

DIGITAL MATURITY OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION AND ITS IMPACT ON COUNTRIES' ECONOMIC PERFORMANCE: A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS BASED ON THE EGDI, DIGITAL DEVELOPMENT SCORE, AND THE OECD DIGITAL GOVERNMENT INDEX

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Abstract: *The digital maturity of public administration and its impact on countries' economic performance has become an increasingly important topic in contemporary research on public policy, digital transformation, and macroeconomics. In the context of global digitalization, countries seek to modernize public services, enhance transparency and efficiency, and stimulate economic growth through the use of digital tools and investments in digital infrastructure. The objective of this study is to empirically examine how different dimensions of digital maturity in public administration influence key economic indicators. The analysis is based on three internationally recognized indices: the E-Government Development Index (EGDI), the Digital Development Score (DDS), and the OECD Digital Government Index. Four research hypotheses are formulated to explore the relationship between digital maturity and GDP per capita, employment in the ICT sector, the efficiency of public-private digital services, and differences between developed and developing countries. The study relies on secondary data obtained from international databases and applies descriptive statistics, correlation analysis, and simple linear regression analysis to assess the relationships between digital maturity indicators and selected economic variables. The empirical results indicate a statistically significant positive relationship between higher levels of digital maturity in public administration and improved economic performance. Countries with higher EGDI and DDS values tend to achieve higher GDP per capita and stronger ICT sector development, while higher OECD Digital Government Index scores are associated with more efficient public-private digital services. The findings confirm that the digitalization of public administration reduces administrative burdens, shortens processing times, lowers operational costs, and improves the overall efficiency and quality of public services.*

In conclusion, the study demonstrates that the digital maturity of public administration represents a key determinant of contemporary economic development and a strategic instrument for enhancing national competitiveness, particularly in the context of global economic and technological transformation.

Keywords: digitalization, public administration, countries' economic performance, GDP, national economy

JEL classification: O33, H83, O47, E01, E60

INTRODUCTION

The concept of e-government refers to the use of information and communication technologies (ICT) in the field of public administration. The primary objective of ICT adoption is to enhance accountability and transparency in public governance, as well as to enable more effective and efficient delivery of public services (Bedecković, 2024). Public services encompass not only services provided to citizens and individuals, but also those delivered to the business sector, including faster responsiveness to change and more efficient communication with enterprises and the wider business community.

The contemporary concept of e-government further entails strengthening institutional interoperability, ensuring digital accessibility of administrative procedures, and reducing costs through process automation. These activities contribute to the establishment of a more predictable business environment, the strengthening of public trust in institutions, and an overall increase in economic efficiency.

All of the above exerts a positive influence on multiple factors, particularly in terms of supporting entrepreneurship, which ultimately affects macroeconomic indicators such as GDP, labour market performance, and the efficiency of services and communication with the business sector. The aim of this research is to examine how different dimensions of digital maturity in public administration influence countries' economic performance. The analysis is based on three key indices: the E-Government Development Index (EGDI), the DDS, and the OECD Digital Government Index.

Taking into account the identified challenges and potentials of digital transformation in public administration, there is a clear need for an empirical examination of how varying levels of digital maturity affect key macroeconomic indicators. This provides the basis for formulating the following hypotheses:

H1: Countries with higher EGDI scores exhibit higher GDP per capita.

H2: Higher DDS are correlated with higher employment levels in the ICT sector.

H3: Countries with stronger performance on the OECD Digital Government Index demonstrate more efficient public-private digital services.

H4: There is a significant difference in digital maturity between developed and developing countries, which is reflected in their economic indicators.

The remainder of the paper presents graphical representations, statistical analyses, and a discussion of results that illuminate these relationships.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The digitalisation of public administration is a gradual process that brings with it numerous benefits. Digital transformation in the public sector generally unfolds

through incremental changes that cumulatively generate broader societal effects, such as improved service delivery and reduced levels of corruption (Hauga, 2024). While digital transformation enhances efficiency, citizen engagement, and government accountability in the provision of public services, it simultaneously raises important concerns related to inclusiveness, data privacy, and the digital divide (Latupeirissa, 2024).

