

Western Balkan PAR Monitor:

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.

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.



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

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More information about the WeBER 3.0 project, the WeBER Advisory Council, members of the WeBER Platform and the project's partners can be found at www.par-monitor.org

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The assessment of transparency and citizen centricity of service design and delivery focuses on three critical aspects – 1) citizen-centric service design and delivery, 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 particularly to persons with disabilities and other vulnerable and marginalised groups. Finally, the last aspect examines progress in service digitalisation, highlighting the practice of establishing user-oriented digital platforms and enablers for the citizens (such as ePayment, eSignature, etc.). Findings of this report reflect the period since the publication of the PAR Monitor 2021/2022, i.e. between the second half of 2022 and the end of 2024.²

All WB administrations have established strategic frameworks that set out reform goals in the service delivery and digitalisation area, with measures and activities that reflect an intent to transition towards citizen-centric service design and delivery. Key priorities include end-user involvement in service design, improved user interfaces, digitalisation of services, quality control, and a focus on increased accessibility and omnichannel delivery. However, a significant implementation gap persists, as most administrations lack a solid legal basis to operationalise these reform ambitions, particularly regarding citizen involvement in service (re)design. There are no legal obligations to include citizens in design processes or to collect and publish data on their participation. Although regulations that enable citizen-centric service delivery are more widely present, significant gaps are still noted. Institutional responsibilities also remain fragmented, although Albania, BIH and North Macedonia have designated respective central authorities to coordinate and steer improvements in the area. The absence of such a designated institution in other administrations undermines the creation of unified approaches to performance management, measurement of user satisfaction, and overall service standardisation and coordination.

The lack of coordination and solid legal bases for citizen-centric service design has notable implications in practice, as research has revealed that data on user

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

involvement in service design is mostly missing, across all analysed services.³ While feedback mechanisms for service delivery exist in some administrations, practices remain inconsistent, with little evidence that collected feedback is systematically used to improve services. Moreover, the once-only principle is inconsistently applied, even in administrations where it is legally mandated. Finally, neither the key non-state actors nor the citizens of the Western Balkans recognise the impact of reform measures. Key non-state actors across the region expressed negative stances on the citizen-centricity of service design and delivery, while highlighting the crucial role of non-state actors in nudging institutions towards this objective. Public perception survey data confirm that citizens of the Western Balkans feel largely excluded from shaping public services, as an average of 54% do not believe they can influence service development – with particularly low scores in Montenegro and Serbia. Perceptions are more favourable regarding the ability to provide feedback on the quality of services received, with an average of 53% of respondents across the region expressing agreement. Moreover, while the public is largely aware of the existence and benefits of the once-only principle, practical experience diverges sharply. A large majority of citizens - 67% - report having to resubmit documents already held by the state, underscoring the gap between formal commitments and administrative practice.

Furthermore, the Western Balkan administrations have all embedded measures for enhancing accessibility of services into their PAR strategic frameworks, with clearly defined institutional responsibilities for such actions and emphasis on improving user experience. Also, most administrations regulate basic principles for accessing administrative services. Yet critical gaps persist in regulating certain accessibility-enhancing provisions, such as legal mandates for life-event-based service delivery or assistance for vulnerable groups. Physical access to services is mostly regulated in the region. However, communication about service delivery through multiple channels remains underdeveloped, with North Macedonia showing the weakest performance. Similarly, legal obligations for collecting performance metrics (e.g. service volume, cost, processing time) are limited, which hinders transparency and evidence-based improvements in service delivery.

In practice, core information related to service delivery – such as procedural steps, required documents, contact details, fees, and users' rights – is generally available online across the region for the analysed sample of services. Nevertheless, there are significant disparities among the countries' practices. Albania stands out for systematically publishing comprehensive service-related information, while Bosnia and Herzegovina (BIH) and Montenegro reveal the most pronounced

³ For the 'Practice' type of elements, the sample includes the same seven administrative services in all countries: property registration, company (business) registration, vehicle registration, passport issuance, ID card issuance, VAT declaration and VAT payment.

information gaps. Except for North Macedonia,⁴ all administrations offer their services in all official languages. However, services are rarely available in an international language, with Albania and Kosovo standing out as exceptions by offering most of the analysed services in English. Furthermore, service information is predominantly presented in written format. While some sample service providers in Montenegro, Serbia, and North Macedonia routinely offer alternatives such as audio or video materials, the region still relies heavily on basic presentation methods that are not adapted to a broader range of users. Finally, most information about services is still provided in non-machine-readable formats, despite some good practices found in Albania and Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Physical accessibility and territorial coverage of services are broadly adequate. Sampled service providers are mostly present at the local (municipal) level, although some exceptions exist – such as business registration services, which in certain cases are only accessible centrally or online. Training of staff to address the needs of vulnerable groups during service delivery is not yet consistently institutionalised across the region. However, Albania and Serbia stand out, having recently implemented training programmes for civil servants focused on non-discrimination and the rights of persons with disabilities. Finally, feedback from interviews with key non-state actors and from the public opinion poll presents a fragmented picture of accessibility in practice. While a majority of citizens agree that service information and services are accessible—with 56% stating that information and guidance are easy to find, and 57/58% affirming the accessibility of in-person and online services—sizable segments of the population still report encountering barriers, particularly in digital environments, highlighting the ongoing need for targeted improvements.

Finally, all six Western Balkan administrations have adopted strategic and legal frameworks that prioritise digitalisation of public services, aiming to create more accessible, user-friendly, and efficient public administrations. Moreover, all administrations, apart from BIH, have established centralised service delivery portals to facilitate online access to services. At the time of monitoring, a new Montenegrin e-services portal was still under development. Albania and Kosovo operate platforms with interactive features and robust personal data protection mechanisms, a standard also met by the Serbian and North Macedonian portals, which provide clear and easily accessible data protection policies. However, the platforms in Serbia and North Macedonia are somewhat less centralised in practice. While they do offer a central access point, many services are still hosted on separate platforms, redirecting users via banners or external links. Legal frameworks regulating digital services, e-signatures, and e-payments are in place across the region, but their practical

⁴ Macedonian and Albanian are the official languages of the Republic of North Macedonia.

application is uneven. Most administrations have introduced e-signature and e-payment systems that are functional for at least part of the analysed service sample. However, specific technical and procedural barriers continue to limit their use. These inconsistencies reveal the gap between legal provisions and the practical delivery of digital services, highlighting the need for improved implementation and coordination.

Despite the observed areas of progress, digital exclusion remains a concern throughout the region. The interviewed key non-state actors emphasise that vulnerable groups often face difficulties accessing digital services due to limited digital literacy, insufficient infrastructure, and fragmented service delivery. To address this, they stress the importance of inclusive service design, strengthened institutional coordination, and targeted support measures. They highlight that, while digitalisation is advancing, its benefits must be distributed more equitably to ensure all citizens can fully access and make use of digital public services.

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

AI	Artificial intelligence
ALB	Albania
BIH	Bosnia and Herzegovina
CSO	civil society organisation
FOI	Freedom of Information
KS	Kosovo
MKD	North Macedonia
MNE	Montenegro
Mol	Ministry of Interior
MPALSG	Ministry of Public Administration and Local Self-Government
PAR	Public Administration Reform
ReSPA	Regional School of Public Administration
SIGMA	Support for Improvement in Governance and Management
SRB	Serbia
VAT	Value Added Tax
WB	Western Balkan
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*⁵ 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.⁶

⁵ Available at: <https://www.sigmaweb.org/publications/principlesofpublicadministration.htm>.

⁶ 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 (i.e. specific criteria assessed). • Introduction of types of sub-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. • More systematic 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 public service delivery.

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

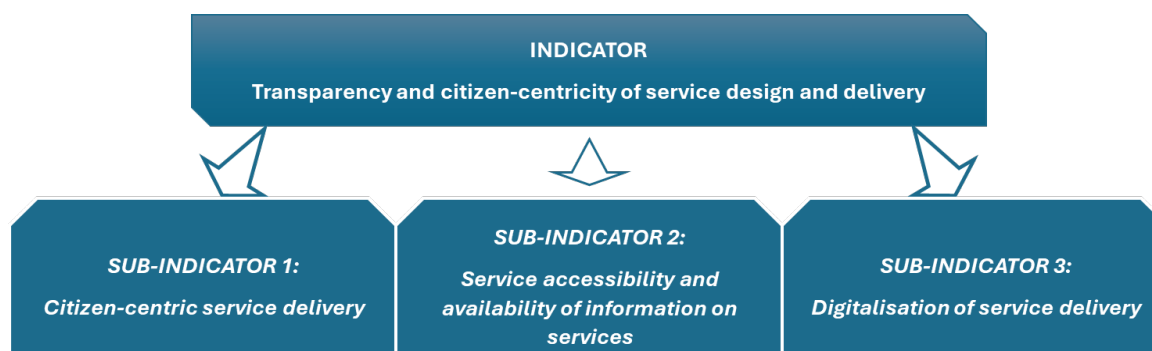
Principle 19: Users are at the centre in design and delivery of administrative services.

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

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

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

These Principles are assessed through the lens of public involvement in service design and delivery, as well as the outward-facing functions of the administration that shape daily interactions with citizens—such as accessibility of service information and services themselves. The focus on transparency and citizen-centricity seeks to determine the extent to which stakeholders' needs and views are consulted and taken into account in the development and provision of administrative services, both online and in person.



The monitoring period for the Service Delivery and Digitalisation covers developments since the last PAR Monitor cycle, i.e. post-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.⁷ 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-indicator⁸ 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.

⁷ Unless specified otherwise in the methodology of individual elements.

⁸ 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.

Monitoring of strategy and policy, legislation and practice aspects is performed by combining various data sources to maximise reliability of results. It includes 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/or experience participating in the analysed processes. For the same purposes, researchers also use results of the public perception survey conducted within the scope of the assessment.

Table 2 lists indicator elements that are assessed under the first sub-indicator.

Table 2: Indicator elements under 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-indicator⁹ 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 three key aspects: the extent to which service providers consider the needs of vulnerable and minority groups in service delivery; 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 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, as in the first sub-indicator, researchers conduct key informants' interviews and use public perception survey results.

