

# The impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on the digital transformation of public administration: The case of Slovenian administrative units

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**Abstract:** The Covid-19 pandemic has significantly reshaped almost all aspects of societal relations, including administrative ones, whereby the rise of digital development was no exception. Namely, in an unexpected circumstance, such as the Covid-19 crisis, public service delivery cannot be suspended, but must be delivered online, relying on the available digital technology. Accordingly, public administration has faced the urgent need to assess its current digital technological capabilities while facing sudden processes of technological adoption and implementing solutions. In other words, the Covid-19 pandemic can be considered as an accelerator for digital transformation in public service delivery. Therefore, the main aim of the paper is to examine the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on the digital transformation of public administration in Slovenia. The ordinal logistic regression analysis is based on 58 public managers of administrative units who participated in the web-based survey in June 2020. The results of the paper suggest that the Covid-19 pandemic will have a lasting impact on the operation of the Slovenian administrative units, especially concerning digitization. Namely, it is very likely that the administrative units in Slovenia will continue to use digital-based solutions, including processes digitalization, web portals and digital communication channels, even after the Covid-19 crisis, whereby different internal and external factors play different role. The findings of the paper will facilitate formulating the recommendations for agile functioning of the Slovenian administrative units in line with the principles of good public governance. Namely, the Covid-19 pandemic has made clear that turbulent problems – characterized by surprising, inconsistent, unpredictable, and uncertain events – persistently disrupt public administration. Therefore, enhanced digital technological capabilities and digital transformation represent an inevitable challenge for the public administration in the future.

**Keywords:** public administration, administrative units, Covid-19, digitalization, Slovenia