At its core, the advancement of digitalisation would not be possible without adequate support from the ICT sector. The impact of the ICT sector on societal economic indicators has been the subject of extensive scholarly research, offering diverse perspectives on this issue. This study places particular emphasis on three key contributions and their scientific relevance.

Baltezarević (2023), in the paper “*The Impact of Artificial Intelligence on the Global Economy*”, analyses how AI technologies are reshaping labour market structures, increasing productivity, and contributing to sustainable development. The author highlights the need for new educational models and workforce reskilling in response to these changes (Baltezarević, 2023).

Nadkarni and Prügl (2021), in “*Digital Transformation: A Review, Synthesis and Opportunities for Future Research*”, provide a systematic review of the literature on digital transformation. Their study identifies key success factors as well as challenges related to the integration of digital technologies into business models (Sven Nadkarni, 2021).

Kirchberger and Pohl (2016), in “*Technology Commercialization: A Literature Review of Success Factors*”, focus on the determinants of successful technology commercialisation, emphasising collaboration between universities, start-ups, and industry as a critical factor (Kirchberger, 2016).

All three studies address the role of the ICT sector and its influence on economic performance. Baltezarević examines a more recent phenomenon by analysing the impact of artificial intelligence on macroeconomic indicators, particularly labour market dynamics, and underscores its strong implications for educational reform and workforce reskilling. Although predating Baltezarević’s work, Kirchberger (2016) similarly emphasises the importance of close cooperation between universities and labour markets, highlighting its relevance for economic development and innovation capacity.

DIGITALISATION AS A STRATEGY FOR COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGE OF THE NATIONAL ECONOMY

Digitalisation and digital transformation exert a direct influence on the formation of new strategic directions within society. Digitalisation was preceded by globalisation, a process aimed at reducing barriers created by national borders in international trade. In his book *Runaway World: How Globalization is Reshaping Our Lives*, Anthony Giddens argues that, in order to benefit from the process of globalisation, societies have had to relinquish a certain degree of sovereignty. He emphasises the growing importance of institutions such as the European Union, the World Trade Organization, and the United Nations, as well as the need for societies to adapt to global economic and political dynamics (Giddens, 1999).

Giddens articulated these views in the late 1990s, highlighting the necessity for states to adapt to globalisation processes if they wish to secure advantages at the level of national economies. Globalisation has affected every society worldwide, and

digitalisation has emerged as its successor, elevating national economies that were able to adapt their structural capital to emerging global trends, while leaving behind those that failed to do so.

Thus, while the process of digitalisation brings numerous advantages, it also introduces challenges that must be addressed. Digitalisation at the national level requires the comprehensive digital transformation of industrial sectors and all participants within those sectors. This implies that enterprises, as well as all actors within a national economy, must continuously adapt to digitalisation processes. The development of a digital economy necessitates appropriate infrastructure, encompassing physical and technological, institutional and regulatory, educational, security, and business–entrepreneurial components (Kahrović, 2021). This transformation does not occur overnight; rather, it gradually permeates all spheres of economic activity, both at the micro-economic and macroeconomic levels.

Digitalisation does not merely transform the information structure of society and the economy or modes of business operation; it also requires changes in legal frameworks and standards, which must be adapted to new forms of economic activity and, more broadly, to evolving lifestyles.

Digitalisation entails both advantages and limitations. Among its primary benefits are faster and significantly simplified data processing, the shortening of administrative procedures, improved detection and elimination of errors, enhanced control mechanisms, and increased satisfaction among users, whether citizens or businesses. Digitalisation reduces waiting times not only in terms of data processing but also in a physical sense, as requests from citizens and businesses are handled through telecommunications devices without requiring physical presence. One of the key disadvantages of digitalisation and digitally managed procedures is excessive reliance on network infrastructure, electrical power, and digital devices, all of which are vulnerable to technical failures, cyberattacks, and similar risks.

The potential of mathematical models represents an inexhaustible source of opportunities for exploring the unknown and integrating seemingly random factors into structured systems that enhance the performance of business processes and, consequently, public sector operations. Research in the field of optimising the operations of public enterprises includes the optimisation of public investments while accounting for non-economic factors, in order to maximise their contribution to local communities (Landika, *Modeliranje konkurentskog prioriteta investicionih alternativa u funkciji strategije globalnog razvoja*, 2011).

