

# **What Does It Take for a Local Government to Have the Administrative Capacity to Implement the Digital Transformation?**

## **Comparative Analysis Between Urban and Rural Communities.**

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### **Abstract**

Digital transformation is inevitable. It is the fourth industrial revolution in human history and differs significantly from the other three. The digital transformation allows citizens to be actively involved in the act of social communication which, until now, was generated only by state authorities and media institutions. Also, citizens need skills to participate in digital communication. Thus, the digital transformation is not a simple acquisition of software, but a fundamental cultural process that involves both the rulers and the governed. So, digital transformation requires public policies, not just software purchases.

Romania has a major gap with EU countries in terms of digitization: there are few electronic public services and very few go beyond level 2 of digital sophistication, on a scale from 1 to 5. In Romania, the gaps between urban and rural areas are very large. In the context of the European Recovery Plan and European structural funds, local governments have money for digital transformation. The question is: do local governments have the administrative capacity to generate local public policies for digital transformation? The research analyses - quantitative and qualitative - the perception of digital transformation in Romanian local communities. The study focuses on the comparative analysis between urban and rural areas regarding the process of the digital transformation. It is highlighted that the differences in digital transformation process are related to certain objective economic, social, and political conditions, but they are decisively related to subjective conditions such as the training and determination of local leaders elected to implement digital transformation in cities and the villages they lead. The paper identifies the conditions for a community to advance digitally and recommends steps to be taken by local authorities so that any community can elaborate public policies to move forward on the digital transformation process.

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