

Insights from the AI Readiness Check

Learnings for government leaders, based on data
gathered in 2025 from 5,000 public servants.

with support from 



At a glance

In 2025, 5,000 public servants from 26 countries completed the [Apolitical AI Readiness Check](#). This unique dataset provides a vital insight into the state of global public sector AI development, identifying areas of real progress and critical areas to strengthen capability. This report details what we have learned so far.

↗ AI continues to grow in governments globally.

76% Public servants who say they are using generative AI tools. The vast majority of Leaders say they allow their staff to use AI at work.

70% Leaders who say their organisations are running AI pilots (or plan to in the next 12 months).

↗ But the foundations for ethical and scalable AI aren't there yet.

26% 'AI Implementers' – public servants who design and deliver AI solutions in government — who say they are familiar with frameworks for ethical AI.

41% Leaders who say their organisations have developed a plan to procure AI systems and solutions.

36% Leaders who say their organisations are making their data ready for use in AI solutions.

↗ Governments need to be proactive about developing skills and capabilities at all levels, to promote effective adoption.

35% Public servants who say they can apply prompt engineering skills to maximise the quality of outputs from generative AI tools they use.

34% The proportion of Implementers who say that they have a plan in place to develop their AI-specific knowledge and skills.

34% Leaders who say they have a strategy to increase technical talent in government, to support AI development within their organisation.

Introduction

Policymakers globally have pushed for their governments to be early adopters and shapers of artificial intelligence [AI]. Over 70 countries have published national AI strategies where the public sector features prominently. Now that the strategic direction is becoming clearer, the focus has shifted to evidence and impact.¹

Apolitical launched the [Government AI Campus](#) in June 2023. It has emerged as a global hub for building public sector skills and capabilities to use AI safely and effectively. In February 2025, we launched the AI Readiness Check — an interactive tool to help

public servants self-assess their AI abilities. Some 5,000 public servants have completed the assessment, providing a unique insight to where governments need to strengthen capabilities in 2026. **It's also being used as a strategic capability tool by several governments, to benchmark and build their AI readiness.**

This report provides a global perspective on the data Apolitical has gathered throughout 2025.

What is the AI Readiness Check?

The AI Readiness Check is carefully designed to support public servants across all roles and levels of seniority. The tool offers three tailored pathways—Leader, Implementer and User—reflecting the varied ways public servants may engage with AI in government. You can read more about the methodology behind the tool and how we analysed the data at the end of this report.

- ↗ **3 TAILORED AI PATHWAYS**
- ↗ 20 questions per pathway.
- ↗ Questions structured across 4 topics.
- ↗ Rapid assessment (6 minutes in total).

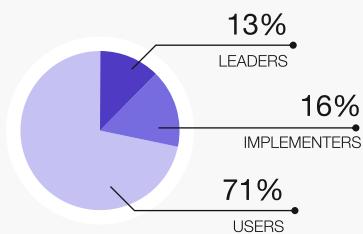
Public servant profile	What we assess
LEADERS	Sets strategic AI goals, mobilise resources. Institutional readiness for AI adoption.
IMPLEMENTERS	Supports the design and implementation of AI in public services. Abilities to embed AI safely into operations and services.
USERS	Interacts with and uses AI in their daily work. Abilities to use AI effectively in their work.

2025 OVERVIEW

4,812 submissions

26 countries for English version.
Top 5: Australia, Canada, South Africa, UAE and United Kingdom.

4 additional language translations for 2026, including Hindi, French, Spanish and Portuguese.



"We realised we needed to strengthen ourselves first before we could support others. It's helping us create a healthier environment for AI and data governance"



Daniel Rosero

Associate Project Officer, Development Academy of the Philippines.
Used the AI Readiness Check with his team.

Insights from the AI Readiness Check

What we learned from 5,000 public servants in 2025

The table below provides a snapshot view of the key insights gathered from users of the AI Readiness Check in 2025. The colour grading of the cells represent the percentage of respondents who responded positively to the five questions in each section.

SECTION	TOPIC	LEADERS (n=607)	IMPLEMENTERS (n=770)	USERS (n=3,435)
1	Workforce readiness	 Medium The majority of leaders say they provide access to AI tools and training, but very few (around 30%) have thought about the impacts of augmentation and automation or people's jobs.	 High High readiness driven by positive attitudes about AI's potential and high levels of experimentation (both above 90%). There are significant gaps with prompt engineering skills and developing critical mindsets toward AI.	 High The vast majority of public servants (>90%) are optimistic about AI's potential and confident in their core ICT skills. Technical awareness of AI is much lower (45%), as are critical mindsets about augmentation versus automation.
2	Ability to apply AI in government	 Low Responses indicate a lack of stakeholder engagement in developing AI projects, low levels of data readiness and the absence of evaluation.	 Medium Most (63%) can take a problem-centred approach to implementing technology but there are gaps in knowledge about specific approaches and metrics for procuring and evaluating AI solutions.	 Medium Around 75% say they use generative AI tools and carefully check outputs before implementing them. However, only 35% say they can apply prompting skills to shape the quality of these outputs.
3	Ability to apply AI ethically	 Medium Core data protection policies provide a base layer of governance but there is a lack of transparency around the use of algorithmic systems or consideration of AI's environmental impact.	 Medium Very few are aware of frameworks for ethical AI adoption (26% — drops to 15% among those actively working on AI projects). But there is stronger confidence around core principles and practices for data protection.	 Medium Most are aware of basic ethical risks posed by using AI (particularly bias) and are familiar with core data protection policies. Far fewer can engage critically with the underlying data used to produce AI outputs.
4	Promoting AI innovation	 Medium Nearly 70% say they are running pilots, but few (<45%) have the strategic foundation to prioritise potential opportunities, evaluate impact and scale up successful initiatives.	 High A majority are actively involved with AI projects (58%) and many more are following AI developments in their field. However, few (34%) have a learning plan to address gaps in their AI competencies.	 Medium Very few (27%) are actively involved with AI projects in their organisation, but around half say they are actively experimenting with genAI tools and sharing learnings with peers. There are gaps in understanding the core link between data and AI innovation.

