

ORIGINAL ARTICLE

# Strategic proposals for the modernization of the public administration of Portoparques EP in Portoviejo, Ecuador

Propuestas estratégicas para la modernización de la administración pública de Portoparques EP en Portoviejo, Ecuador

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**Abstract** The modernization of public administration is a key process for increasing the efficiency, transparency, and quality of services provided by public sector institutions. Within this framework, the public company Portoparques EP, responsible for managing green areas and cemeteries in the canton of Portoviejo (Ecuador), faces the challenge of transforming its organizational model to respond more effectively and promptly to citizens' needs. This study analyzes the progress made in the administrative modernization of Portoparques EP by examining initiatives related to digitalization, streamlining administrative procedures, professionalizing human talent, and enhancing citizen participation. In addition, the main barriers hindering institutional development are identified, including resistance to change, lack of technological resources, and the absence of an innovation-oriented organizational culture. Based on this diagnosis, strategic proposals are formulated to enhance the operational capacity and social impact of this local public enterprise.

**Keywords** administrative modernization, local public management, digitalization, citizen participation, organizational culture.

**Resumen** La modernización de la administración pública constituye un proceso esencial para incrementar la eficiencia, la transparencia y la calidad de los servicios prestados por las instituciones del sector público. En este marco, la Empresa Pública Portoparques EP, responsable de la gestión de áreas verdes y cementerios en el cantón Portoviejo (Ecuador), enfrenta el reto de transformar su modelo organizativo para responder de manera más ágil y eficaz a las demandas ciudadanas. Este trabajo analiza el grado de avance del proceso de modernización administrativa de Portoparques EP, a partir del examen de iniciativas relacionadas con la digitalización, la simplificación de trámites, la profesionalización del talento humano y la promoción de la participación ciudadana. Asimismo, se identifican las principales barreras que limitan el fortalecimiento institucional, tales como la resistencia al cambio, la escasez de recursos tecnológicos y la ausencia de una cultura organizacional orientada a la innovación. Con base en este diagnóstico, se formulan propuestas estratégicas orientadas a mejorar la capacidad operativa y el impacto social de esta empresa pública local.

**Palabras clave** modernización administrativa, gestión pública local, digitalización, participación ciudadana, cultura organizacional.

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## Introduction

Contemporary public administration faces the ongoing challenge of adapting to dynamic contexts characterized by technological acceleration, the complexity of social problems, and rising citizen expectations. In this environment, the traditional paradigm, based on hierarchical structures and rigid processes, is insufficient to respond efficiently, transparently, and promptly to the needs of the population (Vatamanu & Tofan, 2025). Consequently, administrative modernization has become a strategic priority on public management agendas globally, aimed at transforming the state apparatus through innovation, digitalization, operational efficiency, and the strengthening of ties with citizens.

Administrative modernization involves much more than the incorporation of technologies or the automation of processes; it is a structural transformation that encompasses management models, organizational culture, forms of interaction with users, and the regulatory frameworks that govern institutional actions (Kraus et al., 2022). Various international organizations, such as the OECD, CLAD, the World Bank, and ECLAC, have promoted comprehensive reforms in the public sectors of Latin America, focusing on results-based management, open government, interoperability, administrative simplification, and citizen participation as central pillars of good governance.

In this scenario, local public enterprises—as decentralized units operating on the front line of contact with citizens—play a crucial role in the provision of essential services. Their modernization improves the population's quality of life and strengthens trust in state institutions (Kurkela et al., 2024). However, this process faces multiple challenges, including resistance to change, limited staff training, a lack of technological integration, and a weak organizational culture geared toward innovation (Maldonado-Nova, 2022).

In Ecuador, these efforts have been partially incorporated at various levels of government. However, significant shortcomings persist in many local entities and municipal public enterprises, where traditional approaches still prevail, limiting the potential for innovation and institutional efficiency. Such is the case of Portoparques EP, a public company attached to the Decentralized Autonomous Government of the Portoviejo canton, whose mission is the administration of parks and cemeteries, as well as the management of recreational, tourist, and cultural spaces for the benefit of the public. These functions involve complex management that integrates technical, environmental, administrative, and social aspects. Therefore, the incorporation of modern management tools, digital platforms, and mechanisms for citizen participation is essential to effectively respond to current demands.

Despite its local importance, EP Portoparques faces limitations in its administrative processes, use of information te-

chnologies, inter-institutional coordination, and citizen participation channels— aspects that hinder its consolidation as a modern, agile, and community-focused public organization. While some specific improvement efforts have been made, a comprehensive modernization strategy to transform its management model in accordance with current environmental demands and international best practices has not yet been implemented.

