

Evaluating Algeria's Public Procurement Platform: Between Innovation and Structural Constraints

تقييم فعالية وحدود المنصة الجزائرية للصفقات العمومية: بين الابتكار والحدود الهيكلية

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الملخص:

بدافع من الرغبة في التحديث والانفصال عن الممارسات البيروقراطية التقليدية، أطلق المشرع الجزائري إصلاحا عميقا في نظام الصفقات العمومية، واضعا الرقمنة في صميم هذه التحولات. تأتي المنصة الإلكترونية للصفقات العمومية ضمن هذه الفلسفة الجديدة التي تهدف إلى تكريس مزيد من الشفافية والمساواة والفعالية في إبرام الصفقات. تهدف هذه الدراسة إلى تقديم تقييم نقدي لهذه الأداة من خلال إبراز التقدم المحقق، خاصة من حيث سهولة الوصول وتتبع العمليات، مع الإشارة في الوقت نفسه إلى العقبات المستمرة التي تحدّ من فعاليتها الكاملة، مثل النواقص التقنية، وتفاوت فرص الوصول بسبب تكاليف التسجيل، وغياب الإطارين القانوني واللوجستي الكافيين لدعمها.

الكلمات المفتاحية: الصفقة العمومية، الرقمنة، الشفافية الإدارية، المساواة في الوصول.

Abstract:

Driven by a desire for modernization and a break from traditional bureaucratic practices, the Algerian legislator has initiated a profound reform of public procurement, placing digitization at the heart of this transformation. The creation of the electronic public procurement platform is part of this new philosophy, aiming to establish greater transparency, equality, and efficiency in the awarding of contracts. This contribution aims to provide a critical assessment of this tool, highlighting significant progress made—particularly in terms of accessibility and traceability—while also identifying persistent obstacles that hinder its full potential, such as technical shortcomings, unequal access due to registration costs, and the lack of adequate legal and logistical frameworks.

KEY WORDS: Public procurement, Digitization, Administrative transparency, Equal access.

Introduction:

The digitization of public procurement in Algeria represents a decisive step in the administrative modernization process and in promoting transparency. In recent years, the Algerian government has launched an ambitious digital reform aimed at simplifying, automating, and securing public procurement procedures. This transition notably led to the creation of platforms such as the e-Marché Public, which centralize calls for tenders, facilitates access to information for businesses, and enhances transparency in the management of public funds.

However, although this initiative represents undeniable progress, its effectiveness remains hindered by several challenges. While the use of digital technologies in this area is widely seen as a key tool to fight corruption, optimize processing times, and reduce costs, the concrete results also reveal technical, institutional, and human limitations.

In this perspective, this assessment—supported in particular by the analyses of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD)—aims to evaluate the achievements and challenges encountered by Algeria's public procurement platform, with the objective of drawing useful lessons for its continuous improvement.

The adopted methodology is based on a documentary analysis of current regulatory texts, national and international reports (notably those of the OECD), and a critical reading of administrative practices through selected concrete examples.

This reflection will be structured in two parts:

First, we will highlight the positive contributions of the platform in the management of public procurement, both from an administrative and ethical perspective.

Second, we will analyze the structural, technical, and human limitations that still hinder its full potential, before proposing possible avenues for improvement.

I. A Platform Serving Transparency and Administrative Performance

The effectiveness of the public procurement platform in Algeria must be analyzed in light of the fundamental principles governing public procurement. Indeed, public contracts are traditionally based on core legal values such as equal treatment of economic operators, free access to public procurement, and procedural transparency. These principles enshrined in Algerian regulations, aim to ensure fair competition, prevent discriminatory practices, and guarantee rigorous and equitable management of public funds.

In this regard, the implementation of digital platforms such as e- Public Procurement represents a major lever for putting these principles into practice. The centralization of calls for tenders, digitization of procedures, and traceability of operations help strengthen transparency, administrative efficiency, and the confidence of economic operators.

