

Administration Beyond E-Government: Restoration of Administrative Legality and Individual Rights in the Era of Digital Administration

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Abstract

The stage following the electronic administration phase involves several imperatives. The most important of these are how to redefine the concept of administrative legality, and how to achieve safeguards for individuals' rights and freedoms in the face of the administration's new operational method, namely automated decisions and digital administration. Branching from this are new concepts, most notably electronic or digital administrative legality. This requires digital administration to be subject to the same legal rules that govern the administration's work, along with the resulting complications regarding the extent to which these rules can be applied to digital administration and smart systems. Furthermore, there is a necessity to safeguard individual freedoms and rights under digital administration. This can be achieved by granting individuals the right to appeal—even digitally—against digital administrative decisions that affect their rights. Additionally there is a need for administrative employees to intervene personally to review sensitive digital administrative decisions that impact individual rights. The imperatives of protecting fundamental rights and freedoms also include safeguarding individuals' personal data, which may be vulnerable to violation during the digital operations carried out by the administration.

In this research, we addressed the stage that follows electronic governance, along with the related reformulation of the concept of legality within administrative work, and the variation in guarantees that safeguard individuals' fundamental rights and freedoms in the face of digital administrative decisions.

Key words: E-Administration/ Electronic Administration, Principle of Legality, Digital Governance, Automated Decisions, Individual Guarantees.

Introduction

The process of administrative activities has undergone tremendous changes due to the advent of technological revolution and use of artificial intelligence technologies. Not only the processes of administrative activities have been transformed, but also the whole structure of decisions made within the process of administrative activities and consequences that follow from these decisions and the legal foundation of these decisions.

It makes the importance of technological influence on the process of administrative activity even higher because many administrative decisions have direct bearing on the legal status of individuals

(namely on the decisions about imposing disciplinary punishments, granting licenses or entitlements).

Technological modernization has become one of the leading factors influencing the process of public administration activities and development of its mechanisms. The technological modernization tools have stopped being simply an instrument of assistance to public administration activities and became an essential tool in providing public services, making decisions, protecting the data and controlling work performance.

However, this process of technological advancement has created digital administration, which increases efficiency and speed but creates a lot of legal and technical problems. Thus, a reconsideration of the system of control and responsibility becomes necessary in order to guarantee the legality principle and prevent any violations of the rights and freedoms of individuals.

Research Problem

Even though the necessity of using technology in administration and the advantages that have been obtained through its use in the case of public administration, especially the advantage of high efficiency, there are many problems related to electronic administration and automated decision-making.

The first problem relates to the balance between the advantages of electronic administration and the problems associated with it, mainly related to the principle of legality and guarantees for individual rights and freedoms. Thus, the main research question and sub-questions will be:

Main Research Question:

How much do existing substantive rules and procedures solve the problems of the post-E-Government period and related challenges related to the changed concepts of administrative legality and individual guarantees?

Sub-questions:

1. What has changed the concept of the principle of legality due to the emergence of the electronic administration epoch?
2. Which legal provisions control accountability and liability of automated administrative decisions?
3. How can legal guarantees of individual rights and freedoms be built in the epoch of digital administration?

Hypotheses:

This study is based on the following hypotheses:

1. The concepts of the principle of legality and individual guarantees should be reconsidered after the implementation of electronic administration.

2. Legal rules and guarantees of these rules are not enough to ensure the principle of legality and rights of individuals in the epoch of electronic administration.
3. Legal rules of administrative liability for official acts should be organized according to electronic administration and digital administration.

Importance of the Research

The importance of the research results from the fast application of technological innovations in administrative processes compared to the slow process of legislative reforms. There is a need to make legislation and procedure more up-to-date in order to protect the personal data and individual rights which could be affected by automated administrative decisions and find out who is responsible for these mistakes.