Table 3 lists indicator elements assessed under the second sub-indicator

⁹ 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.

.Table 3: Indicator elements under 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-indicator¹⁰ examines the provision of services in electronic format and the broader process of service digitalisation. The assessment centres on the strategic framework supporting a smooth and stable digitalisation process; the legislative framework regulating 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 for accessing e-services.

Monitoring relies on the review of institutional websites and official documents related to electronic service design and delivery, supplemented by data obtained through FOI requests from the responsible institutions. For the assessment of outcomes and impact, as with the previous sub-indicators, researchers conduct key informants' interviews.

Table 4 lists the elements assessed under the third sub-indicator.

¹⁰ 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.

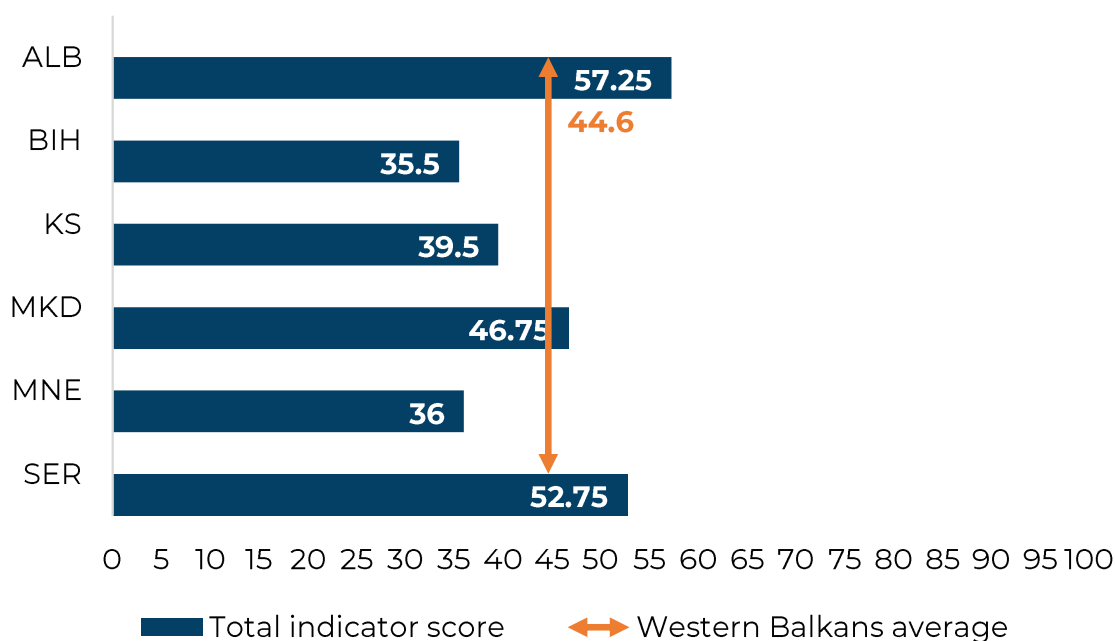
Table 4: Indicator elements under the sub-indicator 3

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. SERVICE DELIVERY AND DIGITALISATION: Comparative Western Balkan findings

This section presents the assessment results for Western Balkan administrations. Each sub-section presents the results for one sub-indicator (three in total), beginning with a brief overview of developments since the PAR Monitor 2021/2022. This is followed by a detailed assessment of the sub-indicator elements, starting with the policy, legislative, and institutional framework, then moving to the practice in implementation, and finally outcomes and impact. Each sub-indicator assessment concludes with the presentation of awarded points.

The graph below displays the overall results for the Service Delivery and Digitalisation area, measured on a scale from 0 to 100 points.



National reports for the Service Delivery and Digitalisation area for all WB administrations are available at : www.par-monitor.org

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

While most Western Balkan administrations have developed strategic and legal frameworks for service design and delivery, there is a widespread gap between planning and execution. Moreover, results from the latest SIGMA assessment, published in 2024, pointed to a general lack of systematic use of performance data and citizen feedback to inform improvements in the area. In the previous period, the quality of many services in Albania has increased due to digitalisation and a push towards simplification, but with notable implementation problems. On the other hand, little progress has been made in BIH due to a lack of policy leadership, which hampers coordinated efforts. As for Kosovo, although the Government focuses on promoting services online, citizens still rely on over-the-counter services, and central guidelines for involving users in service design have not been set up. In North Macedonia, SIGMA noted that the implementation of reforms has been slow, with no evidence of comprehensive collection of performance data and improvement actions based on user insight, while quality of service delivery remains weak. The overall quality of public service delivery in Montenegro has not improved in recent years. The implementation of strategic measures has not yet brought tangible benefits and user-centricity is limited to few examples. Finally, an increase in the overall quality of public administration services in Serbia was noted. However, SIGMA points out that the authorities do not rely systematically on performance information when selecting or prioritising improvement areas.¹¹

PAR strategic frameworks in all Western Balkan (WB) administrations set the reform course in the area of service delivery, with clearly defined measures and activities devoted both to citizen-centric service design and delivery. They are articulated in the overarching PAR documents in each administration, but can also be found in other planning documents, such as strategies and programmes devoted to electronic governance and digital transformation. The most common actions envisaged to support citizen-centric service

¹¹ SIGMA country reports on the Assessment against the Principles of Public Administration for all WB countries, along with an overview WB report, are available at: <https://tinyurl.com/3uwz5dh7>

design include end-user involvement in service development, improvement of user interfaces, and the establishment of quality control and management mechanisms. Similarly, the most common actions to support citizen-centric service delivery entail digitalisation of services, enhancement of accessibility, development of omnichannel service delivery and overall improvement of user-friendliness. The inclusion of clear activities in planning documents aimed at shaping services around the actual needs and experiences of end users – rather than institutional preferences or traditional procedures – demonstrates a clear commitment to building more responsive and inclusive administrations.

However, the none of the WB countries' legislative frameworks contain provisions that explicitly require citizen participation in service design or mandate alignment of services with user preferences. Moreover, no legal provisions require tracking or publishing metrics on user participation in this process, indicating that strategic commitments have yet to translate into enforceable obligations. In contrast, legal provisions for citizen-centric service delivery are more developed, as regulations in all six administrations contain relevant requirements. The most common elements in these provisions are the once-only principle¹² and one-stop shops¹³, indicating a primary focus on simplifying access to services and reducing administrative burden. While these findings point to some positive developments, the absence of regulations regarding citizen-centric service design across the region highlight the need for translating strategic measures for end-user involvement into legal requirements for public administration bodies.

The lack of a clearly mandated central institution to steer service delivery reform in half of the WB administrations poses significant risks to achieving tangible progress. Such responsibility is currently assigned only in Albania, BIH, and North Macedonia. In the remaining administrations, this institutional gap can lead to shortcomings in service design and delivery quality, inconsistent application of accessibility standards, and limited availability of relevant information. More broadly, it undermines the initiative needed to drive improvements, adopt best practices, and respond to evolving user needs and contextual changes.

The previously noted absence of legal provisions requiring the collection and publication of data on citizen involvement in service (re)design is mirrored in practice, as no such data was available for any of the sample services analysed in WB. This not only reinforces the need for a legal basis but also points to a limited participatory culture as well as a general lack of initiative among service providers to adopt user-centred approaches in the absence of legal obligations.

12 This principle implies that citizens should only need to provide their data and documents once, through the use of registers and interoperable data exchange between public sector organisations.

13 One-stop shops, also known as single administrative points, represent designated places for obtaining services in both physical and electronic format and serve as a point where citizens can obtain multiple different services, with the intent to save them time, effort and material resources.

Findings are comparatively more favourable regarding the collection and publication of user feedback on services. However, practices remain inconsistent within individual administrations and often depend on the specific service provider. The analysis of the availability of feedback channels, publication of basic and advanced feedback data¹⁴ and reporting on how feedback is used reveals some encouraging – albeit scattered – examples. In particular, neither feedback mechanisms nor even basic data on collected feedback were identified for the sampled services in BIH and Kosovo, while the remaining four administrations exhibited highly uneven practices (see Table 5 below). Where information on user feedback was available online, it consisted exclusively of basic data from a single source. Advanced feedback information – i.e. drawn from multiple sources and disaggregated by criteria such as gender or disability – was not identified in any case. Finally, evidence of utilisation of user feedback in service (re)design is rare and was identified only in isolated cases in Kosovo, North Macedonia and Serbia. In sum, even among the region's service delivery frontrunners, such as Serbia and Albania, practices for systematically measuring, publishing, and using user feedback remain weak, underscoring that no WB administration has yet established a consistent, user-centred approach to service improvement.

Table 5: availability of information on user feedback on service delivery

		SAMPLE						
		Property registration	Company registration	Vehicle registration	Passport issuance	ID issuance	VAT declaration	VAT payment
ALB	Channels for collecting users' feedback	✓	✓	X	✓	✓	X	X
	Basic information/data on users' feedback	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
	Advanced information/data on users' feedback	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
	Evidence on incorporation of citizens' feedback	X	X	X	X	X	X	X

¹⁴ 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:

- Citizens' feedback includes information from at least two different credible sources,
- Data is segregated based on gender, disability or other relevant criteria (ethnicity in countries where this is relevant, region, urban vs. rural, etc.).

BIH	Channels for collecting users' feedback	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
	Basic information/ data on users' feedback	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
	Advanced information/ data on users' feedback	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
	Evidence on incorporation of citizens' feedback	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
KS	Channels for collecting users' feedback	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
	Basic information/ data on users' feedback	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
	Advanced information/ data on users' feedback	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
	Evidence on incorporation of citizens' feedback	X	X	X	X	X	√ ¹⁵	√
MKD	Channels for collecting users' feedback	X	√	√	√	√	√	√
	Basic information/ data on users' feedback	√	X	√	√	√	X	X
	Advanced information/ data on users' feedback	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
	Evidence on incorporation of citizens' feedback	√	√	X	X	X	X	X

¹⁵ Although research showed some reports with evidence on the incorporation of citizens' feedback into service delivery were available, these reports were available only for the years 2015 and 2017. Although taken into consideration, it should be noted that such reports were not available for more recent periods.

