to track service performance are limited, and digital accessibility efforts, though progressing, still face barriers such as incomplete functionality and limited user-friendliness. In practice, most procedural information is available online, though the quality, accessibility, and availability of information in multiple languages and formats vary across observed sample services. Training for civil service staff on working with vulnerable groups exists but is not mandatory. Overall, while strategic and regulatory steps have been taken to modernize and humanize service delivery, gaps remain in consistency in application, full digital access, and equitable service provision across institutions and user groups. Public perception of service accessibility reflects a mixed picture. While over half of citizens strongly agree or agree that information and online services are generally accessible (52%), a significant share still faces difficulties, especially in accessing necessary information (38,5%), physical service points (44%), and navigating digital platforms (27%).

Serbia's PAR Strategy also strongly emphasizes digitalising public services through user-oriented reforms and strategic programs such as the e-Government Development Program and the e-Paper Program. These aim to simplify administrative processes, supported by a robust legal framework ensuring the right to digital services, including electronic signatures and payments. However, the lack of centralised coordination and inconsistent implementation across institutions continues to slow down progress. While the eGovernment portal offers various digital services and features designed to enhance user experience and accessibility, gaps remain in functionality, integration, and user support. Fragmentation of platforms for online access, besides the eGovernment portal, there are a number of platforms such as eTax (*ePorezi*), Welcome to Serbia, eOffice (*ePisarnica*), My Highschool and other, as well as insufficient promotion, further challenge widespread and effective use. Despite good practices in some areas, the full potential of digital service delivery in Serbia is yet to be fully tapped due to these persistent structural and coordination issues.

The recommendations from this monitoring cycle are focused on legal and policy amendments that would establish mechanisms for monitoring, control, and quality assurance of service delivery, as well as enable the systematic involvement of end users in the (re)design of administrative services. They also underline the need for the development of guiding documents to further standardise procedures and unify processes across different service-providing institutions. In addition, the recommendations aim to enhance the inclusiveness, accessibility, and transparency of service delivery. In addition, recommendations section highlights the importance of institutionalising mandatory and regularly delivered training for civil servants on how to assist population in need, developed in cooperation with representative organisations to ensure its relevance. Furthermore, the recommendations call for the introduction of binding standards for the presentation of service-related information, including the use of plain language, assistive formats such as infographics, and video tutorials, to simplify access and improve user experience. Particular emphasis is placed on ensuring that information on services is available in multiple communication formats, written, audio/visual, and Braille, in order to meet the diverse needs of users and foster inclusion. Finally, the recommendations stress the need to make data on administrative services publicly available in open and machine-readable formats via the national open data portal, thus enabling administrative or third-party in-depth analyses to inform future actions aimed at improvement.



## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

AI	Artificial Intelligence
AP	Action Plan
BRA	Business Registers Agency
CSO	Civil Society Organisation
EU	European Union
FOI	Freedom of Information
HRMS	Human Resource Management Service
ID	identification/identity document
ITE Office	Office for Information Technologies and eGovernment
Mol	Ministry of Interior
MPALSG	Ministry of Public Administration and Local Self-Government
NAPA	National Academy for Public Administration
PAR	Public Administration Reform
PPS	Public Policy Secretariat
ReSPA	Regional School of Public Administration
RGA	Republic Geodetic Authority
SIGMA	Support for Improvement in Governance and Management
VAT	Value-Added Tax
WeBER 3.0	Western Balkan Enablers for Reforming Public Administrations

# **I. WeBER PAR Monitor: What we monitor and how**

## **I.1 WeBER's approach to monitoring PAR**

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

In line with WeBER's focus on the region's EU accession process, once the SIGMA *Principles of Public Administration*<sup>4</sup> 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.<sup>5</sup>

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

5 For detailed information on the scope and process of 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:
  - 1) Strategy and Policy
  - 2) Legislation
  - 3) Institutional Set-up
  - 4) Practice in Implementation, and
  - 5) Outcomes and Impact
- Introduction of a 100-point scale, allowing for a more nuanced assessment of progress in each PAR area

## **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-centred 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 socioeconomic background, geographic location, gender, disability status, or other factors – to access and benefit from them. By tracking progress and challenges, the monitoring provides actionable recommendations for sustainable, citizen-oriented reforms in service delivery.

Monitoring in **the Service Delivery and Digitalisation** is based on all four SIGMA Principles in this area:

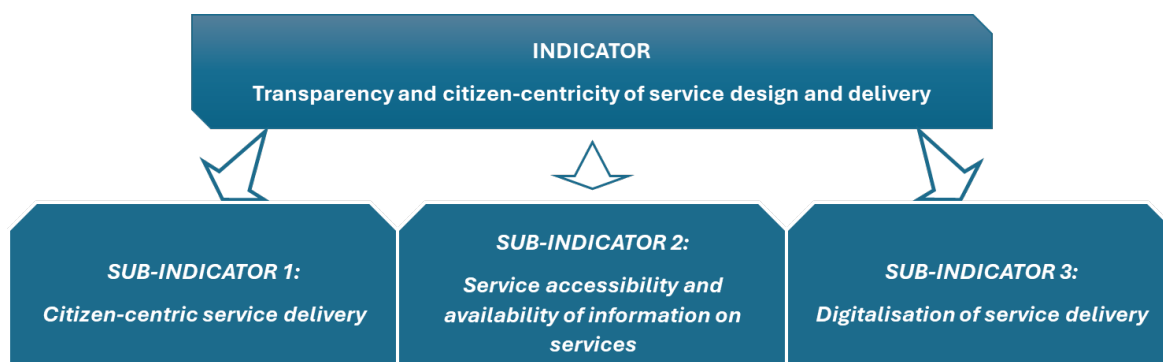
**Principle 19:** Users are at the centre in design and delivery of administrative services.

**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.<sup>6</sup> 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 with non-state actors who possess significant expertise in the area and use

<sup>6</sup> Unless specified otherwise in the methodology of individual elements.

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
E 1.9 Public service providers implement the once-only principle during service delivery	Practice in implementation
E 1.10 Key non-state actors consider service design and delivery as citizen centric	Outcomes and impact
E 1.11 Citizens' perception of their ability to influence service design	Outcomes and impact
E 1.12 Citizens' perception of their opportunity to provide feedback on public service quality	Outcomes and impact
E 1.13 Citizens' awareness of the once-only principle	Outcomes and impact
E1.14 Citizens' reported experience with the implementation of the once-only principle	Outcomes and impact

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

Monitoring of this sub-indicator is based on the review of official documents and websites of institutions in charge of service delivery, in order to assess different aspects related to issues of accessibility, while also taking into account official documents and data obtained from responsible institutions through FOI requests. For the assessment of outcomes and impact, researchers conduct key informants' interviews with non-state actors who possess significant expertise in the area and use the findings from the public perception survey conducted within the scope of the assessment.

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

**Table 3: Indicator elements under the sub-indicator 2**

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

E 2.9 Information on services is available in multiple formats to meet diverse users' needs	Practice in implementation
E 2.10 Information on public service delivery is available in multiple languages to meet diverse users' needs	Practice in implementation
E 2.11 Service providers publish information on the prices of their services	Practice in implementation
E 2.12 Service providers publish information on the rights and obligations of users	Practice in implementation
E 2.13 Service providers publish precise contact information for service provision	Practice in implementation
E 2.14 Data on administrative services are available in open formats	Practice in implementation
E 2.15 Service providers train their staff on how to treat vulnerable groups	Practice in implementation
E 2.16 Service providers ensure adequate territorial distribution of service delivery	Practice in implementation
E 2.17 Key non-state actors consider service delivery as accessible	Outcomes and impact
E 2.18 Citizens' perception of the accessibility of information necessary for obtaining services	Outcomes and impact
E 2.19 Citizens' perception of the ease of in-person access to services	Outcomes and impact
E 2.20 Citizens' perception of the ease of online access to services	Outcomes and impact

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

Monitoring is based on the review of official documents and websites of institutions relevant to electronic service design and delivery, while also taking into account official documents and data obtained from responsible 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
E 3.1 There is a strategic document in force that envisages digitalisation of service delivery	Strategy and policy
E 3.2 Regulations stipulate provision of digital services, digital signature and e-payment in digital service delivery	Legislation
E 3.3 Institutional responsibility for steering the digital service delivery at the central administration level is assigned	Institutional setup
E 3.4 Online central platform for digital service delivery is established and user-oriented	Practice in implementation
E 3.5 Digital signature and digital payment are available to all users	Practice in implementation
E 3.6 Key non-state actors consider digital services as easy to use	Outcomes and impact

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

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

52.75

47.25

■ 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

#### *Sub-indicator 1: Citizen-centric service delivery<sup>7</sup>*

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	1/2
E 1.3 Regulations stipulate an obligation of service providers to keep and publish metrics of users' participation in service design	Legislation	0/2

<sup>7</sup> Through the first sub-indicator, the following SIGMA sub-principles are monitored: The government establishes and co-ordinates a whole-of-government policy to continuously improve design and delivery of public administrative services, based on evolving user needs; Public administration bodies engage users to understand their needs, expectations and experiences and to involve them actively in the (re)design of public administrative services (co-creation); The public administration regularly monitors service quality against delivery standards and other metrics, to learn lessons and improve service design and delivery; and Users have the legal right to provide the public administration with information and documents only once. The public administration applies this right consistently.