An innovative research approach is presented in a study that conducts a model-based comparison of satisfaction with service quality in the public sector from both the provider's and the user's perspectives (Landika et al., *Stochastics aspects of continuous improvement of the business results performance of the public administration*, 2017). Another contribution applies a modelling approach to analysing communication needs with users in primary healthcare as a key element of perceived service quality, using rank correlation analysis to generate valuable insights and recommendations for proactive action (Landika et al., *Stohastički aspekti marketing strategije usluga zdravstvene zaštite na teritoriji RS/BiH*, 2019).

THE ICT SECTOR AND ITS ROLE IN THE ECONOMY

Information and communication technologies (ICT) as a field of knowledge emerged through the convergence of information technologies and communication technologies. They encompass technical knowledge related to physical processes such as hardware, as well as the execution of analytical, coded, machine-readable instructions known as software, used for organising and managing information (Sarangi, 2021). The ICT sector includes all areas concerned with technologies for the transmission, processing, and storage of information and data. Given that it covers activities related to information storage, transfer, and processing, the ICT sector occupies a central position in contemporary business practices.

The development, production, procurement, distribution, and numerous other business activities would not be possible without the support of the ICT sector. Its scope spans the software industry, telecommunications, electronic equipment manufacturing, digital services, and innovations in the field of artificial intelligence. In modern economic systems, the ICT sector plays a pivotal role, as its presence enables business digitalisation, the modernisation of public administration, increased access to education, and the development of digital infrastructure, among other functions.

The ICT sector is a key driver of global economic growth. On average, it recorded growth of 6.3% between 2013 and 2023, which is approximately three times faster than overall economic growth across the 27 analysed OECD member countries (*Growth of digital economy outperforms overall growth across OECD*, 2025). According to the OECD, the ICT sector is also regarded as a horizontal driver of economic development, as it influences all sectors of the economy. Its integration into public administration has a direct impact on GDP growth, labour market dynamics, and the overall quality of life of citizens.

Stojanović and Regodić analyse the impact of information and communication technologies on economic growth, emphasising that ICT contributes to productivity gains, innovation, and structural changes within the economy. Their findings indicate that countries investing more heavily in ICT achieve stronger economic outcomes compared to those with lower levels of investment in this sector (Milan Stojanović, 2016).

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

For the purposes of this study, the following statistical methods were employed:

- Descriptive analysis, used to describe the basic characteristics of the digital indices and economic indicators.
- Simple linear regression analysis, applied to examine the impact of digital processes on the efficiency of public services.
- Correlation analysis, used to assess the relationships between the E-Government Development Index (EGDI), the DDS, the OECD Digital Government Index (DGI), and key economic indicators such as GDP and employment in the ICT sector.

The data used in this research are secondary data obtained from international databases. Specifically, EGDI data were sourced from the UN E-Government Survey (UNDESA), the DDS was obtained from the ITU ICT Regulatory Tracker, while additional data were drawn from OECD Digital Government Policy Papers and the World

Bank databases¹. The data were processed and analysed using Microsoft Excel, applying regression-based statistical techniques.

The sample includes 193 countries covered by the UN E-Government Survey, 33 countries included in the OECD Digital Government Index, as well as additional observations from the ITU DDS, representing countries at different levels of economic development.

The analysis is conducted at the national level and includes the following indicators:

- E-Government Development Index (EGDI)
- Digital infrastructure and capacities (DDS)
- Institutional maturity of digital government (OECD Digital Government Index)
- GDP per capita and employment in the ICT sector

To test Hypothesis 1, data from the E-Government Development Index (EGDI) sourced from the UN E-Government Survey (UNDESA, 2025) and GDP per capita data from the World Bank (2025) were used. The applied analytical methods include descriptive statistics, Pearson correlation analysis, and linear regression analysis, with EGDI specified as the independent variable and GDP per capita as the dependent variable.

To test Hypothesis 2, simple linear regression analysis was applied, with the DDS as the independent variable and employment in the ICT sector as the dependent variable. Correlation analysis and linear regression analysis were applied, with DDS treated as the predictor variable for GDP per capita.