In this context, this research proposes strategies for the administrative modernization of EP Portoparques, from a comprehensive approach that integrates process innovation, institutional digitization, operational efficiency, and mechanisms for citizen participation. Unlike other studies focused exclusively on diagnoses or partial evaluations, this thesis seeks to generate applicable proposals that contribute to institutional strengthening and the improvement of public service offered to the citizens of Portoviejo.

## Methodology

The research was based on a sequential, exploratory-descriptive mixed-methods approach, combining qualitative and quantitative methods to understand and measure the administrative modernization process at Portoparques EP (Dawadi et al., 2021). The qualitative component allowed for the capture of perceptions and internal dynamics within the institution, while the quantitative component facilitated the collection of structured and verifiable data applicable to strategy design. This approach addressed the complexity of the phenomenon, integrating three methodological phases: diagnosis, strategy formulation, and the design of evaluation mechanisms.

A descriptive, propositional, and applied study was developed, focusing on a single case: the Portoparques EP Public Company, attached to the Portoviejo Municipal Government, which allowed for understanding the phenomenon within its institutional and territorial context (Crowe et al., 2011). The research sought to diagnose the level of administrative modernization, identify limiting factors, and propose strategies in accordance with the institution's capacities and needs.

The unit of analysis was the company itself, and the population included internal and external stakeholders involved in its management, with a purposive sample of approximately 25 people from among administrative, operational, and technical staff, as well as municipal officials. For the quantitative component, a structured survey was administered to the available personnel, given the small size of the population.

Qualitative techniques, such as document analysis, semi-structured interviews, and direct observation, were used, while a Likert-scale survey was applied in the quantitative component to evaluate digitization, efficiency, training, and citizen participation (Lim, 2024). A technical prioritization

matrix, validated through the Delphi method with local experts, was used to design strategies.

Qualitative data were analyzed using thematic analysis with open and axial coding (Ruppel & Mey, 2017), identifying categories and organizational patterns. Quantitative data were processed using descriptive statistics and triangulated with qualitative information to strengthen the study's validity. The research was conducted in accordance with ethical principles, guaranteeing informed consent, confidentiality, and anonymity, for academic purposes and institutional strengthenings.

### Results and discussion

The institutional diagnosis of Portoparques EP was structured around four dimensions of administrative modernization: digitization, human talent, operational efficiency, and citizen participation (Table 1). Through a mixed-methods approach that combined document analysis, interviews, field observation, and structured surveys administered to administrative and technical staff, average perception scores and levels of variability were obtained, allowing for the identification of the organization's current state in each of these areas. Perception was measured on a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 represents a very low rating and 5 a very high rating.

These results showed that the highest-rated dimension was human talent, with an average of 3.1 and a standard deviation of 0.5, reflecting a relatively positive and consistent per-

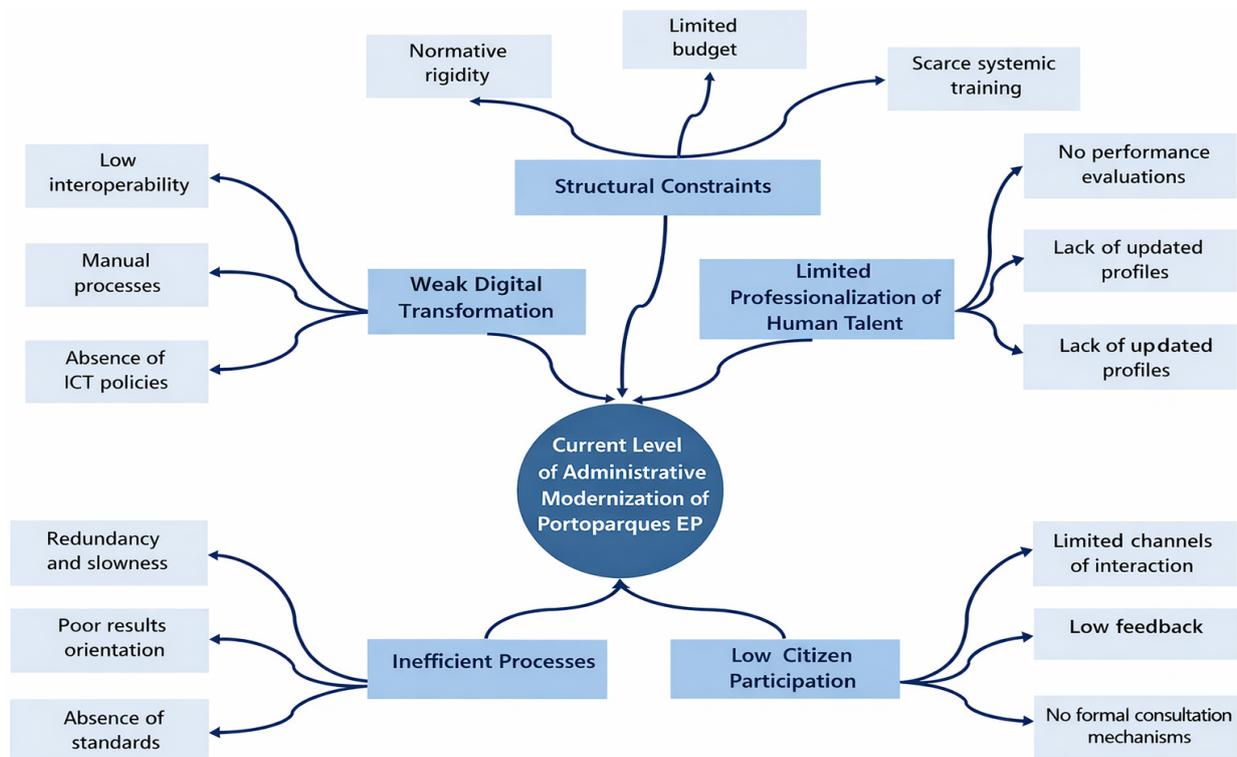
ception of staff capabilities. Operational efficiency ranked second, with an average of 2.9 and greater variability (0.7), indicating more dispersed perceptions regarding the agility and effectiveness of internal processes.