MNE	Channels for collecting users' feedback	X	✓	X	X	X	✓	✓
	Basic information/data on users' feedback	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
	Advanced information/data on users' feedback	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
	Evidence on incorporation of citizens' feedback	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
SRB	Channels for collecting users' feedback	✓	X	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Basic information/data on users' feedback	X	✓	✓	✓	✓	X	X
	Advanced information/data on users' feedback	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
	Evidence on incorporation of citizens' feedback	X	✓	X	X	X	X	X

Finally, regarding the application of the once-only principle, the results did show a high rate of implementation across WB, apart from BIH and Kosovo. Nonetheless, the implementation within the administrations remains uneven, as none of the administrations apply the principle for all observed services (see Table 6 below). In most cases where the principle is not applied, it is due to a lack of interoperability of different databases managed by the public authorities. However, a particular issue was observed in Serbia, where the property registration service is no longer directly accessible to citizens and must instead be obtained through lawyers or geodetic organisations acting as their representatives via the eDesk (*eŠalter*) service. Hence, it cannot be assessed whether the once-only principle is applied in this situation.

Table 6: Implementation of the once-only principle

	SAMPLE						
	Property registration	Company registration	Vehicle registration	Passport issuance	ID issuance	VAT declaration	VAT payment
ALB	✓	✓	X	✓	✓	✓	✓
BIH	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
KS	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
MKD	✓	X	✓	✓	X	✓	✓
MNE	X	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
SRB	X	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

Practices to avoid -

Distancing of Republic Geodetic Authority from citizens in Serbia

The **Republic Geodetic Authority of Serbia (RGA)** introduced a new procedure for obtaining the property registration service, which requires citizens to engage lawyers or geodetic organisations acting on their behalf in obtaining the eDesk service. This new practice has made it harder for citizens to communicate directly with the RGA and introduced a new financial burden in the form of lawyers' fees, although the service itself remained free. This practice represents a negative precedent in terms of the distancing of public institutions from direct interaction with citizens, while also raising concerns about the user-orientation and inclusiveness of service delivery to different societal groups.

Interviews with key informants across the region highlight that public administration practices in this area remain insufficiently oriented toward citizens. Namely, interviewees across WB¹⁶ disagree that service design and delivery are, in general, citizen-centric, that feedback channels are available, or that such feedback is used to improve service delivery (see Table 7 below). These results align with the documented absence of systemic user involvement. Interviewees in Albania, North Macedonia and Serbia pointed out the crucial role of non-state actors in leading towards more citizen-friendly practices, i.e., that they can contribute to ensuring that citizen feedback is integrated into service improvement processes by advocacy, capacity-building, monitoring

¹⁶ 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 per administration for all statements.

service delivery, and facilitating citizen engagement forums. Moreover, they stated that various associations and other organisational forms bring together interest groups that use specific services, and could serve as platforms for channelling, formulating and systematising user feedback in support of service improvement. Such straightforward and more organised approach in terms of advocacy efforts aimed at public administration bodies can be crucial in ensuring that citizens' views and needs are considered and used as a basis for designing and providing services.

Table 7: Number of non-state actors' responses per agreement scale

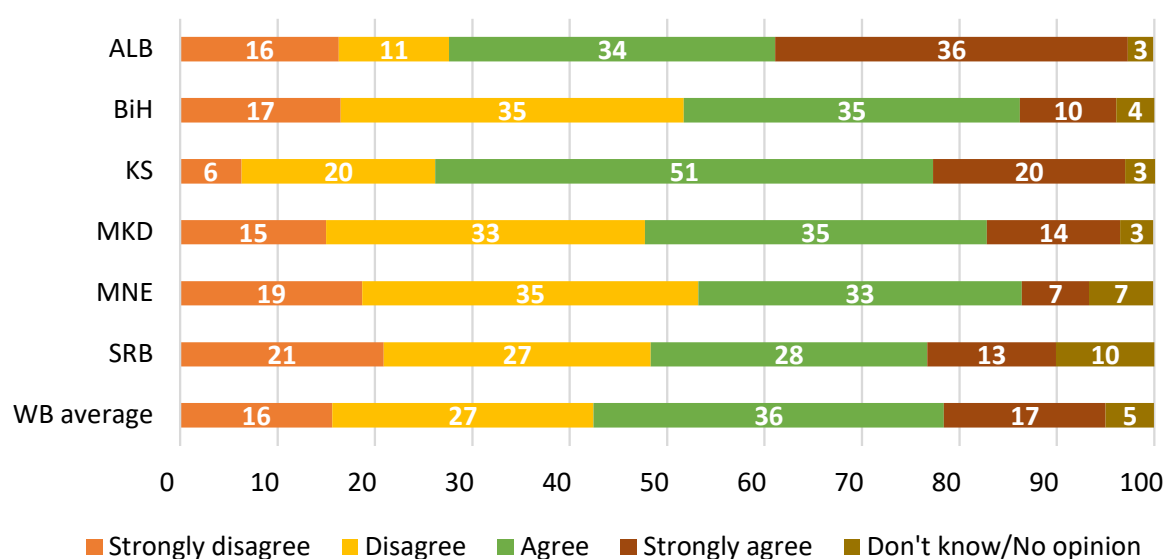
Statement	Admini- stration	Fully disagree	Tend to disagree	Tend to agree	Fully agree
Service design and service delivery are citizen centric	ALB		3		
	BIH		3		
	KS		2	1	
	MKD	1		2	
	MNE	1	2		
	SRB		1	2	
Channels fo citizen feedback are available	ALB	1	1	1	
	BIH	1	2		
	KS	1	2		
	MKD	1	1	1	
	MNE	1		2	
	SRB	1	1	1	
Citizens' feedback is used to improve service delivery	ALB		3		
	BIH	3			
	KS		2		1
	MKD	1		2	
	MNE	1	2		
	SRB	1	2		

Finally, the impact of reform measures in this area tends to go unrecognised by citizens across the WB. Public perception survey¹⁷ results show that a majority of respondents – 54% of WB citizens on average – do not believe they can influence the development of services. The lowest scores were recorded in Montenegro and Serbia, where only 28% of citizens expressed positive stances. On the other hand, the best results were recorded in Kosovo, with 65% of citizens agreeing

¹⁷ The survey was conducted between the 1st and 26th of February 2025 in all WB administrations, on a representative sample of 6077 citizens. For additional information, see the Methodology appendix.

that they could influence service design. By contrast, citizens' perceptions were more favourable regarding their ability to provide feedback on the quality of services received, with an average of 53% positive responses across the region (see Chart 1 below). These findings underscore a significant gap between strategic commitments and practice: citizen-centric service design is still underdeveloped and little recognised by the public. Nevertheless, most citizens do acknowledge that service providers are making some effort to ensure service quality.

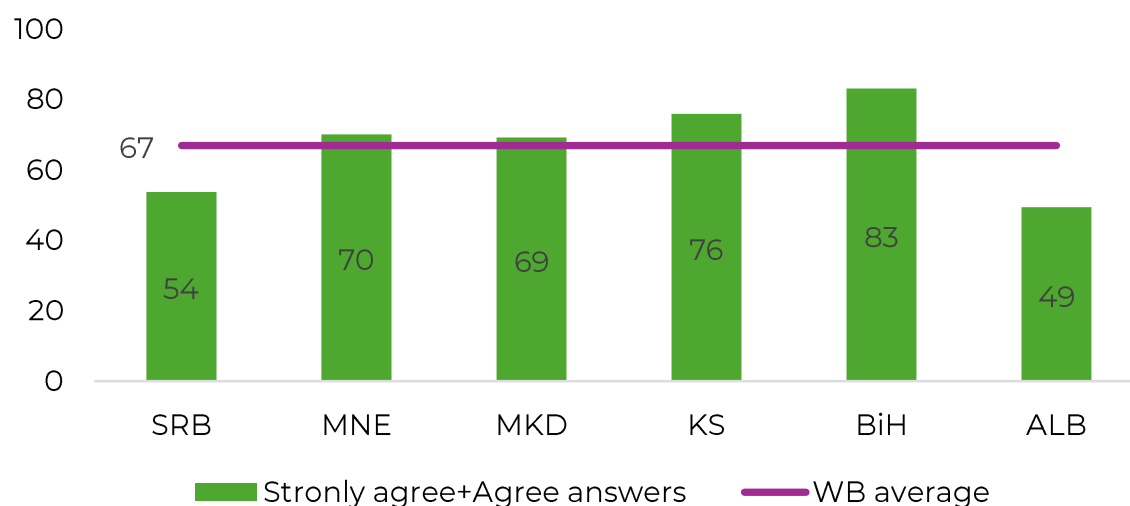
Chart 1: Share of citizens' responses per agreement scale on the statement - *I have the opportunity to share my opinion on the quality of public administration services I received with the relevant state authorities* (%)



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 = 6077 for the entire Western Balkans.