Research Objectives

The objectives of this study include:

1. Explaining the meaning of electronic administration and how it affects the legality of administrative acts.
2. Examining the importance of electronic administration in the protection of basic rights and freedoms of individuals and ensuring compliance with the principle of legality.
3. Identifying ways of reaching a balance between the need for the use of technology in the conduct of administrative activities and the need to observe the principle of legality and protect the rights of individuals.

Methodology for the Research

The methodology of this research includes the analysis of the challenges that electronic administration and digital decision-making encounter. It will examine the legal rules guiding the process of electronic administration and liability. This research will also use a comparative approach to identify differences and similarities between the legal requirements of public administration in national and international level.

Research Outline

Section One: Challenges Faced by Electronic Administration from Legal and Procedural Points of View:

- Subsection One: Challenges to the Principle of Legality due to Digital Governance and Digital Decision-Making.
- Subsection Two: Weaknesses of Legal Rules Guiding Electronic Administration and Challenges in Meeting International Standards.

Section Two: Judicial/Administrative Supervision of Digital Administrative Decisions:

- Subsection One: The Extent of Supervision of Digital Administrative Decisions.
- Subsection Two: Means of Supervision of Digital Administrative Decisions.

Section One: Legal and Procedural Challenges for Electronic Administration

The development of modern technology in administrative processes has led to many challenges associated with developing administrative procedures and decision making mechanisms. As a result, it has become problematic to make digital decisions conformable to the principle of legality and judicial review while showing the inefficiency of the existing legislation in responding to those changes. This implies the need for a new framework of legislation for guaranteeing the rule of law and the protection of individual rights against arbitrary administrative decisions. In this section, we consider legal and procedural challenges from two perspectives:

Subsection One: Impact of Digital Governance on the Principle of Legality and Review of Digital Decisions:

Administrative activity is built on the principle of legality which provides the obligation for public administration to follow the rules of law in their broadest sense, independent of the means used for accomplishing their functions. It is clear that the doctrine of administrative law recognizes the requirement of the principle of legality, which presupposes subordination of all administrative activities to legal norms and their submission to judicial review.⁽¹⁾

The principle of legality is understood not only as a need to comply with legal regulations; it prescribes compliance with the entire legal system, which determines the competence of the administration, the interests of the public and statutory limits, and thus eliminates the deviation from the given boundaries and the misuse of legality⁽²⁾. Therefore, the shift to new technological methods of activity does not release public administration from compliance with the principle of legality and judicial review. The ideal scenario is that technical systems should be regulated by exactly the same legal principles as traditional administrative operations. But there are some major challenges when an algorithm makes an administrative decision. It is extremely hard in this case to determine the decision-maker and the basis for the decision, especially when the automated system uses machine learning or processes massive amounts of information that is impossible for an ordinary officer to process.

The principle of legality is inherently tied to the constituent elements of the administrative decision, mandating the administration to strictly follow its jurisdiction, as well as the necessary form, object of the decision, cause/basis of the decision, and purpose. These elements are considered to be the crucial legal guarantees of the public power's use. Yet, this theory presumes that the administrative

⁽¹⁾ Sulaiman Muhammad Al-Tamawi, *The General Theory of Administrative Decisions*, Dar Al-Fikr Al-Arabi, Cairo, 1990, p. 170.

⁽²⁾ Sami Jamal Sirag Al-Din, *Administrative Judiciary and Oversight of Administrative Acts*, Mansha'at Al-Ma'arif, Alexandria, 2002, p. 143.

decision is made by the human will that is able to make a legal assessment of factual situations. As opposed to this, the automated administrative decision is the result of the technological process and not the human will, which raises the problem of the insufficiency of the classical concept of legality for regulation of automated acts. Legality of automated decisions should no longer be limited to only checking the result, but should include all stages of the technological system's life cycle.⁽³⁾

The problem mainly arises from the point that the classical judicial control of the administrative act presupposes evaluation of the act in terms of the decision-making entity, form, cause, object, and purpose of the decision. On the other hand, decisions made through automation come from highly technical models that are not easily understood by reviewing agencies. Such processes lead to a "black box" approach where it becomes difficult to understand the processing process through which such decisions were made.⁽⁴⁾