**Table 1.** Average perception and variability by dimension of administrative modernization in Portoparques EP

Dimension	Average perception	Deviation standard
Digitization	2.8	0.6
Talent human	3.1	0.5
Efficiency operational	2.9	0.7
Stake citizen	2.4	0.8

Digitalization reached an average score of 2.8, highlighting limitations in the use of technological tools in institutional management. Meanwhile, citizen participation was the dimension with the lowest score (2.4) and the greatest dispersion (0.8), indicating both its low implementation and differences in staff perceptions regarding this aspect. These results underscored the need to comprehensively strengthen administrative processes by incorporating technological innovation, improving human resource planning, and establishing effective mechanisms for interaction with citizens.

Figure 1 shows the main obstacles Portoparques EP faces in consolidating a modern, efficient, and citizen-centered management model. Analysis of these factors identifies five interrelated problem areas: structural constraints, weak di-



**Figure 1.** Factors that influence the current level of administrative modernization of Portoparques EP.

gital transformation, limited professionalization of human resources, inefficient processes, and insufficient citizen participation.

First, structural constraints such as limited budgets, rigid regulations, and inter-institutional dependence are common barriers in many local public entities, as noted by Pomaquero et al. (2023), who warn that without minimum enabling conditions, any reform strategy lacks sustainability. This situation has been documented by Sixpence et al. (2021), who found that, in the case of Johannesburg, resource scarcity and the influence of legacy practices hindered effective talent management.

The weak digital transformation that characterizes Portoparques EP is manifested in the absence of ICT policies, the persistence of manual processes, and low interoperability between systems. This pattern has been identified by Ouabi et al. (2024) as an impediment to improving institutional performance, as it limits the traceability, efficiency, and responsiveness of public organizations. Furthermore, the lack of standardization and automation reduces opportunities to implement real-time monitoring systems, which are essential for results-oriented management (OECD, 2017).

Another key aspect is the limited professionalization of human talent, evidenced by insufficient systemic training, a lack of performance evaluations, and the absence of updated job profiles. This situation aligns with the findings of Bindhu et al. (2024), who emphasize that without a sustainable human resources approach—one that includes professional development, well-being, and recognition—public institutions face high turnover rates and low organizational commitment.

Inefficient processes, characterized by redundancy, slowness, a lack of standards, and poor results orientation, reflect a traditional institutional culture focused on procedural execution rather than public impact. This structural problem has been analyzed by Al Jawali et al. (2022), who emphasize that operational fragmentation and a lack of indicators hinder strategic decision-making and the efficient use of resources.

Limited citizen participation is evident in the restricted channels of interaction, low feedback, and lack of formal consultation mechanisms, which weakens the entity’s legitimacy and responsiveness. Inclusive practices in local governments contribute to strengthening institutional trust and designing more relevant public services.

Taken together, these factors reflect a management model that still responds to traditional bureaucratic logics, with low adaptability and little innovation, but which, when clearly diagnosed, offers a solid starting point for the implementation of modernization strategies well aligned with international best practices and with the local context of Portoparques EP.

Based on the diagnosis, sixteen strategies were formulated, grouped into four priority areas: progressive digital transformation, professionalization of human talent, strengthening of citizen participation, and administrative simplification. These were validated through an impact and feasibility matrix and distributed according to their institutional applicability.