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	0/2
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
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	1.5/2
E 1.14 Citizens' reported experience with the implementation of the once-only principle	Outcomes and impact	0.5/2
<b>Total score for sub-indicator 1</b>		<b>10/32</b>

*Despite the continuous overall improvements, there were no further developments in consolidating the area of service delivery since the previous monitoring cycle. Such developments were hampered by the fragmentation of responsibilities among institutions and the lack of a coordination system.<sup>8</sup> This lack of coordination was also noted in the latest SIGMA assessment, although the coordination at the level of different planning documents implemented in this area was rated as successful (such as the PAR Strategy, eGovernment Development Programme and the ePaper Programme). Moreover, it was highlighted that none of the central-level bodies with jurisdiction in this area (Ministry of Public Administration and Local Self-Government, Public Policy Secretariat and the Office for IT and eGovernment) have an explicit mandate to propose or approve a common methodology to measure user satisfaction or to collect and publish information about performance in delivering services across*

<sup>8</sup> European Commission, Serbia Report 2024, pp. 28. Available at: <https://tinyurl.com/bd3mncwy>

*the government. As a consequence, the authorities do not rely systematically on comparable and complete information on the performance of services when selecting improvement areas or prioritising resources.*<sup>9</sup>

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Several strategic documents in Serbia set the course and define reform measures in the area of service delivery: PAR Strategy for the period 2021-2030, with an Action Plan for 2021-2025, eGovernment Development Programme for the period 2023-2025 and the ePaper Programme for the period 2023-2025. Each of these documents defines specific measures and activities aimed at enabling and enhancing the citizen-centricity of service design and delivery. Regarding the service design aspect, the PAR Strategy (within the fifth specific objective) defines a measure on *the improvement of user-tailored service development through enhancing the process of creating new services and optimising existing ones*. The activities within this measure specify the citizen-centric aspect, such as establishing a methodology for developing new or optimising existing services based on the systematic involvement of end users in all phases and establishing a legal framework for the systematic inclusion of users in the development/design of new and existing services at all stages of development.<sup>10</sup>

The aspect of citizen-centric service delivery is envisaged within all three abovementioned strategic documents. The PAR Strategy defines a measure on *Improvement of the system for controlling and ensuring the quality of service delivery*, with activities such as *Identifying the need for improving physical accessibility to services and Measuring end-user satisfaction*.<sup>11</sup> Moreover, the eGovernment Programme defines three measures devoted to this: *Improvement of the eGovernment Portal and other software*, *Providing support to eGovernment users* and *Affirmation of eGovernment*, each containing activities which further specify the steps that should be taken.<sup>12</sup> Finally, two measures within the ePaper Programme are also devoted to citizen-centric service delivery: *Optimisation of the administrative procedures for citizens and businesses* and *Digitalisation of administrative procedures*.<sup>13</sup> Such measures

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9 SIGMA/OECD, Public Administration in Serbia 2024: Assessment against the Principles of Public Administration, pp. 90-95. Available at: <https://tinyurl.com/26pvjun3>

10 Public Administration Reform Strategy in the Republic of Serbia for the period 2021-2030 with an Action Plan for the period 2021-2025, measure 5.1, activities 5.1.1 and 5.1.8, pp. 22 of the Action Plan. Available at: <https://tinyurl.com/3xche8ep>

11 Ibid, measure 5.3, activities 5.3.8 and 5.3.11, pp. 30 of the Action Plan.

12 Measures 1.3.1, 1.3.2 and 1.3.3. Activities relevant to citizen-centric service delivery envisaged within these measures are: Ensuring the availability of electronic public administration services on all platforms (mobile devices), Development of functional specifications for proposals for changes to regulations in order to optimize procedures related to life events, Establishing a contact centre for citizens and businesses and Ensure the functionality of the eGovernment Portal for monitoring the status of cases. eGovernment Development Programme, pp. 55-63. Available at: <https://tinyurl.com/3xche8ep>

13 These measures envision 1430 activities devoted to the optimisation of procedures and digitalisation of different services. ePaper Programme, Measure 1.2 and 1.3, pp. 16. Available at: <https://tinyurl.com/42meujts>

and their accompanying activities defined within the strategic framework demonstrate a commitment to embedding citizen-centric principles in both service design and delivery.

While citizen involvement in service design is envisaged at the strategic level, this direction is not fully supported by the relevant legislative framework, indicating potential issues with the implementation of envisaged activities and reaching the set strategic objectives. Namely, the relevant laws in Serbia do not stipulate citizen-centric service design, nor do they require institutions to collect or publish data on user participation. More specifically, the legislative framework currently does not contain any provisions that oblige service providers to create new services or optimise existing ones relying primarily on users' inputs. This legal gap has had practical implications, as the monitoring findings revealed the absence of systematic and standardised approaches to collecting, analysing, and publishing data on how service providers engage users in the (re)design of services.

In contrast, the legislative framework more clearly reflects the strategic goals related to citizen-centric service delivery. The Decree on one-stop shops<sup>14</sup> can be used as a basis to assess the service delivery as citizen-centric. By design, one-stop shops serve as single access points for various services, available both physically and electronically, thereby saving time, effort and resources for users. Moreover, the citizen-centric approach was enhanced with the introduction of the once-only principle, which was introduced in the Law on General Administrative Procedure.<sup>15</sup> This principle implies that citizens and business entities can be asked to provide necessary data from official records, such as the facts contained in the civil registers, only once for the purpose of decision-making in the administrative procedure, after which the authorities exchange information internally, with due respect for the protection of personal data. Hence, it can be concluded that the legislative framework in this area is mainly devoted to the reduction of administrative burden of citizens but lacks provisions which would oblige institutions to systematically include them in the development of services.

Despite the outlined strategic objectives, the lack of a coordination mechanism undermines the effectiveness of their implementation. Specifically, the issue stems from the fact that the central authority responsible for steering and continuously improving service design and service delivery is not clearly assigned, with responsibilities dispersed among several institutions. Primarily, the Ministry of Public Administration and Local Self-Government (MPALSG) is tasked with overseeing the PAR process, which includes aspects of service

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<sup>14</sup> Decree on conditions, criteria and metrics for determining the one-stop shop and the manner of cooperation of relevant authorities in terms of conducting procedures within the one-stop shop, Official Gazette No. 93/2023. Available at: <https://tinyurl.com/4vu74e37>.

<sup>15</sup> Article 9 and 103, Law on General Administrative Procedure, Official Gazette no. 18/2016. Available at: <https://tinyurl.com/yeuwervp>.

delivery. However, the Rulebook on Internal Organisation and Systematisation of Workplaces does not specifically mention their jurisdiction in terms of service design and provision.<sup>16</sup> Moreover, several responsibilities are assigned to the Office for eGovernment and IT (ITE Office) regarding electronic services, but the service design falls within the jurisdiction of individual institutions providing those services.<sup>17</sup> Besides these two institutions and line institutions, which are in charge of delivering services in their domain, the Public Policy Secretariat (PPS) is the institution in charge of the ePaper Programme and the Register of Administrative Procedure – a single online point where citizens and businesses can find all relevant information on all administrative procedures.<sup>18</sup> This institutional arrangement suggests a fragmented system and highlights potential challenges stemming from the distribution of responsibilities across multiple institutions, which may undermine clear lines of accountability. Moreover, it shows that a centralised quality control system is not in place, which can lead to significant disparities between different services and service providers, and, thus, negatively impact the user experience.

As previously stated, the lack of a regulatory framework that governs the aspect of service design showed its implications in practice. The metrics on user participation in service (re)design were not available online in this monitoring cycle, for any of the observed sample services. Furthermore, the lack of a coordination mechanism also showed its implications on how service providers collect and publish user feedback on service delivery. Namely, channels for collecting user feedback were available for six out of seven sample services (see Table 5 below).<sup>19</sup> However, basic information on user feedback was available in the case of four sample services, while advanced data was not available.<sup>20</sup> Finally, information on institutional follow-up on the feedback gathered was available

<sup>16</sup> Available at: <https://mduls.gov.rs/o-ministarstvu/>.

<sup>17</sup> These responsibilities are designing, coordinating, developing, and operating e-government systems; participation in the establishment and management of information systems in which state administration bodies and holders of public authority maintain data in registers relevant for providing e-government services; designing, building, connecting, developing, and maintaining information and communication technology resources and infrastructure necessary for providing e-government services, as well as supporting the application of these technologies. Article 38a, Law on Ministries, Official Gazette no. 92/2023. Available at: <https://tinyurl.com/urj2rt9u>.

<sup>18</sup> Available at: <https://rap.euprava.gov.rs/gradjani/home>.

<sup>19</sup> For property registration - <https://tinyurl.com/yc79svcm>. For VAT declaration and payment - <https://tinyurl.com/bd9n9wtw>. For vehicle registration, passport and ID card issuance - <https://euprava.gov.rs/survey>.

<sup>20</sup> Basic data on citizens' feedback includes information from at least one source, be it administrative data, survey data, civil society monitoring data, or another credible source. Advanced data on citizens' feedback are available if any of the following criteria are found:

1. Citizens' feedback includes information from at least two different credible sources;
2. Data is segregated based on gender, disability or other relevant issues (ethnicity in countries where this relevant, region, urban vs. rural, etc.). For company registration - <https://tinyurl.com/y79dk3wp>. For other services - <https://tinyurl.com/ycawzrc2>.

only for services provided by the Business Registers Agency (BRA).<sup>21</sup> Although feedback channels were present for most services, the lack of comprehensive data and the absence of information on follow-up mechanisms raises questions whether the inputs gathered are even considered by relevant authorities, as no information are published on how user insights influence services.

**Table 5: Collecting and publishing information on user feedback**

	SAMPLE						
	Property registration	Company registration	Vehicle registration	Passport issuance	ID card issuance	VAT declaration	VAT payment
User feedback channels	✓	✗	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Public availability of basic information on user feedback	✗	✓	✓	✓	✓	✗	✗
Public availability of advanced information on user feedback	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗
Evidence on incorporation of user feedback to improve service delivery	✗	✓	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗

On a more positive note, the research confirmed that the once-only principle is implemented by service providers when delivering observed sample services, except for the property registration. This service is no longer available to the citizens and has to be obtained through lawyers and geodetic organisations acting as citizen representatives in obtaining the eDesk (*eŠalter*) service to register a property. Hence, it is unclear if the once-only principle is applied or can be applied in this situation. Moreover, it should be noted that this new practice has limited direct communication between citizens and the Republic Geodetic Authority (RGA), introducing a third party into the process. It has also imposed an additional financial burden on citizens, who must pay legal

<sup>21</sup> Available in the Annual report for 2023 of the Business Registry Agency, pp. 118. Available at: <https://tinyurl.com/4uvrrs7n>.



fees despite the service itself remaining free of charge. The RGA justified this change by citing the complexity of the applicable regulations and procedures, which, in their view, necessitates professional legal assistance. However, this approach raises concerns about user-orientation and inclusiveness in service provision, as it is distancing the institution from direct interaction with citizens.

