MATRIX OF RECOMMENDATIONS
"FOR IMPROVING THE QUALITY OF DIGITAL PUBLIC SERVICES TO BUSINESSES"
October 2023

This matrix of recommendations aims to summarize the recommendations and solutions proposed in the Technical Note and serves as an Internal Plan for monitoring from AIC secretariat team to follow up their implementation.

The following recommendations are product of the analyses and consultation of IC Secretariat with a considerable number of stakeholders and experts both in private and public sector. The IC Analysis brings for discussion interventions relying upon private sector (MSME's) perspectives on the quality of digitized public services with a focus on the private sector, highlighting progress and prioritizing the main issues in three pillars: (a) assessment of the administrative burden and corrupt practices. (b) experiences with online platforms (e-Albania, e-tax, e-fiscalization, electronic signature and municipal platforms (c) assessment of specific elements of electronic service platforms - security, access, deadlines, navigation, complaints, etc.

Intervention /Recommendation	Responsible institutions/ Institutions included in implementation	Term
Recommendation 1. Institutionalisation of the process of re-engineering and dynamic deregulation of public administrative services provided by central institutions for Business. The process of deregulation and re-engineering of services in general, and specifically services for business, _should have a concentrated focus and an integrated approach through a specific structure, that constantly pays attention to the improvement of standard of services by proposing and following the implementation through innovative and efficient solutions_.[1] Thus, ad-hoc and non-integrated interventions would be avoided.	**Deputy PM MSHMS Agency for Dialog and co-governance NAIS RTIA ADISA**	**Short term**
Recommendation 2. Digitisation of local administrative public services for business. Local administrative services for businesses have a big gap from the point of view of digitalisation compared to the administrative services of central government institutions. Except for some sporadic cases (such as e-permits,	**Deputy PM MSHMS**	

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[1] _Although at the moment it seems that there is a joint initiative of the Agency for Dialogue and Co-governance and NAIS to coordinate a service reengineering process, still the idea is that this should not be considered an action at a certain point in time, but enhance a structure that constantly thinks about innovative solutions, deregulation and dynamic reengineering based on the ever-changing conditions of the business environment. Perhaps a merger of ADISA within the Agency for Dialogue and Co-governance where a special structure (within the Agency for Dialogue and Co-governance) would specialize and work only on "user-focused service innovation" merging technological and regulatory elements into different solutions, could be a solution long term for this matter._

for example), digitisation is almost non-existent even though the "Decentralization Strategy" has identified the digitisation of local services as one of its priority pillars. In this direction, it would be recommendable: (1) _Legal and institutional clarification for the coordination and implementation of the digitalisation process of local services_. This would require cooperation between agencies at the central level (NAIS, Agency for Dialogue and Co-governance, Agency for the support of local self-government, NBC) and municipalities (at the level of associations) to create a coordination mechanism. (2) _A process of harmonisation, categorisation, codification, and re-engineering of local services identified at the local level._ The complete inventory of local administrative services is a necessary process considering that the Municipalities have autonomy in the "creation" of services. Based on an initial analysis, would be recommended the prioritisation of the main group of harmonised services for all the municipalities (have the same nature and requirements) and go through a process of re-engineering and digitalisation that would serve to all municipalities.	**Minister of State for Local Government** **Ministry of Interior** **Agency for the support of local self-government** **Municipalities** **NAIS** **NBC** **Agency for Dialog and co-governance**	**Medium-term**
Recommendation 3. Support for "digitalisation" and digital education of businesses, especially with a focus on small and medium-sized businesses through (a) programs with grants/assistance for SMEs; (b) digital education through ongoing massive awareness campaigns, such as events like Albanian digital days; (c) programs training provided to business to facilitate usability and adoption with the digital transition such as the use of e-Albania, electronic document management, use of electronic signature, information management systems, etc.; (d) dedicated tutorials for each service.	**MSHMS NAIS AIDA Chambers of Commerce Business Associations Partners for development/ Donors**	**Medium-term**
Recommendation 4. Enhancing Service Quality for Businesses. Recognising businesses as crucial contributors to the budget, the enhancement of service quality relies not only on investment in technical and technological infrastructure or streamlined procedures but also on the proficiency of the public administration staff in digital realms. To achieve this, the following steps are proposed: (1) _Drafting and Annually Publishing a Roadmap_: Establishing a comprehensive plan that outlines concrete training objectives and associated budgets[2] on a yearly basis; (2) _Strengthening Capacities through Ongoing Digital Training:_ Continuous education initiatives for	**Deputy PM MSHMS DAP NAIS**	**Medium-term**

