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Digitalization in Public Administration: A Comparison of Practices in Albania, Türkiye and North Macedonia

Entoni Miska, Omer Cem Ulutas and Gjorgji Ristov

Abstract

This article addresses digitalization processes in the field of public administration for Albania, Türkiye, and North Macedonia and examines in depth the digital management strategies, achievements, challenges, and future plans of these three countries. A transformation process has been initiated in Albania, which offers various e-services such as e-Albania. Türkiye has made a significant transformation in the digital field by offering a wide range of services to citizens through the e-Government Gateway. North Macedonia's aim was to facilitate access to public services through early digital reforms and initiatives such as the One Stop Shop project. This study reveals the common challenges and opportunities the three countries have faced in their digitalization journeys and emphasizes the importance of investments in digital infrastructure, digital literacy programs, and cross-sector collaboration. As a result, Albania, Türkiye, and North Macedonia's efforts to digitalize public administration show them to have taken important steps toward a more transparent, effective, and participatory management approach.

Keywords: digitalization in public administration, e-services, cyber security, innovation in public services, e-government

Introduction

This study looks at digitalization as a method governments are increasingly using to improve the quality and accessibility of the services they offer to their citizens. Moving public services to digital environments increases the efficiency of processes. However, this transformation occurs at different speeds and forms in different countries. This study also evaluates the effects of digitalization processes on public services, as today's changing mechanisms are causing governments to invest in digital developing public administration and public services.

Digitalization significantly facilitates citizens' access to government services. People can access various public services over the Internet and use these services from anywhere at any time without having to go to physical locations, wait in long queues, or receive services during limited working hours. This provides a great advantage, especially for disabled individuals, those living in remote areas, and those with time constraints. Digitalization of public services enables transactions to be carried out faster and at less cost. Digital systems reduce paper use and provide great savings in terms of filing and storage costs. Additionally, digital transactions have a lower error rate compared to manual transactions, meaning time and cost savings for both governments and citizens. Digital governance systems enable government operations and decision-making to be more transparent. Citizens can easily access more information about various public services and policies and take a more active role in these processes. This encourages governments to be more responsive to citizens' needs and increases public confidence. With public services moving to the digital environment, protecting citizens' personal information against cyberattacks is vital. This means that governments need to constantly update and strengthen their cybersecurity measures.

E-Government in the Republic of Albania

The e-government process in the Republic of Albania started with two important documents adopted by the Albanian government: the 2007-2013 Strategy on Electronic Transactions in Public Administration and the Strategy on the Digital Agenda of Albania for 2015-2020. The aim of both of these documents was to form a foundation for transforming public administration into an Albanian information society. By doing so, the Republic of Albania would be in a state of constant development and at the same level as developing countries, which according to Pasha (2022) are very aware that the transition from traditional public service to a full

inclusion in information society is the only possible path for the future. The importance of these strategies is how it emphasized the introduction of electronic transactions into the internal procedures of public administration as well as to the administrative services that are important for any natural and legal person. The very purpose of introducing electronic transactions was to provide a simple, free, and fast quality access for any natural or legal person to information about public administration and services, which as a result would ensure greater transparency and efficiency in the functioning of public administration. As a crucial component for a democratic society, modernized governance is also another government objective. The major point is to promote the digital initiative as a tool for modernizing governance and knowledge for a more open and economically sustainable society for citizens. Last but not least, the digital initiative plays a principal role in joining regional cooperation and coordination with the European Union Law and European Union institutions as part of the process of integrating the Republic of Albania into the European Un

The concrete actions for fulfilling this important and vital objective involved the implementation of certain e-services for citizens and businesses, such as e-Albania and the National Agency for Information Society Services (AKSHI). What these e-services have offered are several service categories such as document certifications with a digital stamp that proves the legal status of the service user as well as education, work insurance, contributions, and more based on requests made by the user. Even though electronic governance in Albania is in the early stages of its development, some of the achievements that have been reached so far include the government network of GOVNET, which was implemented with the support of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the European Commission. With the support of the ministries as well, this project has been implemented much faster, with government departments as well as two public service organizations having been connected through a high-speed fiber-optic network. In general, all ministries have a website and an electronic database where legal acts are presented as well as news about the activity of each ministry and all strategic documents, thus realizing the electronic distribution of information (Pasha, 2022).