Key informants<sup>22</sup> – non-state actors with significant expertise in the area – do not recognise service delivery and design as citizen-centric suggesting that the strategic and regulatory frameworks do not provide a solid ground for practice which would lead to this outcome. Key informants do not consider that channels for citizens' feedback are available, nor that the feedback is used to improve service delivery.<sup>23</sup> Additionally, all interviewees emphasised the essential role of non-state actors in ensuring that citizen feedback is systematically integrated into service redesign and improvement processes. They stated that different associations (such as professional, business and others) serve as valuable platforms for aggregating, formulating, and channelling the interests of service users in a way that can inform and support service improvements.

Public perception in this regard is mainly aligned with the key informants' standpoints.<sup>24</sup> Only 28% of citizens consider that they have the opportunity to influence the design of services. The perception of the ability to provide feedback is somewhat better, as nearly 41% of citizens consider they can share opinions on the quality of services received. Still, these insights suggest a lack of practice to consider user opinions when (re)designing services, indicating that services are predominantly shaped by internal administrative priorities rather than user needs.

Finally, the public perception survey findings suggested that public administration bodies in Serbia should still invest efforts in raising awareness on the once-only principle. Namely, 68% of surveyed citizens expressed their agreement with 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.)"*. Although relatively high, the results indicate the need for more awareness-raising campaigns, as this principle was introduced in 2016, so that more citizens become informed on

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22 Researchers identified and interviewed relevant non-state actors with experience and knowledge in the field (key informants). Non-state actors are selected among representatives of civil society organisations, academia, professional organisations, media associations, investigative journalism outlets, or thematic experts. As a rule, three non-state actors were interviewed for all statements.

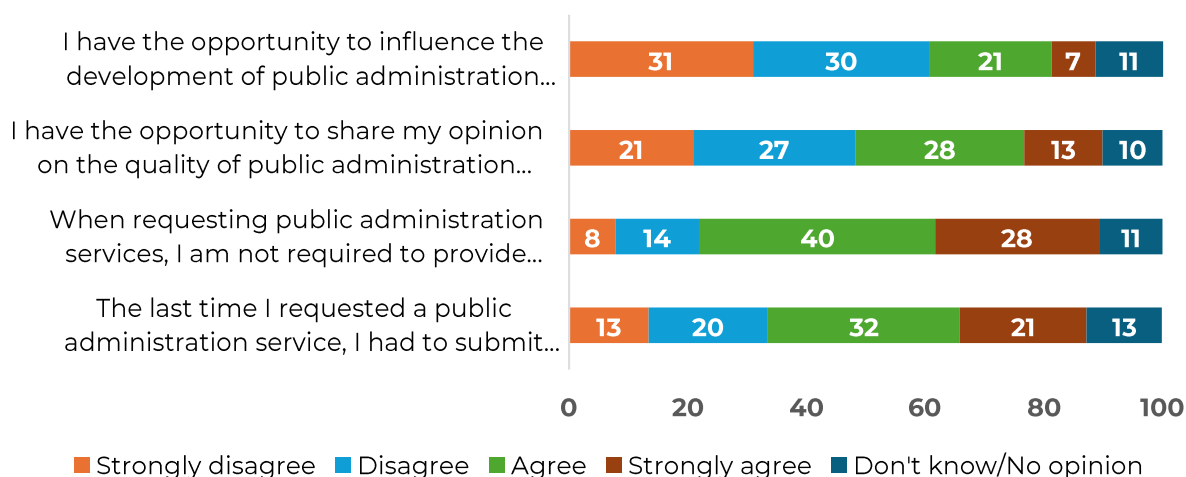
23 Key informant interviews were held on the 12th and 13th of February. To the statement Service design and service delivery are citizen centric, two key informants responded with "tend to agree", while the third responded with "tend to disagree". To the statement Channels for citizen feedback are available, one key informant responded with "tend to agree", one with "tend to disagree", and the third with "fully disagree". To the statement Citizens' feedback is used to improve service delivery, two key informants responded with "tend to disagree" and one with "fully disagree".

24 Public perception survey in Serbia was conducted from the 15th of February until the 19th of February 2025. For more information on the sample and list of statements, please refer to the section Methodology Appendix.



their rights. Moreover, the reported experience with the implementation of this principle is hardly satisfactory – around 53% of citizens stated that the last time they requested a public administration service, they had to submit documents already held by the state. These results indicate that, although introduced almost a decade ago, the once-only principle is not applied consistently by service providers to the fullest, showing a need for standardisation of service delivery and for monitoring the quality not only of delivered services but also of the manner in which the public administration provides them, thus ensuring compliance with legal requirements.

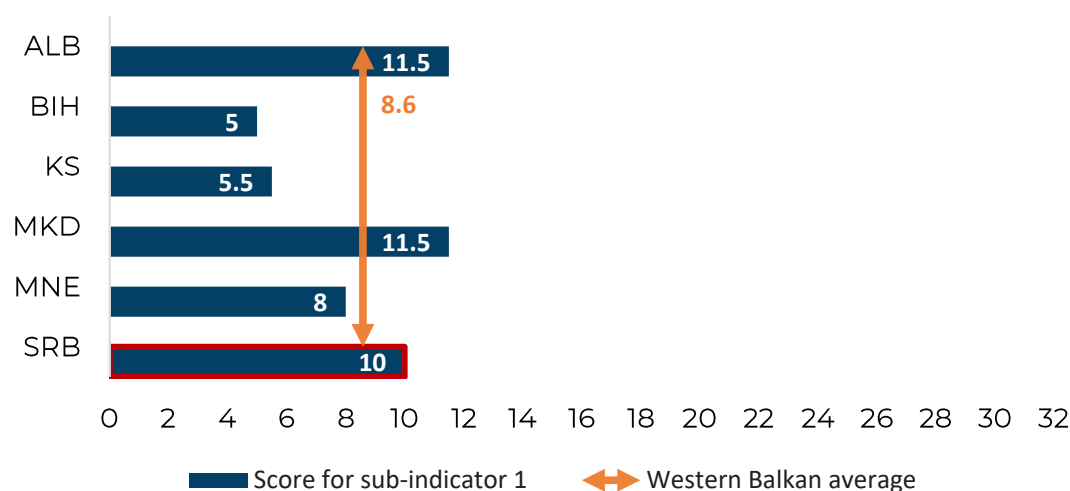
**Chart 1: share of citizens' responses per agreement scale (%)**



**Note:** All results are rounded to the nearest integer. Due to rounding, percentages may not always appear to add up to 100%. The base for these questions was N = 1006.

## HOW DOES SERBIA DO IN REGIONAL TERMS?

### Sub-indicator 1: Citizen-centric service delivery (maximum score 32)



## 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<sup>25</sup>***

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

<sup>25</sup> Through the second sub-indicator, the following SIGMA sub-principles are monitored: The government establishes and co-ordinates a whole-of-government policy to continuously improve design and delivery of public administrative services, based on evolving user needs; The public administration regularly monitors service quality against delivery standards and other metrics, to learn lessons and improve service design and delivery; The public administration ensures that service delivery is streamlined for the maximum convenience of the service users; The public administration organises and offers public services in the form of “life events”; The public administration applies omni-channel service delivery, combining online and (digitally-assisted) offline channels, so users have a seamless user journey with the possibility to interact digitally with any part of administration, if desired; All potential users have physical access to high-quality public services within reasonable distance, through collaboration of involved public administration bodies and co-ordination across and within levels of government; The public administration takes account of the diverse needs of different user groups in delivering services (including with respect to physical and intellectual ability, digital skills and language) and ensures there are no barriers to service access; The public administration ensures that users can easily find their preferred channels and have easy access to information about their rights, obligations, services and the institutions providing them, for example through a service catalogue; In their communication tools (websites, leaflets, forms, etc.) and in the context of administrative decisions, public administration bodies use concise and understandable language that conveys all relevant information in a manner appropriate to the diverse circumstances of service users (minority languages according to the law, visual and hearing impairments, etc.); Public registries are digital by design, and data governance is coherent and systematic, to ensure the trustworthiness and high quality of data and access to it, with active use and sharing of data within the public administration and beyond; and The public administration actively collaborates with relevant stakeholders to enhance the re-use of digital solutions developed with public budget to boost a collaborative ecosystem for the provision and use of digital services economy-wide.

E 2.3 Regulations stipulate that service providers keep key metrics on the use of services	Legislation	0.5/1.5
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	1.5/2
E 2.6 Service providers publish basic procedural information on how to access public services online	Practice in implementation	5/5
E 2.7 Service providers publish citizen-friendly guidance on accessing public services online	Practice in implementation	0/3
E 2.8 Service providers publish information on services they offer as life events	Practice in implementation	4/4
E 2.9 Information on services is available in multiple formats to meet diverse users' needs	Practice in implementation	0/3
E 2.10 Information on public service delivery is available in multiple languages to meet diverse users' needs	Practice in implementation	1.5/3
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	3/3
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	2/3
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
<b>Total score for sub-indicator 2</b>		<b>34.5/52.5</b>

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*No significant changes in the provision of information on services have been detected since the previous monitoring. Territorial access to physical services is guaranteed throughout regional branches of government offices and one-stop shops. The European Commission praises the number of one-stop shops, although the regulation on one-stop shops was adopted in October 2023, and there are still no quality standards for service provision.<sup>26</sup> SIGMA, in its latest report<sup>27</sup>, states that legislation provides the basis for multi-channel accessibility to services and further references that there is no evidence of written guidelines or toolkits in place for public authorities to improve the clarity of their written communications or the use of plain language. Finally, accessibility of services for users with special needs remains a weakness.*

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The PAR Strategy of the Republic of Serbia<sup>28</sup> defines, as a specific objective, the creation of an adaptive public administration that delivers integrated, user-oriented services in a timely and cost-effective manner, while paying special attention to the needs of minority and vulnerable social groups. In line with this objective, the strategic framework envisages several measures aimed at enhancing both the accessibility of services and the availability of information on service delivery, with clearly assigned institutional responsibilities.