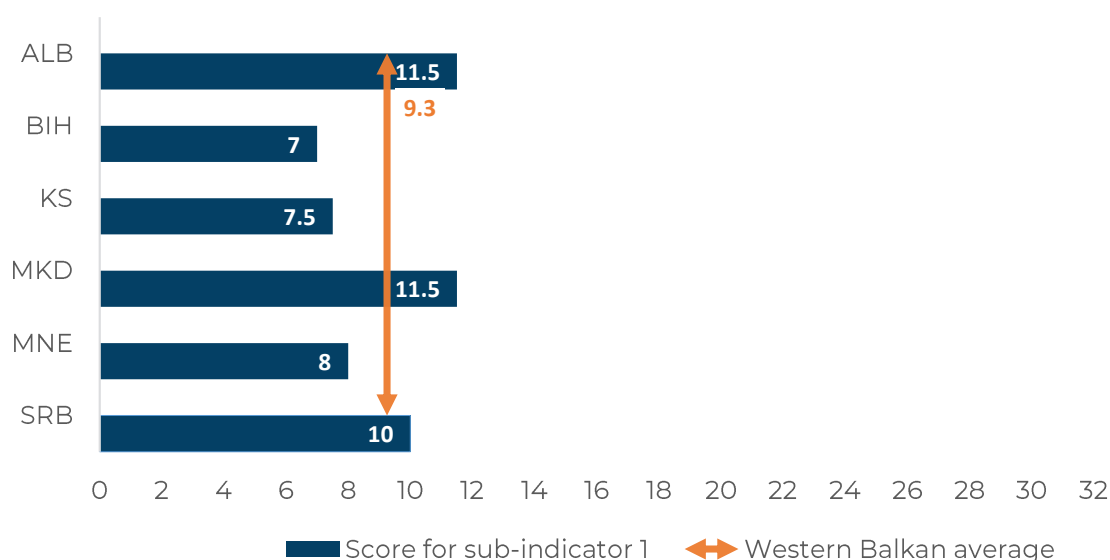
Survey findings also underline the importance of raising awareness and ensuring the implementation of the once-only principle across the region. The highest percentage of positive responses to the statement “When requesting public administration services, I am not required to provide documents already held by the state” was recorded in Serbia, with 67% of participants choosing ‘agree’ or ‘strongly agree’ options (the WB agreement average was 58%). Although relatively high, these percentages do not mirror citizens’ perception on the implementation of this principle. Namely, an average of 67% of WB citizens agreed that, the last time they requested a service, they had to submit documents already held by the state (see Chart 2 below). Notably, the highest shares of citizens reporting a failure to apply the once-only principle were recorded in BiH (83%) and Kosovo (76%). The inconsistent application of the ‘once-only’ principle points to the need for clearer standards and a centralised system for monitoring service delivery quality.

Chart 2: Share of citizens' "strongly agree" and "agree" answers to the statement - *The last time I requested a public administration service, I had to submit documents already held by the state* (%)



Note: All results are rounded to the nearest integer. The base for these questions was $N = 6077$ for the entire Western Balkans.

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.

In the latest monitoring reports that are based on comprehensive assessments carried out in 2024, SIGMA noted that all Western Balkan administrations have established or enhanced central government-run portals, except for state-level BIH, providing online access to a range of public administration services. Also, SIGMA emphasised that multichannel approach to service delivery is now formalised across the region, though implementation varies, and that in the past period, services for businesses were increasingly moving toward online accessibility. Moreover, it is highlighted that while all administrations have adopted accessibility standards for disadvantaged groups, there are no noteworthy developments in monitoring compliance due to a lack of data or monitoring mechanisms. Finally, SIGMA underscored that common web accessibility guidelines exist in four out of six administrations, but the official government websites often remain difficult to navigate due to the absence of set compliance standards.¹⁸

As mentioned earlier, the existing PAR strategic frameworks in WB administrations include service delivery and digitalisation reforms, either through overarching PAR strategies, dedicated service delivery planning documents, or both. In each case, these planning documents set out specific measures or activities aimed at improving access to services for various population groups and at ensuring the availability of all necessary information for a smooth service experience. Institutional responsibilities for implementing these measures are clearly

¹⁸ Additional information is available in SIGMA/OECD reports for 2024 on the Assessment against the Principles of Public Administration for each WB country. Available at: <https://tinyurl.com/3f9ua2pt>.

defined. Overall, across the current PAR cycle, all administrations are focused on enhancing the user journey through upgrades to accessibility of service delivery processes or the introduction of digital innovations.

Legislative frameworks across the region introduce basic concepts that facilitate access to services and information, whereas specific regulatory provisions that could further enhance accessibility are sometimes lacking. For example, the establishment of one-stop shops, centralised service points for handling multiple service requests, is regulated in all administrations except BIH, typically through general administrative procedure codes. In contrast, there is no legal obligation for service providers to design services around “life events”- key personal milestones such as childbirth, marriage, or divorce. Despite the absence of formal legal mandates, some administrations, like Montenegro, have planned the introduction of life-event based services in their strategic frameworks, through increased interoperability and automation. Albania is a partial exception, where the shift towards a life-event approach is explicitly mandated by the Public Service Standards Policy Document,¹⁹ and the Prime Minister’s Order.²⁰

In addition, regulation of certain accessibility criteria to better accommodate the needs of vulnerable groups is limited²¹. While most administrations have legal requirements ensuring physical access to public administration buildings, except North Macedonia, there is a general absence of legislation mandating free, dedicated assistance for vulnerable populations.²² Furthermore, the legal obligation to provide service information in multiple formats to accommodate different user needs exists in half the region – Albania, Montenegro, Serbia.²³ North Macedonia stands out with no positive assessments on accessibility criteria, lacking even mandatory provisions for making service delivery information available in all official languages.²⁴

Finally, binding provisions for collecting key service delivery metrics, such as service volume, processing time, and costs, remain rare across the region. Albania stands out as an exception, with its Public Service Standards Policy Document requiring service providers to perform these measurements. Apart from that,

¹⁹ Decision of the Council of Ministers No.204, dated 07 April 2023.

²⁰ Prime Minister’s Order No. 72, dated 09 June 2023.

²¹ Being vulnerable is defined as in need of special care, support, or protection because of age, disability, risk of abuse or neglect. Vulnerable populations include people with disabilities, minority groups, economically disadvantaged persons and elderly people.

²² Such as telephone lines, personal assistance or guidance etc. The exception is entity level BIH, regulations envisage that vulnerable populations, including people with disabilities, the elderly, and economically disadvantaged groups, are entitled to free assistance. This includes the provision of support services such as telephone lines, personal assistance, and other forms of guidance. At the state level, while there is some support for assistance, the regulation is less comprehensive.

²³ Formats such as written, audio, video, Braille language etc.

²⁴ Macedonian and Albanian are the official languages of the Republic of North Macedonia

there are sporadic examples of laws on free access to public documents and information mandating service providers to keep metrics on service costs (Kosovo), or on service volume (Serbia). Overall, missing opportunities to regulate measuring key metrics not only limits transparency but also hinders potential improvements informed by performance data.

In practice, a wealth of service-related information can be found on service providers' websites or central service delivery portals, but users across the region may still encounter information gaps when actually requesting services. Specifically, basic procedural information is generally available for accessing sample services, though notable differences exist among administrations (Table 8). Users can typically find online service descriptions, guidance on how to access services both online and in person, helpdesk contact information and lists of required documents or online forms to complete. Albania stands out for publishing all of this information comprehensively, whereas the sample analysis for BIH and Montenegro revealed the most significant gaps in this regard.

Table 8: availability of core information on obtaining a sample service

		SAMPLE						
		Property registration	Company registration	Vehicle registration	Passport issuance	ID issuance	VAT declaration	VAT payment
ALB	Service description	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	How to access online	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	How to access in person	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Help-line	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Fill-in forms / documents	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
BIH	Service description	✓	✓	X	X	X	X	X
	How to access online	✓	✓	✓	✓	X	✓	✓
	How to access in person	✓	✓	✓	X	X	✓	✓
	Help-line	✓	✓	X	X	X	X	X
	Fill-in forms / documents	✓	✓	X	✓	X	✓	✓

KS	Service description	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	How to access online	✓	✓	X	X	X	X	X
	How to access in person	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Help-line	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Fill-in forms / required	✓	✓	X	X	X	✓	✓
MKD	Service description	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	How to access online	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	How to access in person	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Help-line	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Fill-in forms / documents	✓	✓	X	X	X	✓	✓
MNE	Service description	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	X	X
	How to access online	X	✓	X	X	X	✓	✓
	How to access in person	X	✓	X	X	X	X	X
	Help-line	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Fill-in forms / documents	✓	✓	X	X	X	✓	✓
SRB	Service description	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	How to access online	X	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	X
	How to access in person	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Help-line	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Fill-in forms / documents	X	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

On the other hand, other essential information required during the service delivery process, such as contact details, applicable fees, and users' rights and obligations, is far more frequently available across the region (Table 9). Contact and pricing information are almost universally provided for the analysed sample, albeit with a few exceptions. Similarly, service providers typically publish information online about the users' rights and responsibilities, with BIH being a negative outlier in this regard. However, citizen-friendly user guides, designed to present key information in formats such as infographics or video tutorials,

are often lacking. Serbia stands out as service providers are using this approach most consistently, although minimum conditions for point allocation have not been met either as there are no citizen-friendly user guides for a minimum 5 out of 7 sampled services. Overall, while most key information is available, service providers could still do more to improve accessibility by having stronger user focus when presenting services online.

Table 9: availability of other essential information on obtaining a sample service

		SAMPLE						
		Property registration	Company registration	Vehicle registration	Passport issuance	ID issuance	VAT declaration	VAT payment
ALB	Contacts	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Prices/fees	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Service users' rights	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Citizen friendly guide	X	X	X	✓	✓	X	X
BIH	Contacts	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Prices/fees	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Service users' rights	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
	Citizen friendly guide	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
KS	Contacts	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Prices/fees	✓	✓	X	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Service users' rights	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Citizen friendly guide	X	X	X	X	✓	✓	✓
MKD	Contacts	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Prices/fees	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Service users' rights	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Citizen friendly guide	X	✓	X	X	X	✓	✓
MNE	Contacts	✓	✓	X	X	✓	✓	✓
	Prices/fees	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	X	X
	Service users' rights	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	X	X
	Citizen friendly guide	X	✓	X	X	X	✓	✓

SRB	Contacts	✓	✓	X	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Prices/fees	X	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Service users' rights	X	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	X
	Citizen friendly guide	X	✓	X	X	✓	✓	✓

Comparably, analysis of accessibility of service information in multiple languages and formats yields mixed results, too (see Table 10). Observed sample services are available in the official languages in the entire WB except for North Macedonia. Availability in international languages is rare, making it more difficult for non-native speakers to obtain desired information. Service providers in Albania and Kosovo stand out for presenting most or all sample services via websites also in English. Furthermore, service information is usually provided exclusively in written format, while audio or video introductions, Braille, or other accessible formats are modestly used. Only in North Macedonia, Montenegro, and Serbia do most sample services go beyond written formats although still not reaching the required standard for point allocation. This indicates that service providers across the region still largely rely on basic modes of presentation and accessibility.