According to Keta and Ziu (2020), when addressing the new way for citizens to participate in the decision-making process, the first instrument one needs to consider is the rule of law, which is not just an instrument of the government but more importantly a principle to which all of society, government included, are bound and a fundamental element in advancing democracy. One key component in the 21st

century has been the use of e-tools. According to Davies (2015), the process being realized through the eyes of a citizen or business also provides an opportunity for redesigning organizational structures and procedures with the purpose of promoting efficiency within public services.

According to Keco et al. (2023), the development of the public sector in Albania over the last two decades has undergone significant improvements, this being seen as well in terms of citizens' demands and expectations of public services. What Keco et al. emphasized is that public agencies are providing a variety of digital services to users, and with regard to addressing citizens' expectations, the governmental platform e-Albania has improved and increased the number of electronic services for citizens and businesses over the last decade. Sear (2024) also mentioned how the 2022-2026 Digital Agenda recently adopted in June 2022 has set a great advantage for Albania to navigate the market dynamics and competitive pressures within the European Union (EU). Sear also stipulated that, with the adoption of such an agenda, the country has shown a degree of readiness and made improvements for enhancing its competitiveness.

AKSHI is a public administration institution that has the status of a legal entity with a public budget. AKSHI is subordinate to the Prime Minister's office and has headquarters in the capital city of Tirana. AKSHI's organizational form has remained at the central level while extending its activity to the entire territory of the Republic of Albania. AKSHI's main responsibility is closely related to providing services in the field of technology and information to natural and legal persons with public or private status (Republic of Albania Law No. 43/2023 on Electronic Governance, Article 23).

For implementing its mission, AKSHI has divided its responsibilities into three roles: as a creator and administrator of service infrastructures, systems, portals, trusted services, and registries; as a contributor to the drafting of policies and action plans in the field of information and communication technology (ICT), and other duties according to the provisions of the Republic of Albania Law No. 43/2023 on Electronic Governance. In order for AKSHI to fulfill its functional tasks, it uses human resources for the purpose of providing electronic services with complete efficiency and effectiveness 24 hours a day, seven days a week (Article 24 of Law No. 43/2023).

AKSHI performs certain tasks within its role as a creator and administrator of service infrastructures, systems, portals, trusted services, and registries. These tasks are:

- Providing online services for citizens and private entities through ICTs that are served by the government and public entities,
- Providing ICT services for state administration institutions and bodies under the responsibility of the Council of Ministers. ICT services are also offered to other public institutions upon their own request,
- Providing authenticated acts, electronic signatures, electronic seals, and electronic certificates for public administration bodies and institutions and public entities in accordance with the decision of the Council of Ministers,
- Enabling interaction with the governmental portal e-Albania and other platforms for the purpose of using the electronic identification and other trusted services from qualified trusted providers authorized in the Republic of Albania,
- Guaranteeing the implementation of cyber security measures for all electronic public service infrastructures in the capacity of a government operator.

The government platform e-Albania is another novelty the government of the Republic of Albania has presented for the purpose of having fast and efficient public administration, faster receipt of public services and response to any problematic issue citizens might have. This governmental interactive platform offers electronic services and is administered and developed by AKSHI. The function of e-Albania is to serve as a gateway through which any interested citizen can receive electronic services public institutions provide through the Internet. Since 2020, the digitalization of a good number of public services has been provided, through which citizens and legal entities can now apply for online. The procedure is easy. Citizens and legal entities are able to apply simply through the e-Albania platform for whatever public service they request, and the public administration employees look after the platform and collect applications for all the subjects. All state records and documents can be easily used and reused without any kind of obstacle, freeing citizens from the burden of having to collect them physically (Republic of Albania, 2014).

The significant part of the government portal e-Albania is its connection to the Government Interaction Platform, which plays an important role in enabling the electronic systems of the public institutions to interact, as well as communication to occur between state databases in order to provide effective electronic services. The e-Albania platform acts as a one-stop shopping system, where the portal serves as a single point around which government institutions provide public services, thus working as a single entry point for citizens and legal entities while being con-

nected to the Government Interaction Platform, which currently enables 60 electronic systems of public institutions to interact (Republic of Albania, 2014).