The prioritization matrix identified five key strategies for strengthening institutional management (Table 2). Each strategy was evaluated using the Delphi technique, based on expert judgment, considering two main dimensions: expected impact (capacity to generate tangible results within the organization) and technical feasibility (feasibility of implementation in the institution’s current context). The scores obtained are presented on a scale of 1 to 5, with 5 being the highest.

These results show clear criteria for prioritizing actions aimed at modernizing Portoparques EP. In general, the strategies evaluated combined high levels of potential impact with acceptable degrees of feasibility, indicating that most are technically feasible and relevant from an organizational perspective.

**Table 2.** Evaluation of institutional strategies according to expected impact and technical feasibility (scale 1 to 5)

Strategy	Impact	Viability
Implement a digital document management system	4.5	4.2
Create an institutional innovation unit	4.0	3.5
Redesign processes key operations	4.3	3.9
Develop a citizen participation portal	3.8	3.6
Establish a continuing education program	4.1	4.4

The highest-scoring strategy overall was the implementation of a digital document management system, which achieved a score of 4.5 for impact and 4.2 for feasibility. This result reflects its potential to transform internal administration, optimizing file management, facilitating access to information, and reducing response times in administrative processes. Its high technical feasibility suggests that, despite requiring initial investment in infrastructure and training, the company has the minimum conditions necessary to move toward institutional digitization.

Establishing a continuing education program stood out among the top-performing strategies, with an impact score of 4.1 and a feasibility score of 4.4, the highest in the table. This result confirms the shared perception of the need for continuous professional development, particularly in areas such as information technology, public administration, and

customer service. Furthermore, its implementation requires a moderate investment and can be supported by institutional partnerships or existing internal resources.

The redesign of key operational processes received a significant rating, with an impact score of 4.3 and a feasibility score of 3.9, making it a balanced and high-priority strategy. This action would allow for the review, simplification, and optimization of internal procedures that currently present bottlenecks or redundancies, directly contributing to greater operational efficiency and a better response to citizen demands.

Meanwhile, the creation of an institutional innovation unit was evaluated with an impact of 4.0 and a feasibility of 3.5. While its strategic contribution to promoting a culture of continuous improvement and facilitating the implementation of new ideas is recognized, its execution could face certain structural challenges, especially with regard to the redefinition of internal functions and the incorporation of specialized technical profiles.

The strategy of developing a citizen participation portal received a slightly lower score in both dimensions (3.8 for impact and 3.6 for feasibility), although it remains relevant overall. Its implementation would improve institutional communication and open channels of dialogue with citizens, thereby strengthening transparency and participatory governance. However, its effectiveness will largely depend on users' level of digital connectivity and the degree to which citizens take ownership of these virtual spaces.

Taken together, the analysis of these strategies demonstrates that Portoparques EP has a range of potentially transformative actions that can be implemented gradually, prioritizing those with the greatest technical feasibility and immediate impact, while also considering those that represent strategic medium- and long-term commitments. This assessment, therefore, constitutes a strategic input for institutional decision-making and the effective implementation of the modernization process.

Through progressive digital transformation, the phased implementation of actions aimed at strengthening the institution's technological infrastructure became evident. These included the provision of state-of-the-art computer equipment and the modernization of internal connectivity systems. Simultaneously, progress was made in developing and implementing digital regulations governing the secure, ethical, and efficient use of institutional digital platforms. A sustained increase in the migration of in-person services to online platforms was observed, resulting in a rise in digitized procedures, greater accessibility for users, and reduced processing times.

The professionalization of human resources led to substantial improvements in the training processes for institutional

staff through the implementation of specialized training programs in both technical and soft skills. These programs were accompanied by performance evaluation mechanisms that allowed for the identification of knowledge gaps and the establishment of individual improvement plans. Furthermore, job profiles were updated and redefined, aligning them with the new demands of digital environments and the strategic needs of each area, which facilitated greater efficiency in the allocation of responsibilities and in professional development planning.

Citizen participation was recorded through online forums, interactive surveys, and digital suggestion boxes. These tools allowed for the collection of direct user feedback and fostered an institutional culture of active listening. Additionally, civic campaigns were implemented to promote citizens' rights and strengthen the sense of shared responsibility in public administration. Furthermore, service channels were diversified through the implementation of multichannel platforms, including social media, mobile applications, and call centers, thereby expanding communication reach.

Administrative simplification was achieved through a thorough review of internal administrative procedures, which identified redundancies, bottlenecks, and opportunities for improvement. As a result, efficiency and response time indicators were designed and implemented, enabling the monitoring and optimization of institutional performance. Operational planning was restructured under a results-based management approach, facilitating the alignment of strategic objectives with measurable and evaluable goals. This course of action contributed to greater transparency in decision-making and a reduction in processing times.

Table 3 presents an operational plan for the institutional modernization strategies, organized into four strategic axes. Each strategy is linked to an institutional manager, a specific evaluation indicator, and a timeframe for its implementation, measured in months.