01.

Public servants are outpacing their institutions on AI readiness and adaptation.

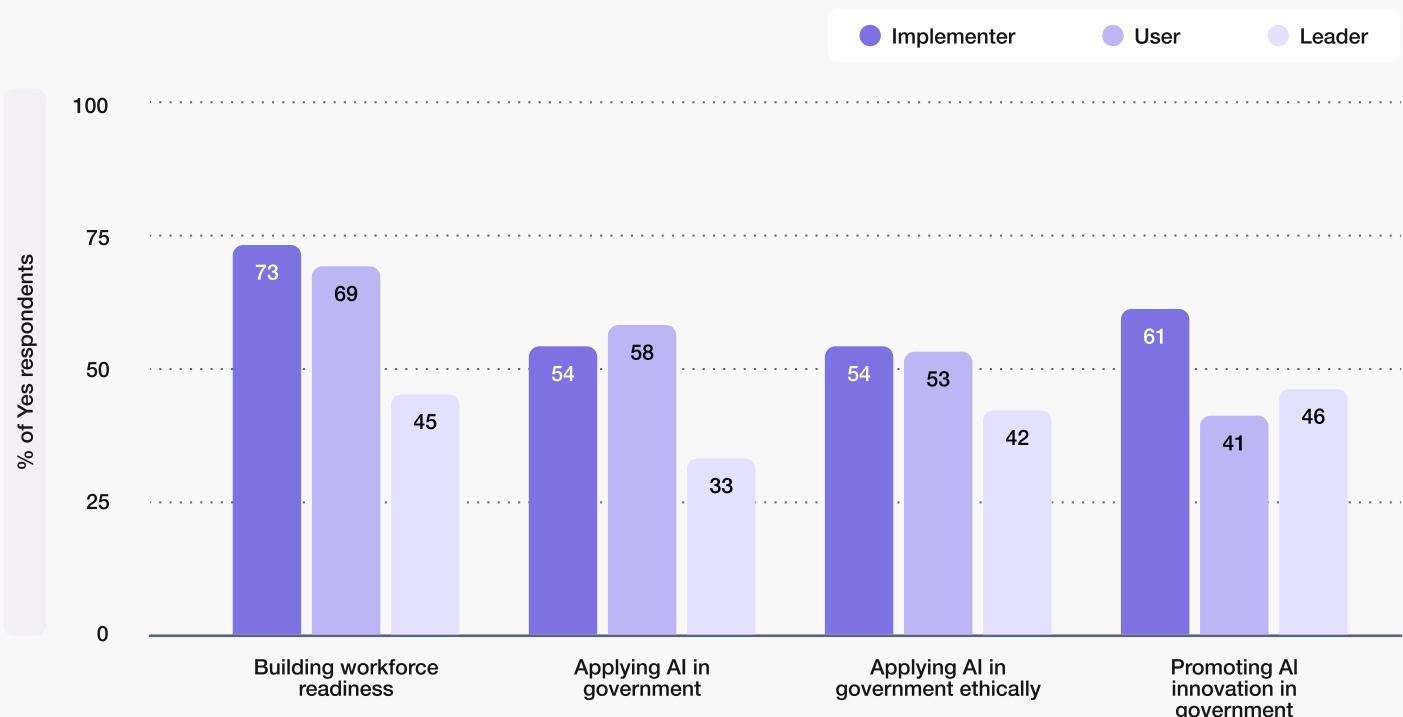
Across Apolitical's global sample of 5,000 public servants, Users and Implementers achieved significantly higher average readiness scores than Leaders. The biggest driver of that gap was the high rate of positive responses among User and Implementers in Section 1 of the assessment, where we evaluate

their **AI confidence**. It was also driven by low Leader scores in Section 2, where we evaluate **readiness to start applying AI in operations, services and daily work**. The key takeaway is that leaders face a longer and harder road to achieve meaningful AI adoption at an institutional level than individuals do.

Overall AI readiness assessment performance by pathway.

Average rate of 'Yes' responses to each section.

AI Readiness Check. All pathways. Sample: 4,812



02.

Public institutions face important gaps in readiness to implement AI at scale

When we analyse responses across all pathways, we find that some of the biggest gaps in government readiness are related to building foundations that can enable the effective implementation of AI solutions at scale.