There are also only a few instances of information on sample services being available in machine-readable formats for potential reuse by third parties. Noteworthy examples include the General Directorate of Road Transport Services in Albania, which publishes and uses open data to visualise annual vehicle registrations, and the Agency for Identification Documents, Registers and Data Exchange of Bosnia and Herzegovina, which runs its own open data portal, with access to machine readable data on travel documents, ID cards and vehicle registration procedures.²⁵ Nevertheless, there is still a significant potential for service providers across the region to enhance accessibility by offering information in more languages and formats.

Table 10: availability of information in different languages and formats

		SAMPLE						
		Property registration	Company registration	Vehicle registration	Passport issuance	ID issuance	VAT declaration	VAT payment
ALB	Official language(s)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	International language	✓	✓	X	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Multiple formats	X	X	X	✓	✓	X	X
	Machine readable	X	X	✓	X	X	X	X

²⁵ Available at: <https://www.dpshttr.al/open-data-dpshttr-english> for Albania, and <https://odp.iddeea.gov.ba/home> for Bosnia and Herzegovina.

BIH	Official language(s)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	International language	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
	Multiple formats	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
	Machine readable	X	X	✓	✓	✓	X	X
KS	Official language(s)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	International language	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Multiple formats	X	X	X	X	✓	✓	✓
	Machine readable	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
MKD	Official language(s) ²⁶	✓	✓	X	X	X	X	X
	International language	✓	✓	X	X	X	X	X
	Multiple formats	✓	✓	X	X	X	✓	✓
	Machine readable	x	✓	X	X	X	X	X
MNE	Official language(s)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	International language	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
	Multiple formats	✓	X	✓	✓	✓	X	X
	Machine readable	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
SRB	Official language(s)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	International language	X	✓	X	X	X	X	X
	Multiple formats	✓	X	X	✓	✓	✓	X
	Machine readable	X	X	X	X	X	X	X

26 Macedonian and Albanian are the official languages of the Republic of North Macedonia; however not all observed sample service providers have an entirely functional website in both languages.

Good practices - Open data portals on vehicle registrations in Albania, and personal documents and vehicles in Bosnia and Herzegovina

*As noted in the previous PAR Monitor 2021/22, since 2020, **the General Directorate of Road Transport Services in Albania** publishes machine-readable data and runs a detailed and up-to-date open data dashboard on annual vehicle registrations, and on the size and distribution of vehicle fleet in the country. With plenty of data visuals, users can also easily export data. Data provides insight into registrations by month, type of vehicle, car brands, year of production, and territorial organisation. In addition, a separate sheet is reserved for vehicle registrations by fuel or power source type, including the count of green, electric vehicles and more.*

*In addition, **the Agency for Identification Documents, Registers and Data Exchange of Bosnia and Herzegovina**, runs its own open data portal containing anonymised datasets on citizens (residence, newborns etc.), travel and ID documents, vehicle registrations, driver's licenses, and more. With plenty of search categories, and several data export formats, this website offers a smooth user experience and potential for re-use.*

Apart from the practical challenges outlined above, it is worth noting that the sample services analysed in this monitoring cycle are, in general, adequately territorially distributed. In all administrations, regardless of the overall level of online service offer, nearly all sample services can be requested and obtained at the municipal offices of the relevant service providers. One exception is business registration, which in some cases can only be completed centrally, either at the provider's headquarters or online, as is the case in Kosovo and Montenegro. It is also important to highlight that in Albania, despite the government's strategic push toward full digitalisation of service delivery, every sampled service provider retains a local presence. This enables in-person support when, for instance, submitting data that cannot be obtained online or when physical presence is required, such as for retaking an ID or passport photo or biometric data.

When it comes to service provision practices beyond the analysed sample, the application of additional approaches to ensure smooth access to services is uneven across WB. For example, the publishing of life-event oriented services is rare, reflecting the absence of legal regulation supporting this approach. Specifically, services organised around life events are featured only on the central government portals in North Macedonia and Serbia.²⁷ Similarly, not all service providers across the region had trained their staff within the two years prior to the assessment on how to interact with vulnerable groups in the context

²⁷ See at: <https://uslugi.gov.mk/> for North Macedonia, and <https://euprava.gov.rs/> for Serbia.

of service delivery. Albania and Serbia are exceptions, where a number of civil servants have participated in trainings addressing the role of administration in combating discrimination against minorities and in protecting the rights of persons with disabilities – trainings broadly relevant to accessibility of service provision. These occasional efforts suggest that service delivery frameworks in WB could still develop, particularly through additional proactive or mandatory measures to better accommodate the needs of diverse population groups.

Practical accessibility challenges are also reflected in the views of non-state actors involved in or closely monitoring service delivery policy implementation in the region (see table 11 below).²⁸ Their opinions are split when asked to reflect on whether the territorial network for accessing administrative services is adequate, with the same share of those agreeing to some or full extent and of those who are in dissent. Likewise, opinions are mixed on the issue of physical accessibility of the premises of service providers for all. On both issues, interviewed non-state actors in Albania consistently selected “*tend to disagree*”—a response that aligns with the Albanian government’s strategic push toward an (almost) fully digital service model. In contrast, respondents in Serbia showed a strong tendency to agree with the adequacy of both the territorial distribution of services and the physical accessibility of service premises. Finally, a notably higher number of non-state actors expressed some form of disagreement with the statement that online services are easily accessible, suggesting significant gaps in the domain of digital service delivery.

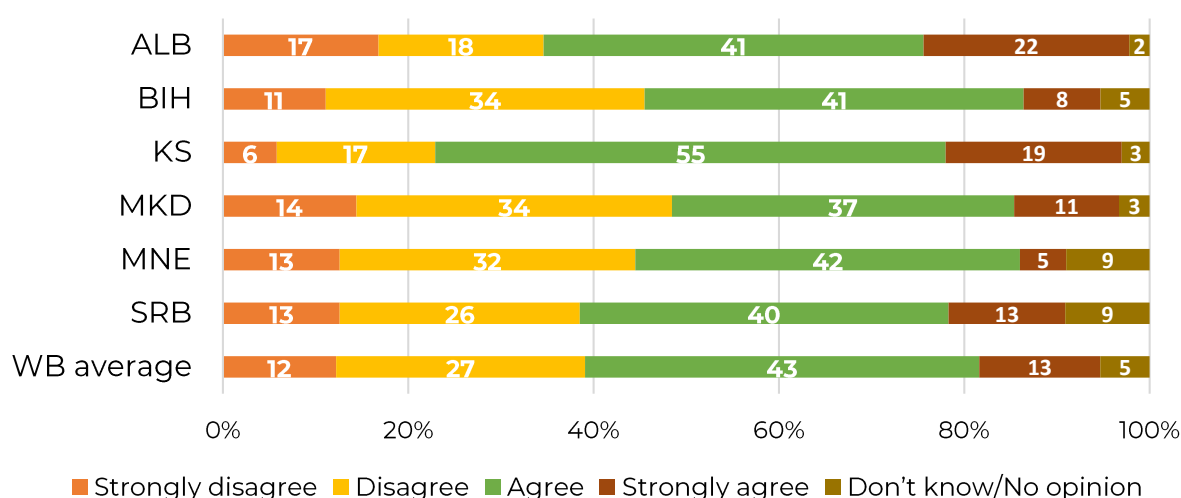
28 Researchers identified and interviewed relevant non-state actors with experience and knowledge in the field (key informants). Non-state actors are selected among representatives of civil society organisations, academia, professional organisations, media associations, investigative journalism outlets,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

Table 11: number of non-state actors' responses per agreement scale

Statement	Administration	Fully disagree	Tend to disagree	Tend to agree	Fully agree
The territorial network for accessing administrative services by all citizens is adequate	ALB		3		
	BIH			3	
	KS	1	1	1	
	MKD	1		2	
	MNE		3		
	SRB			2	1
The premises of service provides are physically accessible by all citizens	ALB		3		
	BIH		3		
	KS	1		2	
	MKD		1	2	
	MNE		2	1	
	SRB			3	
Services offered online are easily accessible by all citizens	ALB		2	1	
	BIH		3		
	KS	2		1	
	MKD		2	1	
	MNE		2	1	
	SRB		2	1	

Public opinion poll results also reflect mixed user experiences, suggesting that, in practice, the needs of many service users remain unmet. Namely, public opinion is generally positive regarding the availability of service delivery information. On average, 56% of WB citizens agree or strongly agree that the information and guidance needed to access services are easy to find (Chart 3). Agreement is above the regional average in Kosovo (74%) and Albania (63%), followed by Serbia (53%). In the remaining WB administrations, fewer than half of the population shares this view. Overall, while a majority in the region find service-related information accessible, a significant portion of the population still struggles to navigate administrative procedure.

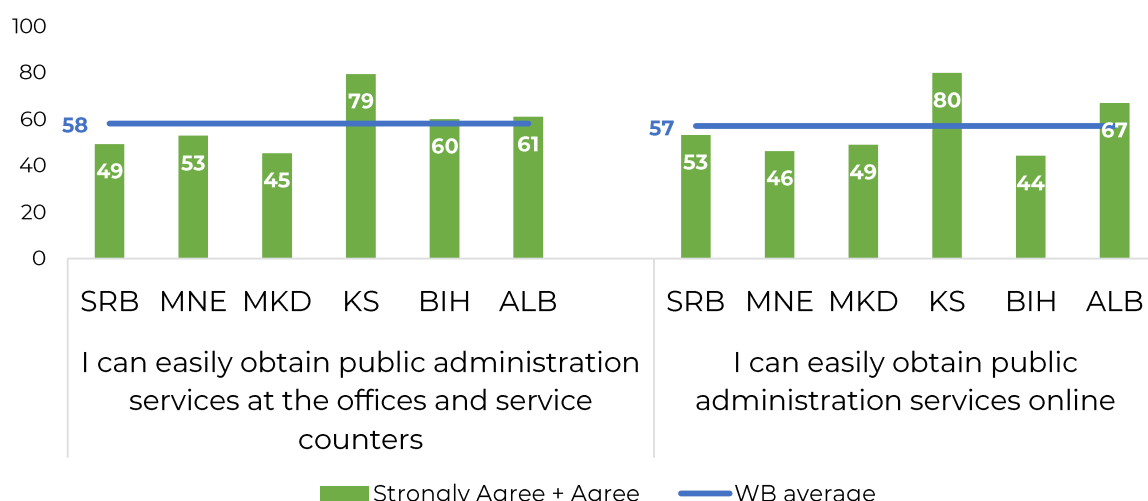
Chart 3: share of citizens' responses per agreement scale on the statement - *I can easily find the information and guidance that helps me obtain public administration services* (%)



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 = 6077 for the entire Western Balkans.