As one of the most important initiatives under the principle of good administration, the government portal e-Albania offers some basic standards. The first is related to public administration institutions providing information about their services. The information presented on the governmental portal is updated as needed by the institutions themselves. The second standard has to do with the portal functionality. The e-Albania platform ensures its availability 24 hours a day, seven days a week, at over 99% functionality. Another thing to mention is how its functionality ensures payments for every electronic service provided, and these are made securely through the Government Electronic Payments Platform, which is connected to banking and other non-banking institutions. The third standard is related to the registration process and the protection of personal data. The registration process is carried out through the e-Albania platform, and the data users fill in during this process are verified electronically through the National Register for Civil Status for individuals or through the National Commercial Register for legal entities. When addressing the protection of personal data, the portal is designed to offer a combination of security technologies (Republic of Albania, 2014).

Digitalization has a crucial impact in human life in modern time, when nowadays people can communicate or get information faster than was possible in earlier periods. The process of digital transformation in Albania has been going on for a long time, and all public and private actors contribute to changing the mindset of citizens regarding this new form of communication, something which is also inevitable at the same time. According to the Digital Agenda of the Republic of Albania 2022-2026, Albania currently has over 1,200 public services that are offered online, translating to around 95% of all public services, which compared to 2014 had only 14 public services (i.e., only 1% of services were available online then). Based on the findings of the Digital Agenda of the Republic of Albania 2022-2026, the increase in online public services has brought several advantages, such as lower costs, facilitation of bureaucratic procedures, and less time spent receiving these services; however, what the Digital Agenda 2022-2026 really emphasizes is the improvements in the transparency and quality of what is provided.

The major investments the Albanian government undertook involved such things as digitalizing physical archives, increasing the number of public institution systems connected to the Governmental Interaction Platform, exchanging data among the public institution systems, adding new electronic services to the e-Al-

bania platform, establishing the specific mechanisms enabling the circulation of legal documents equipped with electronic signatures and seals. All activity has been concentrated on digitalizing the public administration based on a specific legal framework covering all the processes required for developing the country's e-Government (Digital Agenda of Albania 2022-2026, 2022).

Several of the most prestigious international organizations have given their opinions regarding digital governance in Albania. According to the latest report on the European Commission for 2023, the institutional and legal framework on ensuring a public administration oriented toward the citizens is in place. As an example, the European Commission Report (2023) took the new Digital Agenda of Albania 2022-2026 and stated that it still needs to align with such important frameworks as the European Interoperability Framework and that this must be ensured. The United Nations' (UN, 2022) e-Government Survey organized by the Department of Economic and Social Affairs stipulated that Albania, alongside 11 other upper-middle income countries (Argentina, Brazil, China, Ecuador, Kazakhstan, Malaysia, Mexico, Peru, Serbia, Thailand, and Türkiye) had achieved very high levels in the sector of open systems interconnection (OSI) by reaching considerable advances in capital and infrastructure development. Alongside other reports, the Regional School of Public Administration (ReSPA, an EU initiative) and Support for Improvement in Governance and Management (SIGMA), a joint Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) and EU initiative, have also awarded the Republic of Albania with a prize for digital governance with its Digital Agenda of Albania 2022-2026 through which it has implemented applications, initiatives, on-line services, and efficient measures for dealing with COVID-19 throughout the pandemic period.

When addressing electronic seals, since 2017 when electronic documents were given full legal status in the Republic of Albania, their number has increased, with more than 16 million documents having been downloaded; thusly, citizens have avoided the prolonged time waiting in lines (United Nations in Albania, 2022). Considered the basic architecture for interacting with public institutions' electronic systems, the government interaction platform is currently connected through the government network GovNet with 55 public administrations' electronic systems. GovNet is a private government fiber optic network built from the latest technological equipment with advanced security that has managed to be present in over 250 government institutions, distributing Internet and other centralized services (United Nations in Albania, 2022).

On May 1, 2022, the government of the Republic of Albania decided to close its so-called “front desks” for the purpose of transforming public services into 100% online service delivery. On one hand, the aim of improving service quality by offering short waits and reduced corruption has almost been fully achieved (European Commission, 2023), while according to another report from the European Commission (2022), this rapid shift has raised the question about the quality and accessibility of services for those with limited digital skills, those with limited access to the Internet, and those with disabilities. In response to this question, the government has expressed its intention to establish certain contact centers throughout the country’s territory. Currently, most municipalities have one-stop-shop centers that are able to provide services to the citizens. As for accessibility to electronic services for persons with disabilities, according to European Commission Report (2023), the Republic of Albania need to align with Article 2 of Directive 2016/2102, which foresees the need to understand accessibility as principles and techniques that need to be taken into account when designing, constructing, maintaining, and updating websites and mobile applications in order to make them more accessible to users, including persons with disabilities in particular.