Only around half of Leaders say that their organisations are running pilots that are underpinned by a clear strategic plan. Perhaps an even more foundational gap is the ability to procure AI systems and solutions into government. Just 40% of leaders say they have developed a plan to procure AI systems or developed a framework to prioritise potential investment opportunities.

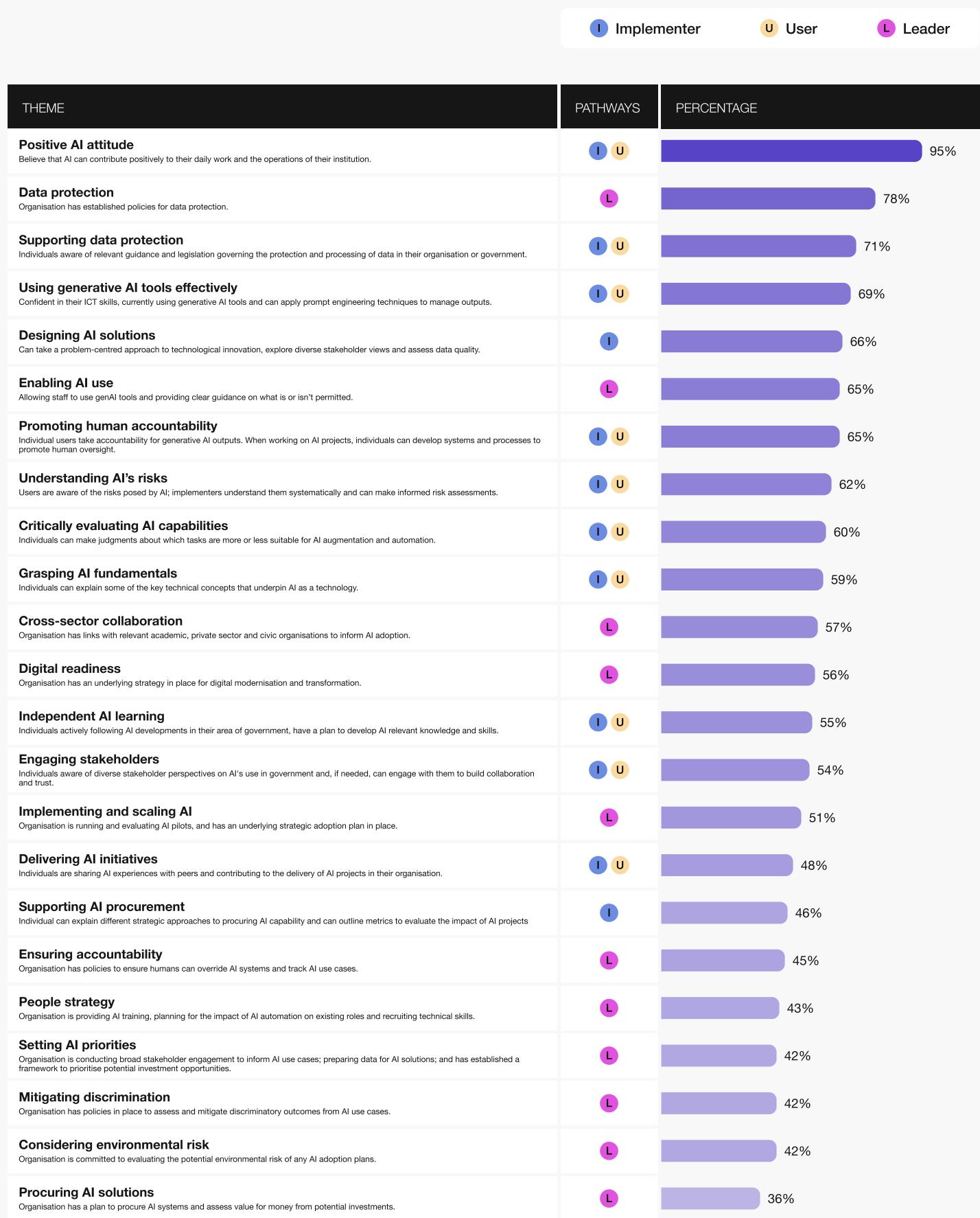
The graphic on the next page illustrates how these foundations for scaling AI are lagging.

It provides a combined view of all 60 questions across the three pathways on the AI Readiness Check. The 60 questions are organised into 23 thematic areas. Each thematic area is a combination of questions across either one or two pathways. The percentage value represents an average of 'Yes' responses for these combined questions.

The graph shows how leader-only outcomes group together at the bottom of the rankings.

AI readiness across 23 thematic areas

Proportion of respondents responding Yes to questions grouped into thematic areas



03.

Governments need to strengthen the pool of in-house talent responsible for designing and delivering AI projects

'Implementers' are the delivery engine of AI in government. Their skills and expertise enable public institutions to design and produce solutions that work effectively in the complex, sensitive realities of government. Our data shows that 58% of Implementers say they are actively working on AI projects in government.

However, among this subset, just 10% have a broad mix of 'delivery capabilities' — including project evaluation, embedding oversight and accountability, supporting procurement and awareness of ethical frameworks — to support their organisation's to adopt AI.

There are not enough Implementers with delivery skills to support ethical adoption at scale.