1. Strengthening the Three Fundamental Principles:

The ministerial order of 17 November 2013¹, set the content and management procedures of the electronic public procurement portal, marked a significant step forward in consolidating the principle of free access to public procurement in Algeria. Pursuant to Article 2, the portal is required to publish notices of competitive bidding, tender documents, and the results of contract awards. This systematic dissemination of information allows economic operators, regardless of their geographical location, to have equal access to opportunities offered by public contracts. Thanks to this digital accessibility, businesses located in remote regions—traditionally marginalized by the conventional methods of publication—can now consult and participate in calls for tenders under the same conditions as economic actors based in major urban centers.

The dissemination of information related to public procurement through the electronic platform, as established by the ministerial order of November 17, 2013, fully reflects an approach of “universal service.”², Aiming to ensure equitable access to essential services, regardless of citizens’ or economic operators’ geographical or socio-economic situation, the platform makes calls for tenders and related documents accessible to all operators — including those located in “shadow zones”, the remote and historically marginalized regions. This initiative directly aligns with President Tebboune’s ambition to reduce economic and social disparities between the different regions of the country. Through this digitization process, the State ensures continuity in the provision of public services, offering every company — wherever it may be located — the opportunity to participate in public procurement under the same conditions as those in major urban centers. In doing so, the platform contributes to the economic inclusion of disadvantaged areas, promotes equal opportunity, and guarantees a genuine democratization of public procurement.

The principle of equal treatment of candidates within the electronic public procurement platform is reinforced by the digitization of procedures, as provided by Articles 3 and 4 of the Ministerial Order dated November 17, 2013. These provisions aim to ensure the uniformity and transparency of procedures, while limiting the risk of favoritism or discrimination in the evaluation of bids.

Article 3 of the Order mandates the systematic and uniform publication of all information related to public procurement on the electronic platform, including notices of competitive bidding, tender documents, and contract award results. This online publication ensures equal access to information for all economic operators, without geographical or sectoral discrimination. By guaranteeing that all businesses — whether located in major cities or remote areas — have access to the same information within the same timeframe, this article eliminates disparities in access and significantly reduces the risk of human error or manipulation in the dissemination of information.

Article 4, for its part, precisely defines the modalities for submitting bids on the platform, requiring a standardized format and strict deadlines. This standardization ensures

that all candidates submit their proposals under identical conditions and according to the same criteria. By imposing the use of a uniform format for submitting bids, the article ensures equal treatment of proposals regardless of the company's profile, location, or technical resources. This approach guarantees transparency in the bidding process, excluding any possibility of differential treatment.

Thus, the digitization of public procurement processes — through the implementation of Articles 3 and 4 of the Order — ensures an entirely objective candidate selection procedure. Information relating to bid evaluation is presented transparently and consistently, in accordance with the objective criteria outlined in the tender documents. As a result, the platform guarantees that bid selection is based solely on pre-established, neutral criteria, thereby reducing the risks of arbitrariness and favoritism and reinforcing the integrity of the public procurement process.

The transparency of public procurement procedures is significantly enhanced by the traceability and archiving mechanisms introduced by the electronic platform, as indicated by the provisions of Article 6 of the Ministerial Order of November 17, 2013. The aim of these measures is to ensure that all stages of the public procurement process are documented and accessible, thereby providing an additional guarantee of transparency and legal security.

Article 6 states that all operations carried out on the platform — including the publication of calls for tenders, bid submissions, and contract awards — must be recorded and securely archived. This traceability requirement allows the entire lifecycle of each public contract to be monitored, from its publication to its award, ensuring that the process can be fully reconstructed in the event of a dispute or audit. Every action taken on the platform is therefore logged and accessible, which facilitates subsequent audits and oversight by competent authorities.

Furthermore, Article 6 specifies that archived information is accessible at any time, thereby reinforcing transparency and accountability in public procurement management. This access allows any legitimately interested party (bidders, citizens, oversight authorities) to verify the regularity of the procedures undertaken and to identify any irregularities or breaches of procedure.

The mechanisms of traceability³ and archiving are crucial in preventing irregularities, particularly regarding corruption, conflicts of interest, or favoritism. By ensuring comprehensive and accessible documentation of all stages, the Ministerial Order helps to establish a culture of accountability in the use of public funds.⁴ For example, in the event of a challenge to the awarding of a contract, all actions taken (such as the receipt of bids, their evaluation, and the criteria used) can be reviewed and verified, thereby ensuring effective recourse against decisions deemed unlawful or non-transparent.