To test Hypothesis 3, data from the OECD Digital Government Index (OECD, 2025) and GDP per capita data from the World Bank were used. Correlation and regression analyses were conducted on a restricted sample consisting exclusively of OECD member countries.

To test Hypothesis 4, data from the B-READY Index (UNDP, 2025) and GDP per capita data from the World Bank were employed. Correlation and regression analyses were used to examine differences in digital maturity and their reflection in economic indicators.

For the purposes of this study, indicators related to digital infrastructure and regulatory capacity are jointly referred to as the DDS.

Descriptive statistics were used to examine the basic characteristics of digital maturity indicators and economic variables. Pearson correlation analysis was applied to assess the strength and direction of relationships between digital maturity indices and economic performance indicators. Simple linear regression models were employed to evaluate the impact of digital maturity indicators as independent variables on GDP per capita, ICT employment, and public-private digital service efficiency as dependent variables.

RESEARCH RESULTS

Descriptive Statistics

Table 1 presents the descriptive statistics of the digital process index and public service efficiency. The mean value of the Digital Process Index is 6.13, while the

1 Accurate web addresses referenced later in the text

average efficiency of public services is 5.73. The standard deviations (2.16 and 2.10) indicate moderate variability across countries. The range of values suggests substantial differences in digital maturity and service efficiency, which is relevant for testing Hypothesis H4.

Table 1. Descriptive Statistics

Indicator	Digital Process Index	Public Service Efficiency
Count	7	7
Mean	6.13	5.73
Std deviaton	2.16	2.10
Min	3.2	2.9
25%	4.55	4.15
50% (Median)	6.3	5.9
75%	7.55	7.15
Max	9.2	8.7

Source: Authors (2025)

Figure 1 illustrates the DDS for six countries. Brazil, Argentina, and Indonesia exhibit relatively high scores, while Nigeria and Kenya lag behind. This highlights differences in digital maturity among developing countries. The DDS values represent an author-compiled dataset based on the methodological principles of the BCG Digital Acceleration Index (DAI), using a 0–100 scale.

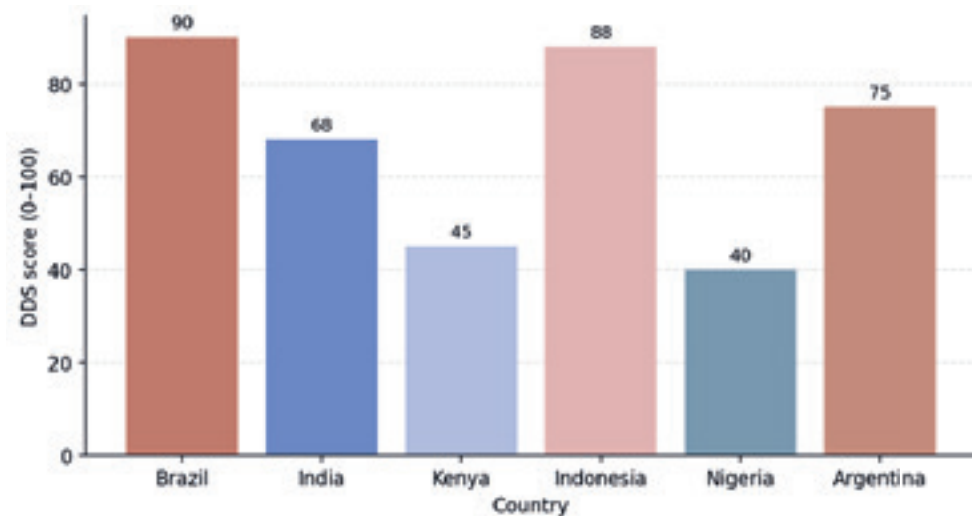


Figure 1. DDS by country

Source: Authors' compilation based on BCG Digital Acceleration Index (DAI) methodology; scale 0–100. (2025).