Within the framework of progressive digital transformation, four actions focused on technological and regulatory development were considered: implementation of an integrated digital system, formulation of an internal digitization policy, staff training in ICT skills, and migration to online procedures. These actions are assigned to areas such as the Technology Department, Planning, Human Resources, and Financial Administration, with implementation timelines ranging from 6 to 12 months.

Regarding the professional development of human talent, four strategies were defined, focusing on staff training, updating job profiles, performance evaluation, and promoting an institutional culture geared towards innovation. Responsibilities fell primarily to the Human Talent Specialist and the General Management, with implementation timelines ranging from 8 to 12 months and indicators focused on fulfilling

**Table 3.** Strategic plan for the implementation of institutional modernization proposals in Portoparques EP by axis, responsible party, indicator, and time horizon

Axis strategic	Strategy	Responsible institutional according to organization chart	Evaluation indicator	Implementation horizon
Progressive digital transformation	Design and implement an integrated digital system for institutional management	Technology Department (Eng. Kevin Jarre Barcia)	Digital system operating and updated	6 months
	Formulate an internal digitization policy with regulations and a timeline	Planning and Management Control (Architect Adriana Rivas)	Regulations approved and schedule in progress	6 months
	Train staff in digital skills according to their functional role	Human Talent Specialist (Ms. Vivian Suzuki)	Percentage of staff trained in ICT	9 months
	Gradually migrate to online procedures and processes	Administrative and Financial Management (Fernando Loor, Esq.)	Percentage of procedures handled online	12 months
Professionalization of talent human	Develop an annual training plan in ICT, public management, and user support	Human Talent Specialist (Ms. Vivian Suzuki)	Percentage of completion of the training plan	12 months
	Update job profiles and identify skills gaps	Administrative Specialist (Ab. Alfredo Bravo)	Updated profiles and gaps detected	9 months
	Implement a performance evaluation system linked to results	Human Talent Specialist (Ms. Vivian Suzuki)	Performance evaluations implemented	8 months
	Promote an organizational culture based on innovation and continuous improvement	General Management (Eng. Ricardo Briones)	Number of workshops and institutional climate surveys	12 months
Stake citizen	Create mechanisms for citizen listening (surveys, suggestion boxes, workshops)	Social Communication and Marketing (Kevin Cedeño)	Number of citizen interactions recorded	6 months
	Develop civic education campaigns on the use of public spaces	Social Communication and Marketing (Kevin Cedeño)	Number of campaigns executed per year	9 months
	Promote volunteer programs with institutional recognition	Maintenance Department (Eng. Miguel Moreira)	Number of volunteers participants	6 months
	Design a multi-channel institutional communication strategy	Social Communication and Marketing (Kevin Cedeño)	Multichannel coverage and informational reach	9 months

Administrative simplification and continuous improvement	Analyze and redesign internal administrative processes	Administrative Analyst ( Ec . Verónica Cedeño)	Percentage of processes optimized	8 months
	Develop an institutional manual of simplified procedures	Administrative Specialist (Ab. Alfredo Bravo)	Updated and distributed manual	6 months
	Implement a system of administrative efficiency indicators	Planning and Management Control (Architect Adriana Rivas)	Percentage of efficiency goal achievement	6 months
	Linking strategic planning with results monitoring	Planning and Management Control (Architect Adriana Rivas)	Effective use of planning tools	12 months

the training plan and recording internal activities.

The citizen participation component included actions such as the creation of active listening mechanisms, civic education campaigns, volunteer programs, and a multichannel communication strategy. All these actions are managed by the Social Communication and Marketing department, in conjunction with the Maintenance Department, and have indicators associated with the number of interactions, campaigns, volunteers, and media coverage, with timeframes of between six and nine months.

The administrative simplification and continuous improvement focus area encompassed initiatives related to the redesign of internal processes, the development of institutional manuals, the implementation of efficiency indicators, and the link between planning and results. Responsibilities are distributed among the Planning department, the administrative team, and the process analyst, with implementation timelines ranging from 6 to 12 months, depending on the complexity of each action.

The strategic proposals formulated for the institutional modernization of Portoparques EP reflect a structured approach that prioritizes high-impact actions with reasonable technical feasibility (Al-Sobai et al., 2020). This criterion, based on the impact-feasibility matrix and validated through expert judgment, allows institutional efforts to be focused on interventions that generate visible results in the short and medium term. This approach aligns with international recommendations that promote strategic planning adapted to the organizational context and actual implementation capacities.

Compared to other international experiences documented in the analyzed literature, this strategy finds support in effective practices of local governments. For example, Sixpence et al. (2021) noted that, in the Johannesburg metropolitan municipality, while talent attraction practices were effective, the lack of retention strategies negatively impacted staff performance. This observation reinforces the relevance of prioritizing the digitalization, professionalization, and moti-

vation of human talent in the Portoparques context.