The cyberattacks that happened in July and September 2022 temporarily shut down the governmental portal. In response to such a big issue, the government began to strengthen its cybersecurity architecture by appointing a National Coordinator for Cybersecurity, setting up a Cybersecurity Operations Center, and adopting the Law on Cybersecurity with the aim of further aligning with the NIS 2 Directive, which was enacted in 2023 with the main objective of modernizing the legal framework for other countries, increasing digitalization, and evolving a strong cybersecurity mechanism. The 2020-2025 national strategy for cybersecurity and its action plan is the first step for strengthening this crucial area. Another important institution is the National Authority on Electronic Certification and Cybersecurity, and apart from dealing with cyber threats, it also has the main duty of organizing and interacting with the national security and defense institutions in Albania for participating in the cyber exercise called the Cyber Coalition of NATO. This coalition brings together a cyber coalition of NATO bodies, allies, and partners with the purpose of defending against the cyberattacks by supporting NATO’s main tasks in this regard (National Authority on Electronic Certificaton and Cyber Security, 2022).

e-Government in the Republic of Türkiye

The e-government system in Türkiye was developed for citizens to have electronic access to government services. It has been an integral part of the digital transformation process in Türkiye's public administration and provided significant gains as it has evolved over time regarding the functions it offers and its purposes.

The foundations of the e-government system in Türkiye began to be laid in the early 2000s. The first steps were toward moving public services to the electronic environment and making them accessible to citizens over the Internet. This process has gone through multiple stages and reached today's comprehensive and integrated service structure. Many public institutions began developing internal digitalization projects, but these efforts initially proceeded independently of one another with no coordination. Türkiye's e-Government Gateway (e-Devlet) was launched in 2008 (Government of Türkiye, 2023). This platform has been designed to enable citizens to access various public services securely from a single point. With the launch of the e-Government Gateway, citizens have gained significant convenience and speed when accessing public services.

After the e-Government Gateway became operational, the number of services offered and the number of system users increased rapidly. The development of mobile technologies and Internet infrastructure also changed the e-Government system. The mobile application of e-Devlet has enabled citizens to easily access services via their smartphones. In addition, the development of authentication methods and the introduction of digital authentication tools such as electronic and mobile signatures have increased system security and improved user experience. The development of the e-Government system has also been recognized internationally, and Türkiye's actions regarding digital public services have been shown as an example on many platforms. Additionally, Türkiye has contributed to global digital transformation efforts by sharing technology and information with other countries (Şeker, 2023).

The system was expanded over time to include public services in different areas such as health, education, justice, police, and social security. The e-Government website has different functions citizens can access, such as:

- Justice,
- Environment, Agriculture, and Livestock,
- State and Legislation,

- Education,
- General Information,
- Security,
- Business and Career,
- Personal Information,
- Health,
- Social Security and Insurance,
- Complaints and Obtaining Information,
- Telecommunications,
- Traffic and Transportation,
- Taxes, Fees, and Penalties (Government of Türkiye, 2023).

Türkiye's e-Government system has been internationally recognized through various evaluations. Studies such as the United Nations e-Government Survey (UN, 2022) have frequently emphasized Türkiye's progress in the field of e-government applications and digital public services and comparatively analyzed it with other countries, stating Türkiye to have taken significant steps in its digital transformation and highlighting the scope, accessibility, and user-friendly interfaces of the services Türkiye offers.

In particular, developing countries are sharing knowledge and experience on how they can improve their own e-government services. Türkiye's e-Government system has created a transformation in the delivery of public services and adapted to the requirements of the digital age by facilitating citizens' interactions with the state. This success has been made possible by integrating technological innovations and adopting a citizen-centered approach (OECD, 2023).

Although the e-Government system in Türkiye has achieved significant success in digitalizing public services and facilitating citizens' access to government transactions, areas exist that need improvement, as frequently expressed by users.

Users have criticized the user interface of and experience with the e-Government system from time to time. Unfriendly interfaces and cybersecurity concerns in some parts of the system can create difficulties. In particular, news about the hacking of user information sometimes causes concern among citizens (Kara-Kaşka, 2022). Users' personal information, financial data, and other sensitive data must

be securely protected. In Türkiye, although its e-Government system is generally considered secure, it needs to be constantly updated and its security measures improved against cyberattacks and data breaches. As such, ensuring the transparency of the system and information about how user data is protected is important.