Thus, the digitalization introduced by the Order, through strict mechanisms of traceability and archiving, helps secure the public procurement process, prevent fraud, and ensure full accountability from public officials. By strengthening transparency, the platform

offers a true guarantee of legality and reliability, which is essential for preserving the integrity of public procurement and restoring citizens' trust in the management of public funds.

The transparency of public procurement procedures, as illustrated by the traceability and archiving mechanisms introduced through the electronic platform, plays a decisive role in fostering the legitimate trust of economic operators in contracting authorities. By ensuring that every stage of the procurement process—from the publication of tenders to the awarding of contracts—is recorded and accessible, the platform guarantees not only procedural regularity but also equal treatment for all bidders. This level of transparency, combined with accessible documentation, significantly reduces the risk of abuse of power, favoritism, or discretionary decisions. As a result, economic operators are more inclined to participate in public tenders, confident that their bids will be treated fairly and objectively.

The impact of this transparency on the legitimate trust⁵ of economic operators is multifaceted. On the one hand, it reassures businesses about the regularity of procedures and the possibility of challenging, if necessary, the decisions regarding the award of contracts. On the other hand, it fosters healthy competition, where companies can compete with confidence, knowing that the evaluation criteria for bids are objective and predefined. This transparency thus strengthens the legitimacy of contracting authorities, encouraging them to adopt clear practices that respect the principles of sound public management.

At the same time, digital vigilance becomes a crucial element in preserving this transparency. The implementation of the digital platform should not only be seen as a mere management tool but also as a mechanism for continuous and proactive monitoring. In this regard, Article 6 of the decree not only ensures the archiving of information but also implies that all actions carried out on the platform must be traceable and verifiable. This digital vigilance allows authorities to monitor in real time the compliance of administrative acts and detect any anomalies or attempts to manipulate data.

In this sense, digital vigilance⁶ becomes a lever for detecting potential irregularities, such as fraudulent practices or behaviors that do not comply with public procurement rules. It also allows economic operators to be reassured about the security of the process and the protection of their data, knowing that all interactions are recorded and can be reviewed in case of disputes. This system thus strengthens the trust of businesses in the public procurement system, contributing to better participation and greater competitiveness in the awarding of public contracts.

In conclusion, the transparency of procedures, enhanced by traceability and data archiving, and coupled with digital vigilance, plays a central role in the legitimate trust of economic operators. This transparency creates an environment where businesses feel safer, more respected, and more willing to participate in public procurement, while ensuring a more responsible and more integral management of public funds.

2. A Lever for Modernizing Public Action

The public procurement platform in Algeria is fully part of the broader project of modernizing public administration through the e-government initiative launched in 2013.⁷

This project aims to use digital technologies to transform traditional administrative processes, making public services more accessible, transparent, and efficient, while reducing operational costs for the state. The e-government project is based on the idea of digitizing public services, optimizing public management, and strengthening the trust relationship between citizens and public authorities.

In this context, the implementation of the public procurement platform becomes a central lever to achieve these goals, as it helps modernize a key sector of public administration. The adoption of the platform aims to reduce the complexity of procedures related to public procurement, improve the transparency of processes, and facilitate access to public information for citizens and businesses. By ensuring greater equity in access to public procurement, the platform directly responds to the goal of making administration more accessible and open to all economic operators, including those from remote regions, in line with the vision of e-government.

The impact of this digital modernization is felt at the level of public service quality. By streamlining the public procurement process, the platform not only speeds up the processing time of files but also ensures that selection criteria are applied uniformly, objectively, and transparently. This directly contributes to reducing subjectivity and irregularities in the treatment of offers, which strengthens the confidence of economic operators in the legitimacy and regularity of the process. This climate of trust is essential for encouraging business participation in public procurement and ensuring sound management of public funds.

The e-government project and the public procurement platform contribute to improving service quality by ensuring a more responsive and transparent management of requests and offers. This evolution is accompanied by administrative simplification that reduces the burden of procedures for citizens and businesses, making administration more agile and closer to the concerns of users. The digitization of procedures, combined with the automation of processes, also contributes to improving the responsiveness of contracting authorities, enabling faster responses to the needs of businesses and ensuring a more efficient public service.

