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Digitalization of the Investment Sector

Sakri Zoubida^{1*}, Chekirine Dilmi², Mahmoudi Rachid³

¹University of Batna (Algeria) , Sakri.zoubida@univ-batna.dz

Governance and economic law laboratory

²University of Khmiss Miliana (Algeria) , d.chekirine@univ-dbkm.dz

Civil status laboratory

³University of Khmiss Miliana (Algeria), r.mahmoudi@univ-dbkm.dz

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***Corresponding author**

Abstract :

This study examines the digitalization of the investment sector in Algeria under Law No. 22-18, considering it a strategic mechanism for modernizing the business environment and enhancing the attractiveness of the investment climate. The research further analyzes the platform's core objectives, namely ensuring equal opportunities, accelerating file processing, and attracting foreign direct investment. It also evaluates its practical implementation through indicators related to electronic registration and digital submission. Conversely, the study discusses the main technical, organizational, human, and cybersecurity challenges that continue to hinder its full operational effectiveness.

Keywords: Law No. 22-18; Investment digitalization; Investor Digital Platform; Business climate.

Introduction

In recent years, digital transformation has become a central strategic orientation for states worldwide, serving as a key driver of economic modernization, improvement of the business climate, and attraction of investment flows. Digitalization has evolved beyond isolated administrative reforms to constitute a comprehensive governance model aimed at enhancing transparency, simplifying procedures, improving efficiency, and reducing bureaucratic constraints that have historically hindered sustainable development.

In Algeria, economic reform efforts culminated in the adoption of Law No. 22-18 on Investment, which not only redefined guarantees and incentives granted to investors but also institutionalized digitalization as a core mechanism for facilitating investment operations. The establishment of the Digital Investor Platform and the implementation of electronic submission and monitoring systems reflect a deliberate shift toward embedding digital governance principles within the national investment framework. This reform seeks to eliminate administrative fragmentation and procedural complexity while promoting unified electronic processing and greater decision-making transparency.

However, the effectiveness of digitalization cannot be assessed solely on the basis of legislative innovation. This raises a central research question: To what extent does the digitalization of the investment sector under Law No. 22-18 effectively improve Algeria's business climate and investment attractiveness, and what structural limitations may constrain its full implementation?

To address this question, the study adopts a descriptive-analytical and doctrinal legal methodology, complemented by an institutional governance perspective. It examines the legal framework of digitalization, evaluates its practical implications in light of principles of transparency, efficiency, and legal certainty, and assesses its alignment with standards of good governance and international competitiveness.

The analysis is guided by three hypotheses: first, that digitalization constitutes a structural reform capable of enhancing transparency and investment attractiveness; second, that its effectiveness depends on infrastructural readiness, institutional coordination, human capital, and cybersecurity safeguards; and third, that it strengthens investor confidence by increasing procedural predictability and reducing administrative discretion.

Accordingly, this article aims to analyze the legal and institutional foundations of investment digitalization in Algeria, assess the role of the Digital Investor Platform in improving governance and efficiency, identify the challenges

affecting its implementation, and evaluate its broader impact on national and international investment competitiveness.

THE FIRST TOPIC Establishment and Objectives of the Investor Digital Platform under Law No. 22-18

Through Law No. 22-18, the Algerian legislator sought to embody a new vision for the business climate, grounded in the principles of transparency and digitalization. This vision was concretely translated into the establishment of a national digital platform for investors, considered the first of its kind within Algerian investment legislation.

This platform does not merely constitute a technical tool; rather, it represents an integrated legal and administrative mechanism aimed at ensuring the fluid circulation of information, simplifying procedures, and establishing the foundations of fair competition.

First requirement: The Legal Framework Governing the Establishment of the Digital Platform

An analysis of the legal framework of the Investor Digital Platform requires an examination of the legislative foundation established by Law No. 22-18 on Investment, followed by an assessment of its consistency with the constitutional principles enshrined in the 2020 Constitution.

The digital platform is not a transient regulatory measure; instead, it embodies a profound transformation in the philosophy of state intervention in the economic sphere—shifting from a traditional administration characterized by procedural complexity to a digital administration founded upon the principles of governance, transparency, and equality.

First section: The Legislative Foundation of the Platform

Law No. 22-18 on Investment constitutes the explicit legislative basis for the establishment of the Investor Digital Platform, recognizing it as an official institutional mechanism placed under the supervision of the Algerian Investment Promotion Agency.