To improve accessibility, the Strategy aims to develop user-oriented services through improved service development processes and the optimisation of existing services. The MPALSG and the PPS are primarily responsible for implementing these activities. Furthermore, strengthening human, technical, and technological capacities within the public administration is planned to support user-oriented services, with the Human Resource Management Service (HRMS) and the National Academy for Public Administration (NAPA) as institutions responsible for implementation. The Strategy also includes activities aimed at enhancing the system for service control and quality assurance, to ensure accessible, consistent, and reliable service delivery, with MPALSG identified as the lead institution in this area. In terms of enhancing the availability of service delivery information, the strategic framework envisages the establishment of a public services registry. This registry will be managed by the PPS, with technical support provided by the ITE Office, which already plays a key role in policymaking in this field, as well as in coordinating efforts related to the simplification and digitalisation of public administration services. Taken together, these measures demonstrate a structured and institutionalised approach to improving both the accessibility of public services and the

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26 European Commission, Serbia Report 2024, pp. 28. Available at: <https://tinyurl.com/bd3mncwy>.

27 SIGMA/OECD, Public Administration in Serbia 2024: Assessment against the Principles of Public Administration, pp. 99. Available at: <https://tinyurl.com/26pvjun3>.

28 Public administration reform strategy for the period from 2021 to 2030, Official Gazette no. 42/2021, 9/2022, available at: <https://bit.ly/3gh8HTI>.

transparency and availability of service-related information, aligned with the broader goals of the digital transformation.

As mentioned earlier, the legal framework in Serbia supports establishing one-stop shops to improve service delivery and inter-institutional cooperation, although their establishment remains voluntary. The Law on General Administrative Procedure<sup>29</sup> introduces the concept of one-stop shops as a mechanism to better meet the needs of service users and facilitate coordination among bodies involved in service provision. Further progress has been made with the adoption of the Decree on conditions, criteria and metrics for determining the one-stop shop and the manner of cooperation of relevant authorities in terms of conducting procedures within the one-stop shop<sup>30,31</sup>. Despite these efforts, the legal framework does not impose a mandatory obligation on authorities to establish one-stop shops, and it depends on the initiative and capacity of individual local self-governments.

On the other hand, there are currently no laws or bylaws in place that would stipulate that service providers keep key metrics on the use of services. While there is a regulatory requirement to publish some data related to service provision (Table 6), there is no obligation for service providers to systematically track or report on core performance metrics, essential for managing and improving service delivery. This aligns with the previously noted absence of a central institution in Serbia, which would be responsible for overseeing service delivery overall.

**Table 6: Regulation of collecting service delivery performance data**

Metrics on service volume	Metrics on processing time and services costs
<p>The Law on Free Access to Information of Public Importance<sup>31</sup> requires state bodies to publish information booklets that include a list of services they provide, procedures for accessing those services, and data on service provision for the current and previous year. This includes the number of requests received, services delivered (on time or late), measures taken by authorities, legal remedies applied, and their outcomes.</p>	<p>There is no legal obligation for service providers to systematically monitor or report on time required to process service requests or costs of obtaining a service for users. The collection of such data, if conducted at all, is generally determined by internal policies and practices of individual service providers rather than mandated by law.</p>

29 Law on General Administrative Procedure, Official Gazette no. 18/2016, 95/2018, 2/2023, available at: <https://tinyurl.com/46hrbm28>

30 Decree on detailed conditions, criteria, and measures for determining a single administrative place, as well as the manner of cooperation between competent authorities regarding the conduct and performance of tasks at a single administrative place, Official Gazette no. 93/2023, available at: <https://tinyurl.com/mtvxj39a>

31 Public call for applications to municipalities and cities within the project “Support for the establishment of a single administrative location”, available at: <https://tinyurl.com/4s3n5ek7>.

32 Law on Free Access to Information of Public Importance, Article 39, Official Gazette no. 120/2004, 54/2007, 104/2009, 36/2010 and 105/202, available at: <https://tinyurl.com/mwpxfbxz8>

Organisation of services around life events is not specifically regulated in Serbia either.<sup>33</sup> Life-event approach aims to improve user orientation by structuring services around key events in citizens' lives, such as birth, education, employment, or retirement. Although the Serbian eGovernment portal groups available services within a dedicated "Life Events" section, there is currently no legal or regulatory framework that formally defines or mandates this classification. The categorisation of services by life events remains a practical feature of the eGovernment platform, rather than a binding requirement grounded in legislation or policy documents.

On the other hand, existing legislation prescribes some accessibility measures for both physical and online accessibility, although certain aspects, such as free assistance and support targeted or vulnerable groups are not explicitly regulated in the context of service provision.

**Table 7: Legal framework for adapting services to vulnerable groups' needs**

Physical accessibility	Information availability in multiple formats
Law on the Prohibition of Discrimination, <sup>33</sup> guarantees equal access to public-use facilities, including buildings where public authorities are located.	The Law on Electronic Government requires all digital public services and websites to be accessible to persons with disabilities, without technical or communication barriers. This obligation is further detailed in a regulation mandating features like screen reader compatibility, text-to-speech tools, and accessible CAPTCHA systems.
Information availability in official languages	Free assistance for targeted population
Law on the Protection of Rights and Freedoms of National Minorities <sup>34</sup> guarantees the use of national minority languages in administrative procedures, in communication with public authorities, and in the issuance and recognition of public documents.	Provision of free assistance for targeted populations is not currently supported by specific regulatory obligations. While the NAPA offers training programs that include modules on working with persons with disabilities, these are not mandatory and are not systematically implemented. <sup>35</sup>

<sup>33</sup> eGovernment portal, available at: <https://euprava.gov.rs/>

<sup>34</sup> Law on the Prohibition of Discrimination, Article 17, Official Gazette no. 22/2009, and 52/2021, available at: <https://tinyurl.com/bdd9ddz7>

<sup>35</sup> Law on the Protection of Rights and Freedoms of National Minorities, Article 11, Official Gazette no. 72/2009, 97/2013, and 47/2018, available at: <https://tinyurl.com/37ppw472>

<sup>36</sup> Annual training programs of NAPA, available at: <https://tinyurl.com/2p9kj855>

When it comes to practical aspects of service accessibility measures and availability of service-related information, an analysis of a sample of services in Serbia showed service providers generally ensure that basic procedural information, such as service descriptions, instructions, and contact information are available on institutional websites and, sometimes, on the national eGovernment portal. Nevertheless, the scope and accessibility of online functionalities vary depending on the type of service, and the level of digital functionality is significantly different across services. For example, full online access to property registration is limited to specific professional users rather than the public.

*For property registration, RGA provides a detailed service description<sup>37</sup> and an option to schedule an appointment online for submitting a request in person<sup>38</sup>. While this reflects efforts to simplify access, the use of the eDesk- a fully digital channel - is restricted to specific professional categories such as notaries, courts, bailiffs, lawyers, and other authorised entities.<sup>39</sup> This limitation excludes individual citizens from using the full range of online functionalities. Nevertheless, users can contact the RGA through various channels, including a dedicated info centre and contact forms.<sup>40</sup> For business registration, the Business Registers Agency (BRA) offers a comprehensive online overview, including service descriptions, required documentation, and guidance on registration procedures.<sup>41</sup> Since 2023, company establishment requests can be submitted electronically via the BRA portal or in person through a one-stop shop.<sup>42</sup> Contact information for each office is also readily accessible online.<sup>43</sup> For services provided by the Ministry of Interior, including vehicle registration, passport issuance, and ID card issuance, key procedural information such as service descriptions, required documentation, and contact details for relevant offices is available online.<sup>44</sup> In addition, scheduling appointments via the eGovernment portal is possible, with location-specific details provided during the booking process. However, some digital features, such as initiating vehicle registration through the eGovernment portal, require additional equipment (e.g., card readers), which may limit accessibility for some users. Regarding tax-related services, the Tax Administration offers comprehensive*

37 See: <https://tinyurl.com/fx3uxum3>

38 See: <https://tinyurl.com/br5s3yru>

39 See: <https://tinyurl.com/3jun83k5>

40 See: RGA info centre <https://tinyurl.com/3wabebxu> , professional support <https://tinyurl.com/3a7pd59x>, contact form <https://tinyurl.com/4bj2j5vk>

41 See: <https://tinyurl.com/3ez6ujvb>

42 See: <https://tinyurl.com/3arxmejt> and <https://tinyurl.com/d3xcr4nm>

43 See: <https://tinyurl.com/28hufbem>

44 See: vehicle registration <https://tinyurl.com/4aka9uhp> , passport issuance <https://tinyurl.com/45ra6p33> , ID card issuance <https://tinyurl.com/5axpn99t>



*procedural information and documentation online.<sup>45</sup> VAT declarations can be submitted electronically through the eTax portal (ePorezi) using an electronic signature. Nonetheless, VAT payment cannot be completed through the portal, as it still relies on external banking services, indicating a gap in the full digitalisation of the service.*

When looking at the availability of multi-format and citizen-friendly guidance on accessing sampled services online, practice varies significantly across institutions and services (see Table 8 below). Consequently, information on sampled services is generally available in written, with examples of video presentation for property registration appointments, detailed booklets for VAT, or visual illustrations showing how biometric data is collected for passport and ID card issuance.<sup>46</sup> In addition, the eGovernment portal offers a “read to me” function for selected services, such as vehicle registration, passport issuance, and ID card issuance, enhancing accessibility for users with visual impairments or reading difficulties. However, the availability of information in alternative formats other than written remains uneven. On the other hand, the analysis reveals a consistent lack of open formats as no data on sampled services is available in a machine-readable format, on the open data portal or otherwise.