Besides the criticism brought by users, Türkiye's e-Government system usually receives good feedback from its users. Additionally, it encourages people to be engaged with the online services as well, with 73.9% of citizens actively using the e-Government Gateway (Turkish Statistical Institute, 2023). Statistically, 4.4 billion people had accessed the e-Government Gateway by the end of 2023 (Bodur, 2024). The e-Government system has created an important milestone in the field of digital public services; and its ongoing developmental work has the potential to increase user satisfaction and provide more inclusive service in Türkiye. Still, its system functionality has good room for improvement.

e-Government in the Republic of North Macedonia

Digitalization represents a significant subject. Nonetheless, one must not overlook the fact that society is subject to change, and modernization and technological advancement have induced substantial societal shifts within a relatively short period of time. Posing inquiries regarding the nature of progress itself, its efficiency, and its long-term ramifications is essential, sometimes even on an evolutionary basis. Summarily, when considering that developing countries including North Macedonia aspire toward complete digitalization and envisage a significant future within this realm, to initially delineate the positive aspects thereof and conduct a retrospective analysis of the situation would be prudent.

According to Agenda 2030 (Mojsovska, 2022, p. 26), the primary focus of digitalization in North Macedonia is placed on the following areas:

- Skills (number of ICT experts in the country, particularly women, and the percentage of digitally literate population),
- Government (digitalization of public services, e-health, and digital identity),
- Businesses (percentage of companies using advanced IT technologies in their operations; speed of growth of innovative companies and the percentage of SMEs using basic digital technologies),
- Infrastructure (Internet connection quality and speed; the number of secure communication nodes; Mojsovska, 2022, p. 26).

According to data from the State Statistical Office, over 83% of households had Internet access at home in 2020, with the majority using broadband Internet. Regarding business entities, 91% of companies with more than 10 employees use computer technology and broadband Internet. Among the total number of firms with 10 or more employees, 54.5% had a website, and concerning e-commerce, 6.2% utilized electronic sales platforms. The latter two indicators point to a very low prevalence of formal electronic sales by business entities. However, informal sales should be noted to occur through the direct use of social networks (State Department of Statistics, 2023). The Global Goals and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (UN, 2015) focuses on digitalization of the administration and created couple of focus topics;

1. Accelerating Digital Transformation in the Country:

- Advancing infrastructure and digitization technologies while keeping pace with global changes (e.g., 5G).
- Providing training to enhance digital literacy among the population and workforce.
- Digitalizing all levels of education, focusing on providing infrastructure and promoting advanced digital skills among students, teachers, and educational staff.
- Introducing various means of electronic identity.
- Implementing public-private partnership models as a means to accelerate digital transformation.

2. Promoting the Digital Economy:

- Ensuring easy access to information for businesses regarding available digital technologies in the country and the business opportunities they offer.
- Promoting formal electronic sales in domestic and international trade of goods and services.
- Implementing the digital agenda of the Western Balkans.
- Elevating the level of digital skills among the workforce.

3. Developing the Macedonian IT Sector:

- Encouraging the education of ICT experts.
- Promoting the development of the IT sector as a driving service activity in North Macedonia.
- Actively attracting investments in the IT sector in the country.

- Strategically retaining IT professionals in the country.
4. Complete Digitalization of Public Services:
- Completing the e-services system as a comprehensive system.
 - Enhancing the capacity of public institutions to deliver comprehensive e-services.
 - Elevating the digital literacy of citizens and business entities for using e-services (Mojsovska, 2022, pp. 27-28).

The aim of digitalization has been to allow citizens to adopt digital services, to prevent corruption, and to secure citizens' electronic data. Then-Minister of Justice Mihajlo Manevski stated, "The electronic counter is the greatest preventive barrier against corruption" (Ministry of Justice, 2011). Chamber of Notaries of the Republic of North Macedonia President Zlatko Nikolovski and Information Society and Administration Minister Ivo Ivanovski emphasized that the introduction of the e-counter will secure data and that a service-oriented administration will be developed for citizens (Metamorphosis, 2022). Top of Form

The first initiative was the One-Stop Shop project of the Ministry of Information Society and Administration, which aimed at connecting all state institutions in the Republic of North Macedonia in order to simplify citizens' access to institutions and the services they offer. Citizens can get all the services and information they need in one place. At the One-Stop Shop center, one's ID profile can be upgraded for the needs of the National Services Portal. Citizens can reserve their appointment or use the electronic booking system *Get a Number*. The project has aimed to streamline citizen access to government services by consolidating multiple services from various ministries and state institutions into a single location. This initiative was a response to the growing demand for improved efficiency and convenience in accessing public services. The implementation of the One-Stop Shop system has provided citizens with access to services and information from various institutions. These include the Ministry of Interior, Ministry of Transport and Communications, Public Revenue Office, Agency for Real Estate Cadastre, Employment Agency, Ministry of Labor and Social Policy, Central Registry, Health Insurance Fund, Civil Registry Office, and Pension and Disability Insurance Fund (Employment Agency of the Republic of North Macedonia, 2022).