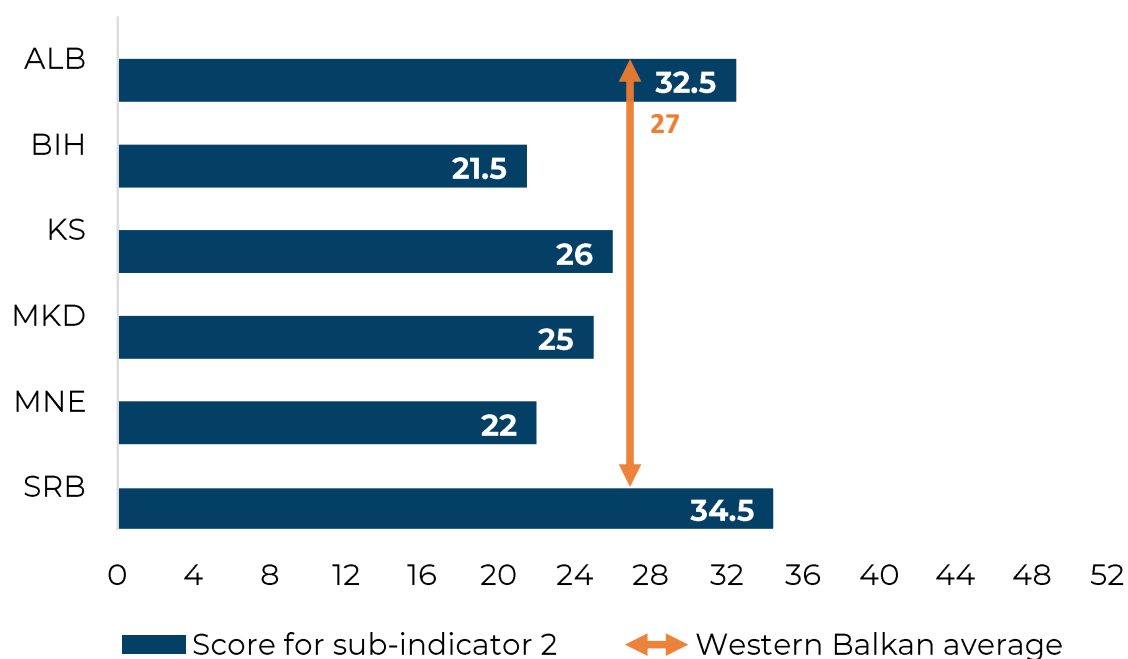
Similarly, when asked about the ease of accessing services both offline and online, a majority of citizens across the region expressed agreement (Chart 4). On average, 58% of WB citizens agree or strongly agree that in-person services are easily accessible, while 57% say the same for online services. Citizens in Albania and Kosovo again stand out by expressing agreement levels well above the regional average. Notably, BIH is the only other example where citizens report above-average agreement, specifically for offline access (60%). Nevertheless, despite the favourable regional outlook, the data once again reveal a divided picture: in three administrations – Montenegro, North Macedonia, and BIH - fewer than half of the population find digital access easy, pointing to either a persistent digital divide or the continued inaccessibility of online service delivery platforms.

Chart 4: Share of citizens agreeing that public administration services are easily accessible in-person and online (%)



Note: All results are rounded to the nearest integer. The base for these questions was N = 6077 for the entire Western Balkans.

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.

Several key digital government functions are well developed across the WB, but overall maturity remains uneven between administrations, and progress in certain areas is still lacking. According to SIGMA assessments, Serbia, Albania, and Kosovo are above the regional average in the design of digital government and services. All six administrations have adopted strategic and legal frameworks that prioritise the digitalisation of service delivery, aiming towards greater accessibility, user-orientation, and efficiency. While the scope, coordination, and implementation of these efforts vary, they share a common focus on improving service quality through e-platforms, paperless processes, and digital tools such as electronic signatures and payments. All countries have established national portals, except for BIH, where a highly decentralised system hinders unified implementation. Despite the overall progress, digital exclusion remains a significant challenge, particularly for vulnerable groups.²⁹

All WB administrations have strategic documents in place prioritising digitalisation of service delivery, focusing on user-centred, efficient, and integrated e-government. Each of them adopted at least one relevant strategy, highlighting a commitment to improving and digitalising services. Common regional priorities include enhancing user experience, promoting paperless administration, reusing government data, and reducing administrative burdens through e-platforms.

At the same time, differences in approaches exist across individual administrations. Nevertheless, despite these variations in focus and reform strategies, all WB administrations show a clear strategic commitment to digitalisation, sharing a common vision of user-centred digital services that reduce administrative burdens and enhance accessibility.

²⁹ Additional information is available in SIGMA/OECD reports for 2024 on the Assessment against the Principles of Public Administration for each WB country. Available at: <https://tinyurl.com/3f9ua2pt>.

Table 12: strategic documents and measures for digitalisation of service delivery

ALB	<i>Strategic document</i>	Digital Agenda
	<i>Specific measures or activities</i>	Defines full digitalisation as an irreversible process with centralised service access via the e-Albania platform.
BIH	<i>Strategic document</i>	Strategic Framework for PAR with Action Plan
	<i>Specific measures or activities</i>	Expanding service access via multiple channels, with priority digitalisation, secure e-services, and strategic e-administration planning.
KS	<i>Strategic document</i>	PAR Strategy; E-Government Strategy
	<i>Specific measures or activities</i>	Enhancing service quality by expanding e-Kosovo and establishing an innovation unit to explore AI, big data, and cryptography
MKD	<i>Strategic document</i>	PAR Strategy; Government Work Programme
	<i>Specific measures or activities</i>	Improved e-communication, SMART administration, and stronger ICT, with a focus on AI, mobile services, inclusion, and cybersecurity.
MNE	<i>Strategic document</i>	PAR Strategy; Digital Transformation Strategy
	<i>Specific measures or activities</i>	Digitalising 20 “life events” through increased interoperability and automation
SRB	<i>Strategic document</i>	PAR Strategy with accompanying Action Plan; eGovernment Programme
	<i>Specific measures or activities</i>	Optimising services, promoting digital uptake, expanding e-signature access, and developing guidelines for digitalisation priorities.

Also, all WB administrations have adopted legal frameworks that regulate digital service delivery, including the use of digital signatures and electronic payments. These frameworks ensure the legal validity of digital interactions between citizens and public institutions, aiming to enhance efficiency, security, and accessibility in service provision. In BIH, although operating within a complex and decentralised administrative system, key laws were adopted that collectively ensure legal support for digital services, electronic signatures, and e-payments.³⁰ Overall, the legal preconditions for digital service delivery are

³⁰ Law on Electronic Communications, Law on Public Administration, Law on Electronic Signature, and Law on Electronic Commerce.

formally in place across the region, laying the groundwork for further digital transformation.

The institutional responsibility for steering digital service delivery in the region is generally assigned to specific authorities or ministries, as is the case in Albania, BIH, Montenegro, and North Macedonia. In Kosovo, there is currently no single body exclusively responsible for digitalisation policy, though the Prime Minister's Office has formed a commission for digital transformation to guide these efforts. Serbia also faces challenges in terms of defining the central responsibility; however, the Ministry of Public Administration and Local Self-Government (MPALSG) has been involved in strategic planning for e-government, and the Office for IT and eGovernment (ITE Office) coordinates activities in the domain of information system, data management, and electronic government system development. The table below provides an overview of the responsible institutions, by the administration.

Table 13: central institutional responsibility for digital service delivery

ALB	National Agency for Information Society
BIH	Council of Ministers Department for Maintenance, Development of Electronic Business and e-Government Services, Public Administration Reform Coordinator's Office (PARCO)
KS	/
MKD	Ministry of Digital Transformation
MNE	Ministry for Public Administration
SRB	/

All WB administrations, except BIH, have established central online platforms for digital service delivery, featuring varying degrees of user-oriented functionalities (Table 14). These platforms generally comply with data protection standards and include at least one form of interactive or two-way communication with users. Overall, the findings indicate a growing commitment to user-friendly design and accessibility across the region.

Table 14: user-oriented features of eGovernment portals

	ALB	BIH	KS	MKD	MNE	SRB
<i>Adherence to data protection policies on the portal</i>	Specified in "Privacy Policy" and "Terms of Use" sections	N/A	Specified in "Privacy Policy" section	Specified in "Privacy Policy" and "Terms of Use" sections	Specified in "General Terms of Use" and "Privacy Policy" sections	Specified in "Privacy Policy" and "Terms of Use" sections
<i>Inclusion of at least a single interactive or two-way communication tools</i>	AI chatbot	N/A	Chatbot	Guides and contact form	Contact form	Beta chatbot not functional; contact form

Moreover, WB administrations have introduced digital signatures and digital payment options for at least some sampled services. While Serbia, Albania, and North Macedonia show broader and more structured application of digital signature and payment functionalities, BIH and Montenegro are somewhere in the middle, with partial solutions and ongoing reforms, while Kosovo lags behind (Table 15). In Kosovo, electronic signatures are legally regulated, but their practical application on the e-Kosova platform remains limited and unclear. In North Macedonia, digital signatures are also generally available for most services, except those provided by the Ministry of Interior (MoI). In Montenegro, although a central portal for digital services exists, digital signatures are supported on separate platforms, such as eCompany (*eFirma*) and the eTaxes portal, which are specifically designed for business and tax-related services. However, digital payment options are lacking. By contrast, Serbia demonstrates a relatively high level of development in this area, and although not all services are fully available online, and some still require in-person processing, users can initiate and complete payments through the central eGovernment portal for services provided by the MoI and Tax administration. Uneven progress in digital signatures and electronic payments in the region highlights the need for continued reforms and greater integration of digital tools to ensure more accessible public services.

