Data foundations for government

From AI ambition to execution

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Who should read this report and why?

This report is designed for leaders of government organizations in ministries and various lines of business (LOBs). The report focuses on how data and AI are instrumental in driving public sector initiatives, providing public sector decision-makers with a comprehensive understanding of the current state of data and AI readiness.

The report will also be of interest to Chief Data Officers (CDOs) and Chief AI Officers (CAIOs), outlining clear steps to bridge the gap between the public sector's AI ambitions and its current capacity. Additionally, CIOs will find value in this report in its examination of the role of data platforms and IT infrastructure in driving AI readiness.

Executive summary

Historically, the public sector has been slow to adopt new technologies. But this is changing. In 2025, governments around the world are driving changes in the public sector in pursuit of greater efficiency. They see data and AI as key enablers of this goal. As many as 71% cite efficiency and cost savings as their principal incentives for using data.

However, the public sector's focus on data and AI is not solely driven by efficiency concerns; the aim is also to open up opportunities. Governments are increasingly recognizing the potential of AI to deliver citizen-centric services, drive economic growth, and foster innovation. This is reflected in the AI action plans being developed by various countries.[1]

But to achieve meaningful results from AI, it is essential to manage data effectively. To assess whether public sector organizations have the data foundations required to harness AI effectively, we surveyed executives from 350 public sector organizations globally, with two respondents from each organization – one from the IT/data function and one from a line of business (LOB). The survey included government agencies at national, state, local, and international levels,

covering public administration, tax and customs, welfare, defense, security, and healthcare.

AI is already transforming government

Our research reveals a strong interest in AI among public sector organizations. AI enhances decision-making, operational efficiency, and service delivery. The majority (64%) of public sector organizations are already exploring

64%

of public sector organizations are already exploring or actively working on Gen AI initiatives.

Executive summary

or actively working on Generative AI (Gen AI) initiatives. This proportion is even higher in the defense (82%), healthcare (75%) and security (70%) segments of the public sector. National agencies lead the way in Gen AI adoption, with 76% exploring or implementing Gen AI, while regional agencies follow at 59%, and local agencies at 52%, indicating that budgetary constraints may be hindering smaller agencies from adopting Gen AI. However, only 21% of public sector organizations have moved to pilots or actual deployment of Gen AI. Data security and trust issues are the primary barriers, stemming from the need to protect sensitive citizen data and ensure the accuracy and fairness of AI systems.

Further, our research highlights strong interest in agentic AI within the public sector, with 90% of organizations planning to explore, pilot or implement agentic AI within the next 2–3 years, with 39% focusing on feasibility, 45% exploring pilot programs and 6% planning to scale. This is especially noteworthy given that agentic AI is a nascent technology. It underscores the public sector's willingness to adopt new technologies to drive progress and improve services, as well as its belief in the transformative potential of agentic AI. By automating routine tasks, agentic AI frees up human resources to focus on more complex issues, thereby improving efficiency and service delivery. It can be particularly valuable for handling large volumes of citizen queries and case work. However, the success of agentic AI depends on many factors including the maturity of an organization's data management and well-defined guardrails to ensure trusted decisions and actions.

90%

of public sector organizations are planning to explore, pilot or implement agentic AI within the next 2–3 years.

Executive summary

The public sector still needs to build the data foundations to harness AI

To harness AI's transformative power, governments need strong data foundations. This includes ensuring data availability, accessibility, quality, and governance, along with establishing a scalable data infrastructure. Our research shows that most government agencies have yet to create the strong data foundations necessary for widespread success with AI.

<25%

of public sector organizations report high maturity in any aspect of data readiness required to harness AI effectively.

Fewer than 25% report high maturity in any aspect of data readiness. The areas with the lowest data readiness are scaling data infrastructure, fostering a data culture, and nurturing data and AI skills, with only 10%, 9%, and 7% of public sector organizations respectively reporting high maturity in these areas.

In the past five years, the public sector has made some advancements in areas such as improving data visibility using data catalogs, implementing data quality checks, and aligning data strategy with overall business strategy. However, progress has been disappointing in several critical areas. These include expanding data, business intelligence (BI), and analytics on the cloud, which is essential for providing the scalability and computational power needed for AI adoption; enabling access to data at the speed required for decision-making; and broadening data and AI upskilling programs to target business users.

