Digital-Era Legal Frameworks in Public Administration: From Deregulation to Normative Reconstruction in the Data-Driven State

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Abstract: This paper examines the transformation of legal frameworks in public administration within the digital age, focusing on the normative shift from traditional deregulatory approaches to a model of "normative reconstruction." The research problem lies in identifying how law functions not solely as a set of formal obligations, but as an infrastructure for governance, when confronted with data-intensive, interoperable administrative systems. Drawing on a multidisciplinary methodology combining doctrinal legal analysis, comparative public administration research, and qualitative case study, the study explores two interconnected questions: (1) In what way does the digitalisation of administrative processes compel a redefinition of statutory norms and administrative regulation? (2) How does the normative reconstruction of law contribute to resilience and certainty in the rule of law in multilevel governance settings? Methodologically, the paper employs a legal-dogmatic interpretation of legislative instruments, a comparative analysis of EU regulatory frameworks (including identifier systems such as LEI), and an empirical case study of a European supervisory agency's digital governance infrastructure. Preliminary findings suggest that the shift from deregulation conceived as a reduction of norms to deregulation conceived as a redesign of norms enables more effective administrative compliance and enhances public governance—but also raises novel challenges regarding legal certainty, accountability, and oversight in multilevel contexts. The paper contributes to the scholarly discourse on law in public administration by proposing that normative reconstruction, enabled by data infrastructures, constitutes a crucial mechanism for the rule of law in the contemporary digital state.