Apolitical AI Readiness Check, Analysis of Implementer responses (n=770)



What can governments do to strengthen AI capabilities in 2026?

There are a few key areas where governments can take practical action to enhance the effective adoption of AI in the public sector.

Support public servants to explore more innovative use cases of generative AI tools in their daily work.

If governments want to fuel faster AI innovation, enabling public servants to make more sophisticated use of generative AI tools could be the solution.

Getting started with generative AI adoption doesn't require huge top-down planning and investment. Innovation can happen at the individual and small team level. But there is growing risk that generative AI innovation in government has reached an early plateau.

Public servants have the best perspective on the frustrations, limitations and opportunities of their jobs and work. Equipping them with understanding of AI's technical capabilities and limitations, the right tooling and examples of use cases in other contexts, can empower them to have greater agency in shaping how AI is (and isn't) used in their work.

There is a relationship between AI confidence and usage. More AI-confident public servants use AI tools more frequently. That should not be a surprise, but what's significant is that AI-confident public servants have identified applications that they clearly perceive as useful.

Wider research has also shown that more AI-confident public servants experiment more with more novel applications, like scenario planning, policy analysis and risk management.² These confident users can be a source of experimentation and peer learning in government. In Singapore, the central govtech agency has built an internal platform that enables public servants to safely experiment with creating their own low and no-code bots that can unlock more sophisticated AI applications.³

Where the right opportunities exist, identify critical gaps to spreading and scaling AI.

There are growing demands to show that AI can deliver positive impact at scale for governments. Of course, 'scale' needs to be defined. There are emphases on large-scale cost savings (at the order of billions of dollars) or radically increasing state capacity in

areas like health and education (particularly for developing economies).

Evidence from the AI Readiness Check shows that procurement is a critically undeveloped area for governments.

AI procurement challenges facing governments in 2026

Assessing value for money

As governments look to implement AI automations, one of the challenges they face is knowing how to evaluate whether the solution delivers significant savings or efficiencies. This is particularly true in areas of work which have not been traditionally measured.

32%

Leaders who say that they have conducted analyses to assess value for money from potential AI projects.

Some governments, notably the UK's Department for Science Innovation and Technology (DSIT), are conducting evaluation studies to calculate baseline for potential savings in different areas of work. For example, DSIT estimates that its Consult tool could save 75,000 manual days, worth £20 million in staffing costs.⁴ Governments will need more granular data about services, workflows and tasks to inform their approach to identifying the most valuable opportunities for implementing AI at scale.⁵

Ensuring sovereignty

In an increasingly complex and volatile geoeconomic landscape, policymakers are facing difficult trade-offs between rapidly scaling AI and protecting or promoting the sovereignty of public technology systems.

41%

Leaders who say their organisation has developed a plan to procure AI systems.

There are no easy answers. Some countries, for example Canada, are establishing centres of excellence that can advise and support agencies to implement procurement strategies that are aligned with sovereign aims.⁶ In Europe, France and Germany have indicated their intention to partner with a European AI lab to establish a strategic public-private partnership to develop a 'sovereign AI capability'.⁷

In Latin America, a consortium of 30 countries, led by Chile, are collaborating to build a regionally-developed large language model (Latam-GPT). HyperClover X is an example of a model which is highly customised to the Korean language and culture, which government agencies are using for citizen-facing applications.

Each of these approaches have wide-ranging implications for the skills and capabilities needed within government to ensure successful implementation.

Build a stronger cadre of 'Implementers' who can help deliver safe, ethical and effective AI solutions at scale

Skills gaps are consistently cited as a significant barrier to government innovation with AI. Increasing technical expertise (for example, data science and machine learning) is an obvious (and urgent) challenge. But there is also a broader skillset required to design and deliver effective digital solutions in government. These can include data specialists, product managers, designers, IT operators and other management professionals.

34%

Leaders who say their organisation has a strategy in place to recruit or train technical AI expertise.

26%

Implementers who are familiar with at least one ethical framework to govern AI use.

34%

Implementers who say they have a learning plan in place to develop their AI competencies.

Source: AI Readiness Check

Evidence from the AI Readiness Check shows that there is still significant room for progress in how public institutions develop the internal expertise required to build AI solutions at scale. And also

among Implementers, in developing new knowledge and skills to support the safe and effective delivery of those initiatives.

In Apolitical's discussions and interactions with public servants, concerns about the ethical usage of AI in government are consistently top of mind. Issues like bias and discrimination are frequently cited, particularly how it relates to the underlying training data of AI models that public servants may be using in government.

Worryingly, one of the most significant gaps we identified was a lack of awareness of ethical frameworks governing AI use. Only 1 in 4 Implementers say they are aware of such frameworks, despite governments publishing guidance and playbooks which set out a systematic approach for defining and managing AI risks.

This suggests that many public servants, particularly Implementers, lack systematic understanding of the ethical and safety risks posed by AI systems. That raises concerns for obvious reasons — public servants should be considering a wide range of factors, from sustainability to transparency and explainability, when weighing up whether to use AI.

There is also a risk of inaction caused by overestimating certain ethical risks or focusing on issues that might not be relevant to a specific use case.