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[2] For example, "digital bootcamps" trainings.

administration personnel, focusing on adapting to digital transformations; (3) *Transparent Progress Monitoring*: Implementing a transparent system to monitor results, thereby ensuring alignment with reform objectives, efficient budget utilisation, and enhanced accountability to taxpayers.		
Recommendation 5. Strengthening Information Security on Digital Administrative Platforms. In addressing the security of information shared on digital platforms for administrative services, the following steps are advised: (1) *Establishment of a Contingency Plan for Cyber Attacks:* Develop comprehensive "back-up" and "recovery" plans to respond to potential cyber-attacks quickly and effectively. This plan should be made transparent to both businesses and the public. Such transparency will foster trust in the platforms and encourage their use; (2) *Implementation of Information Classification*: Introduce a system for categorising publicised information, particularly data disclosed by businesses. This could involve implementing limited access to certain data, for instance, through a payment system.	**Deputy PM MSHMS NAIS Agency for Dialog and co-governance AKCESK**	**Long- term**
Recommendation 6. Streamlining User Support for Enhanced Platform Usability. To optimise the usability of platforms for businesses, it is proposed to establish an integrated support system that harmonises all service channels. Currently, the fragmented approach creates confusion and inefficiency, hampering its effectiveness. *Building a coherent integrated system, rooted in user experience, necessitates a meticulous mapping of touchpoints and levels that users engage with, to access needed information more efficiently.* This mapping process would summarise the entire user-service interaction cycle, enhancing user assistance comprehensively. To initiate this system, a "user journey" model can be employed, which centres around the user's query. This journey model should encompass an entry point and diversions based on specific query types. Additionally, to centralise support, *it is recommended to unify the support phone number and offer real-time "chat box" assistance for service-related issues.* This concerted approach is envisioned to bolster user satisfaction and engagement while streamlining the problem-solving process.	**Deputy PM MSHMS NAIS Agency for Dialog and co-governance ADISA**	**Medium-term**
Recommendation 7. Simplifying the complaints process through harmonisation, integration, and improvement of the complaints system for administrative services. The following steps are proposed to *Initiate a User Journey Mapping:* Commence by meticulously mapping the "user journey" concerning complaints about services**.** This mapping should encompass all touchpoints and interactions a user undergoes when raising a complaint. The outcome should be a clear and coherent path that users can follow. *Integration into e-Albania Platform:* Based on the established user journey mapping, integrate the complaints process into the e-Albania platform, aligned with specific requested services. This step facilitates the digitalisation of complaints and overall	**Deputy PM MSHMS MFE NAIS Agency for Dialog and co-governance**	**Medium-term**