In conclusion, the public procurement platform, as a key element of the e-government project in Algeria, plays a crucial role in modernizing public services. It contributes to the creation of a more transparent, inclusive, and responsive administration, thereby enhancing the quality of public service. Through its direct impact on the management of public procurement, it helps improve governance and fosters a healthier and more competitive economic environment, in line with the demands of a modern and responsible administration.

Beyond its operational advantages, the public procurement platform embodies a transformative shift in the governance culture of the Algerian administration. By institutionalizing digital transparency, procedural standardization, and traceable interactions, the platform does not merely optimize existing processes—it reshapes the very relationship between the state, economic actors, and citizens. This systemic transformation fosters a culture of accountability, where decision-making is no longer opaque or subject to discretionary interference, but is instead documented, auditable, and objectively justifiable.

Moreover, the platform serves as a catalyst for socio-economic inclusion, bridging the historical gap between central authorities and marginalized regions, and enabling previously excluded enterprises to compete on an equal footing. In doing so, it reinforces the legitimacy of public institutions and strengthens citizens' trust in the rule of law, highlighting how digital tools, when strategically implemented, can become instruments of both administrative modernization and democratic consolidation. Ultimately, the platform exemplifies the synergy between technology and governance: it transforms public procurement from a procedural necessity into a strategic lever for transparency, equity, and institutional integrity.

II. Persistent Limitations Hindering the Impact of the Platform

Despite Algeria's ambitions for the digitization of public procurement, the digital platform faces significant limitations. These institutional and technical obstacles undermine its effectiveness and impact. An analysis is necessary to understand the structural barriers preventing its full operational capacity.

1. Institutional and Legal Barriers:

The Algerian legislator's rush to implement the digitization of public procurement without first establishing the necessary conditions had a direct impact on the legal uncertainty surrounding the platform. Indeed, in the absence of adequate preparation, both in terms of digital infrastructure and the training of relevant stakeholders, technical gaps emerged, creating vulnerabilities that could be exploited. This haste contributed to a lack of coherence in the implementation of control and validation mechanisms, which weakened the platform and undermined the legal stability of the procurement process.

The report from the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) highlighted several of these technical gaps, which amplify the risks of inefficiency and injustice. The platform, though innovative, suffers from certain flaws in data management, procedural transparency, and information accessibility, which could lead to errors in the allocation of contracts. These gaps, combined with legal uncertainty, create an environment prone to legal insecurity, where economic actors and contracting authorities may find themselves in a situation of mistrust and uncertainty regarding the regularity of the procedures.

The rush of the legislator to launch this digitization, without first ensuring the technical reliability and legal solidity of the platform, has therefore led to increased legal insecurity. This has contributed to a lack of trust among economic operators in the platform and to doubts about the impartiality of the process, with risks of errors in contract allocation and judicial challenges. It is now crucial to address these technical gaps and strengthen the legal framework around the platform to ensure legal security and sustained confidence in public procurement management in Algeria.

In contrast, the French legislator has adopted a more gradual and thoughtful approach to digitization. For example, before launching ambitious artificial intelligence and public service

digitization projects, France first implemented initiatives aimed at building citizens' trust in these new technologies. The "artificial intelligence for trust" program, for instance, was introduced to ensure transparency, security, and ethics in the use of digital technologies. This preparation phase helped raise awareness among citizens and build a trusting relationship before introducing complex digital tools, thereby allowing a smooth transition to the digitalization of public services.

2. Technical and Infrastructure Challenges

The introduction of the digital platform for public procurement in Algeria, although ambitious and offering significant reforms, presents several technical and operational challenges that undermine its effectiveness. One of the major issues lies in the cost of accessing the platform, which is set at 12,000 DZD for annual registration. This pricing can pose a considerable barrier for small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), particularly those located in remote regions or those with limited resources.

The high registration cost thus excludes a significant portion of economic actors, reducing competition and limiting equal access to public procurement. Such a barrier directly affects the equal treatment of candidates, one of the fundamental principles of public procurement. Furthermore, this financial obstacle prevents the platform from fulfilling its role of democratizing and expanding access to public procurement for all economic operators, regardless of their size or location.