The use of algorithmic impact assessments — introduced by governments like Canada, Chile and the UK — are one way to help public servants systematically evaluate and disclose risks. However, our data from leaders suggest that just 38% report following such processes.

Recommendations for action

The use of artificial intelligence is spreading throughout the global public sector. The change it brings (is already bringing) will be more or less transformational in some areas, and with varying degrees of speed.

Effective AI adoption should be seen as an institutional skill, not an inevitability.¹⁰ Many governments have decided to put the public sector at the frontier of national strategies for AI adoption. Therefore the standards and practices which emerge in governments in the coming years are critically important, not just for sake of effective governance but also for embedding safe and ethical AI for wider society.

The speed of technological innovation means that developing the

‘institutional skill’ of AI adoption can’t be seen as a static, ‘one-and-done’ challenge. Individuals and their institutions need to build a sustainable approach to continuous learning.

That being said, it’s also important that leaders not overestimate the pace of change. In interactions with public servants on the Government AI Campus, we see that there is still a large-scale need for AI awareness and exposure at the most foundational levels.

Based on our evidence from the AI Readiness Check and wider insights through our network, Apolitical is making the following recommendations for governments to build their AI capability in 2026.

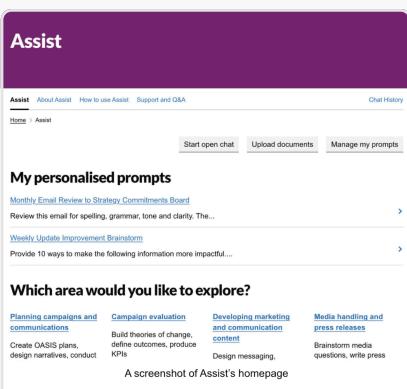
01.

Give public servants more role-specific guidance on how to use AI in their daily work.

Our evidence and interactions show that there may be an ‘innovation plateau’ with generative AI in government. More and more public servants are using generative AI tools, but few have found use cases outside of email and note-taking and some document drafting.

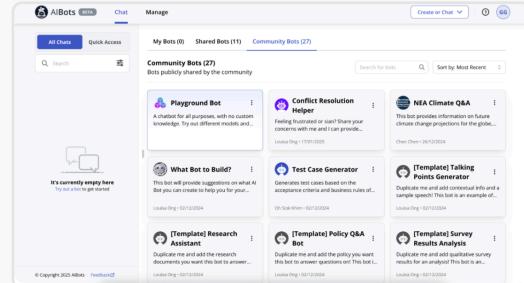
That might be due to a lack of tooling or confidence to experiment with new applications, or it may well be that their work does not require the use of AI. In 2026, governments need to dive deeper

into role-specific guidance on how generative AI can (or shouldn’t) be used. A good example is the UK Government’s Communications Profession, which has developed detailed guidance and external communications around AI use, as well as a customised tool called Assist.¹¹ Our evidence shows that government communications professionals are among the highest users of AI.¹² In Singapore, the central govtech agency has built an internal platform that enables public servants to safely experiment with creating their own low and no-code bots that can unlock more sophisticated AI applications.¹³



A screenshot of the UK Government's AI tool 'Assist' homepage. The interface is titled 'Assist' and includes a purple header bar. Below the header, there are sections for 'My personalised prompts' and 'Which area would you like to explore?'. The 'Explore' section lists several categories: 'Planning campaigns and communications', 'Campaign evaluation', 'Developing marketing and communication content', and 'Media handling and press releases'. Each category has a brief description and a link to learn more.

UK Government comms tool 'Assist'.



A screenshot of Singapore's AI Bots platform. The interface is titled 'AI Bots' and shows a list of available AI bots. The bots are categorized into 'My Bots (0)', 'Shared Bots (11)', and 'Community Bots (27)'. Each bot has a thumbnail, a name, a brief description, and a link to 'View bot'. Some examples of bots include 'Playground Bot', 'Conflict Resolution Helper', and 'NEA Climate Q&A'.

Singapore's AI Bots platform.

02.

Central institutions should give smaller agencies more support to plan strategically for AI adoption in areas like procurement and evaluation.

Nearly 70% of Leaders told us that they are running (or plan to run) AI pilots, yet less than half of them say that they have a strategy in place to guide these efforts. We recommend that individual public institutions develop more robust strategic planning for their AI development in the coming years.

This strategic work can be challenging, particularly for smaller agencies at the sub-national level. Well-resourced central institutions with access to expertise and best practice can play a supporting

role. Data from the AI Readiness Check shows that there are urgent needs to enhance capabilities around procurement, assessing ethical risks from potential projects and evaluating the impact of pilots.

Centres of excellence can help develop and disseminate best practice. Examples include the [UK's Incubator for Artificial Intelligence](#), which provides in-depth resources that other agencies can use – including open source code and case studies.

03.

Ensure public servants working on AI projects have the knowledge and frameworks they need to assess ethical risks.

Data from the AI Readiness Check shows that just 1 in 4 Implementers say they are aware of ethical frameworks which govern AI use.

It's vital that public servants who play a critical role in shaping how AI will be used at scale in government also have a systematic, informed understanding of the ethical risks. And not just a theoretical or technical understanding, but applied to their specific area of government and the stakeholders they deal with.