efficiency in addressing them. Priority Focus on Key Services: *Prioritise the enhancement of the complaints process for crucial services*, particularly those involving the NBC, Customs, and Tax Administration.	**ADISA**	
Recommendation 8. Review, evaluation, and regulation of administrative services for agricultural businesses and farmers through the following aspects that need to be addressed: (1) *Streamlining Initial Registration of Agricultural Cooperatives* as the entire process of registration of these companies and documents requirements should be reviewed since it is currently considered difficult and subject to unclear interpretations. (2) *Regulating and unifying the registration of farmers with Taxpayer Identification Number (NIPT), since all farmers who sell their products to entrepreneurs (traders) are obliged to register and be equipped with the NIPT certificate*: This registration serves various purposes, including adherence to the VAT scheme and participation in the National Agriculture Support Scheme. Presently, this process requires physical document submission at Regional Tax Directorates. Meanwhile, to access IPARD funds, farmers need a separate NIPT issued from NBC, leading to the use of two separate NIPTs. To streamline this, *it is suggested to unify the process and ensure that farmers operate with a single NIPT, possibly through NBC (as any other business) and operate solely with one NIPT. However, despite the decision whether the registration process is managed by the NBC or Regional Tax Directorates, the key is to establish a unified and digitalised approach that p*resently is conducted in a physical format.	**Deputy PM MSHMS MBZHR AZHBR NAIS Agency for Dialog and co-governance ADISA GDT NBC**	**Medium-term**
Recommendation 9. Improvement of the online payment system, at least for central administrative services. To bolster the effectiveness of the online payment system for central administrative services, the following steps are advised: *Expansion of Online Payment Channels:* Presently, payments are facilitated via two main avenues: 1) physical banks, and 2) Credins Bank online within e-Albania. Acknowledging the business community's inclination towards online payments, it's recommended to broaden the scope of options. This entails enabling online payments through all second-level banks and even exploring additional payment methods. *Addressing Concerns and Improving Security:* Addressing scepticism regarding transaction security is pivotal. Measures to ensure the integrity and safety of online transactions must be implemented and clearly communicated to enhance user trust. *Diversification, Facilitation, and Speed:* By incorporating multiple second-level banks and alternative payment options within the e-Albania platform, the payment process will become more diverse, streamlined, and efficient. This step will significantly contribute to expediting services for businesses.	**Deputy PM MSHMS NAIS Agency for Dialog and co-governance ADISA Bank of Albania Bank's Association**	**Medium-term**
Recommendation 10. Simplifying the interaction and usability of platforms for businesses through: (1) *Targeted Service Display:* Modify the e-Albania platform to exclusively filter/display services meant for businesses upon entering, rather than presenting all services intended also for individual citizens; (2) *Process Traceability and Resolution:* Implement a system for tracking processes, saving information while completing and resuming the process in a second step where it was left before, particularly in cases of platform malfunction; (3) *Logical*	**Deputy PM MSHMS NAIS ADISA GDT**	**Medium-term**

Codification in Fiscalization platform: In the Fiscalization system, introduce a rational codification of NIVFs (National Identification and Fiscal Verification Numbers) that follows a coherent order, as opposed to using arbitrary numbers. This logical sequence simplifies the identification and retrieval of information; (4) _Automated Invoice Download:_ Enable businesses to automatically download invoices from the fiscalization system on a weekly or monthly basis. This automation streamlines archiving processes, saving time and effort.		
Recommendation 11. Re-engineering of administrative practices and procedures related to the filing of financial statements, taking advantage of the functionalities offered by digitisation, as an opportunity to reduce the administrative burden for both business and administration. Currently, there is an increased administrative burden for the business related to the filing of financial statements according to different formats in two institutions, respectively GTD and NBC, according to legal obligations arising from two different laws. Specifically, based on Law No. 9723, dated 03.05.2007, "On the National Business Centre", amended, article 43, point 3 (a), entities are obligated to submit annual financial statements, the business performance report and the audit report, maintained in accordance with legal requirements when the retention of these documents is mandatory. Their submission is currently done online at NBC in electronic format and by July 31 of the following year. Meanwhile, a similar obligation is also imposed on businesses based on Article 22 of Law No. 25/2018 "On accounting and financial statements", requiring the submission of financial statements and explanatory annexes to the GDT within 7 months from the reporting date (March 31 of the following year). Based on the goal of the digitisation to streamline the process of information and procedures, to simplify and facilitate the bureaucratic steps that are performed or administered by public administration institutions and to increase their efficiency according to _the one-stop shop concept,_ unification of the above procedures would be a reasonable measure, with mutual benefits and would require only a few legal amendments.	**Deputy PM MSHMS NAIS ADISA GDT NBC Agency for Dialog and co-governance IEKA**	**Medium-term**