In contrast, in France, access to the public procurement platform is free, which facilitates participation by all businesses, including the smallest. This no-fee policy ensures equal opportunities for all economic operators, regardless of their size or location. In fact, the absence of financial barriers helps reduce inequalities between businesses and fosters greater diversity in participation in public procurement. This French model is particularly relevant for encouraging competitiveness and strengthening transparency in the procurement process, as it attracts a wide range of candidates, ensuring healthy and fair competition. This approach contributes to creating a climate of trust among economic actors, as it eliminates one of the main sources of exclusion and discrimination, namely registration costs.

At the same time, the platform suffers from technical shortcomings that make its use difficult and limit its impact. The OECD report of 2019 highlights that the infrastructure necessary for optimal use of the platform is not always available, particularly in rural or remote areas. Internet connectivity remains a major issue, preventing many businesses, especially the smaller ones, from registering and submitting their bids online. This lack of digital infrastructure creates a digital divide that excludes less-equipped economic actors, preventing them from fully participating in public procurement and accessing the opportunities offered by digitization.

Moreover, the lack of adequate training for platform users, particularly for small businesses and those located in less-developed areas, contributes to the platform's inefficiency. Many businesses are not familiar with the digital tools required for optimal use

of the platform, leading to errors during bid submissions and potential inequalities in the treatment of candidates.

Finally, the absence of an independent regulatory authority to oversee the platform's operation and ensure its compliance with public procurement principles has also been identified as a major gap. Without this authority, it is difficult to ensure the consistency and regulation of the processes and ensure that businesses adhere to the criteria in an equal and transparent manner. This undermines economic operators' trust in the system and raises concerns about the transparency of procedures. This situation creates legal insecurity, which may discourage economic actors from fully engaging in public procurement, as they are not guaranteed that the process will be conducted fairly and in accordance with established rules. The OECD report therefore recommends the swift establishment of the Public Procurement Regulatory Authority (ARMP), which would strengthen oversight and ensure better transparency and fairness in the treatment of bids.

In summary, while the Algerian public procurement platform represents a significant step toward modernization and digital governance, these institutional, legal, and technical limitations seriously undermine its potential impact. The combination of high registration costs, insufficient digital infrastructure, lack of user training, and absence of an independent regulatory authority creates systemic barriers that threaten the platform's ability to foster transparency, equal access, and administrative efficiency. This analysis highlights that digitization alone cannot guarantee reform; it must be accompanied by robust legal frameworks, inclusive policies, and strong oversight mechanisms. Comparative insights from the French experience demonstrate that careful preparation, free and equitable access, and the establishment of trust-building initiatives are essential for a successful transition to digital public procurement. Consequently, for Algeria to fully realize the transformative potential of its platform, it is imperative to address these structural gaps, ensuring that the digitalization of public procurement becomes not merely a technical innovation but a true instrument of governance, inclusion, and legal certainty.

Conclusion:

Public procurement in Algeria constitutes a strategic lever for economic development and the modernization of public action. Aware of the need to adapt procurement procedures to the requirements of transparency, fairness, and efficiency, Algeria introduced, through the Ministerial Order of November 17, 2013, an electronic public procurement portal designed to centralize and digitize the main stages of the competitive bidding process. This initiative is part of broader reforms related to e-government, initiated as early as 2013 and consolidated by Law No. 18-04 of May 10, 2018, on the modernization of public administration.

The platform aims to strengthen the transparency of procedures, ensure equal treatment of candidates, streamline timelines, and broaden access to public procurement, particularly for operators located in remote areas. However, a critical analysis of its implementation reveals significant disparities between its stated objectives and its operational reality. Technical,

legal, institutional, and human limitations still hinder its full deployment, compromising its effectiveness and the engagement of economic actors, especially those from marginalized regions.

It is therefore necessary to carry out an in-depth assessment of the platform's actual contributions while identifying persistent shortcomings. This analysis will help to identify concrete avenues for improvement, from the perspective of efficiency, inclusion, and legal certainty. In this respect, the following recommendations can be made:

Revising the regulatory framework governing the digital public procurement platform in Algeria has become a strategic priority to ensure its reliability, sustainability, and acceptability. Indeed, a digital platform can only be secure and credible if the legal framework supporting it is equally robust. In other words, the technical security of the platform is inseparable from the legal security of the system in which it operates.