Moreover, there are also difficulties associated with the contract between public administration and the software developers. Administrative software is usually developed by private companies where the proprietary algorithms are protected by both intellectual property laws and trade secret laws. Private parties indeed have a right to protect themselves from any harm that might arise in their commercial dealings. However, this should not be used as a ground to prevent others from getting to know the legal basis for the automated decision-making process. Hence, the contracts entered into by public authorities and private parties should include such terms.⁽⁵⁾

The problem of algorithmic bias caused by imprecise or unbalanced training datasets is another challenge in the domain of electronic administration. Although technical systems could produce biased results without appearing as being biased at all,⁽⁶⁾ principles of equality and non-discrimination should be included in the system itself from the very beginning. They need to be tested before the deployment of the system for administrative purposes in addition to post-harm reviews.

To deal with these challenges, the paradigm of administrative review needs to change from reactive, ex-post judicial review to continuous administrative oversight throughout the entire life cycle of a technical system. It includes stages of design, procurement, data tests, and algorithmic modeling, followed by the deployment and auditing of the system. By evaluating technical systems in the design

⁽³⁾ Zohra Hassan Rashid, "Automated Administrative Decision and the Principle of Legality: A Study in Light of Legal Regulation of Artificial Intelligence", Journal of Legal Research and Studies, Vol. 11, No. 2, Faculty of Law, University of Sabratha, Libya, 2026, p. 251.

⁽⁴⁾ Muhammad Rifaat Abd al-Wahhab, The Principle of Legality and Demands for Transitioning to Electronic Administration, Halabi Legal Publications, Beirut, 2019, pp. 84–88.

OECD, Algorithmic Accountability for the Public Sector, OECD Public Governance Reviews, OECD Publishing, Paris, 2022, p. 18.

⁽⁵⁾ Saif Hameed Mahdi Al-Shahristani, Legal and Administrative Challenges of Modern Technology and Their Impact on Public Administration, Arab Democratic Center, Berlin, 2026, available at: <https://democraticac.de/?p=111495> (Accessed: September 29, 2026, 4:00 PM).

⁽⁶⁾ Selbst, A. & Powles, J. "Meaningful information" and the right to explanation. in conference on fairness, accountability and transparency 48 (PMLR, 2018).

stage, risks associated with individual rights violations could be revealed early enough, allowing public administration to take appropriate actions.⁽⁷⁾

Technically speaking, judicial branch, inspection and administrative oversight bodies must have enough technical capacity to understand technical systems and the legality of the decision made by these systems. The combination of legal knowledge with outside technical expertise is not enough; the oversight bodies should have the capability and power to use and scrutinize such technologies. Digital administration requires the combination of legal and technological expertise into one body of legal experts who would audit digital models and its consequences for law.⁽⁸⁾

Subsection Two: Shortcomings of the Legal Regulation of Electronic Administration and the Problem of Matching Them with International Standards:

Legislators cannot catch up with fast changes of technology due to the slow legislative process. Even though every draft of legislation goes through a long process of drafting, discussion and adoption, technologies change constantly. Therefore, the laws adopted in order to control certain technology very soon become outdated since there is no place for new versions of this technology in them. It makes necessary to develop flexible legislative regulation of technology based on high-level rights and principles instead of getting involved in the rapidly-changing technicalities.⁽⁹⁾

Reviewing the laws of Iraq indicates a compelling need for an integrated legal framework covering digital technologies in the public administration, instead of using piecemeal legislative rules and administrative guidelines for dealing with digital transformation. Fragmentation in legislation results in the inconsistent use of legal standards by various administrative authorities when it comes to decision-making and technology usage. It also prevents the consistent application of rules related to transparency, accountability, and data protection.⁽¹⁰⁾ In addition, some administrative processes demand physical presence, traditional wet signature, and paper-based documentation, which makes a glaring inconsistency between digitalization and established administrative process.⁽¹¹⁾