When it comes to information on prices, service providers offer fee details on sampled services with the exception of property registration. Likewise, service providers generally publish information on users’ obligations, primarily through listings of required documents and procedural prerequisites. The most detailed guidance is provided in the context of the VAT declaration<sup>47</sup>, which includes comprehensive brochures outlining legal obligations. For other services, users are informed about necessary documentation, and, in some cases, which data public authorities obtain ex officio. The property registration service notably lacks any section dedicated to user rights or obligations.

Similarly, sample service providers generally publish accessible contact information to support service provision. Most services offer multiple contact channels - such as phone numbers, email addresses, online forms, and in some cases, AI chatbots. The Business Registers Agency provides the most tailored support through its help desk and issue-specific contact emails.<sup>48</sup>

45 See: <https://tinyurl.com/2nksspn2> ; <https://tinyurl.com/3t3u34b4>;

46 See: passport issuance <https://tinyurl.com/mrddc4e4> ; ID card issuance <https://tinyurl.com/4zany5z6>

47 Booklets on applying the VAT law that lists instructions and obligations for those liable to pay the tax. Available at: <https://tinyurl.com/ybdt4c4>. There are also instructions on how to fill out the VAT form. Available at: <https://tinyurl.com/ydb3zy8a>.

48 See: <https://tinyurl.com/y8v8qyly>.



**Table 8: Online availability of essential information on sample services**

	SAMPLE						
	Property registration	Company registration	Vehicle registration	Passport issuance	ID card issuance	VAT declaration	VAT payment
Citizen friendly guidance	X <sup>49</sup>	✓	X <sup>50</sup>	X <sup>51</sup>	✓	✓	✓
Information in at least 2 formats	✓	X	X	✓	✓	✓	X
Information in the official language	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Information in an international language	X	✓	X	X	X	X <sup>52</sup>	X
Price/fees	X	✓ <sup>53</sup>	✓ <sup>54</sup>	✓	✓	✓ <sup>55</sup>	✓
Information on users' rights and obligations	X	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	X
Contacts	✓	✓	X	✓	✓	✓	✓

49 While procedural explanations and documentation lists are available, there are no step-by-step or user-friendly guides specifically tailored to the service.

50 Although the website provides extensive information across multiple sections, including detailed descriptions of different registration types and legal requirements, the format of the content is not adapted for the average citizen, making it difficult to navigate and use. See: <https://tinyurl.com/3axcd4j4>.

51 Online content is comprehensive and legally detailed; however, the language and presentation are not user-oriented, and the overall layout is more administrative than citizen-focused. See: <https://tinyurl.com/4v3pzetz>.

52 Certain information and forms are available in English, but only for non-resident users.

53 Detailed pricing is available, including a cost calculator within the application process and a dedicated section listing all fees. See: <https://tinyurl.com/yb483rrg>.

54 For vehicle registration, passport issuance, and ID card issuance, the MoI provides comprehensive lists of applicable fees on its website, and payments can be made using a standardised payment slip via the eGovernment portal. See: <https://bit.ly/30yZZty>.

55 The use of the service itself is free; however, users must cover the cost of the necessary electronic signature and technical equipment unless they opt for free authentication methods such as the eID account and ConsentID application.

Assessment of service provision practices also examined whether service providers train their staff on how to properly interact with and support vulnerable groups when delivering services. In this context, NAPA provides training on various topics related to vulnerable groups, such as the rights of national minorities, gender equality, prevention of human trafficking, protection of persons with disabilities, and the exercise of children's rights. In 2023, 188 civil servants attended these training programmes, while in 2024, the attendance was 167.<sup>56</sup> These training programmes broadly fit into the service delivery domain, as they focus on the interaction of administration bodies with citizens, particularly focusing on the targeted population.

Finally, in practice, all sample services can be obtained at the municipal level. All MoI services are accessible through local police stations, and similarly, all Tax Administration services are available at local offices, with the VAT declaration service fully accessible online. Similarly, property registration is carried out at local RGA offices. Finally, the BRA offers services at its central office, as well as through a number of local branches, but also provides its services online. This indicates that the territorial distribution of the sampled services is generally ensured, with most being available at the local level and, in some cases, supplemented by online access.

Conversation with key non-state actors showed that they generally consider service delivery to be accessible, although there is a diversity of opinions among them.<sup>57</sup> Respondents highlight that the practices vary significantly across different services and providers, making it difficult to generalise. While some services benefit from a wide territorial reach, others, like RGA services, remain largely inaccessible both online and offline. Also, they have pointed out that certain groups, particularly minorities, continue to face problems in access to institutions. The challenge of incomplete digitalisation of online services is also a significant issue in the opinion of interviewees, as many services still require offline steps, such as manual payments or physical document submission. Moreover, they have emphasised that varying levels of digital literacy among users further obstruct accessibility. They have pointed out that systemic improvements should aim to expand digital service offerings while simultaneously enhancing users' ability to navigate these platforms, where civil society and other non-state actors can play a significant role.

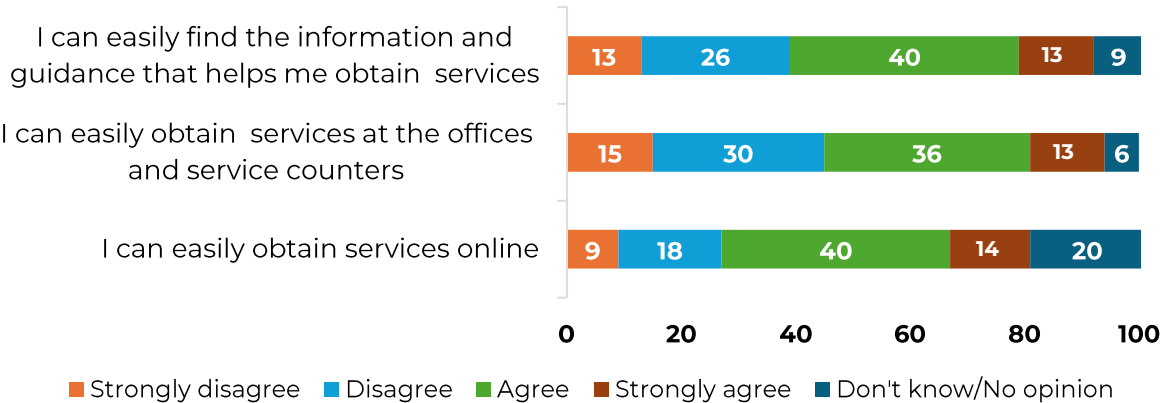
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<sup>56</sup> Information obtained through NAPA's response to the FoI request on 10.02.2025.

<sup>57</sup> Key informant interviews were held on the 12th and 13th of February. To the statement "The territorial network for accessing administrative services by all citizens is adequate", two key informants responded with "tend to agree", while the third responded with "fully agree". To the statement "The premises of service providers are physically accessible by all citizens", all key informants tend to agree. To the statement "Services offered online are easily accessible by all citizens", two key informants responded with "tend to disagree" and one with "tend to agree".

Finally, the public perception of the accessibility of services reveals a mixed outlook, with notable differences across various aspects of service delivery.<sup>58</sup> Regarding the accessibility of information necessary for obtaining services, the majority of citizens in Serbia agree or strongly agree that the information is accessible or very accessible (53%, see Chart 2 below). However, a sizeable portion (39%) still perceives challenges in accessing the required information, suggesting a communication and service transparency gap. In terms of in-person access to actual services, opinions are divided; nearly half of the respondents (45%) express disagreement, and the other half (49%) feels that physical access is easy. This highlights ongoing barriers in the physical delivery of services, particularly for those in more remote areas or with mobility challenges. When it comes to online access, the perception is slightly more favourable, with 54% of citizens agreeing or strongly agreeing that online services are accessible. However, the 27% who disagree and the 20% who either do not know or have no opinion indicate that digital accessibility remains a challenge. These insights point to the need for continuous observation and improvements in both in-person and digital service provision to ensure equal access for all.

**Chart 2: Share of citizens' responses per agreement scale (%)**

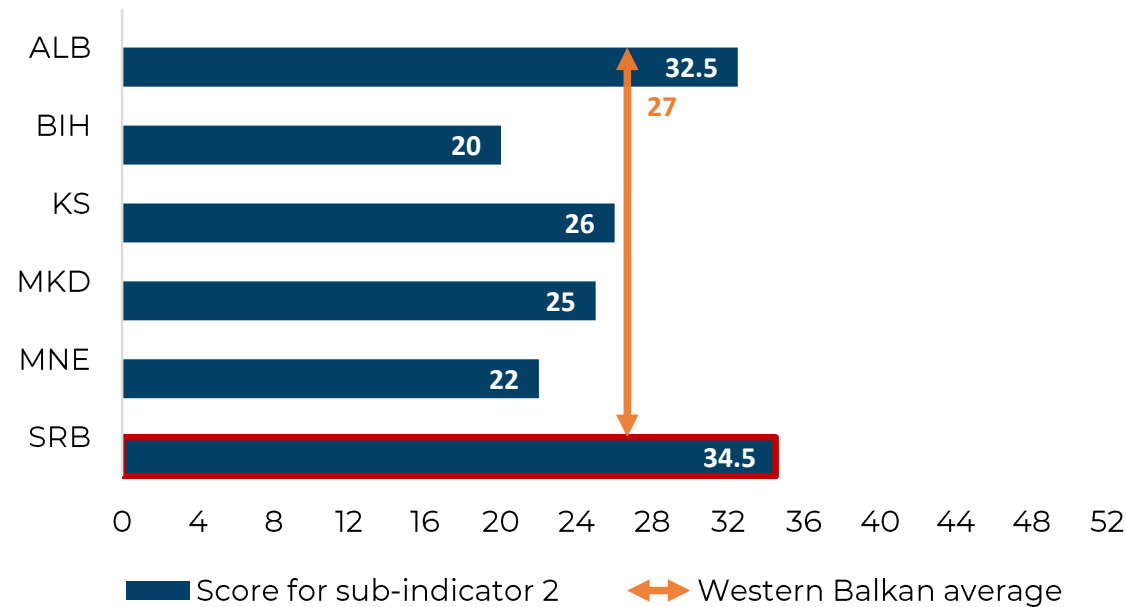


**Note:** All results are rounded to the nearest integer. Due to rounding, percentages may not always appear to add up to 100%. The base for these questions was N = 1006.