Law plays a fundamental role in this context: it establishes guarantees, defines responsibilities, regulates remedies, and protects data. However, the current framework, still partial and sometimes unclear, does not fully meet the modern requirements of digital vigilance—namely, the ability to prevent, detect, and sanction abuses or malfunctions linked to the use of technology in public procurement.

France, for instance, has gradually incorporated these requirements into its public procurement law, particularly through the 2020 Public Procurement Code and data protection regulations (GDPR), which provide a legitimate foundation of trust for digitalization.

Thus, while a platform may be technically efficient, it will remain fragile without a strong and modern legal framework. It is therefore essential to link digital modernization with legal consolidation by establishing a regulatory framework that is clear, predictable, and protective. Only under these conditions can Algerian public procurement truly adapt to the challenges of digitalization and foster lasting trust between the State and economic operators.

Eliminating the access fee for the public procurement platform—currently set at 12,000 DZD per year—would be a key measure to ensure genuine equal access to public contracts. Indeed, this fee can represent a disproportionate burden for many small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), particularly those located in so-called "shadow zones," meaning remote, underdeveloped, or socio-economically disadvantaged areas. This registration cost acts as a financial barrier, restricting access to public procurement services to a minority of better-resourced operators, thereby undermining the principle of equality before public services and that of free competition.

Making access to such a platform free of charge is not only an economic fairness requirement, but also a corollary of the principle of accessibility to public services, which is recognized as fundamental in a modern democracy. In the field of public procurement, such accessibility ensures that all operators, regardless of their size, location, or financial capacity, have an equal opportunity to respond to public tenders.

By way of comparison, in France, access to the public procurement platform is completely free. This free access is designed as a key lever to enhance economic inclusion, promote diversity in applications, and stimulate competitiveness. It allows micro-enterprises, artisans, SMEs, and even new entrants to access public procurement opportunities without any upfront financial barrier. This political and legal choice reflects the French legislator's intention to use public procurement as a tool for territorial development and economic justice, ensuring equal access for all operators.

Thus, by removing the registration fee, Algeria could move toward a more inclusive model that aligns with international standards of equal access to public services. This would increase participation from marginalized economic actors, enhance transparency, and help rebuild trust in the public procurement process. Such a reform would be a decisive step toward democratizing access to public contracts.

Rethinking the ergonomics of Algeria's public procurement platform is also a crucial step in improving its efficiency and accessibility. Currently, many users—particularly small businesses unfamiliar with digital tools—encounter difficulties navigating the platform, submitting bids, or reviewing tender notices. A more intuitive, clear, and structured interface would simplify the user experience, reduce errors during submissions, and increase participation, thereby contributing to healthier and fairer competition.

Moreover, strengthening data security is a critical priority. The platform handles sensitive information, both on companies and on contractual procedures. Without robust cybersecurity protocols, this data is vulnerable to hacking, manipulation, or loss. Implementing measures such as data encryption, strong user authentication, action traceability, and regular file backups would help ensure the confidentiality, integrity, and availability of information—conditions that are essential for building trust among economic operators.

Furthermore, improving the platform's compatibility with commonly used digital tools (up-to-date browsers, standard file formats, and document management systems used by businesses) is equally crucial. Many users report bugs, technical incompatibilities, or malfunctions when uploading or downloading documents. A modern platform must be designed to be responsive, interoperable, and tested across different environments (Windows, Mac, mobile devices) to ensure seamless access regardless of the user's profile.

Ultimately, by drawing inspiration from countries like France—which has prioritized simplicity, robustness, and security in its digital tools—Algeria would benefit from upgrading its platform to make it a true lever for openness, transparency, and performance in public procurement. A technical and ergonomic overhaul is essential to meet the real needs of businesses and to promote innovation in the service of the public interest.

Establishing a national training program on digital public procurement is a strategic measure that is essential to enhance the effectiveness and inclusiveness of Algeria's public procurement platform. Many bidders, particularly small and medium-sized enterprises

and operators from less advantaged regions, lack the technical skills needed to fully utilize the platform's features. Similarly, public officials responsible for managing tenders often struggle with a lack of proficiency in digital tools and the specific rules related to the digitalization of procurement procedures.