Correlation Analysis

Table 2 presents data for 193 countries, including the EGDI, E-Participation Index, Online Service Index, Human Capital Index, and Telecommunication Infrastructure Index, enabling a global analysis of digital maturity in public administration. High EGDI values observed in countries such as Singapore, the United Arab Emirates, and the United Kingdom illustrate the general pattern that countries with more advanced levels of e-government development tend to exhibit stronger economic performance, thereby supporting the expectations outlined in Hypothesis H1.

The correlation coefficients show positive associations among the analyzed indices, meaning that increases in one dimension of digital maturity are generally accompanied by increases in the others. The relationship between the DDS and the OECD Digital Government Index is particularly strong ($r = 0.964$), while the correlations involving the EGDI are moderate ($r \approx 0.59$ and $r \approx 0.51$). These patterns suggest that although the indices measure different aspects of digital development, they reflect similar cross-country trends.

Table 2. Correlation Analysis

	EGDI_2024	DDS	OECD_Digital_Government_Index
EGDI_2024	1.0	0.5915343423571162	0.5061366753560136
DDS		1.0	0.9641089191635362
OECD_Digital_Government_Index			1.0

Source: Authors' calculation based on UNDESA EGDI dataset (2024), DDS data (BCG, 2025), and OECD Digital Government Index (2023).

Regression Analysis

Table 3 presents the regression results showing that the Digital Process Index has a strong and statistically significant positive association with public service efficiency. The coefficient value of 0.972 ($p < 0.001$) indicates a highly robust relationship. These findings suggest that higher levels of digital process maturity are closely linked to more efficient public-private digital services, thereby supporting Hypothesis H3.

Table 3 illustrates the impact of increased digital maturity on the efficiency of public-private digital services.

Table 3. Regression Analysis

Predictor	B	Std. Error	t	Sig.	Lower CI	Upper CI
Const	-0.22850553 50553531	0.10666807 06685263	-2.1422111 94251742	0.08507899 447123952	-0.5027045 399582377	0.04569346 984753148
Digital_Process_Index	0.972017220 1722018	0.016549837 20961763	58.7327360 3001557	2.707414318 25225e-08	0.92947450 92584208	1.01455993 1085983

Source: Authors, 2025

The EGDI index indicates a high level of digital maturity for Brazil and Indonesia, while Kenya records the lowest score. These differences may affect the efficiency of public services and overall economic performance. In other words, it cannot be

assumed that the EGDI index is the sole determinant of digital maturity in public administration.

Figure 2 presents EGDI values for selected countries in 2024, revealing substantial disparities in the level of e-government development. Countries such as Argentina, Brazil and Indonesia achieve high levels of digital maturity, whereas Kenya and Nigeria lag behind. These results confirm that differences in digital infrastructure directly affect the overall efficiency of public administration.

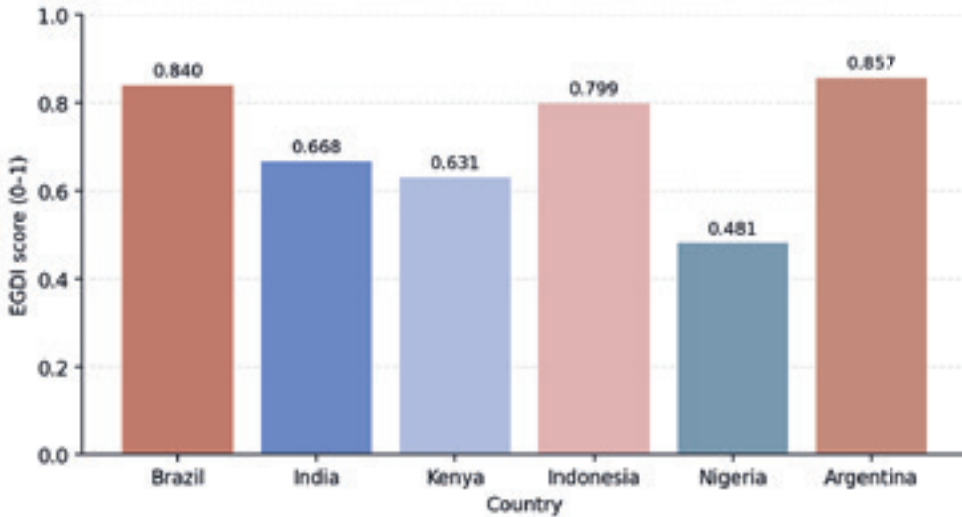


Figure 2. EGDI values by country (2024)