Only one-third of public sector organizations in our research qualify as frontrunners in building data readiness. These

Executive summary

organizations are building capabilities across both pillars of data mastery: data enablers (tools and technologies for managing data) and data behaviors (skills, culture, and processes for driving data-driven decision-making). However, the majority (67%) of public sector organizations are lagging in their efforts and progress on one or both pillars of data mastery. The slow pace of progress underscores the urgent need for action to address all elements of data readiness, including tools, technology, culture, skills, and governance.

Further, data sharing, which is essential to solving complex, interconnected challenges and enhancing AI model

only **35**%

of public sector organizations have rolled out or fully deployed data sharing initiatives.

performance, is lagging. Although public sector organizations see data sharing as important, the majority (65%) are still in the planning and pilot stages of their data sharing initiatives, and only 35% are rolling out or have fully deployed them. Crucially, only 8% have fully deployed these initiatives. Our research indicates that cultural and trust issues remain barriers to effective data sharing.

Additionally, most public sector organizations have concerns about data, cloud, and AI sovereignty, highlighting their need to maintain agency and control in the digital sphere as they build their data and AI capabilities. While data sovereignty has long been a consideration for the public sector, today's sovereignty concerns extend beyond data. Specifically, 64% of public sector organizations express concern about data sovereignty,[2] 58% about cloud sovereignty,[3] and 52% about AI sovereignty.[4] Sovereignty considerations will influence the public sector's future technology choices.

Executive summary

52%

of public sector organizations are concerned about AI sovereignty.

The public sector needs to bridge the gap between its AI ambitions and data readiness

While the public sector has ambitious goals for AI adoption, it needs sound data foundations to reach them. A growing number of CDOs and CAIOs are working on these challenges. However, addressing them requires a transformation journey for the entire organization. Simply appointing a CDO does not automatically lead to a clean-up of the data estate. Public sector organizations should consider prioritizing the following measures encompassing people, processes and technology:

- **Center data and AI initiatives around citizens and employees to ensure they are relevant, impactful, and user-centric**
  – Ensure a clear vision and strong leadership for data management and AI
  – Foster a data-driven culture to embed data and AI-driven practices across operations
  – Nurture analytical and AI skills, especially among business users
- **Strengthen and reinvent processes**
  – Implement strong data governance with responsible AI practices
  – Focus on gradual modernization of the data landscape
- **Build the right technological foundation**
  – Invest in a robust cloud-based data infrastructure
  – Ensure interoperability of data and IT systems to facilitate data sharing

Additionally, public sector organizations should closely monitor the environmental impact of AI and implement sustainable measures throughout AI's lifecycle, including hardware, model architecture, energy sources for data centers, and usage policies, to mitigate negative impacts.

"Governments everywhere are under immense pressure to deliver more – faster, and with fewer resources. **To meet these demands, they must use every possible tool and leverage every available asset. AI is the most powerful tool available in the arsenal, and data is an asset whose potential is underexploited today. In all this, data and AI are inseparably linked: you cannot have powerful, effective AI without high quality, well-structured data. Brought together, governments can achieve smarter decisions, better outcomes, and greater societal impact. But this transformation must be guided by strong AI governance, transparency, and a human-centered approach – ensuring that technology enhances our public services, while preserving trust and accountability."**

Marc Reinhardt
Public Sector Global Industry Leader,
Capgemini

01 | AI is already transforming government

AI is crucial to tackling critical challenges faced by governments, such as demographic shifts, resource constraints, complex and interconnected policy issues, and the demand for citizen-centric services. Patrick Vallance, the UK's Minister of State for Science, Research and Innovation, underscores the importance of AI in the public sector: *"The government has a clear focus on taking advantage of new technologies such as AI to improve public sector productivity and deliver a better user experience for citizens."*[5]

