



SIGMA
Creating Change Together



A joint initiative of the OECD and the EU,
principally financed by the EU

Digital Government in the Western Balkans

Following the key insights from the SIGMA Monitoring Reports

28 April 2022

AGENDA

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Final AGENDA



28 April 2022



10.00-12.30 CET



Online event [REGISTER HERE](#)

About the SIGMA Monitoring Reports

SIGMA has carried out reviews against [The Principles of Public Administration](#) in EU candidate countries and potential candidates since 2015. These reviews analyse performance against standard benchmarks and performance criteria, establishing both the state of play at a point in time and the subsequent progress made towards the standards for good governance and requirements for successful European integration, as set out in the Principles and its indicators. Regional comparisons and detailed and sequenced recommendations for reform are provided. The reviews feed into the European Commission's annual progress reports and its programming of support to PAR. They also provide SIGMA partners with data and analysis to inform their own reform activities.

The full 2021 [Monitoring Reports](#) were presented and discussed in bilateral events in Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo*, Montenegro, the Republic of North Macedonia and Serbia in the course of December 2021 and January 2022. Building on the country specific reports, the key messages and lessons learned at the regional level were the subject of the [SIGMA Ministerial Conference: Good public administration for better lives in the Western Balkans](#) of 22 February 2022.

In order to further stimulate regional exchanges, SIGMA is organising a series of three, cross-cutting regional events:



Digital government (online event) 28 April 2022



Administrative simplification (co-hosted with ReSPA in Istanbul) 24 May 2022



Managerial accountability (online event) mid June 2022

Digital government in the Western Balkans

Today, governments are increasingly committed to digitalising public services and their administration, with the aim of making administrative procedures simpler and more accessible. Overall, this digital transformation of public administration can have consequences that go beyond a simple modernisation, transforming traditional models of governance and becoming an instrument for open government.

The ability to store, retrieve, process, and transfer vast amounts of information is enhancing the efficiency of public institutions, opening up new avenues of policy development and implementation and revolutionising service quality and accessibility. These information flows break down prior conceptions of 'place' in public administration (local, central, supra-national). Digitalisation touches all areas of public administration, including educational (online learning), medical (e-Health) and judicial (e-Justice), as well as administrative services themselves (enquiring, applying, registering, licensing, paying, etc.). Moreover, digital government also acts as a springboard and catalyst for economic growth.

Over the last few years, digital transformation has moved to the top of every public organisation's agenda. Putting people at the centre of the digital transition is crucial for the European Commission (EC). According to the 2021 EC progress reports for the Western Balkans¹, 2021 SIGMA Monitoring Reports², as well as the 2021 Digital Economy and Society Index Report³, service delivery will still hugely depend on technologies and diverse and evolving client demands and expectations. The overarching vision of EU 2030 is conceptualised under the [Digital Compass](#)⁴. Besides digital skills, secure and sustainable digital infrastructure and digital transformation of businesses, it focuses on the digitalisation of public services. It can be seen as an inspiring concept for Western Balkan and other economies at the international level. Digital integration across various channels of public service delivery will lead the transformation process in 2022 and onwards.

Digitalisation of public services has been a key priority in the Western Balkan government agendas and the COVID-19 pandemic has accelerated the sense of urgency. The Digital Agenda for the Western Balkans joined the Western Balkans Investment Framework (WBIF), the Common Regional Market Action Plan and the EU Economic and Investment Plan for the Western Balkans (EIP) to set a path towards sustainable digital governance for the public administration of the Western Balkan region.

SIGMA's 2021 Monitoring Reports demonstrated that service delivery is the area that has most substantially improved in the Western Balkan region since 2017. Administrations have understood the importance of digitalisation, although progress is uneven with the emphasis on services for businesses. Despite the improvements in digitalisation, many services are still only provided in a traditional form, often leaving the potential provided by digital enablers underutilised.

This webinar will focus on the key opportunities and challenges for governments in the area of digital transformation both now and in the future. Key issues such as further digitalising services, investing in infrastructure, digital skills and competences, minding the digital gap, securing electronic identification, authentication and trust services will be discussed with key digital actors from the Western Balkan region and the EU. Moreover, discussion of (business) process-related aspects will encompass the increase in inclusive (user-centric) design and use of e-services, the co-ordination of DT and quality assurance (monitoring) of public services and the cross fertilisation of the concept of integrated service delivery with crisis management and future (foresight strategies).

1 [Countries \(europa.eu\)](#)

2 [Monitoring Reports - OECD \(sigmaweb.org\)](#)

3 [DESI — Digital Public Services | Shaping Europe's digital future \(europa.eu\)](#)

4 [Europe's Digital Decade: digital targets for 2030 | European Commission \(europa.eu\)](#)

Draft Agenda

10.00	Welcome and Opening <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Gregor Virant, <i>Head of the SIGMA Programme</i> ✓ Florian Hauser, <i>Team leader Public Administration Reform , DGNEAR European Commission</i>
10.15	Insights from the SIGMA monitoring reports on the state of play on digital government in the Western Balkan region <i>Nick Thijs and José Manuel Diaz, senior advisors, SIGMA</i>
10.30	A roadmap for digital government transformation: do's, don'ts and must haves <i>Siim Sikkut - former CIO Estonia</i>
11.00	Panel 1: Digital government transformation in the Western Balkan Region <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Slavica Grkovska, <i>Deputy Prime Minister (North-Macedonia)</i> ✓ Marina Banović, <i>State secretary Ministry Public Administration Digital Society and Media (Montenegro)</i> ✓ Dara Gravara Stojanović, <i>Ministry Public Administration and Local Self Government (Serbia)</i> <i>Moderated by Boris Koprivnikar, digital government expert and former Slovenian Minister of Public Administration</i>
11.30	Points of attention and interest for the Western Balkan region from and EU perspective <i>Maximilian Strotmann, head of unit , DGDIGIT European Commission</i>
11.50	Panel 2: Key aspects in Digital governance in the Western Balkans <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Nevila Repishti and Romina Kostani, <i>Director of Governmental Portal e-Albania, NAIS (Albania)</i> ✓ Luleon Jagxhiu, <i>Chief Technology Officer (Kosovo)</i> ✓ Nermin Bećirbašić, <i>IDDEAA - Agency for identification documents, registers and data exchange (BiH)</i> <i>Moderated by Maja Handjiska-Trendafilova, Director ReSPA</i>
12.20	Closing words <i>Gregor Virant</i>
12.30	<i>End of the meeting</i>

Interpretation provided in Albanian, Macedonian and BSC languages

ABOUT SIGMA

SIGMA (Support for Improvement in Governance and Management) is a joint initiative of the OECD and the European Union, principally financed by the EU. Its key objective is to strengthen the foundations for improved public governance, and hence support socio-economic development through building the capacities of the public sector, enhancing horizontal governance and improving the design and implementation of public administration reforms, including proper prioritisation, sequencing and budgeting. We have been working with our partners on strengthening their public governance systems and public administration capacities since 1992.

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