Table 15: application of digital signature and payment in the WB

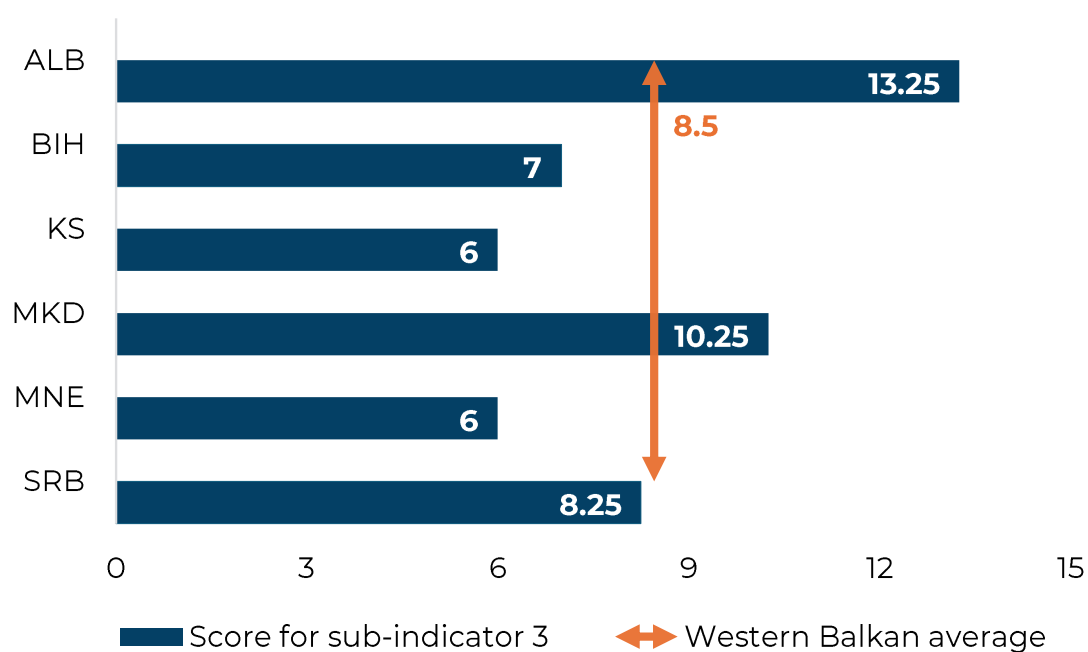
		SAMPLE						
		property registra- tion	company registra- tion	vehicle registra- tion	passport issuance	ID card issuance	VAT declara- tion	VAT pay- ment
ALB	signature	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	payment	✓	✓	X	X	X	X	X
BIH	signature	X	X	X	X	X	✓	✓
	payment	X	X	X	X	X	✓	✓
KS	signature	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
	payment	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
MKD	signature	✓	✓	X	X	X	✓	✓
	payment	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
MNE	signature	X	✓	X	X	X	✓	✓
	payment	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
SRB	signature	X	✓	X	X	X	✓	X
	payment	X	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	X

Key non-state actors in the region generally agree that digital services have become easier to use, especially for citizens with adequate digital skills (see responses in Table 16). However, they have pointed out that significant challenges remain for vulnerable groups such as older adults, people with disabilities, rural populations, minorities, and economically disadvantaged citizens. Common barriers – including low digital literacy, limited infrastructure, and fragmented service provision – continue to hinder the full usability and reach of digital public services. A clear regional similarity is the shared recognition among interviewees that vulnerable groups remain excluded, whereas the main difference lies in the opinion on availability and scope of digital services offered across countries. To advance an inclusive digital transformation, some interviewees emphasize the need for user-friendly service design combined with structural support and targeted outreach to those most at risk of digital exclusion.

Table 16: number of non-state actors' responses per agreement scale

Statement	Administration	Fully disagree	Tend to disagree	Tend to agree	Fully agree
Digital services are easy to use by all citizens	ALB			3	
	BIH			3	
	KS	1	1	1	
	MKD		1	2	
	MNE		1	2	
	SRB		1	1	1

Sub-indicator 3: Digitalisation of service delivery (maximum score 15.5)



III. SERVICE DELIVERY IN THE WESTERN BALKANS: Gradual Steps Towards Inclusive, Accessible and Digital Services

The Fragility of Citizen-Centric Reforms in Service Delivery: Strategic Direction vs Practice

While strategic direction in the WB clearly indicates a shift towards citizen-centric service design and delivery, these commitments have not yet translated into consistent legal and institutional operational frameworks, resulting in uneven implementation. A key implication of the monitoring findings is the need to legally reinforce citizen participation in service design, while also strengthening the regulations regarding citizen-centric service delivery. The absence of provisions requiring user involvement, as well as the collection and publication of participation metrics, weakens the prospects of administrations embedding citizen feedback into ongoing service improvement efforts. This not only limits the responsiveness of services but also undermines trust in public institutions.

Moreover, the uneven application of the once-only principle shows that even legal obligations are not consistently carried out. These shortcomings stem – at least in part – from the absence of institutional steering and quality assurance, as only half of the WB administrations have assigned a central institution to oversee and coordinate improvements in the area. In the absence of clear leadership, individual service providers develop inconsistent approaches to service delivery, user feedback collection, and quality standards and management.

Public perception survey results further confirm the distance between strategic intentions and user experience, as half of the region's population feels excluded from the design of services, suggesting a low degree of trust in the administration's willingness to integrate citizen input. Furthermore, this disconnection signals a broader failure to build participatory cultures. The role of non-state actors should be viewed as a critical lever for bridging this gap. As emphasised by key informant, non-state actors can help facilitate the exchange between administrations and users, advocate for participatory reforms, and help systematise citizen feedback.

The way forward requires a deeper institutionalisation of reform commitments, through sound legal provisions, clear institutional arrangements and leadership, as well as continuous monitoring to ensure consistency and quality. To ensure that public services are genuinely responsive to citizens' needs and expectations, WB administrations must move beyond declarative commitments and demonstrate

a genuine resolve to implement them systematically in practice. This requires stronger mechanisms for citizen participation from the earliest stages of service design, along with clear, centrally established obligations for service providers to track and publish records of public involvement, explain how feedback is used, and uphold consistent quality standards across the administration.

Accessibility of Services: Progress, Gaps, and Solutions

The assessment revealed progress in integrating user-oriented accessibility measures across the WB PAR frameworks but at the same time exposed certain regulatory gaps, particularly in terms of mandatory systematic support for vulnerable groups, multi-format communication of service offer, and data collection on service delivery performance. In practice, service delivery in the region is generally characterised by improved online information provision and a well-established territorial network of service providers; however, the quality and consistency of providing service-related information remains uneven across administrations. A broader trend of underutilising the full potential of digital tools to improve outreach and facilitate access to services is evident across the region: limited use of machine-readable data (despite some good practice examples in Albania and BiH) as well as the scarce availability of alternative communication formats and user-friendly tools, such as infographics or video tutorials. In this domain, feedback from key non-state actors and public perception survey results revealed slightly positive, yet divided views on the actual accessibility of service delivery across the region.

To address existing gaps, and maximise service accessibility, administrations in the region should strengthen accessibility standards in both legislation and practice, and ensure these standards are clearly communicated to the public – so that users know what to expect and can hold providers accountable. In parallel, standardising and mandating user-friendly service formats—such as simplified procedures, visual aids, and plain language guides tailored to diverse needs—would substantially benefit service users. Also, developing integrated service bundles around common life events would serve to simplify complex bureaucratic processes and improve user journeys through them. Furthermore, to inform service delivery policy and empower service-related improvements, WB service providers should start or expand the existing open data initiatives on service delivery performance. In some administrations in the region, transforming isolated good examples of open data initiatives into standard practice domestically, and where possible, regionally, could boost access to service delivery information substantially and enable reuse of data to generate new services for the public. Finally, institutionalising and delivering regular training for civil servants on user-centric and accessible service delivery – especially in interactions with vulnerable population groups – is essential for further progress in this area.

Advancing but Challenging Road to Digitalisation

The WB administrations have laid the strategic and legal foundations for the digitalisation of service delivery, demonstrating a shared commitment to modernising public administration through digital technology. However, the depth and coherence of implementation vary significantly. Overall, Albania presents the most centralised and advanced model in the entire regional picture, with fully integrated services and a clear institutional structure, followed by North Macedonia, and Serbia. Across the region, the availability and quality of digital services are improving, yet challenges remain, particularly regarding interoperability, user experience, and the uniform use of electronic signatures and payments. According to the interviewed key non-state actors, digital exclusion continues to limit the impact of reforms, especially for vulnerable groups.

To ensure that digital transformation is not only effective but also inclusive, administrations need to continue investing in infrastructure, reinforce institutional coordination, and start designing truly accessible services that are in line with users' experiences, and needs. The foundations have been laid but sustained political will and a people-centred approach to design and delivery, will be essential to bridging the gap between ever higher digital ambitions and everyday reality.