The most significant legislative gap in applying the electronic administration is the lack of clear rules in the statute concerning the liability of technical mistakes in administrative processes and decisions. In case the erroneous decision emanates from a flawed algorithm, biased data, or improper system design, there is no clear rule that identifies the source of the legal responsibility, whether it is the developer, operator, administration, or administrative official himself. As regards this matter, the

⁽⁷⁾ European Commission, Ethics Guidelines for Trustworthy AI, translated edition, Arab Organization for Administrative Development, Cairo, 2020, pp. 22–25.

⁽⁸⁾ Saif Hameed Mahdi Al-Shahristani, Legal and Administrative Challenges of Modern Technology and Their Impact on Public Administration, op. cit.

⁽⁹⁾ Abd al-Fattah Bayumi Hijazi, The Legal Framework of Electronic Administration: A Comparative Study, Dar Al-Fikr Al-Jami'i, Alexandria, 2007, p. 112.

⁽¹⁰⁾ Williams, R. Rethinking administrative law for algorithmic decision making. Oxf. J. Leg. Stud. 42, 468–494 (2022).

⁽¹¹⁾ Matthias, A. The responsibility gap: Ascribing responsibility for the actions of learning automata. Ethics Inf. Technol. 6, 175–183 (2004).

public administration should be mainly responsible for illegal decisions and technical mistakes against the concerned citizens—with the right to indemnification against the vendors of technologies in question according to contract provisions and liabilities rules. It would be unreasonable to expect injured individuals to prove complicated technical issues that are hard for them to establish or even understand.⁽¹²⁾

Deficiencies are obvious also in connection with the "right to an explanation" regarding automated administrative decisions. The right is essential for any person whose interests are damaged, as it provides an opportunity to appeal the decision and make the decision-making body accountable. It is not enough for administration to make a decision- it should provide the grounds and reasons of its decision-making, especially when it concerns the important interests of the individual- employment, financial benefits, or punishment, for example. In this connection, it is important that the public administration maintains regulatory registers of the algorithms used in decision-making and their purposes, data sources, and risks.⁽¹³⁾

With regard to compliance with international standards, national legislators should not simply replicate foreign legal regulations or international conventions, but should incorporate international principles into their national law. These principles are supposed to include: Transparency and strong personal data protection guarantees- Accountability for losses caused by artificial intelligence technologies- Pre-deployment risk assessment obligations- Provision of secure digital infrastructure, and administrative appeal mechanism in case of loss caused by automation. It is obvious from the practical experience that implementation of these principles involves not only regulation of the corresponding issues in the form of laws, but also the establishment of special bodies for inspection and supervision over these systems and their work mechanics.⁽¹⁴⁾

Taking everything into account, the process of administrative reform in Iraq aimed at compliance with digital transformation needs cannot be reduced to adoption of only one statute dedicated to digital administration. It involves reexamination of all existing regulations on the administrative action and its digitalization.

The code must provide for protection of the rights and liberties of individuals (primarily their rights to protection of personal data), set rules concerning automated decision-making and usage of AI, update administrative proceedings via digital transactions and digital signatures, regulate liability issues in digital administration, and create special authorities responsible for the supervision of digital administrative proceedings.

⁽¹²⁾ Muhammad Rifaat Abd al-Wahhab, The Principle of Legality and Demands for Transitioning to Electronic Administration, op. cit., p. 90.

⁽¹³⁾ OECD, Recommendation of the Council on Artificial Intelligence, OECD/LEGAL/0449, Paris, 2019, Section 1.3 (Transparency and Explainability).

⁽¹⁴⁾ Saif Hameed Mahdi Al-Shahristani, Legal and Administrative Challenges of Modern Technology and Their Impact on Public Administration, op. cit.