Several governments and jurisdictions, including the UK, Canada, European Union and the United States, require agencies to

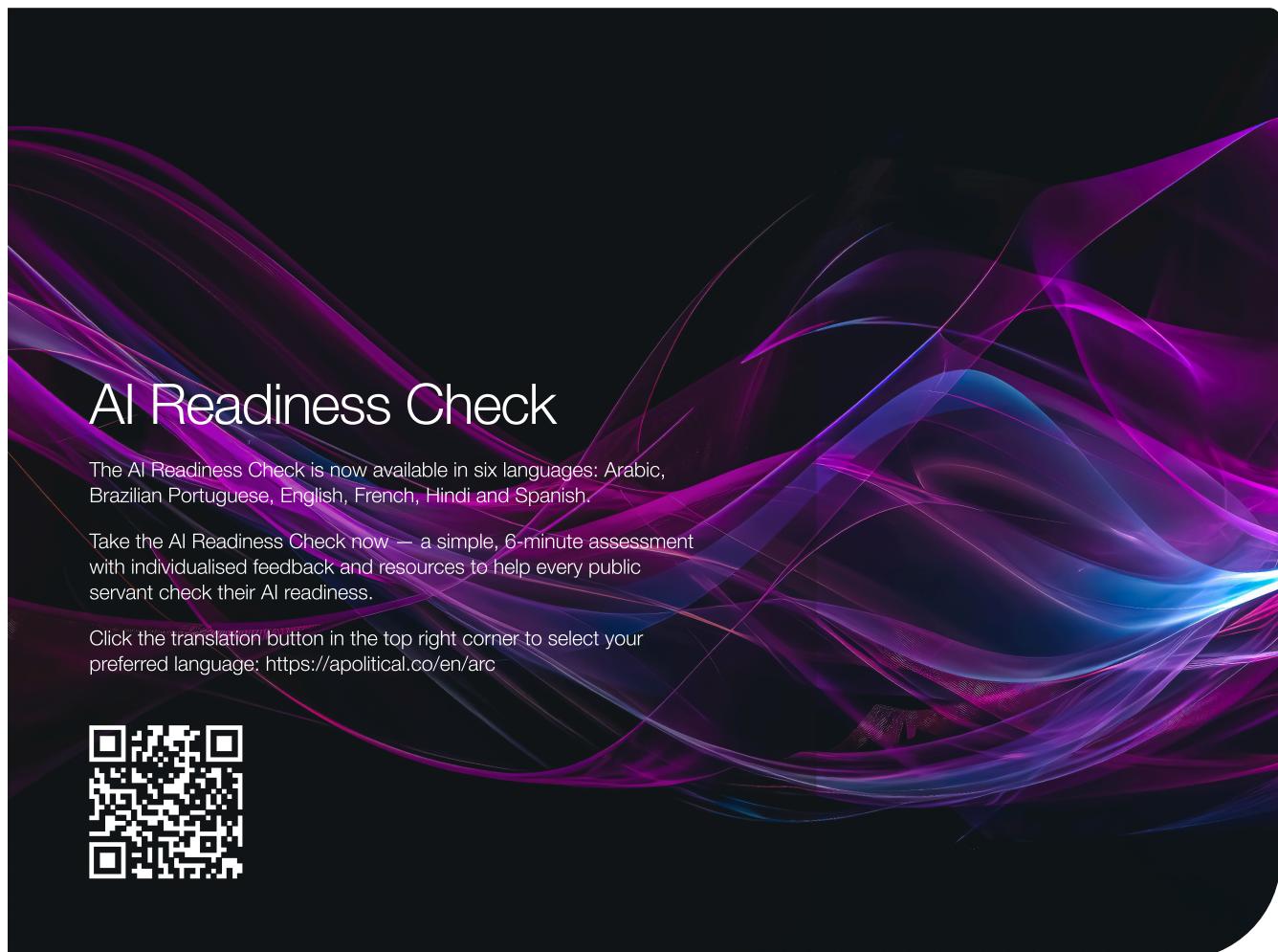
implement impact assessments to provide a structured method for evaluating AI risks. While there are limitations with these self-assessment tools, they have emerged as an important mechanism for public sector AI governance.

Responses from the AI Readiness Check show that, even in countries which require these assessments, very few leaders (38%) say their organisations consistently track and clearly explain all algorithmic tools they use. Compliance is one thing, comprehension is another. For these assessments to be as effective as possible, it's important that agencies also assess and ensure that public servants have a robust understanding of the risks they are measuring.

Be part of the Government AI Campus in 2026

The Government AI Campus, funded by Google.org, is a trusted global hub for AI excellence in government, supporting 1 million public servants to lead in the age of AI.

[Discover more here.](#)



AI Readiness Check

The AI Readiness Check is now available in six languages: Arabic, Brazilian Portuguese, English, French, Hindi and Spanish.

Take the AI Readiness Check now — a simple, 6-minute assessment with individualised feedback and resources to help every public servant check their AI readiness.

Click the translation button in the top right corner to select your preferred language: <https://apolitical.co/en/arc>



Results table

The results table shows the full set of responses to **60 questions** across each of the three pathways. The questions are presented in the order they are asked in the assessment for each pathway. The "Yes" value represents the proportion of respondents who answered 'Yes' to the question. The number of respondents for each question within each pathway are: **Leaders (n=607)**, **Implementers (n=770)** and **Users (n=3,435)**.