Suggestions from Members	**Subject**
The costs related to the renewal of the digital firm and fiscalization should be determined in accordance with a specific methodology, based also on the experiences from other countries for example, it is suggested that these costs should be based on the average salary of the employees who will use these services.	**Pro Eksport**
Avoiding technical problems such as in cases where the subject pays from the online business account and the application is rejected because it is not specified that the payment was made from the business account, forcing the business to restart the	**Pro Eksport**

payment process from the beginning and lose time limits. It is suggested to create an express service for those businesses that wish to receive service more quickly, even at an additional cost, in order to mitigate delays and enable businesses not to be adversely affected by these challenges.	
Consider easing the procedure for issuing residence permits for foreigners, especially when the administrator is a foreigner.	**Diaspora Chamber of Commerce**
A profiling of users is needed in E Albania, to distinguish the user's local Albanians or foreigners. This information is important to make a better profile of investors and to improve the use of diaspora funds for the economic development of the country.	**Diaspora Chamber of Commerce**
"Single window" for import and export is an important issue for businesses dealing with international trade. The relevant institutions, including the Ministry of Finance and Economy, should take measures to fulfill this goal and help businesses seeking licenses for international trade.	**Union of Chamber of Commerce Albania**
Obtaining the "authorized exporter" status remains a challenge for many businesses. Training support and more detailed information on this procedure is needed.	**Union of Chamber of Commerce Albania**
In relation to e-commerce, should be made improvements on the development of electronic documents, digital signatures and online payments.	**Union of Chamber of Commerce Albania**
The simplifications that have been made in the digitization of incoming services are to be evaluated, but it is important to establish a plan for closing the digitization cycle that also includes data processing, which continues to be manual by the state administration. It is emphasized that the majority of entrepreneurship in Albania consists of small and medium-sized businesses, which have limited knowledge in the digitalization of services, therefore it is important that there is a joint plan between the government and donors to help with education and digital transformation of these companies.	**Association of Producer's Union**
The enterprise perception is that there may not be enough digital security. It is proposed to take measures and develop a transparent plan for digital security.	**Association of Producer's Union**
Self-care portal usage: several improvements are proposed, including the need for a second user to protect confidential data, approaching the date of closing the books from self-care, reviewing invoice dates that belong to the previous month, and improving the usability of the platform. Also, he emphasized the need to facilitate the regulation of VAT in the purchase books.	**Confindustria Albania**
Find solution to some problems related to the applications in the QKB, such as lack of clear instructions for each application, template responses that do not help users understand the problems, and various technical and administrative problems. A contact phone number should be placed in order to solve the inquiaries issues.	**Confindustria Albania**
e-Albania: It is advisable to create a second user with rights adjusted by the administrator to improve access and control.	**Confindustria Albania**

Taxes: in relation to problems regarding tax obligations and certifications for their repayment, it is highlighted the necesity for improvements and facilitation of their reporting and processing by companies.	**Confindustria Albania**
Regarding digitalization in the National Business Center (NBC), there are some issues regarding the services offered. For ex.s the lack of efficiency of the Farmer's NIPT at the Industrial Directorate. A review of both services should be considered.	**KASH**
The private sector has already started using electronic platforms and the use of the EBRD portal for farmers should be highlighted. However, it is important that these two platforms should work together to complement each other and to address a gap in the sector related to data collection and dissemination. This functions very well on private platforms.	**KASH**
It is important to have a dedicated budget for platform maintenance. The Ministry of Agriculture has a certain budget and it would be necessary for the Ministry of Finance and Economy to monitor it to ensure the necessary funds for the digitization process. There have been cases of misunderstandings with the budget determined by the World Bank for the digitization of the livestock sector. In the absence of a specified budget, the system will continue to operate in a limited manner.	**KASH**

Abbreviations:

Deputy PM – Deputy Prime Minister

MSHMS – Minister of State for Protection of Entrepreneurship

NAIS – National Agency of Information Services (AKSHI)

RTIA - Research, Technology and Innovation Agency (AKTI)

ADISA - Integrated Services Delivery Agency

NBC – National Business Center (QKB)

AIDA - Albanian Investment Development Agency

DAP – Department of Public Administration

AKCESK - The National Authority For Cyber Security And Electronic Certification

MFE – Ministry of Finance and Economy

MBZHR – Ministry of Agriculture and Rural development

AZHBR – Agricultural Rural Development Agenc

GDT – General Directory of Taxes

IEKA - Institute of Authorized Chartered Auditors of Albania

KASH – Albanian Agrobusiness Council

Term :

Short term- period from 1 to 6 months.

Medium-term – period from 6 month to 1 year.
Long term – period over 1 year.