Section Two: Supervision and Review of Digital Administrative Decisions

Generally speaking, review is needed to make sure that the legality of the administrative decisions is complied with, which ensures the balance between the protection of the individual's rights and the possibility of exercising the power of public administration, especially when using the modern technologies in administrative processes. In this section, we shall discuss the issue of the scope of supervision over the automated decisions made by public administration and the way such supervision is carried out through the following two sub-sections:

Subsection One: Scope of Supervision over Digital Administrative Decisions:

The automated decisions in administration should meet certain elements (the elements of legality) to be considered legal. Such elements include both substance and form⁽¹⁵⁾ and they are as follows:

1. **Jurisdiction (Competence):** Competence is the power vested in an administrative body to do an act recognized by the law. On the other hand, incompetence is the failure of an administrative body to do a certain act on account of violation of statutory rules on competence.⁽¹⁶⁾ Legally, the acts of public administration must be authorized in order to be legal.⁽¹⁷⁾ It means that administrative decisions must be made either by a traditional official or a computer. If not done so, it will be ultra vires and illegal.
2. **Form and Procedure:** The form and procedure requirement compels public administration to follow the procedures and forms prescribed by the law in making a decision.⁽¹⁸⁾ Observing these procedures prevents the public authorities from making hurried decisions. It enables them to think over their actions in order to make them legally valid and evaluate administrative acts before they adopt them. This provision safeguards individual's right from being violated because of abuse of discretion. With digital governance, form and procedures are likely to change in a way that increases the efficiency of the administration and reduces administrative corruption.⁽¹⁹⁾
3. **Cause/Motif:** Cause means the set of legal or material circumstances that lead the public administration to make a decision or administrative act. There has to be the actual legal or material ground that leads the administration to produce a particular legal effect. Where the grounds for the decision exist, the automated system produces the decision; where no legal or material ground

⁽¹⁵⁾ Abd al-Fattah Hassan, Principles of Administrative Law, Al-Jala' Al-Jadeedah Library, Mansoura, Egypt, 2000, p. 151.

⁽¹⁶⁾ Obeid Issa Turki Al-Jubouri, Annulment of Administrative Decisions by the Administrative Judiciary: A Comparative Study (Iraq and Lebanon), Master's thesis in Public Law, Faculty of Law, Islamic University of Lebanon, 2021, p. 46.

⁽¹⁷⁾ Muhyi Al-Din Al-Qaysi, General Administrative Law, Halabi Legal Publications, Beirut, 2007, p. 102.

⁽¹⁸⁾ Obeid Issa Turki Al-Jubouri, Annulment of Administrative Decisions by the Administrative Judiciary: A Comparative Study (Iraq and Lebanon), op. cit., p. 50.

⁽¹⁹⁾ Bashir Ali Baz, The Role of E-Government in Administrative Decision-Making and Electronic Voting, Dar Al-Fikr Al-Jami'i, Alexandria, 2015, p. 62.

exists, the decision lacks validity and becomes open to being invalidated.⁽²⁰⁾ The element of cause in automated decisions is not different from that in traditional decisions because the courts of review will be able to determine the existence of material circumstances where they are properly documented, whether digitally or otherwise.⁽²¹⁾

4. **Subject matter/Object:** Subject matter is the actual legal or material change that is brought about by the administrative decision, meaning the establishment, amendment, or cancellation of a legal situation.⁽²²⁾ The subject matter of an administrative act, either automated or traditional, has to be legal and legally executable; if not, the decision would be invalid and be open to being invalidated.⁽²³⁾
5. **Purpose:** Purpose is the actual purpose which the public administration aims to fulfill through its decision. Administrative authorities cannot act but in the interest of the public at large, which gives justification for the discretion conferred upon them.⁽²⁴⁾ Purpose is different from subject matter in the sense that while purpose is the general, long-term objective, subject matter is the immediate, direct legal consequence of the decision. Any automated administrative decision should purely be made in the interests of the public, otherwise it shall amount to abuse of power, thereby making such an administrative decision open to being declared invalid by a court of law.⁽²⁵⁾

Subsection Two: Means for Controlling Automated Administrative Decision:

Recourse in annulment (action for annulment) is one of the most important legal proceedings brought before administrative courts and serves to be one of the most significant tools for maintaining the principle of legality in that it annuls unlawful administrative acts. There are several requirements to be met for challenging unlawful automated administrative decisions before courts of law:⁽²⁶⁾

⁽²⁰⁾ Maysa Muhammad Shor, et al., Principles of General Administrative Law, 1st ed., Zein Legal Publications, Lebanon, 2019, p. 110.