Overall, the One-Stop Shop project has represented a significant advancement in the digitalization of public services, aiming to improve efficiency, reduce bureau-

cratic barriers, and enhance citizen satisfaction. A large number of the people weren't even familiar with the government's efforts toward digitalization; it had never produced a grand effect or raised efficiency. All implementations had very little result on the population's interest toward digitalization, and the analyses are ones that were conducted recently in 2022.

According to the information from *Kanal 5* [Channel 5, a national TV channel], citizens with higher education were shown in 2023 to tend to turn more toward online administrative services. For instance, while 62.1% of respondents with a higher education preferred online administrative services, only 11.6% of those without even basic education shared this preference. Those who have used online services overwhelmingly expressed satisfaction. In fact, 87.4% of respondents said they were satisfied with the online service they'd received from government institutions, while only 11.6% were dissatisfied. Many citizens (25.6%) used the online services of the Ministry of Interior, followed by 10.6% having used those of the Employment Agency and 7.8% the online services of the Agency for Real Estate Cadastre. Based on these statistics, citizens can be said to have been insufficiently informed about the benefits of digital administration. In this context, the system does function, despite not being very popular. This stance was expressed by 53.3% of the respondents, while 23.7% believe that reform in public administration should focus on new hirings and training. Here, the clientelist hirings had evidently harmed the state (Kanal 5, 2023).

Conclusion

The implementation of e-government formats is now considered a way to improve the quality of services that states provide to their citizens and to facilitate access to these services. In this context, different countries such as Albania, Türkiye, and North Macedonia have aimed to accelerate the transformations in this field by adopting digitalization processes regarding public administration. All three countries have developed their own e-government applications and encountered similar challenges within these processes. However, they've also differed in terms of the way their systems have been implemented and the successes they've achieved.

Albania has taken important steps in implementing e-government applications. In particular, e-services offered through the e-Albania portal have allowed citizens quicker and easier access to government services. However, one of the biggest challenges Albania faces in the implementation of its e-government strategy is the in-

adequacy of its digital infrastructure. This situation prevents e-services from being used to their full potential and has slowed down the pace of its digital transform.

Türkiye has come to a very advanced point in the field of e-government. The comprehensive services offered through its e-Government Gateway have facilitated citizens' transactions with the government and increased the efficiency of public services. A strong digital infrastructure and high level of digital literacy lie behind the success of the e-Government applications in Türkiye. However, one of the challenges Türkiye also faces involves countering the ever-increasing cybersecurity threats and protecting citizens' personal data.

North Macedonia has made significant initiatives in the digitalization of public services through the One-Stop Shop project. However, the particular challenges North Macedonia faces in its digital transformation are its slow progress digitalizing public institutions and citizens' low interest in e-services.

From a comparative perspective, the e-government applications of Albania, Türkiye, and North Macedonia have been shaped in line with the specific conditions and needs of each country. Although all three countries have taken significant steps toward digitalizing public services, they have differed in terms of the challenges encountered and the successes achieved from this process. For example, progress in the delivery and accessibility of e-services in Albania has required continued efforts to improve digital infrastructure and literacy levels. Meanwhile, Türkiye's e-Government Gateway has significantly facilitated citizens' access to government services with its wide range of services and user-friendly interface; however, cybersecurity measures need to be strengthened for the sustainability of this success. On the other hand, North Macedonia has been trying to increase the accessibility of public services through innovative projects such as the One-Stop Shop, but more efforts are needed to ensure widespread adoption and effective implementation of such projects.

As a result, the e-government applications of Albania, Türkiye, and North Macedonia have made significant strides in accelerating digital transformation regarding public administration. This process has included both common challenges and unique problems faced by each country. These countries' experiences emphasize the importance of a comprehensive strategy, a participatory approach, and efforts at continuous improvement in digital transformation. The successes achieved in this journey provide valuable examples for other countries and shed light on the future development of e-government applications.

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