The progressive digital transformation strategy is one of the strongest priorities of the modernization plan, encompassing technological, regulatory, and training components. The implementation of a digital document management system, digital skills training, and the migration of procedures to online platforms are aligned with the principles of interoperability, efficiency, and citizen-centeredness promoted by the European Union Commission (2020). In line with this, studies such as that by Ouabi et al. (2024) demonstrate how human resources practices that incorporate digital tools can directly impact staff satisfaction and performance in public institutions. In the case of Portoparques, these efforts are essential to overcome information fragmentation and the slowness of administrative processes.

Regarding the professionalization of human talent, the proposed strategies—updating job profiles, continuous training, and performance evaluation—align with the recommendations of Pomaquero et al. (2023), which focus on merit-based and results-oriented management. This vision is supported by Bindhu et al. (2024), who emphasize that implementing sustainable human resource practices (such as employee well-being and professional development) promotes staff retention and engagement in the public sector. This perspective is consistent with the approach proposed for Portoparques EP, where limited training and a lack of incentives are limiting factors already identified in the institutional study.

Promoting a culture of innovation and continuous improvement aligns with the recommendations of the Kaizen approach (Imai, 1986) and is reinforced by the experiences documented by Harrison (2013), who identified that “high-involvement” models in public management—based on commitment, internal transparency, and organizational learning—generate tangible improvements in both economic performance and work environment. In the case of Portoparques EP, fostering this culture would allow for the consolidation of structural changes beyond technocratic decisions, giving symbolic meaning to the reforms.

The axes related to citizen participation and administrative simplification are complementary pillars of the overall strategy. The creation of active listening mechanisms, civic campaigns, and multi-channel communication promotes more open and co-responsible governance. This line of action, which includes the redesign of internal processes and the development of institutional manuals—as proposed for Portoparques EP—is consistent with the process-based management recommendations outlined by Al Jawali et al. (2022), who emphasize the need for clear structures to ensure efficiency and traceability.

Taken together, these strategies represent a coherent step towards a modern, efficient, and citizen-centered administration, which is also supported by documented international best practices in the field of local public management.

To ensure that the formulated strategies are not limited to theoretical guidelines, an evaluation system based on key performance indicators (KPIs) was designed. These KPIs allow for continuous and measurable monitoring of institutional progress. They enable the tracking of the degree of implementation, process efficiency, and user perception. Furthermore, this system aims to consolidate a technical control structure that allows for verifying compliance with operational goals, identifying deviations, generating early warnings, and implementing timely corrective actions in the management of Portoparques EP.

The indicators were organized according to the four strategic pillars identified: digitalization, human talent, operational efficiency, and citizen participation (Table 4). For each pillar, a representative KPI was defined, along with a suggested target, to facilitate its interpretation and periodic measurement.

**Table 4.** Key performance indicators (KPIs) proposed by the strategic dimension of institutional modernization in Portoparques EP

Strategic dimension	Indicator	Suggested goal
Digitization	Percentage of online procedures	≥ 80%
Human talent	Percentage of staff trained annually	≥ 90%
Operational efficiency	Average processing time for procedures	≤ 48 hours
Citizen participation	Percentage of users satisfied with the service	≥ 85%

In the area of institutional digitization, the percentage of procedures managed online was proposed as the key indicator, with a minimum target of 80%. This KPI is essential for evaluating the degree of automation of services and the

entity’s capacity to operate through digital platforms, overcoming its reliance on manual and paper-based processes. Adopting this metric will allow for the identification of technical progress, the detection of lagging units, the promotion of interoperability, and the strengthening of the digital government approach at the local level.

Regarding the human talent dimension, the established indicator was the percentage of staff trained annually, with a target of 90% or higher. This indicator aims to reflect the scope and sustainability of continuing education programs, as well as their penetration among all technical, administrative, and operational staff. This parameter will allow verification of whether the organization is successfully keeping its team’s professional skills up-to-date, particularly in areas such as information technology, public administration, citizen services, and organizational culture.

For the operational efficiency dimension, the average processing time for procedures was defined as the indicator, with a target of 48 hours or less. This KPI has significant practical value, as it allows for measuring the institution’s responsiveness to requests, internal processes, and citizen requirements. Through its systematic monitoring, bottlenecks, unjustified delays, or deficiencies in interdepartmental coordination can be identified, facilitating corrective actions and the implementation of continuous improvements in administrative workflows.