This legislative provision carries dual legal significance. On the one hand, it grants the platform direct statutory legitimacy; on the other hand, it integrates it into the institutional architecture of investment governance, thereby removing it from the sphere of temporary administrative initiatives and placing it within a binding and stable legal framework.

By incorporating the platform into a legislative text, the principle of legality is reinforced, as all procedures related to the submission, processing, and monitoring of investment files become governed by clear legal rules, rather than subject to individual discretion or inconsistent administrative assessments. In this

sense, digitalization is not merely a technical option but a legislative commitment generating legal effects for both the administration and investors.¹

Moreover, this legal institutionalization reflects a qualitative transition from a “paper-based administration” to a “digital administration.” Traditionally, the processing of investment files involved multiple documents, repetitive movement between administrative bodies, and overlapping competences, resulting in procedural delays and increased transaction costs. Under the digital platform, however, applications are submitted electronically, and investors are able to track the progress of their files and identify the stages of examination. This reduces uncontrolled discretionary power and enhances the reviewability and accountability of administrative decisions.

From a theoretical perspective, the platform may be regarded as a concrete manifestation of the concept of e-government, which entails the use of information and communication technologies in the delivery of public services. However, its specificity in the investment domain lies in its connection to financial and economic rights of national significance, thereby transforming it into an instrument for regulating economic activity rather than merely a service-delivery mechanism.

Furthermore, placing the platform under the supervision of the Algerian Investment Promotion Agency reflects a deliberate move toward centralizing responsibility and unifying the investor’s point of contact, thus minimizing the fragmentation of competences. This approach reinforces the principle of the “single window” (one-stop shop), which has become an international standard in investment governance, whereby investors interact digitally with a single entity instead of physically engaging with multiple administrative bodies.

Accordingly, the legislative foundation of the platform confirms that digitalization in the investment sector is not an incidental reform, but rather a legally grounded strategic choice aimed at restructuring the relationship between the investor and the administration on the basis of speed, transparency, and equal opportunity.

Second section: The Platform’s Consistency with Constitutional Principles

The analysis of the legal framework governing the Digital Investor Platform cannot be confined solely to its legislative basis; it must also extend to assessing its conformity with the constitutional principles enshrined in the 2020 Constitution. Digital transformation in the field of investment derives its legitimacy from a set of constitutional principles that regulate economic activity and define the State’s obligations toward economic operators.²

Foremost among these principles is the constitutional guarantee of freedom of investment and economic initiative, exercised within the framework of the law.

By simplifying procedures and ensuring equal access to information, the digital platform removes unjustified obstacles that may hinder the effective exercise of this freedom. In this regard, digitalization becomes a concrete instrument for implementing constitutional norms rather than a mere technical mechanism.

The platform is likewise consistent with the principle of equality before the law and before public services. The unified electronic processing of applications significantly reduces the risks of discrimination or favoritism, as all requests are subject to the same digital pathway and identical procedural conditions. Consequently, the platform contributes to the institutionalization of equal opportunity among investors, whether domestic or foreign.

From a deeper analytical perspective, the platform may also be viewed as an embodiment of the concept of good governance, which is grounded in efficiency, accountability, and clarity in decision-making processes. The Constitution does not merely proclaim normative principles; it requires the establishment of effective mechanisms for their implementation. In the economic sphere, the digital platform constitutes one such operational mechanism.

Accordingly, digitalization in this context transcends its technical dimension to assume the character of a constitutional instrument aimed at safeguarding investors' rights, ensuring fair and transparent treatment, and strengthening confidence in public administration. The Digital Investor Platform should therefore not be understood merely as a modernization of administrative tools, but rather as part of a broader constitutional reconfiguration of the relationship between the State and economic actors.

second requirement: Objectives of the Investor Digital Platform

The Digital Investor Platform cannot be reduced to a technical tool designed solely to facilitate the electronic submission of applications. Rather, it must be understood as a strategic instrument for re-engineering the investment climate in accordance with the logic of digital governance. It reflects a structural shift from a traditional administrative model characterized by procedural multiplicity and direct bureaucratic interaction to a digital administration based on unified procedures, traceability, and the institutionalization of equal access to economic public services.

First section: Ensuring Transparency and Equal Opportunity

The principle of transparency constitutes one of the fundamental pillars of modern economic governance, as a stable investment environment cannot be conceived without clear rules and equal access to information. In this context, the Digital Investor Platform performs a central function by unifying the source of

legal and regulatory information and making it accessible to all investors without discrimination.

By providing legal texts, procedures, incentives, and eligibility conditions through a unified digital interface, the platform places all economic actors in an equivalent legal position. Information is no longer a privilege obtained through personal networks or informal channels; rather, it becomes objectively and transparently accessible. In this sense, the administration shifts from a logic of “information monopoly” to one of “information democratization.”