Source: Authors' calculations based on UN DESA – UN E-Government Survey 2024

Comparative Index Analysis

Table 4 summarizes the available distributional characteristics for the three key indices: the EGDI, the DDS, and the OECD Digital Government Index (DGI). For the EGDI and DGI, the table reports the mean and the approximate minimum and maximum values. For the DDS, publicly available sources do not consistently provide global mean, minimum, or maximum values on a unified scale, and therefore only the standard deviation ($SD = 17.42$) is included. The relatively high variability of the DDS, compared with the narrower ranges of the EGDI and DGI, indicates pronounced cross-country disparities in digital infrastructure and regulatory capacity. These patterns are particularly relevant for assessing Hypothesis H4, which concerns differences in digital maturity between developed and developing countries.

Table 4. Comparative Index Analysis

Index	Average	Minimum	Maximum	Standard deviation
EGDI – E-Government Development Index (193 zemlje)	0.638	≈ 0.00	≈ 1.00	n/p ¹
DDS	n/p ²	n/p ²	n/p ²	17.42
OECD Digital Government Index (33 countries)	0.605	≈ 0.45 ³	≈ 0.85 ³	n/p ³

Source: Authors' synthesis based on UNDESA EGDI dataset (2024), BCG/ITU DDS(2025), and OECD Digital Government Index (2023).

¹ UNDESA (UN E-Government Survey 2024) publishes the global average EGDI value (0.638) and the distribution of values, while the aggregate standard deviation is not tabulated in the executive summary.

² In publicly available summaries of ITU and partner indicators for the DDS, the global mean and minimum/maximum values are not consistently reported on a unified scale. Accordingly, the study explicitly emphasizes SD = 17.42 as an indicator of high variability.

³ OECD DGI 2023 reports the sample mean (0.605) and country rankings (e.g. Korea, Denmark, the United Kingdom, and Norway at the top). However, exact minimum/maximum values and standard deviation are not tabulated in the summary; therefore, approximations are presented for the purpose of interpreting the observed range.

The OECD Digital Government Index (DGI) indicates a high level of digital maturity in countries such as Norway and Japan, which is reflected in the quality of public–private digital services. These findings suggest that developed countries tend to have more advanced digital public services.

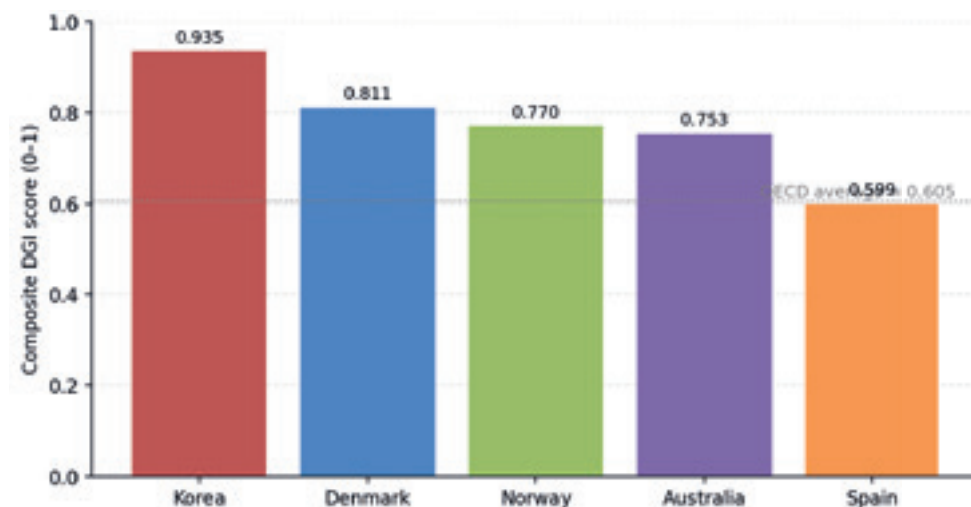


Figure 3. OECD Digital Government Index by country

Source: Authors' calculations based on: Republic of Korea MOIS press release for 2023 OECD DGI results (Korea 0.935; Denmark 0.811); Digdir Norway (Norway 0.770); Australia DTA (Australia 0.753); Spain PAe (Spain 0.599); OECD overall average reported in OECD summaries/media (0.605).