⁽²¹⁾ Ismat Abdullah Al-Sheikh, The Role of Information Systems and Technology in Facilitating and Enhancing Administrative Operations, Dar Al-Nahda Al-Arabiyyah, Cairo, 2005, p. 29.

⁽²²⁾ Mahmoud Al-Hammadi, Rights and Guarantees of Administrative Contractors, and Arbitration in Administrative Contracts, Legal Publications Center, Cairo, 2011, p. 59.

⁽²³⁾ Taha bin Muhammad bin Salman Al-Haji, Challenging Severable Administrative Acts within Administrative Contracts via Annulment Actions, Master's thesis in Public Law, Faculty of Law, Ain Shams University, Egypt, 2010, p. 42.

⁽²⁴⁾ Muhammad Sadiq Ismail, E-Government and Its Applications in Arab Countries, 1st ed., Al-Arabi Publishing & Distribution, Egypt, 2010, p. 93.

⁽²⁵⁾ Muhammad Samir Ahmed, Electronic Administration, 1st ed., Dar Al-Massira for Publishing & Distribution, Amman, 2009, p. 38.

⁽²⁶⁾ The Iraqi legislator set the deadline for filing an annulment suit under Law No. 17 of 2013 (the Fifth Amendment Law to the State Consultative Council Law No. 65 of 1979 as amended), where Article 7/Seventh/A stipulates that the complainant must submit their appeal to the court within sixty days from the end of the thirty-day period designated for submitting the grievance to the competent administrative authority; otherwise, their right to appeal shall lapse. Regarding filing a lawsuit before the General Disciplinary Board concerning disciplinary penalties, the Second Amendment Law No. 5 of 2009 to the State Employees Discipline Law No. 14 of 1991 clarifies in Article (1) that the following is added to

1. **The electronic administrative decision must exist and be definitive:** Administration should make known its intention to issue the decision. Moreover, the decision must be a final decision – in that it must be capable of being immediately enforced without any additional requirement of approval, and comes from a competent authority without any ratification from a superior administrative authority.⁽²⁷⁾ In case of a decision needing ratification by a superior authority, it is not a decision which can be challenged through an annulment process at the administrative tribunal level.⁽²⁸⁾
2. **The decision must be taken by a competent national administrative authority:** The act must be made by a public body operating in its capacity as an administrative entity, either as part of the central or decentralized administration (like the President of the Republic, Council of Ministers, Ministers individually, or public entities). The decision must be a unilateral act of that body and hence differs from other legal acts like contracts made through mutual consent.⁽²⁹⁾

Conclusion

The present study considered a new topic, which is electronic administration and how it utilizes contemporary technological means in administrative procedures, thus changing how administrative decisions are made and controlled. This process is due to the particularity of the decision made through automation rather than the act itself as well as the need for new guarantees to ensure legality and rights protection.

Thus, in Section One, we considered the problems of electronic administration from a legal perspective, whereas in Section Two, the peculiarities of digital administrative decisions and control of their legality were considered.

Findings

1. **Inadequacy of the Traditional Concept of Legality:** The concept of the principle of legality that existed in the past is not enough to assess the automated decision-making of technical systems.