From a legal perspective, equal access to information constitutes a concrete manifestation of the principle of equality before public service. Investors must not be subjected to differential treatment based on disparities in their level of awareness or ability to reach competent authorities. The digital platform reduces the risks of favoritism or undue interference by standardizing and technically structuring the procedural pathway.

Moreover, enabling investors to track their applications step by step through an electronic monitoring system strengthens what may be termed “procedural transparency.” The administration is no longer perceived as a closed entity issuing unexplained decisions; rather, the processing of applications becomes observable and assessable. This enhances trust in public administration and reduces the uncertainty that traditionally characterized conventional bureaucratic procedures.³

From a broader governance perspective, digital transparency also contributes to combating administrative corruption. Every entry, modification, or rejection becomes electronically documented, thereby reinforcing accountability and ensuring that any deviation from the lawful process is traceable. In this way, the platform evolves into a preventive oversight mechanism rather than merely a service-delivery tool.

Accordingly, the objective of ensuring transparency and equal opportunity transcends its procedural dimension and reaches the level of rebuilding trust between investors and the State—trust being a fundamental element in the stability of economic relations.

Second section: Simplification of Procedures and Reduction of Timeframes

Administrative complexity represents one of the most significant traditional obstacles to investment. The multiplicity of intervening bodies, duplication of documentation, and overlapping competences have historically resulted in prolonged processing times and increased transaction costs. Within this framework, the Digital Investor Platform emerges as a mechanism for re-engineering the administrative pathway according to the logic of the “single procedure” and “simultaneous processing.”⁴

The possibility of electronic submission effectively eliminates repetitive physical movement between administrative entities and reduces direct bureaucratic interaction, which may otherwise lead to unjustified delays or obstruction. Furthermore, the issuance of an immediate digital receipt reinforces the principle of legal certainty, as the investor obtains electronic proof of the date of submission—an essential element in calculating statutory time limits.

From an organizational standpoint, digitalization enables the simultaneous electronic distribution of applications to the relevant authorities, replacing sequential processing and thereby significantly shortening administrative timelines. The unification of the database also minimizes duplication of requests and prevents the repeated submission of identical documents to multiple entities.⁵

The reduction of processing time is not merely a procedural advantage; it carries significant economic implications. Prolonged waiting periods increase project costs and heighten investment risk. Consequently, accelerating procedures contributes to improving a country’s ranking in business climate indicators and enhances its regional and international competitiveness.

From a theoretical perspective, the simplification of procedures may be viewed as an expression of the principle of administrative efficiency, which requires public authorities to perform their functions with minimal cost and maximum speed, without compromising legality. The Digital Investor Platform achieves a balance between legal oversight and procedural flexibility, thereby positioning itself as a concrete instrument for the realization of sound public administration and good governance.

Third section: Attracting Foreign Investment

The impact of the Digital Investor Platform is not confined to domestic investors; it extends equally to foreign investors who seek a stable legal environment and procedures that are clear, predictable, and efficient. In the context of intensified global competition for capital inflows, digitalization has become a fundamental benchmark in assessing a state's investment attractiveness.

By providing a multilingual interface, the platform enables foreign investors to access national legislation, available incentives, and mechanisms for appeal directly, without reliance on intermediaries or informal channels. This reduces market entry costs and enhances transparency in the potential contractual relationship between the investor and the State.

Furthermore, the unified digital character of procedures conveys a message of institutional reliability to the international investor community. It signals that the State adheres to modern standards of administration and is committed to the principles of governance, clarity, and procedural consistency. Foreign investors evaluate not only the scope of fiscal incentives but also the stability, predictability, and transparency of administrative procedures.

From a competitiveness perspective, digitalization positions Algeria on a path of convergence with international standards in investment management, particularly as many jurisdictions have adopted “digital one-stop-shop” systems to streamline investment procedures. Consequently, the platform should not be viewed merely as a domestic administrative reform, but rather as a component of the State’s broader external economic strategy.⁶

Accordingly, the objective of attracting foreign investment is grounded in a dual rationale: enhancing the institutional image of the State on the one hand, and providing practical guarantees of transparency and procedural efficiency on the other. In this sense, the Digital Investor Platform functions as an indirect instrument of economic diplomacy, reflecting the State’s seriousness in modernizing its investment environment and aligning it with global governance standards.