PATHWAY	SECTION	QUESTION TEXT	YES (%)
Leader	Workforce readiness	My organisation provides access to basic AI training (or intends to) for a wide range of staff.	69.40
Leader	Workforce readiness	My organisation allows individuals and teams to experiment with generative AI tools, like ChatGPT, CoPilot or Gemini.	77.8
Leader	Workforce readiness	My organisation has issued clear guidance to govern how individuals use generative AI tools.	55.8
Leader	Workforce readiness	My organisation has assessed how AI automation could affect people's jobs.	30.6
Leader	Workforce readiness	My organisation has a strategy in place to recruit or train technical AI expertise.	34.4
Implementer	Workforce readiness	I believe that AI has the potential to contribute positively to government operations and services.	96.8
Implementer	Workforce readiness	I can explain some key technical concepts that underpin AI as a technology, such as algorithms and machine learning.	71.9
Implementer	Workforce readiness	I experiment with generative AI tools, like ChatGPT, CoPilot or Gemini in a professional or personal capacity.	90.9
Implementer	Workforce readiness	I can apply prompt engineering techniques to manage the quality of outputs from generative AI tools.	55.2
Implementer	Workforce readiness	I can critically assess the capability of AI systems to replace or augment human resources for various tasks.	59.5
User	Workforce readiness	I believe that AI has the potential to contribute positively to my work as a public servant.	95.5
User	Workforce readiness	I recognise how AI can be used as a tool to support the administration of government operations and delivery of public services.	88.7
User	Workforce readiness	I can adapt to use new digital tools and applications to complete my work (supported by adequate training).	95
User	Workforce readiness	I can explain some of the key technical concepts that underpin AI as a technology, such as algorithms and machine learning.	45.4
User	Workforce readiness	I can critically evaluate the capabilities of AI to replace or support human skills and judgement.	54.4
Leader	Applying AI	My organisation has consulted a range of stakeholders, including employees and end-users, about opportunity areas for AI use.	53.9
Leader	Applying AI	My organisation has a framework for prioritising investment in potential AI use cases.	39.5
Leader	Applying AI	My organisation has developed a plan to procure AI systems.	40.9
Leader	Applying AI	My organisation has conducted detailed analysis to assess the value for money from potential AI projects.	32.3
Leader	Applying AI	My organisation has established processes to prepare data for use in AI systems.	36.1
Implementer	Applying AI	I can define policy, operational or decision-making problems to inform an evaluation of the appropriate digital solution.	63
Implementer	Applying AI	I can explore diverse stakeholder perspectives, including users, to identify opportunities for potential AI projects.	80
Implementer	Applying AI	I can assess the availability and quality of data sets to support potential AI projects.	53.9
Implementer	Applying AI	I can explain the advantages and disadvantages of different approaches to procuring AI capability (e.g. 'Off-the-shelf' or building internal systems).	46.2

PATHWAY	SECTION	QUESTION TEXT	YES (%)
Implementer	Applying AI	I can outline quality and performance metrics to evaluate the impact of AI projects.	45.7
User	Applying AI	I use generative AI tools, like ChatGPT, CoPilot or Gemini, in my professional work or a personal capacity.	75.5
User	Applying AI	I follow available ethical and security guidance when using generative AI tools.	80.4
User	Applying AI	I can identify which types of tasks in my regular work are more or less suitable to complete using generative AI tools.	69
User	Applying AI	I can apply prompt engineering techniques to manage the quality of outputs from generative AI tools.	35.3
User	Applying AI	I critically evaluate the quality of outputs produced by generative AI tools when I use it in my work.	73.3
Leader	Ethical application	My organisation has policies in place to manage the protection of data.	77.3
Leader	Ethical application	My organisation has safeguards in place to ensure that human decision-makers can intervene to override AI systems.	52.1
Leader	Ethical application	My organisation has policies in place to assess and mitigate the risk of discriminatory outcomes from AI uses.	42.2
Leader	Ethical application	My organisation has policies in place to track and clearly explain all algorithmic tools we use.	38.4
Leader	Ethical application	My organisation is committed to considering the environmental impact associated with any AI adoption plans.	42.3
Implementer	Ethical application	I am familiar with at least one ethical framework to govern AI use (e.g. FASTER or SSAFE-D principles).	26
Implementer	Ethical application	I can articulate some core principles for good data stewardship in government.	68.1
Implementer	Ethical application	I can assess the risks for biased, discriminatory or harmful outcomes from potential AI projects.	63
Implementer	Ethical application	I can develop systems and processes that promote human oversight and accountability throughout the lifecycle of an AI project.	47.1
Implementer	Ethical application	I can inform a diverse range of internal and external stakeholders about AI's use in government to promote collaboration and trust.	62.5
User	Ethical application	I am aware of relevant legislation and guidance governing the protection and processing of data in my organisation.	72.1
User	Ethical application	I understand how AI systems can produce risks for bias and discrimination when used in government operations.	78.3
User	Ethical application	I apply measures to take accountability for AI use in my work, such as checking that outputs are factual, non-harmful or do not violate guidelines or policies.	80.7
User	Ethical application	I can use prompt engineering techniques to reduce the risk of biased, harmful or inaccurate outputs from generative AI tools.	33
User	Ethical application	I can critically evaluate the quality of data used to power AI systems.	48.3
Leader	AI Innovation	My organisation has an ongoing strategy to ensure it has a modern digital infrastructure to support AI adoption.	57.5
Leader	AI Innovation	My organisation has close links with academia, private industry, civil society and other government agencies to understand diverse perspectives on AI and monitor important technological trends.	56.3
Leader	AI Innovation	My organisation has produced an AI adoption strategy.	43.3
Leader	AI Innovation	My organisation has run AI pilots or plans to run them in the next 12 months.	69.5
Leader	AI Innovation	My organisation has a strategy in place to evaluate and scale up successful AI experiments.	45.1
Implementer	AI Innovation	I recognise there are diverse social and cultural perspectives on the use of data and AI technology in government.	92.3
Implementer	AI Innovation	I am actively following developments in AI, including public sector adoption, academic research and new products in the market to understand how they could affect my field of work.	72.5
Implementer	AI Innovation	I have prepared a personalised learning plan to build my AI competencies.	33.6