In the area of citizen participation, the percentage of users satisfied with the service received was proposed as an indicator, with a target of 85% or higher. This measure, obtained through citizen perception surveys, allows for the assessment of service quality based on the user’s experience, and not solely on internal criteria. Its incorporation into the institutional evaluation system represents a step towards more democratic governance models, in which the citizens’ voice becomes a valid input for guiding and reformulating management policies.

Taken together, these indicators provide a solid quantitative basis for monitoring modernization strategies, strengthening accountability, and contributing to the development of an institutional culture focused on results, quality, and continuous improvement. Furthermore, they allow for linking the operational objectives of different areas with concrete and verifiable goals, promoting more transparent, efficient, and citizen-centered public management.

The evaluation and monitoring system designed as part of the administrative modernization process at Portoparques EP was structured around a set of complementary operational tools, conceived to guarantee continuous, participatory, and technically rigorous monitoring of institutional performance. These tools were not limited to simple data collection, but were integrated into a functional model aimed at transforming the management culture, promoting evidence-based

decision-making, and fostering greater transparency for the public.

Table 5 shows the operational structure of the evaluation system, where each component is designed to generate use-

**Table 5.** Proposed institutional evaluation and monitoring system for Portoparques EP

System stage	Main content	Tools associates	Purpose functional
Dimensions strategic	- Digitization - Human talent - Operational efficiency - Citizen participation	—	Identify the structural axes of institutional performance
Key performance indicators (KPIs)	- % of online procedures - % of trained personnel - Average service time - % of satisfaction	Institutional Key Performance Indicator (KPI) Matrix	Measuring goal achievement by strategic dimension
Information gathering	Institutional data and user perception	- Institutional panel (intranet) - Citizen surveys - Administrative records	Obtain up-to-date empirical evidence on institutional functioning
Visualization and alerts	Graphic panel and traffic light coding of compliance	- KPI Dashboard (traffic light, graphs, trends) - Alert dashboard by operational area - Semi-annual institutional evaluation reports	Facilitate dynamic analysis and visual communication of performance
Assessment technique periodic	Progress reports, deviations and corrective actions	- Minutes of the Strategic Committee's evaluation - Management meetings - Planning Committee - Board of Directors	Provide feedback on the planning and accountability process
Decision making	Settings strategic and operational	- Corrective action matrix - Improvement plans by area - POA Update	Reorient institutional actions based on evidence
Feedback and improvement	Reformulation of goals and adjustments to strategies		Closing the institutional management cycle, incorporating lessons learned and effective corrections

ful, timely, and usable information for decision-making. It is based on a cyclical approach, characteristic of results-oriented public management committed to transparency, efficiency, and continuous improvement.

One of the central instruments proposed was the institutional panel of indicators, conceived as a digital tool hosted on the entity’s intranet, with restricted access and hierarchical according to the user’s profile (managerial, technical, or administrative).

This panel allows real-time visualization of progress in meeting the key performance indicators (KPIs) defined in the four strategic dimensions: digitalization, human talent, operational efficiency, and citizen participation.

Thanks to the inclusion of graphical visualizations—such as bar charts, performance indicators, trend lines, and alerts—the dashboard facilitates a clear and quick understanding of the institution’s status, immediately highlighting potential deviations from planned goals. It also allows for the generation of automatic reports for use in evaluation or accountability meetings.

As a complement to the panel, the preparation of semi-an-

nual institutional evaluation reports was established, to be carried out by the Planning and Management Control Unit. These reports serve to document progress, analyze deviations, and propose corrective actions, thus establishing a dynamic of continuous improvement.

Each report presents an analysis by strategic dimension, including comparative charts, goal achievement tables, institutional risk analysis, and specific recommendations. These reports are intended to serve as inputs for both operational and strategic decision-making and as a basis for formulating internal policies that are more aligned with the identified realities and priorities.

Additionally, the system includes the periodic application of citizen perception surveys, both digitally (through online forms, email surveys, or mobile systems) and in person (through interviews conducted in parks, cemeteries, and service offices). These surveys aim to gather direct information from users regarding aspects of the services provided, with a particular focus on accessibility, quality of service, and the effectiveness of communication channels. Through the quantitative analysis of these responses and the qualitative interpretation of the open comments, the institution can adjust its

strategies, improve its engagement with the community, and align its services with a framework of shared public responsibility.

Together, these instruments form a robust, functional, and adaptable institutional evaluation model, centered on results-based management and a culture of monitoring and accountability. Triangulation between operational performance data (panel), internal reports (semi-annual reports), and citizen perception (surveys) allows for a comprehensive view of the institution's status, encompassing both internal processes and the external user experience. In this way, the monitoring system facilitates the technical control of progress, strengthens planning processes, fosters organizational transparency, and enhances the public company's legitimacy in the eyes of the public. This approach reflects a commitment to the sustained, measurable, and participatory modernization of the local administrative apparatus.