THE SECOND TOPIC: The Reality and Challenges of the Digital Investor Platform

The adoption of the Digital Investor Platform represents one of the most significant practical manifestations of the Algerian State’s orientation toward modernizing its investment environment and progressively transitioning from a traditional paper-based administration to a digital administration grounded in modern technological systems for file processing and information management.

Despite the considerable uptake the platform has achieved since its launch—reflecting a genuine need among investors for a mechanism capable of delivering fast and transparent services free from bureaucratic complexity—this development has not been devoid of structural, technical, and organizational challenges that have affected its overall effectiveness. These challenges relate

both to levels of accessibility and usability, and to the imperative of ensuring data security and confidentiality in the digital environment.

First requirement :The Operational Reality of the Digital Investor Platform

Since its launch, the Digital Investor Platform has witnessed substantial engagement from economic operators, as confirmed by reports issued by the Prime Minister's Office and by statements from senior officials within the Algerian Investment Promotion Agency⁷. A significant number of investors have successfully registered and declared their projects through the platform, demonstrating their demand for a simplified and efficient procedural mechanism capable of overcoming the bureaucratic constraints that historically hindered investment in Algeria.

The platform seeks to establish a new model of interaction between investors and public administration—one based on transparency, rapid file processing, and instantaneous access to information regardless of the user's location or time of access. It functions as a digital mechanism for facilitating investment operations and overcoming paper-based procedural complexities, in line with the broader global transition toward digital transformation.

Furthermore, the platform operates as an intelligent interface linking investors with entities responsible for industrial land allocation. By providing a unified and accurate digital overview of available land resources, it contributes to addressing structural inefficiencies within the industrial land market and offers practical solutions to long-standing constraints in this sector.⁸

In a public statement during an interview with “Al Jazeera Podcast” on 6 April 2022, President Abdelmadjid Tebboune indicated that the private sector represents approximately 14% of national capital, expressing expectations that investment would reach USD 22 billion by 2023 and generate approximately 44,000 jobs within eighteen months. These projections underscore the magnitude of the economic stakes associated with improving the investment climate and relying on digitalization as a primary lever for reform.

Under the new Investment Law No. 22-18, the Digital Investor Platform has become an integral component of the institutional mechanisms supporting investment. The law established an independent mechanism for adjudicating appeals and complaints, composed of judges and economic and financial experts, while reinforcing deterrent measures against any obstruction of investment projects, regardless of the position or authority of the individual responsible. In addition, the Algerian Investment Promotion Agency was created under the

authority of the Prime Minister and entrusted with supervising the platform and ensuring its integration within the broader file-processing framework.⁹

This orientation continues earlier efforts to institutionalize e-government practices in sectors such as justice and higher education, now extending digital transformation into the economic sphere as a cornerstone for transparency, integrity, and improved investment outcomes. Law No. 22-18 explicitly enshrines the principles of transparency and good governance and contributes to combating administrative corruption through the digitalization of procedures and the adoption of electronic exchange of documents and data, particularly as investor information is entered through the platform without direct human intervention.¹⁰

The platform enables access to comprehensive information related to investment, including competent authorities, available land resources, incentives, and benefits, while also allowing full digital submission of administrative files. It plays a pivotal role in dematerializing procedures, thereby enhancing transparency and facilitating the electronic examination and processing of applications.

Second requirement: Obstacles Facing the Digital Investor Platform

Despite the significant benefits offered by the Digital Investor Platform and its potential to improve the investment climate, the implementation of digitalization in this domain is not without substantial and multidimensional challenges. These obstacles are technical, organizational, financial, and human in nature, collectively affecting the platform's overall effectiveness and sustainability.

At the level of infrastructure, the State faces difficulties related to the high costs associated with equipping and maintaining electronic administration systems. These include insufficient financial resources for software development, continuous system upgrades, staff training, and the recruitment of specialized information technology experts. Digital transformation projects within the economic sector are further constrained by limited funding allocations and ongoing technical maintenance challenges affecting digital platforms and software systems.¹¹

From an organizational and managerial perspective, part of the problem stems from weak coordination among the various administrations involved in investment governance and the absence of a unified strategic vision for digital transformation programs. Additionally, resistance to change among certain public officials—stemming from concerns over job security or limited capacity to adapt to new technologies—constitutes a structural impediment.¹² Administrative bureaucracy and limited trust in public institutions remain among the most

significant barriers facing the platform, particularly from the standpoint of foreign investors.