Such a training program would not only improve understanding of the legal framework for digital public procurement but also ensure better handling of digital tools. It could include modules on identifying tender opportunities, assembling and submitting electronic bids, the secure use of digital signatures, and post-award contract management. Tailored training sessions adapted to the participants' profiles (business owners, technicians, legal experts, public agents) would be particularly relevant to address the specific needs of each stakeholder group.

From a comparative perspective, France has successfully implemented similar initiatives, notably through online courses, free webinars, and practical guides published by regulatory authorities. This approach has helped democratize access to digital public procurement, reduce procedural errors, and ensure a fairer and more transparent operation of the platforms.

By strengthening users' digital skills, Algeria could not only improve the overall performance of its platform but also boost the confidence of economic operators in the system, while fostering the emergence of a modern and inclusive digital public culture.

Establishing permanent technical support and a multilingual interface is an essential condition for ensuring the accessibility of the public procurement platform to all users, regardless of their skill level or working language. Currently, many economic operators—particularly those from remote areas or with limited digital proficiency—face difficulties in using the platform on a daily basis. These technical or linguistic obstacles can hinder their effective participation in public tenders, thereby undermining the principle of equal access to public services.

Setting up continuous technical assistance (via phone, instant messaging, or email) would allow users to receive immediate help when encountering difficulties at any stage of the process (registration, bid submission, electronic signature, etc.). This technical support should be provided by a well-trained and responsive team capable of guiding both bidders and contracting authorities in their tasks.

Moreover, offering a multilingual platform interface—including at least Arabic, French, and Tamazight—would help eliminate a major access barrier. In a country where linguistic diversity is a reality, limiting the interface to a single language creates inequality in access to information and opportunities. Inspired by certain European platforms (such as those in France), which offer services in several languages to ensure accessibility for all citizens and businesses, Algeria could significantly improve the inclusiveness of its public procurement system.

Ultimately, this dual measure—permanent support and a multilingual interface—would enhance the efficiency, transparency, and fairness of the platform, while ensuring that

no one is excluded due to technical or linguistic reasons.

Integrating automated and traceable controls over the publication, submission, and award phases of public procurement processes is a key tool to strengthen transparency, accountability, and auditability. One of the main criticisms of the Algerian platform today is the opacity of certain stages of the process, leaving room for suspicions of favoritism, corruption, or undetected errors.

Automated control involves implementing a digital system capable of automatically verifying compliance with key steps: publication of calls for tenders, receipt of submissions within deadlines, and awarding of contracts based on the announced criteria. Each operation would be recorded with a timestamp and metadata, allowing the precise identification of the actor, time, and nature of the action performed.

Digital traceability, through integrated audit logs, would make it possible to reconstruct the history of a contract from its launch to its award at any time. This would facilitate not only post-procedure audits by regulatory bodies or competent courts but also internal or external reviews, while discouraging fraudulent practices.

Such mechanisms are already in place in some countries, like France, where public procurement platforms (such as PLACE) include secure archiving features, transaction tracking, and access to operational histories. This helps foster a culture of accountability and administrative ethics.

Ultimately, the digitization of public procurement is not merely a tool for administrative modernization; it represents a true revolution in the way the State conceives and carries out its economic mission. By enhancing transparency, efficiency, and traceability, it actively contributes to strengthening the legitimacy of public action and restoring citizens' trust. Certainly, technical, legal, and human obstacles remain, but they must be addressed as challenges to be overcome, not as barriers to innovation. The success of this digital transition will depend on the institutions' ability to adopt a strategic, inclusive, and forward-looking approach.

Eventually, while the electronic public procurement platform represents an innovative tool and a driver of transparency, its full potential remains largely conditioned by several essential factors. Beyond the mere digitalization of procedures, the success of this reform depends on the effective and sustained commitment of all economic actors, the consolidation of a clear and coherent legal framework, as well as the implementation of rigorous monitoring mechanisms to continuously evaluate and adjust the system's effectiveness. It is also essential to accompany this transition with ongoing training policies for all users, whether they are bidding companies or public officials managing the calls for tenders, in order to strengthen digital tool proficiency, raise awareness of compliance and ethical issues, and prevent errors or malfunctions.