METHODOLOGY APPENDIX

Overview of country scores per each indicator element

Table 17: Score for sub-indicator 1 - *Citizen-centric service delivery*

Sub-indicator elements	Element type	Maximum points	ALB	BIH	KS	MKD	MNE	SRB
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	0,5	0,5	0,5	0,5	0,5
E 1.2 Regulations stipulate citizen-centric service design and service delivery	Legislation	2	1	1	1	1	1	1
E 1.3 Regulations stipulate an obligation of service providers to keep and publish metrics of users' participation in service design	Legislation	2	0	0	0	0	0	0
E 1.4 Regulations stipulate application of 'once-only principle'	Legislation	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
E 1.5 Institutional responsibility for steering and continuously improving service design and service delivery at the central administration level is assigned	Institutional set-up	2	2	2	0	2	0	0
E 1.6 Service providers collect and publish information on users' participation in service design	Practice in implementation	3,5	0	0	0	0	0	0

E 1.7 Service providers collect and publish users' feedback on their experience with service delivery	Practice in implementation	4	0	0	0	1	0	1
E 1.8 The administration uses citizens' feedback to improve administrative services	Practice in implementation	3	0	0	0	0	0	0
E 1.9 Public service providers implement the once-only principle during service delivery	Practice in implementation	3	3	0	0	3	3	3
E 1.10 Key non-state actors consider service design and delivery as citizen centric	Outcomes and impact	3	0	0	0	0	0	0
E 1.11 Citizens' perception of their ability to influence service design	Outcomes and impact	2	1	0,5	1,5	0,5	0,5	0,5
E 1.12 Citizens' perception of their opportunity to provide feedback on public service quality	Outcomes and impact	2	1,5	1	1,5	1	1	1
E 1.13 Citizens' awareness of the once-only principle	Outcomes and impact	2	1	1	1,5	1	1	1,5
E 1.14 Citizens' reported experience with the implementation of the once-only principle	Outcomes and impact	2	0,5	0	0,5	0,5	0	0,5
Total points		32	11,5	7	7,5	11,5	8	10

Table 18: Score for sub-indicator 2 -
Service accessibility and availability of information on services

Sub-indicator elements	Element type	Maximum points	ALB	BIH	KS	MKD	MNE	SRB
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	0,5	0,5	0,5	0,5	0,5
E 2.2 Regulations stipulate service provision through one-stop shops	Legislation	1	1	0	1	1	1	1
E 2.3 Regulations stipulate that service providers keep key metrics on the use of services	Legislation	1,5	1,5	0	0,5	0	0	0,5
E 2.4 Regulations stipulate provision of services in the form of life events	Legislation	1	1	0	0	0	0	0
E 2.5 Regulations stipulate mandatory adaptation of service delivery to the needs of vulnerable groups	Legislation	2	1,5	1,5	1	0	1,5	1,5
E 2.6 Service providers publish basic procedural information on how to access public services online	Practice in implementation	5	5	3	3	4	2	5
E 2.7 Service providers publish citizen-friendly guidance on accessing public services online	Practice in implementation	3	0	0	0	0	0	0
E 2.8 Service providers publish information on services they offer as life events	Practice in implementation	4	0	0	0	4	0	4
E 2.9 Information on services is available in multiple formats to meet diverse users' needs	Practice in implementation	3	0	0	0	0	0	0

E 2.10 Information on public service delivery is available in multiple languages to meet diverse users' needs	Practice in implementation	3	3	3	3	0	1,5	1,5
E 2.11 Service providers publish information on the prices of their services	Practice in implementation	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
E 2.12 Service providers publish information on the rights and obligations of users	Practice in implementation	3	3	0	3	3	3	3
E 2.13 Service providers publish precise contact information for service provision	Practice in implementation	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
E 2.14 Data on administrative services are available in open formats	Practice in implementation	4	0	0	0	0	0	0
E 2.15 Service providers train their staff on how to treat vulnerable groups	Practice in implementation	3	2	0	0	0	0	3
E 2.16 Service providers ensure adequate territorial distribution of service delivery	Practice in implementation	3,5	3,5	3,5	3,5	3,5	3,5	3,5
E 2.17 Key non-state actors consider service delivery as accessible	Outcomes and impact	3	0	1	0	0	0	2
E 2.18 Citizens' perception of the accessibility of information necessary for obtaining services	Outcomes and impact	2	2	1	1,5	1	1	1
E 2.19 Citizens' perception of the ease of in-person access to services	Outcomes and impact	2	2	1	1,5	1	1	1
E 2.20 Citizens' perception of the ease of online access to services	Outcomes and impact	2	2	1	1,5	1	1	1
Total points		52,5	32,5	21,5	26	25	22	34,5

Table 19: Score for sub-indicator 3 – *Digitalisation of service delivery*

Sub-indicator elements	Element type	Maximum points	ALB	BIH	KS	MKD	MNE	SRB
E 3.1 There is a strategic document in force that envisages digitalisation of services	Strategy and policy	0,5	0,5	0,5	0,5	0,5	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	1,5	1,5	1,5	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	2	2	2	0	2	2	0
E 3.4 Online central platform for digital service delivery is established and user-oriented	Practice in implementation	4	4	0	4	4	2	4
E 3.5 Digital signature and digital payment are available to all users	Practice in implementation	4,5	2	0	0	2	0	2,25
E 3.6 Key non-state actors consider digital services as easy to use	Outcomes and impact	3	3	3	0	0	0	0
Total points		15,5	13,25	7	6	10,25	6	8,25

Data collection methods

For producing this report, 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 20: FOI requests

Administration	Institution	Date of request	Date of reply to the request
ALB	National Agency for Information Society	25.02.2025	10.03.2025
	General Directorate of Taxes	25.02.2025	06.03.2025
	Albanian School of Public Administration	25.02.2025	26.02.2025
BIH	/	/	/
KS	Civil Registration Agency	26.05.2025.	26.02.2025.
	Business Registration Agency	25.02.2025.	no response
	Tax Administration	26.02.2025.	07.03.2025.
	Cadastre Agency	11.03.2025.	/
	Civil Registration Agency	11.03.2025.	11.03.2025.
	Business Registration Agency	11.03.2025.	no response
	Tax Administration	11.03.2025.	14.03.2025.

MKD	Ministry of Digital Transformation	21.01.2025 Reminder sent on: 04.02.2025	11.02.2025
	Ministry of Interior	21.01.2025	29.01.2025
	Central Registry of the Republic of North Macedonia	21.01.2025 Reminder sent on: 04.02.2025	06.02.2025
	Agency for Real Estate Cadastre of the Republic of North Macedonia	21.01.2025	24.01.2025
	Public Revenue Office of the Republic of North Macedonia	21.01.2025 Reminder sent on: 04.02.2025	19.02.2025
	Ministry of Public Administration	11.02.2025	Phone response on 12.03.2025
MNE	Tax Administration	31.1.2025.	19.2.2025.
	Tax Administration	31.1.2025.	10.2.2025.
	Ministry of Public Administration	31.1.2025.	10.2.2025.
	Ministry of the Interior	31.1.2025.	12.2.2025.
	Ministry of the Interior	17.2.2025.	20.3.2025.
	Health Insurance Fund	31.1.2025.	14.2.2025.
	Employment Agency of Montenegro	31.1.2025.	20.2.2025.
	Pension and Disability Insurance Fund	31.1.2025.	18.2.2025.
	Human Resources Administration	31.1.2025.	5.2.2025.
	Real Estate Administration	31.1.2025.	10.2.2025.

SRB	Ministry of Public Administration and Local Self-Government	22.1.2025.	12.2.2025.
	Office for IT and eGovernment	22.1.2025.	no response
	Ministry of Interior	22.1.2025.	3.2.2025.
	Republic Geodetic Authority	22.1.2025.	6.2.2025.
	Business Registers Agency	22.1.2025.	4.2.2025.
	Tax Administration	22.1.2025.	4.2.2025.
	Ministry of Interior	22.1.2025.	31.01.2025.
	Republic Geodetic Authority	22.1.2025.	06.02.2025.
	Business Registers Agency	22.1.2025.	03.02.2025.
	Tax Administration	22.1.2025.	05.02.2025.
	NAPA	04.02.2025.	10.02.2025.
	HRMS	04.02.2025.	05.02.2025.

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 21: Interviews with non-state actors

Administration	Date	Number of interviews
ALB	17.02.2025. 26.02.2025. 27.02.2025.	3
BIH	04.03.2025. (3)	3
KS	10.03.2025. 11.03.2025. (2)	3
MKD	30.12.2024. 31.12.2024. 21.01.2025.	3
MNE	03.03.2025. 09.03.2025. 18.03.2025.	3
SRB	12.02.2025. (2) 13.02.2025.	3

List of interview questions

- **Element 1.10**

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

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

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

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

- **Element 2.17**

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

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

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

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

- **Element 3.6**

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

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

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

The public perception survey was conducted based on a questionnaire targeting the general public (18+ permanent residents) of Western Balkan countries. The survey was conducted through computer-assisted telephone interviewing (CATI) in combination with computer-assisted web interviewing (CAWI).

The survey was conducted between the 1st and 26th of February 2025. The margin of error for the sample of 6077 citizens is $\pm 3,51\%$, at the 95% confidence level.

Table 22: Public perception survey questions in the area of Service Delivery and Digitalisation³¹

Statement 8

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.)

- a. Yes
b. No

Statement 9	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	Don't know/No opinion
I have the opportunity to influence the development of public administration services (such as issuing personal documents, vehicle registration, paying taxes, etc.).	1	2	3	4	99
Statement 10	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	Don't know/No opinion
Public administration should use citizens' experience to improve public administration services.	1	2	3	4	99
Statement 11	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	Don't know/No opinion
I have the opportunity to share my opinion on the quality of public administration services I received with the relevant state authorities.	1	2	3	4	99
Statement 12	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	Don't know/No opinion
I can easily find the information and guidance that helps me obtain public administration services.	1	2	3	4	99
Statement 13	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	Don't know/No opinion

³¹ 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.

I can easily obtain public administration services at the offices and service counters of the relevant authorities.	1	2	3	4	99
Statement 14	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	<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
Statement 15					
How do you prefer accessing public administration services?					
a. Access to services online					
b. Access to services at the offices and service counters of relevant authorities					
c. I have no preference.					
Statement 16					
Thinking about the past two years how often have you used e-services of the public administration?					
a. Never					
b. Rarely					
c. Sometimes					
d. Often					
Statement 17	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	<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
Statement 18	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
Statement 19	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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