PATHWAY	SECTION	QUESTION TEXT	YES (%)
Implementer	AI Innovation	I am collaborating with colleagues across a range of roles to explore potential AI projects in our organisation.	60.1
Implementer	AI Innovation	I am contributing to the design, delivery and/or evaluation of AI projects within my organisation.	58.3
User	AI Innovation	I understand how government organisations can use the data they hold to develop more innovative uses of AI.	55.5
User	AI Innovation	I am continuously learning about AI developments in my area of government, including through peer-to-peer networks.	57.3
User	AI Innovation	I am exploring diverse stakeholder perspectives on the use of AI in government to foster trust and mutual understanding.	31.6
User	AI Innovation	I am contributing to AI innovation in my team or organisation by experimenting with AI tools available at work and sharing my learnings with others.	49.2
User	AI Innovation	I am collaborating with colleagues through cross-functional teams to promote AI projects that meet user needs and are aligned with our organisation's goals.	27.2

Methodology

The AI Readiness Check is the largest, most comprehensive global dataset on government AI capabilities. With 100,000 data points generated from 60 questions across 3 pathways, the tool gives Apolitical a multifaceted insight into how public servants at all levels evaluate their readiness to manage the emergence of AI in government.

The assessment is carefully designed to support public servants across all roles and levels of seniority. The three pathways — Leader, Implementer and User — reflect the varied ways public servants may engage with AI in government. Each participant completes 20 questions answering 'Yes/No', for a fast and intuitive self-assessment.

The questions assess a wide range of areas, from institutional plans to individual skills. The content of these questions is shaped by multiple capability frameworks, including public sector-specific tools (e.g. UNESCO's 'AI and digital transformation: competencies for civil servants' and the European Commission Joint Research Centre's 'Competences and governance practices for AI in the public sector'). Broader evidence and research about the implementation

of AI in the public sector also informed the questions.

For Leaders, the tool assesses institutional readiness — including strategies, activities and policies — rather than individual leadership abilities. For Implementers and Users, questions assess a mix of mindsets, knowledge, skills and behaviours related to AI's application in government. The 'Yes/No' question design enables direct comparison of readiness across this broad range of areas, although it limits nuance in analysing the extent to which respondents agree or disagree with an item.

The analysis in this report is drawn from a sample of 4,812 respondents who completed the assessment in English between February and December 2025. We have not included respondents with perfect scores, those who did not submit their country and a small subset of responses from Leaders with unique assessment questions. Over 90% of respondents are from five countries (UK, Canada, United Arab Emirates, South Africa and Australia). A full table of global results is included in the annex of the report and on our website.

References

1. How governments are driving AI adoption for economic growth ([Nakazawa and Pisa, 2025](#))
2. Generative AI Adoption amongst Dubai Government Employees. ([Mohamed Bin Rashid School of Government, 2024](#))
3. Generative AI in Government: An in depth look at adoption, innovation and impact in 2025 ([Apolitical, 2025](#))
4. Ground-breaking use of AI saves taxpayers' money and delivers greater government efficiency ([Department for Science Innovation and Technology, 2025](#))
5. AI for bureaucratic productivity: Measuring the potential of AI to help automate 143 million UK government transactions ([Straub et al., 2024](#))
6. Canada Strong, Budget 2025 (Government of Canada, 2025)
7. France and Germany Join Forces with Mistral AI and SAP SE to Launch a Sovereign AI for Public Administration ([Government of France, 2025](#))
8. Governing with Artificial Intelligence ([OECD, 2025](#))
9. Generative AI in Government: An in depth look at adoption, innovation and impact in 2025 ([Apolitical, 2025](#)).
10. Generative AI in Government ([Apolitical, 2025](#))
11. For governments, AI adoption is a skill, not an inevitability. ([Quattruci, 2025](#))
12. Assist, the AI tool built for government communicators ([Government Communications, 2025](#))
13. State of Learning in Government ([Apolitical, 2024](#))
14. The Need for Responsible Use of AI by Public Administration ([Monteiro, 2025](#))