Moreover, the success of this digitalization relies on the establishment of independent and transparent control mechanisms, capable of detecting, correcting, and sanctioning

irregular practices, while ensuring traceability and the security of sensitive data. These measures should not merely meet technical requirements but should fit into a strategic vision aimed at transforming public procurement into a genuine lever for economic development. In this sense, the platform could play a decisive role in promoting economic inclusion, particularly by enabling small and medium-sized enterprises, as well as actors from historically marginalized areas, to participate in a more equitable market, thus stimulating competition and innovation.

It is also crucial to adopt a forward-looking approach, open to international best practices and adaptable to technological developments, to ensure that the platform remains relevant in the face of future challenges, such as cybersecurity, artificial intelligence in bid analysis, or the transition toward more sustainable and responsible markets. An integrated vision of public procurement digitalization must combine administrative efficiency, transparency, trust from economic operators, and continuous service improvement, while strengthening the legitimacy of public institutions and citizens' confidence in the State's actions.

Thus, far from being merely a technical tool, Algeria's public procurement platform should be seen as a comprehensive and strategic project, combining administrative modernization, economic inclusion, innovation, and ethical governance. In this regard, it represents not only a vehicle for transparency and efficiency but also an instrument to reinforce social cohesion and territorial development, contributing to the emergence of a modern, resilient, and sustainable public procurement system capable of meeting the aspirations of all stakeholders and supporting the country's economic growth in a sustainable manner.

As **Klaus Schwab**, founder of the World Economic Forum, aptly stated: **"The Fourth Industrial Revolution doesn't just change what we do, it changes who we are."**

In the digital age, the State must not only evolve but reinvent itself to meet the demands of modern, transparent, and future-oriented governance.

Citations:

Ministerial Order No. 13-267 of November 17, 2013 setting the content of the electronic public procurement portal and the terms of its management, Official Journal No. 26, dated April 9, 2014.

1. The concept of universal service emerged in the 20th century in the context of public service reform. It refers to the obligation of public authorities or companies responsible for providing essential public services to ensure fair and continuous access to these services for all citizens, regardless of their geographical, social, or economic situation.
2. The Ministerial Order of November 17, 2013 does not explicitly mention the term "traceability" in all of its articles, but it establishes principles that ensure comprehensive monitoring of the operations carried out on the platform.
3. According to the ministerial order, archiving involves several aspects such as the preservation of documents, the retention period, as well as accessibility and traceability.

4. In administrative law, legitimate trust is protected by the principle that a public authority cannot act in an unpredictable manner or contrary to its prior commitments, to the detriment of citizens or economic operators who have acted based on the legitimate expectations generated by these commitments.
5. In a legal context, digital vigilance refers to the monitoring of digital practices to ensure compliance with standards, laws, and principles of transparency, security, and fairness, particularly in electronic management systems, such as those in public procurement or public administration in general.
6. The e-government project in Algeria was launched in 2013 under the name "National Project for the Digitization of Public Services." This project aims to modernize public services in Algeria by using information and communication technologies (ICT) to simplify and streamline administrative procedures.
7. Also see the Framework Law No. 18-04 of May 10, 2018, on the modernization of public administration, which was published in the Official Journal (OJ) No. 27 of May 11, 2018.

References:

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2. **Ordinance No. 2018-1074** of November 26, 2018 containing the legislative part of the Public Procurement Code, Official Journal of the French Republic (JORF) No. 0273 of November 27, 2018.
3. **Ordinance No. 2005-649** of June 6, 2005 on public contracts awarded by certain public or private entities not subject to the Public Procurement Code, Official Journal of the French Republic, No. 131 of June 7, 2005.
4. **Decree No. 2005-1742** of December 30, 2005 on public procurement, Official Journal of the French Republic, No. 303 of December 31, 2005.
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7. **ODCE Report (2019)**, Report on the Digitalization of Public Procurement in Algeria: State of Play, Prospects, and Challenges, Observatory of Ethics and Electronic Procurement, Algiers.