<sup>58</sup> Public perception survey in Serbia was conducted from the 15th of February until the 19th of February 2025. For more information on the sample and list of statements, please refer to the section Methodology Appendix.

HOW DOES SERBIA DO IN REGIONAL TERMS?

*Sub-indicator 2: Service accessibility and availability of information on services (maximum score 52.5)*



## II.3 Digitalisation of service delivery

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

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

### *Sub-indicator 3: Digitalisation of service delivery<sup>59</sup>*

Indicator elements	Element type	Score
E 3.1 There is a strategic document in force that envisages digitalisation of services	Strategy and policy	0.5/0.5
E 3.2 Regulations stipulate provision of digital services, digital signature and e-payment in digital service delivery	Legislation	1.5/1.5
E 3.3 Institutional responsibility for steering the digital service delivery at the central administration level is assigned	Institutional set-up	0/2
E 3.4 Online central platform for digital service delivery is established and user-oriented	Practice in implementation	4/4
E 3.5 Digital signature and digital payment are available to all users	Practice in implementation	2.25/4.5
E 3.6 Key non-state actors consider digital services as easy to use	Outcomes and impact	0/3
<b>Total score for sub-indicator 3</b>		<b>8.25/15.5</b>

*Readiness and maturity of digital government in Serbia have continued to progress, as confirmed by SIGMA and EC in their latest reports. Digital government foundations, including a new policy framework, are well established. Electronic service delivery is continuously improving as seen in the further development in key enablers, such as a cloud-based e-signature*

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

*system, user-friendly payment services, and digital identity systems, contributed to the further development of e-services. Furthermore, simplification and digitalisation of administrative procedures continued with the implementation of the e-Paper programme.*

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Serbia's PAR Strategy prioritises the digitalisation, focusing on user-orientation and improving the administration's capacity to deliver efficient services. This strategic commitment is also operationalised through key programmes like the e-Government Development Program 2023-2025 and the e-Paper. The strategic framework in force, envisaging the digitalisation of service delivery, is being implemented through a set of concrete measures and activities, with a clear institutional responsibility for each. These include optimisation of existing services, development of user-oriented digital services, strengthening the technical and human capacities of public administration, quality assurance mechanisms, promotion of the use of digital services, improving access to electronic signatures, and establishing guidelines for selecting procedures for digitalisation. However, there is no single body assigned to strategically steer digital service delivery policy, and responsible bodies in this domain often act independently.

In Serbia, regulations ensure the provision of digital services, electronic signatures, and e-payment systems for digital service delivery. The Law on Electronic Government guarantees the right to use e-government services, ensuring equal access to electronic data for all users, including people with disabilities.<sup>60</sup> It also establishes the conditions for creating electronic government services, including the storage of electronically signed documents in archives. Additionally, the Law on Electronic Documents, Electronic Identification, and Trust Services in Electronic Business<sup>61</sup> outlines the legal framework for electronic documents and signatures. It ensures that electronic documents have the same legal validity as paper documents, defines the process of creating these documents, and regulates the use of qualified certificates for electronic stamps and signatures. The eGovernment Portal also facilitates payment for e-government services, in compliance with laws governing payment services, further enhancing the accessibility and efficiency of digital service delivery in Serbia. Overall, regulations in Serbia create a strong foundation for the digitalisation.

However, at the central administration level, there is no single institution with exclusive responsibility for steering the digital service delivery, as is the case with the overall service delivery policy. Improvements in digital service delivery are often carried out independently by individual administrative bodies. Strategic planning and regulatory affairs in this area have been assigned to

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<sup>60</sup> Law on Electronic Government, articles 7 and 15.

<sup>61</sup> Law on Electronic Documents, Electronic Identification, and Trust Services in Electronic Business, articles 7, 8, and 36, Official Gazette no. 94/2017 and 52/2021. Available at: <https://tinyurl.com/2t7rt4vk>

the MPALSG. To further enhance coordination, the ITE Office was established in 2017, primarily to establish and maintain the necessary infrastructure for IT systems, data management and storage, and related services. In 2018, the Government Coordination Council for the Development of Electronic Government was formed to oversee the implementation of strategic actions related to digital services. Additionally, in 2019, the Coordination Body for Monitoring the “e-Paper” Programme was established to track progress in simplifying procedures, including digitalisation efforts, and improving the service quality. These multi-actor responsibilities, with no single institution exclusively assigned to steer digital service delivery can be seen as potentially limiting for the systemic impact of strategic efforts.

In practice, the eGovernment portal serves as the central online platform for digital service delivery in Serbia and is generally providing a secure and user-oriented experience. It has been designed to ensure transparency and security for users by clearly communicating the terms of use and privacy policies. The portal notifies users of updates to the privacy policy and requires users to acknowledge the terms before continuing the use. The privacy policy and terms of use are accessible, outlining the collected personal data, storage methods, retention periods, and security measures. The Personal Data Processing Notice explains how user data is processed in compliance with the Personal Data Protection Law. On the other hand, while the portal includes a beta version of a chatbot to assist users, it was not functional during the assessment. However, the platform provides other means of communication, such as a contact form and an accessibility feature, “read to me,” to support users with diverse needs. These features are designed to enhance user experience and digital access, which signals a commitment toward meeting the needs of a diverse range of citizens.

Digital signature and payment options are features of the eGovernment portal, but also of the other online service delivery platforms. For services like vehicle registration, passport, and ID card issuance, the MoI provides an option to pay fees through its online payment service at the eGovernment portal, streamlining the payment process.<sup>62</sup> When it comes to business registration, users can sign documents electronically from the BRA portal, by using programs like Adobe Acrobat Reader or the NEXU service, with a clear display of a fee before proceeding to payment.<sup>63</sup> Additionally, VAT declarations are handled through the eTax (*ePorezi*) portal, which offers free services for taxpayers. These digitalisation options provide greater convenience and accessibility for users seeking some of the sampled services online; however, property registration and VAT payment remain excluded from this trend.

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<sup>62</sup> While some services are not yet fully digitised, such as passport and ID card issuance, users can still book appointments online.

<sup>63</sup> See: <https://tinyurl.com/4728c8uz>.

**Table 9: Digital signature and payment availability**

	SAMPLE						
	Property registration	Company registration	Vehicle registration	Passport issuance	ID card issuance	VAT declaration	VAT payment
Digital signature	X	✓	X	X	X	✓	X
Digital payment	X	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	X

Finally, key non-state actors have varying opinions on the ease of use of digital services.<sup>64</sup> While one key informant fully agrees that these services are easy to use, another tends to agree, and the third tends to disagree. They highlighted that challenges faced by citizens in using digital services are primarily related to fragmented platforms, a lack of promotional campaigns, and insufficient user training. They have also emphasised that vulnerable groups, such as older adults, rural residents, and people with disabilities, face additional obstacles due to limited digital literacy and internet access. Moreover, the incomplete digitalisation of services, where offline steps like manual payments are still required, creates significant barriers. Additionally, in the opinion of interviewees, the lack of integration between different service providers complicates the process for users. However, some practices, such as “Baby, Welcome to the World<sup>65</sup>”, e-Kindergarten<sup>66</sup>, and e-Office (*e-Pisarnica*)<sup>67</sup>, were mentioned as examples of more accessible services. To improve the situation in the digital domain, respondents highlighted the need for more user-centred service design, better institutional coordination, and targeted support for vulnerable groups.

64 Key informant interviews were held on the 12th and 13th of February. To the statement “Digital services are easy to use by all citizens.”, one key informant responded with “fully agree”, a second one responded with “tend to agree,” and a third with “tend to disagree”.

65 Service makes it easier for parents of a newborn to register their baby in the birth registry, register for residence, apply for health insurance, and apply for parental allowance. The entire process allows for quick, simple, free, and easy registration right at the maternity hospital and eliminates any paperwork, based on the “one-stop” principle.

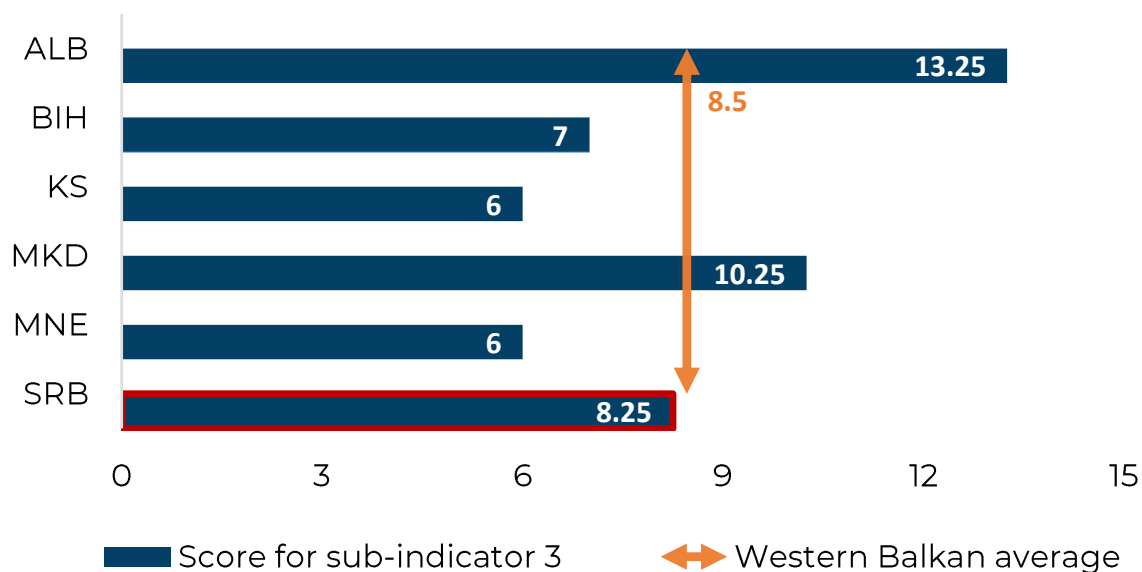
66 Submitting applications for enrolling children in preschool institutions eliminates all paperwork, based on the “everything in one place” principle.