Similarly, Ruth Del Campo, General Director of Data, Ministry for Digital Transformation and Public Service in Spain, highlights AI's pivotal role in delivering citizen-centric services: *"Public administration needs to adapt to citizens, not the other way around. Our vision is to create a 21st-century administration oriented towards the citizen, leveraging AI. AI is an incredibly powerful tool, and with proper governance, regulation, and strong principles, we can harness its potential effectively. Leveraging AI allows us to offer more proactive and personalized services than ever before."*

Figure 1 illustrates examples of how AI is transforming government operations across all segments.
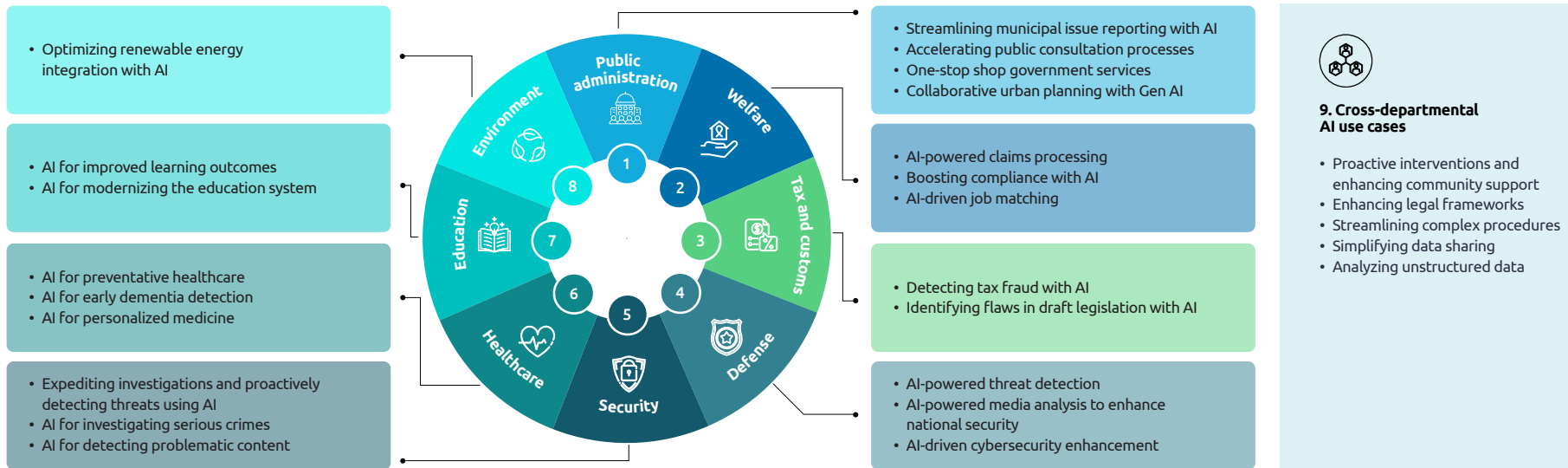

"Public administration needs to adapt to citizens, not the other way around. **Our vision is to create a 21st-century administration oriented towards the citizen, leveraging AI. AI is an incredibly powerful tool, and with proper governance, regulation, and strong principles, we can harness its potential effectively. Leveraging AI allows us to offer more proactive and personalized services than ever before."**

Ruth Del Campo
General Director of Data, Ministry for Digital Transformation and Public Service, Spain

Figure 1.
AI is reshaping operations across all segments of the public sector

- Optimizing renewable energy integration with AI

- AI for improved learning outcomes
- AI for modernizing the education system

- AI for preventative healthcare
- AI for early dementia detection
- AI for personalized medicine

- Expediting investigations and proactively detecting threats using AI
- AI for investigating serious crimes
- AI for detecting problematic content

- Streamlining municipal issue reporting with AI
- Accelerating public consultation processes
- One-stop shop government services
- Collaborative urban planning with Gen AI

- AI-powered claims processing
- Boosting compliance with AI
- AI-driven job matching

- Detecting tax fraud with AI
- Identifying flaws in draft legislation with AI

- AI-powered threat detection
- AI-powered media analysis to enhance national security
- AI-driven cybersecurity enhancement

9. Cross-departmental AI use cases

- Proactive interventions and enhancing community support
- Enhancing legal frameworks
- Streamlining complex procedures
- Simplifying data sharing
- Analyzing unstructured data

To be cont.