The design of an evaluation and monitoring system based on key performance indicators (KPIs) represents a step towards institutionalizing a culture of continuous improvement at Portoparques EP. The inclusion of indicators such as the percentage of online transactions, trained staff, service times, and citizen satisfaction allows for measuring operational performance and the public value generated by modernization strategies. This approach is consistent with recommendations that promote the use of quantitative metrics to align strategic planning with institutional results.

This approach is supported by studies such as Ouabi et al. (2024), which demonstrates that the use of indicators associated with job satisfaction and organizational commitment allows for establishing significant correlations with performance in the public sector. In the context of Portoparques EP, the proposal to monitor variables such as citizen satisfaction and response time to procedures allows for building an evidence-based improvement system capable of identifying deficiencies and redirecting strategic efforts.

In particular, the proposed indicators address internal aspects (efficiency and human talent) and external aspects (digitalization and public perception) in a balanced way, allowing for a comprehensive evaluation of organizational performance. As Kaplan and Norton (1996) point out in the Balanced Scorecard model, the use of multidimensional indicators is essential for translating strategy into action, monitoring progress, and making timely adjustments. This view is shared by studies such as that of Al Jawali et al. (2022), who emphasize the importance of linking performance evaluation systems with talent policies and digitization processes to achieve sustainable impacts in the public sector.

Complementary monitoring tools, such as the institutional dashboard of indicators and periodic reports, help consolidate internal transparency practices and strengthen accountabi-

lity. The European Commission (2020) emphasizes that the availability of up-to-date and accessible data is an essential component of digital governance, facilitating both administrative oversight and informed citizen participation. The framework of the study conducted by Bindhu et al. (2024) highlights how the generation and continuous analysis of data on staff turnover, satisfaction, and productivity can inform strategic management decisions in public bodies.

Portoparques EP monitoring model—strengthens the user-centered approach, facilitating the measurement of the service's technical quality and its social legitimacy. This element is present in the research by Sixpence et al. (2021), who conclude that employees' perceptions of their work environment directly impact their organizational commitment, and that the lack of indicators hinders effective human resource management.

The proposed evaluation and monitoring system helps close the planning, implementation, monitoring, and improvement cycle, consolidating a modern public management approach. This model verifies goal achievement, identifies bottlenecks, allocates resources more efficiently, and legitimizes institutional decisions before internal and external stakeholders. As Pomaquero et al. (2023) state, the consolidation of robust evaluation systems is an essential condition for moving toward a more strategic, effective, and results-oriented state.

In summary, the integration of technical indicators, citizen perception, and transparency tools places Portoparques EP on a path of modern governance, with the capacity to respond to social demands, be accountable, and sustain continuous improvement processes.

However, the study had limitations related to partial access to internal information, a small and non-probabilistic sample, and an approach focused on the institutional perspective, without systematically including the users' viewpoints. Furthermore, time and resources were limited, preventing the validation of the proposed strategies through pilot tests. Despite these limitations, the results remain valid and provide a solid diagnosis with viable proposals for the modernization of Portoparques EP.

## Conclusions

The analysis revealed that Portoparques EP was in an initial phase of administrative modernization, with isolated efforts and no comprehensive strategy to guide institutional transformation. Limitations persisted in digitization, operational efficiency, citizen participation, and the professionalization of human resources, reflecting a clear gap with respect to the principles of modern public administration. In response to this diagnosis, the study formulated a set of strategies

aimed at strengthening institutional capacity, including the digitization of processes, the creation of an innovation unit, operational redesign, and the implementation of technological mechanisms to promote citizen participation, accompanied by a continuous training program. As an essential complement, an evaluation system based on key performance indicators was designed, capable of measuring progress in digitization, efficiency, training, and citizen satisfaction, as well as generating early warnings and supporting decision-making. Together, these proposals provide a coherent, viable, and contextualized framework to drive the modernization of Portoparques EP and ensure the sustainability of its transformation processes.

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## Conflicts of interest

The authors declare that they have no conflicts of interest.

## Author contributions

**Conceptualization:** Halder D. Lucas, Stella M. Iriarte. **Research:** Halder D. Lucas, Stella M. Iriarte. **Methodology:** Halder D. Lucas, Stella M. Iriarte. **Supervision:** Halder D. Lucas, Stella M. Iriarte. **Validation:** Halder D. Lucas, Stella M. Iriarte. **Writing the original draft:** Halder D. Lucas, Stella M. Iriarte. **Writing, review and editing:** Halder D. Lucas, Stella M. Iriarte.

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**Data availability statement**

The datasets used and/or analyzed during the current study are available from the corresponding author on reasonable request.

**Statement on the use of AI**

The authors acknowledge the use of generative AI and AI-assisted technologies to improve the readability and clarity of the article.

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