67 A single service at the state level available to state bodies and local government units. Some of the roles of this centralized service are issuing a unique submission number and stamping documentary material with an electronic seal.



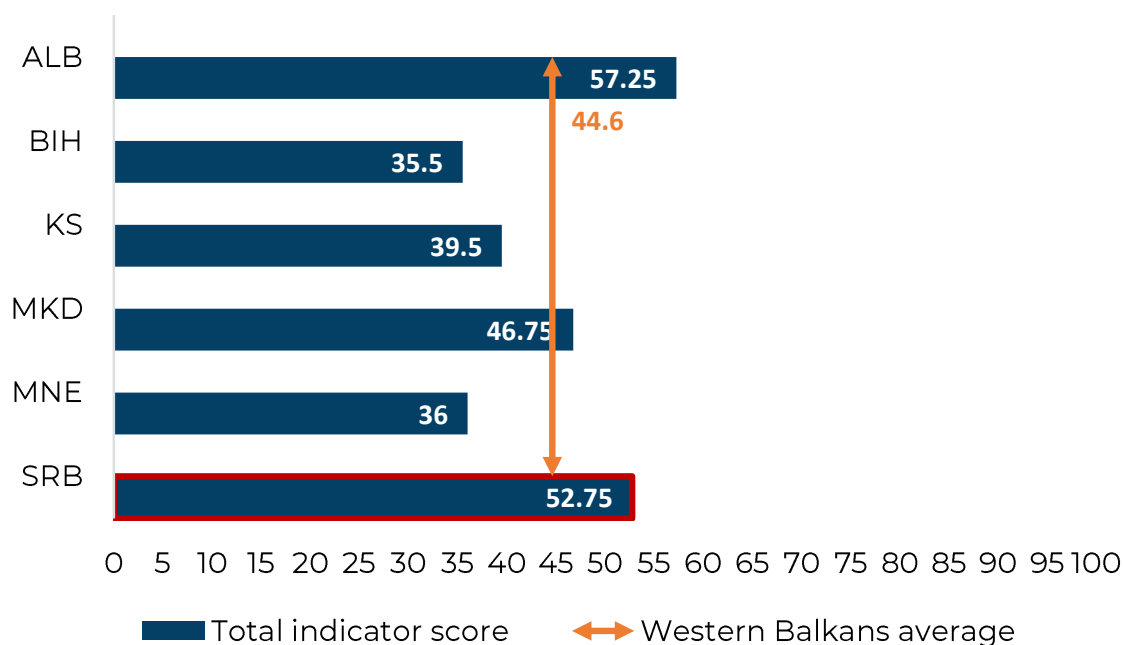
## HOW DOES SERBIA DO IN REGIONAL TERMS?

### Sub-indicator 3: Digitalisation of services (maximum score 15.5)



## OVERALL SCORES COMPARISON IN THE SERVICE DELIVERY AND DIGITALISATION

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



Regional overview report for Service Delivery and Digitalisation area,  
with results for all WB administrations is available at: [www.par-monitor.org](http://www.par-monitor.org)

## II.4 Recommendations for the Service Delivery and Digitalisation

### II.4.1 TRACKING RECOMMENDATIONS FROM PAR MONITOR 2021/2022

<i>Recommendations</i>	<i>Type (short term/medium term/long term)<sup>68</sup></i>	<i>Status</i>	<i>Explanation</i>
One-stop shops, existing ones or new ones, should also incorporate direct user feedback on the quality of the service.	Short term	Partially implemented	The Decree on conditions, criteria and metrics for determining the one-stop-shop, adopted in October 2023, incorporates the provisions on gathering user feedback. It is stated that the user satisfaction is continuously assessed through questionnaires available at the premises of the one-stop-shop, via online surveys, or through polls for citizens. <sup>69</sup> However, the feedback forms or data on gathered inputs and institutional responses were not publicly available.
Service providers' websites and the eGovernment portal should ensure feedback channels for users by default. Users should have an opportunity to elaborate on their experience, and what aspects they were satisfied or dissatisfied with, through more developed yet citizen-friendly options.	Short term	Partially implemented	Feedback channels were available on the websites of service providers for six out of seven sample services analysed in this monitoring cycle, with the exception of the company registration service, i.e., on the website of the BRA. Although the websites of Tax Administration, RGA and the eGovernment Portal contained feedback channels, this practice and the manner in which the channels are designed are not unified, while information on how the feedback is treated is scarce. <sup>70</sup>

<sup>68</sup> 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 which can be implemented in a period from one year up to three years. Long-term require more than three years to be implemented.

<sup>69</sup> Decree on conditions, criteria and metrics for determining the one-stop-shop, Article 7, Official Gazette no. 93/2023. Available at: <https://tinyurl.com/4vu74e37>

<sup>70</sup> For property registration - <https://tinyurl.com/yc79svcm>. For VAT declaration and payment - <https://tinyurl.com/bd9n9wtw>. For vehicle registration, passport and ID card issuance - <https://euprava.gov.rs/survey>.

Public administration service providers should proactively publish feedback results and data (either raw or processed and analysed) to the public, at least on an annual basis, and easily accessible through their websites. Public availability of feedback will in turn serve to increase the accountability for and transparency of service provision.	Short term	No action taken	Service-providers do not publish feedback results and data. The only notable exception to this practice was the example of services provided by the BRA, as information on incorporating citizens' feedback was available in their annual report for 2023, although feedback channels for their services were not available online. <sup>71</sup>
In addition to publishing feedback results, service providers should make it clear how this data was used for adjustments and for curbing or eliminating causes of dissatisfaction.	Short term	No action taken	Service-providers do not provide information on how the feedback was used in redesigning services or the procedures for their delivery. The only exception was the abovementioned example of services provided by the BRA, as information on incorporating citizens' feedback was available in their annual report for 2023.
Service providers should invite and encourage users to send improvement proposals themselves. Collected either online, or at the premises of service providers (or both), the results of these proposals need to be reported to the public to secure the credibility of such initiatives and maintain public trust in the service orientation of the government. The channels for submitting such proposals should be distinct from the general commenting/complaint sections of the websites.	Short term	Partially implemented	Feedback channels were available on the websites of service providers for six out of seven sample services analysed in this monitoring cycle, with the exception of the company registration service, i.e., on the website of the BRA, and are distinct from the general commenting and complaint sections (see recommendation two above). Moreover, according to the relevant Decree, feedback is also collected at one-stop-shops. However, service providers do not report to the public on the gathered inputs nor how they were treated and incorporated into service design and delivery.

<sup>71</sup> Available at: <https://tinyurl.com/4uvrrs7n>.

The decree regulating webpages of public authorities should prescribe an obligation to incorporate user feedback channels within the “Services” section of webpages and promote such channels on the homepage banners.	Short term	No action taken	The decree only prescribes the obligation for public administration bodies to provide information on what services they provide within this section, not the obligation to incorporate user feedback channels into this section.
NAPA training for employees who are in direct contact with service users (with a special focus on users with special needs) should be conducted to include all employees who communicate with service users.	Short term	Partially implemented	General training programme for civil servants does contain a training programme titled <i>Working and communication with service end-users</i> , which also focuses on work with vulnerable groups. However, the data obtained during this monitoring cycle showed that not all service-providing institutions ensure that their employees go through this training, or they do not keep track of their attendance. <sup>72</sup>
The government should develop and implement a general methodology for measuring the satisfaction of service users at a systemic level and in a standardised way, so that all institutions providing services, as well as the eGovernment Portal, establish and widely promote advanced feedback channels, easily accessible, and easy to use.	Medium term	No action taken	Although envisaged in the Action Plan for 2021-2025 for the implementation of the PAR Strategy, this activity was not completed, i.e., this methodology was not developed.

<sup>72</sup> The Ministry of Interior does not keep track of their employees' attendance to these trainings. The Business Registers Agency, Republic Geodetic Authority and the Tax Administration stated that their employees did not attend such training in the previous two years. This information was provided as a response to FOI requests sent to each of these institutions.

Based on the implementation of the methodologies for measuring the performance of service providers and satisfaction of users (foreseen by the PAR Action Plan 2021-2025), the Government should develop and publish an online performance dashboard on the overall public service provision in Serbia. The dashboard could include parameters such as service completion rates, digital take-up rates, and information on user satisfaction.	Medium term	No action taken	The online performance dashboard was not developed during this monitoring cycle.
The government should adopt and apply clear criteria for the establishment of one-stop shops, paying particular attention to accessibility standards in their functioning.	Short term	Implemented	The abovementioned Decree on conditions, criteria and metrics for determining the one-stop-shop defines specific criteria for the establishment of one-stop-shops, while also defining accessibility standards that each one-stop-shop should adhere to. <sup>73</sup>
The Office for IT and eGovernment should proactively seek user feedback on the redesigned portal, and report on the results of such feedback and actions taken based on it.	Short term	Partially implemented	The Office for IT and eGovernment has established a feedback channel on the eGovernment Portal, which is available from the home page, and which contains questions on the user satisfaction with the Portal. <sup>74</sup> However, no data is available on how the feedback has been treated.

<sup>73</sup> Decree on conditions, criteria and metrics for determining the one-stop-shop, Article 4.

<sup>74</sup> Available at: <https://euprava.gov.rs/survey>.