Article (15) of the State Employees Discipline Law No. 14 of 1991 as paragraph Seventh: "Seventh (A): A flat fee of 10,000 (ten thousand) Iraqi Dinars shall be collected from the employee when appealing before the General Disciplinary Board against a decision imposing a disciplinary penalty." Taha bin Muhammad bin Salman Al-Haji, Challenging Severable Administrative Acts within Administrative Contracts via Annulment Actions, op. cit., p. 42.

⁽²⁷⁾ A ruling issued by the Iraqi Administrative Court stated: "Whereas the requests directed by the Defendant to the Karrada Execution Office regarding the eviction of the house challenged before this Court do not fall within the scope of an administrative decision that produces an immediate and direct legal effect, as its result must be conclusive and final." Zuhair Ahmed Qaddura and Muhammad Abd al-Muhsin Ibn Tarif, Concise Manual on Administrative Judiciary, 2nd ed., Dar Wael for Publishing & Distribution, Amman, 2020, p. 161.

⁽²⁸⁾ Ashraf Muhammad Hamamda, "The Electronic Administrative Decision", Journal of Police Thought, Issue 99, Vol. 25, 2016, p. 39.

⁽²⁹⁾ Omar Muhammad Al-Shoubaki, Administrative Judiciary, Dar Al-Thaqafa for Publishing & Distribution, Amman, 2001, p. 62.

Legality cannot be considered only according to the result; the entire process of the lifecycle of the technical system should be verified.

2. The Fundamental Paradigm Shift: The usage of technology in the administration does not indicate just the upgrading of the tools of administration but is a paradigm shift in decision-making in administration. Decisions are not made based on the discretion of the official who evaluates the facts but are made in the technical environment and go through many steps from the data gathering till the implementation and auditing till the decision-making stage.
3. Reinterpretation of the Administrative Law Principles: The automatization of decisions does not indicate the rejection of administrative law principles but requires their reinterpretation in the context of the technical systems of decision-making.
4. Legislative Fragmentation and Deficiencies: Legislative fragmentation and deficiencies constitute one of the most significant challenges to the digital transformation process in Iraqi public administration. Fragmented laws are inadequate, and what is needed is a holistic legislative framework that guarantees individual rights and liberties and ensures legality in public administration.
5. Administrative Liability: Using technological platforms for administrative decision-making does not absolve public administration from any liability for such decisions. Public administration still has strict liability for its decisions, and has the option of suing the vendor of the technology in accordance with the terms of the contracts and the principles of liability.
6. Protection of Personal Information: Personal information protection in digital administration goes beyond protecting such information from any leakage to protecting it at all stages of its existence.
7. Foundations of Successful Digital Transformation: Successful digital transformation in the public sector in Iraq requires the combination of three main foundations: capable human resources, proper legislation, and safe technology.

Recommendations

1. The Iraqi legislature is urged to adopt comprehensive legislation to suit digital transformation in the public sector. Such legislation should include the updating of legal principles with respect to the legality, transparency, and administrative liability of automated decisions, as well as determining which body is responsible for auditing, reviewing, and approving technical systems in public administration.
2. Any piece of legislation needs to explicitly specify that decisions made automatically are not free from legal liability on the part of the administration, since the administration should be responsible for explaining the legal basis for such automated decisions.
3. Adopt legislation to protect personal data and to guarantee the right to object to any data violation.

4. Adopt legislation mandating impact assessments of risk before deploying technical systems, particularly high-risk systems. Such legislation should cover risks regarding discrimination, security, and protection against privacy invasions, as well as periodic re-assessments after deployment.
5. A register of all technical systems used by public authorities, describing the use, responsible body, input data, risk profile, and mechanisms for audit and oversight for such systems.
6. Conduct capacity building for administrative officials during the implementation of the digital administration process, along with maintaining alternative channels of service delivery that can cater to people who may not have the capability to use digital means.
7. Modify the procedure for challenging automated administrative decisions through the setting of specific procedures based on the nature of digital decisions.
8. Legal mandate for technical transparency through the requirement to retain all data and algorithms used in making the decision to enable the courts to review the legality of such decisions.

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