Figure 3 presents a comparison of OECD Digital Government Index (DGI) values for the selected countries (Korea, Denmark, Norway, Australia, and Spain). The results illustrate clear differences in institutional digital maturity within the OECD context. Countries with higher composite DGI scores demonstrate more advanced foundations for digital government, which is associated with greater stability, interoperability, and efficiency in the delivery of public services. This comparison further emphasizes the role of institutional digital capacity in shaping overall public-sector performance.

DISCUSSION

This section discusses the research findings in relation to the proposed hypotheses.

The results of the empirical analysis offer clear support for all four proposed hypotheses. Regarding Hypothesis **H1**, the descriptive and correlational findings show that countries with higher EGDI scores tend to achieve higher levels of GDP per capita. This pattern is consistent with the moderate positive correlation observed between the EGDI and other dimensions of digital maturity, suggesting that more advanced e-government capabilities are generally aligned with stronger economic performance.

Hypothesis **H2** is also supported. Countries with higher DDS values exhibit higher levels of ICT sector employment, indicating that stronger digital infrastructure and regulatory capacity coincide with more dynamic ICT labour markets. Although this study does not test causality, the observed positive association reinforces the notion that digital readiness at the national level is linked to broader economic and labour-market outcomes.

The regression analysis provides strong evidence for Hypothesis **H3**. The Digital Process Index shows a strong and statistically significant positive association with public-private digital service efficiency ($B = 0.972$, $p < 0.001$), indicating that countries with more advanced digital processes also tend to deliver more efficient digital services. These findings are consistent with OECD assessments that institutional digital maturity underpins service quality and interoperability.

Finally, Hypothesis **H4** is supported by the substantial cross-country variability observed in all three indices. The wide ranges of EGDI and DGI values, together with the high standard deviation of the DDS ($SD = 17.42$), point to pronounced structural differences between developed and developing countries. These disparities reflect uneven levels of digital infrastructure, institutional capacity, and human-capital development, all of which shape the broader economic implications of digital maturity.

Taken together, the findings confirm that digital maturity in public administration is closely linked with key indicators of economic performance, administrative efficiency, and institutional development. While the analysis does not establish causality, it demonstrates robust and consistent associations that highlight the strategic importance of digitalization for national competitiveness.

CONCLUSION

The findings of this study demonstrate that digital maturity in public administration represents a critical determinant of contemporary economic performance. By integrating three internationally recognized indices—the EGDI, the DDS, and the OECD Digital Government Index—the research provides a multidimensional assess-

ment of national digital capacities and their economic implications. The results offer clear support for all four proposed hypotheses. Countries with higher EGDI scores tend to achieve higher GDP per capita (H1); higher DDS levels coincide with stronger ICT labour-market performance (H2); higher DGI values are associated with more efficient public-private digital services (H3); and substantial differences in digital maturity between developed and developing economies are reflected in structural disparities across all three indices (H4).

Methodologically, the study applies a transparent and replicable analytical framework based on descriptive statistics, correlation analysis, and simple linear regression, enabling robust cross-country comparisons. The empirical evidence confirms that digital maturity reduces administrative burdens, enhances efficiency, lowers transaction costs, and strengthens the institutional foundations needed for effective public service delivery.

Beyond statistical relationships, the results underline the strategic importance of continuous investment in digital infrastructure, human capital, and institutional capacity. These elements enable governments to adopt advanced digital tools, support innovation, foster interoperability, and create a more predictable and efficient environment for business and society. At the same time, differences in digital maturity contribute to widening economic gaps between countries, emphasizing that digital transformation is not only an economic priority but a developmental imperative.

Overall, the study highlights that digital government is a cornerstone of modern economic competitiveness. Strengthening digital maturity offers measurable benefits for public administration, the private sector, and society as a whole, positioning it as a central driver of long-term national development.

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