For a better user experience, the eGovernment Portal should include more visual guidance through specific services and maps of the entire user journey through the service.	Short term	Partially implemented	The eGovernment Portal does contain visual guidance that maps each step needed for obtaining a service or a functionality of the Portal <sup>75</sup> or offering video instructions, which also show how to obtain a service step by step. <sup>76</sup> However, these tools are not available for every service on the Portal, and are lacking for major services such as ID card issuance and vehicle registration.
The Office for IT and eGovernment should fulfil the requirement stipulated in Article 13 paragraph 3 of the Decree regulating the development and maintenance of websites of public authorities and regularly publish the report on the compliance of public authorities with the decree.	Short term	No action taken	The reports on the compliance of public authorities with the Decree regulating the development and maintenance of websites of public authorities are not available on the website of the Office.
The Government should develop a rulebook on using plain language in written and verbal communication with users of public services, with clear rules on clarity, simplicity, and user-friendly content.	Medium term	No action taken	Such rulebook was not adopted during this monitoring cycle.

<sup>75</sup> Available at: <https://tinyurl.com/mrba64eh> and <https://tinyurl.com/yc6etvkz>.

<sup>76</sup> Available at: <https://tinyurl.com/5e2rc85p>

## **II.4.2 RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE 2024/2025 PAR MONITOR REPORT**

Below are listed the recommendations from the monitoring cycle 2024/2025 for the Service Delivery and Digitalisation area. The recommendations are grouped into three types, according to the estimated time needed for their implementation. 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 which can be implemented in a period from one year up to three years. Long-term recommendations require more than three years to be implemented.

### ***Short-term recommendations***

- The fragmentation of responsibilities among institutions in the area of service design and delivery, as well as the lack of a centralised coordination system, lead to shortcomings and uneven standards in service design and provision. The MPALSG and the Public Policy Secretariat should, as the main policymakers in the area, initiate the process of developing a legal framework to regulate institutional responsibilities and procedures for monitoring, control, and quality assurance of the overall service delivery system.
- None of the observed service providers publish data on services under their jurisdiction on the open data portal. Besides publishing data in open and machine-readable formats, service providers should also be tasked with ensuring the regular updating and technical accuracy of the datasets. The ITE Office should provide methodological guidance, offer technical support, and verify the compliance and quality of uploaded datasets.

### ***Medium-term recommendations***

- The lack of data on how users are involved in the design of services indicates a lack of standardised and systematic use of feedback mechanisms, reporting and following up on the received inputs. The MPALSG should initiate the introduction of legal provisions that mandate systematic involvement of end users in the (re)design of public services, including obligations to collect, analyse, and publish data on user participation.
- In addition to the legal framework, the MPALSG should develop a set of comprehensive guiding documents which would provide for further standardisation of service delivery and unify the processes among different service-providing institutions. The set of documents should include, at least:

- o a methodology for the development of new or optimisation of existing services based on systematic involvement of end users,
  - o a methodology for measuring the performance of service delivery,
  - o a methodology for measuring end-user satisfaction with public administration services (both electronic and traditional), and
  - o guidelines for standardised reporting and publication of collected information on end-user satisfaction.
- Although a high number of civil servants attend trainings related to interaction with vulnerable groups, these trainings are not mandatory for civil servants dealing specifically with service delivery. The government should make training on assisting different vulnerable groups mandatory for all such civil servants and ensure that it is delivered regularly and with measurable outcomes. To achieve this, NAPA should also cooperate with organisations representing persons with disabilities, and other vulnerable groups, to ensure the relevance and quality of the content.

### ***Long-term recommendations***

- Service providers often fail to provide citizen-friendly, online information and guidance on obtaining services. To ensure a consistent and user-friendly experience across all digital platforms, MPALSG and ITE Office should develop and enforce a unified standard for presenting citizen guidance online, in a simplified and accessible way. This includes the use of plain language, infographics, video tutorials, step-by-step guides, and other tools that should help users easily understand how to access and use public services. These standards should be binding for all institutions providing services through digital channels.
- Service providers often do not provide information in multiple formats that enable greater accessibility and understanding to users. All information on services should be made available in multiple formats to meet diverse user needs. This includes, at a minimum, written, audio/visual, and Braille formats, and should be applied consistently across all digital platforms and official websites. MPALSG should produce guidelines and minimum accessibility standards to ensure compliance and inclusivity.



## METHODOLOGY APPENDIX

For producing this report for Serbia, 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 10: FOI requests sent in Serbia**

Institution	Date of request	Date of reply to the request
Ministry of Public Administration and Local Self-Government	22.1.2025.	12.2.2025.
Office for IT and eGovernment	22.1.2025.	no reply
Ministry of Interior	22.1.2025. 22.1.2025.	31.1.2025. 3.2.2025.
Republic Geodetic Authority	22.1.2025. 22.1.2025.	6.2.2025. 6.2.2025.
Business Register Agency	22.1.2025. 22.1.2025.	3.2.2025. 4.2.2025.
Tax Administration	22.1.2025. 22.1.2025.	4.2.2025. 5.2.2025.
National Academy for Public Administration	4.2.2025.	10.2.2025.
Human Resource Management Service	4.2.2025.	5.2.2025.

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 11: Interviews conducted in Serbia**

Date	Interviewees
12.2.2025.	Key informant 1, non-state actor Key informant 2, non-state actor
13.2.2025.	Key informant 3, non-state actor

### List of interview questions

- **Element 1.10**
  1. To what extent do you agree with the following statement: **Service design and service delivery are citizen centric.**
    - a) fully disagree
    - b) tend to disagree
    - c) tend to agree
    - d) fully agree
  2. To what extent do you agree with the following statement: **Channels for citizen feedback are available.**
    - a) fully disagree
    - b) tend to disagree
    - c) tend to agree
    - d) fully agree

3. To what extent do you agree with the following statement: **Citizens' feedback is used to improve service delivery.**
- a) fully disagree
  - b) tend to disagree
  - c) tend to agree
  - d) fully agree

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

- 1. What are the main barriers to achieving citizen-centric service design and delivery in your experience?
- 2. Can you share examples of good practices in citizen-centric service delivery?
- 3. What feedback channels do you perceive most effective for citizens to communicate their needs and experiences?
- 4. Are these feedback mechanisms widely accessible to all population groups (e.g., vulnerable or marginalized groups)?
- 5. How do you think citizen feedback is processed and acted upon by service providers?
- 6. Can you provide examples where citizen feedback led to visible improvements in service delivery?
- 7. In your opinion, what systemic changes are needed to strengthen the citizen-centric approach in service design and delivery?
- 8. How can non-state actors contribute to ensuring that citizen feedback is integrated into service improvement processes?

• **Element 2.17**

1. To what extent do you agree with the following statement: **The territorial network for accessing administrative services by all citizens is adequate.**
- a) fully disagree
  - b) tend to disagree
  - c) tend to agree
  - d) fully agree

2. To what extent do you agree with the following statement: **The premises of service providers are physically accessible by all citizens.**
  - a) fully disagree
  - b) tend to disagree
  - c) tend to agree
  - d) fully agree
3. To what extent do you agree with the following statement: **Services offered online are easily accessible by all citizens.**
  - a) fully disagree
  - b) tend to disagree
  - c) tend to agree
  - d) fully agree

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

1. What challenges exist in ensuring an adequate territorial network for administrative service access?
2. Are there areas or groups particularly underserved by the current network?
3. Are there specific barriers to physical access in service provider premises (e.g., infrastructure, location)?
4. Can you identify good practices in improving physical accessibility?
5. What are the primary barriers citizens face when accessing online services?
6. How can service providers improve the accessibility and usability of online platforms?
7. In your opinion, what systemic improvements are needed to ensure that all citizens have equitable access to administrative services?
8. How can civil society and other non-state actors support better accessibility?

- **Element 3.6**

1. To what extent do you agree with the following statement: **Digital services are easy to use by all citizens.**
  - a) fully disagree
  - b) tend to disagree
  - c) tend to agree
  - d) fully agree

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

1. What are the most significant challenges citizens face when using digital services?
2. Are there specific population groups (e.g., older adults, rural residents, individuals with disabilities) for whom digital services are less accessible?
3. What features or support mechanisms could make digital services more user-friendly for all citizens?
4. Can you provide examples of good practices or successful digital service implementations?
5. How (can) service providers ensure that digital services are accessible to citizens without reliable internet or digital literacy skills?

The public perception survey is based on a questionnaire targeting the general public (18+ permanent residents) of Serbia. The survey was conducted through computer-assisted telephone interviewing (CATI) in combination with computer-assisted web interviewing (CAWI). The survey was conducted between the 15<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> of February 2025. The margin of error for the sample of 1006 citizens is  $\pm 3,52\%$ , at the 95% confidence level.

**Table 12: public perception survey questions in the area of Service Delivery and Digitalisation<sup>77</sup>**

<b>Statement 8</b>					
<p>In the past two years, have you interacted with the administration in Serbia 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.)</p> <p>a. Yes b. No</p>					
<b>Statement 9</b>	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	<i>Don't know/No opinion</i>
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
<b>Statement 10</b>	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	<i>Don't know/No opinion</i>
Public administration should use citizens' experience to improve public administration services.	1	2	3	4	99
<b>Statement 11</b>	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	<i>Don't know/No opinion</i>
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
<b>Statement 12</b>	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	<i>Don't know/No opinion</i>
I can easily find the information and guidance that helps me obtain public administration services.	1	2	3	4	99

<sup>77</sup> The following statements from this section were not used to allocate points within the methodology for the Service Delivery and Digitalisation area: statement 8, statement 10, statement 15, statement 16 and statement 19.

<b>Statement 13</b>	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	<i>Don't know/No opinion</i>
I can easily obtain public administration services at the offices and service counters of the relevant authorities.	1	2	3	4	99
<b>Statement 14</b>	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	<i>Don't know/No opinion</i>
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
<b>Statement 15</b>					
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.					
<b>Statement 16</b>					
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					
<b>Statement 17</b>	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	<i>Don't know/No opinion</i>
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
<b>Statement 18</b>	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	<i>Don't know/No opinion</i>
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

<b>Statement 19</b>	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	<i>Don't know/No opinion</i>
In the past two years, citizens or civil society have been involved in the monitoring of public administration services.	1	2	3	4	99



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