Digital illiteracy among certain categories of public employees—and even among some investors—represents another major challenge. This is compounded by the absence of continuous professional training programs and the decreasing number of personnel possessing adequate technical skills in computer and internet usage. Without sufficient digital competencies, the efficiency gains expected from technological reform risk being undermined.¹³

At the level of information security, the platform confronts particularly sensitive challenges. The success of electronic administration depends fundamentally on safeguarding both administrative and investor data from breaches, cyberattacks, destruction, and other forms of cyber threats. Security and trust are central pillars of digital transformation, requiring the State to implement robust cybersecurity frameworks and stringent protection mechanisms to ensure the integrity and confidentiality of digital transactions.

Additional structural challenges arise from the limited interoperability between the Digital Investor Platform and other investment-related systems, such as customs, the commercial registry, and banking institutions. The incomplete digitalization of the land administration sector and the absence of a comprehensive inventory of investment-ready land further complicate investment facilitation. Moreover, the lack of a precise digital mapping of regional resources and economic capacities restricts strategic investment planning. Persistent vulnerabilities to cyberattacks, the need for continuous hardware and software updates, inadequate internet connectivity in certain regions, and the limited capacity of the banking sector to adapt to technological transformation collectively exacerbate these difficulties.¹⁴

Taken together, these obstacles constitute a substantive challenge to the full realization of digital transformation in the investment sector. Addressing them requires comprehensive technical, organizational, financial, and training reforms aimed at ensuring the operational sustainability, institutional integration, and strategic success of the Digital Investor Platform.

Conclusion

The analysis of the digitalization of the investment sector in Algeria under Law No. 22-18 demonstrates that digital transformation is no longer a temporary administrative option, but rather a strategic orientation reflecting the State's determination to restructure its relationship with economic actors in accordance

with the logic of good governance. The Digital Investor Platform represents a practical embodiment of a new legislative philosophy grounded in transparency, procedural simplification, and the reduction of human discretion in decision-making processes.

The new legal framework has contributed to establishing the foundations of a digital investment administration based on unified processing, open access to information, and electronic traceability of applications, thereby strengthening relative confidence in the investment environment. However, practical experience has shown that the success of digitalization depends not solely on legislative provisions, but also on the readiness of digital infrastructure, the level of institutional coordination, the availability of qualified human capital, and the assurance of cybersecurity and continuity of digital services.

Accordingly, the digitalization of the investment sector constitutes a fundamental reform step toward modernizing the national economy. Nevertheless, it remains an evolving and ongoing project that requires continuous updating, the institutionalization of a digital culture within public administration, and the achievement of systemic integration among the various actors within the economic ecosystem.

Research Findings

Based on the study and analysis conducted, the following findings have been identified:

1. Law No. 22-18 established an explicit legislative foundation for the digitalization of the investment process, granting the Digital Investor Platform binding legal status and removing it from the sphere of temporary administrative initiatives.
2. The Digital Investor Platform has contributed to institutionalizing the principles of transparency and equal opportunity by unifying the source of information and establishing a standardized procedural pathway for all investors.
3. Digitalization has led to a tangible reduction in the material and paper-based nature of procedures and has accelerated file processing compared to the traditional system.
4. The platform represents a strategic instrument for strengthening economic governance through data aggregation and analysis, thereby supporting evidence-based investment policymaking.

Proposals

In light of the foregoing analysis, the following proposals are advanced:

1. Accelerating full digital interoperability between the Digital Investor Platform and all institutions involved in the investment process (tax

authorities, customs, banking institutions, the commercial registry, and industrial land agencies).

2. Developing a comprehensive national digital mapping system for land resources and regional economic capacities, directly integrated into the platform.
3. Implementing mandatory and continuous training programs for public officials and investors in the use of digital systems and electronic procedures.
4. Establishing a specialized national center for economic information security tasked with protecting investment-related digital platforms and securing electronic transactions.
5. Integrating artificial intelligence and big data analytics technologies to support investment decision-making and to direct incentives toward priority sectors.

Recommendations

Based on the findings reached, the study recommends:

1. The adoption of a comprehensive national digital transformation strategy in the economic sphere, aligned with the State's broader digital governance policy.
2. Allocating an independent and sustainable budget dedicated to the development and continuous modernization of digital infrastructure.
3. Periodic revision of regulatory frameworks to ensure alignment with technological advancements and evolving cybersecurity requirements.
4. Strengthening digital oversight and accountability mechanisms to safeguard transparency and prevent any deviation in the processing of investment applications.

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⁸ Algerian Investment Promotion Agency (AAPI). "Digital Platform for the Investor." Available at: <http://acpi.dz/ar/plateforme-numérique-de-linvesliman/> (accessed January 12, 2026).

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