AI is reshaping operations across all segments of the public sector

Examples

1. Public administration

1 GovTech Singapore's AI-powered OneService Chatbot enables citizens to report municipal issues, saving 2,000 labor hours and speeding up case resolution by up to two days by automating case detail extraction and routing.[6]

2 The UK government's AI-powered Consult tool extracts patterns and themes from thousands of public consultation responses, aiding policymakers in making quicker, more informed decisions with fewer resources.[7]

3 The Abu Dhabi government's AI-powered government services app, TAMM 3.0, provides 2.5 million users with streamlined access to 950 government services – from paying traffic fines to getting marriage licenses – reducing offline customer visits by **90%** and enabling over **73%** of transactions to be completed instantly.[8]

4 City planners in Helsinki, Finland, used the AI-powered UrbanistAI platform, which integrates Gen AI-powered drawing and rendering tools, to engage citizens in street redesign by translating textual descriptions into realistic images.[9]

2. Welfare

1 The US Department of Labor is piloting AI to improve the efficiency of unemployment insurance programs by assisting adjudicators with claim sorting.[10]

2 The European Commission's 2023 Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) campaign uses AI and satellite data to accurately classify crops and monitor farming activities, enhancing compliance and oversight of farmers' aid applications.[11]

3 The Singapore government's AI-powered career portal, MyCareersFuture, matches job seekers with vacancies, simplifying the job search process and providing personalized job recommendations, including opportunities users might not have considered.[12]

3. Tax and customs

1 The Australian Taxation Office (ATO) has used AI to detect **$530 million** in unpaid taxes, halt **$2.5 billion** in fraudulent claims, and achieve a **90%** success rate in identifying superannuation underpayments.[13]

2 Ireland's Revenue agency uses AI to draft tax and duty manuals, identify legislative weaknesses, direct queries accurately, and assist staff with summarizing call center interactions.[14]

AI is reshaping operations across all segments of the public sector

Examples

4. Defense

1 The GENIUS Project, funded by the European Commission, aims to enhance threat detection and neutralization in modern warfare using advanced sensors, unmanned platforms, and AI to improve safety and operational efficiency.[15]

2 The US Department of Defense (DoD) is testing AI models to analyze news media from potentially hostile countries, aiding national security assessments.[16]

3 Canada's Communications Security Establishment (CSE) uses AI to protect critical infrastructure from cyber threats by detecting patterns in large data sets.[17]

5. Security

1 Interpol is using AI to significantly expedite complex investigations and proactively identify high-crime risk areas. For example, AI was used to successfully shut down over **82,000** suspicious bank accounts, resulting in the seizure of nearly **$200 million** in hard currency and over **$100 million** in virtual currency.[18]

2 The US Department of Homeland Security (DHS) uses AI to detect narcotics at borders and investigate online child abuse.[19]

3 The Australian Federal Police (AFP) uses AI to detect deepfakes and problematic content.[20]

6. Healthcare

1 The UK NHS is rolling out an AI tool nationwide that predicts a patient's risk of falling with **97%** accuracy, preventing up to 2,000 falls and hospital admissions daily, reducing hospitalizations by up to **70%** and their associated costs which amount to **£2 billion** annually.[21]

2 GovTech Singapore is testing an AI tool that uses a **five-minute** drawing test, where AI analyzes the drawings and stroke sequences, to detect dementia.

This tool aims to address late diagnoses, which currently occur in 70% of cases, and to shorten the testing time from the current 30 minutes.[22]

3 The All of Us Research Program, led by the US NIH, is gathering health data from over one million US participants to create one of the largest biomedical data sources, and using AI to tailor treatments based on genetic, environmental, and lifestyle factors.[23]

To be cont.

AI is reshaping operations across all segments of the public sector

Examples

7. Education

1 UNESCO has developed a Gen AI solution to analyze large-scale learning assessment data, enabling evidence-based decisions to improve learning outcomes and children's reading capabilities in low- and middle-income countries.[24]

2 Estonia has announced the AI Leap 2025 program, offering free access to top AI applications for students and teachers to enhance education quality, boost global competitiveness, and make learning more efficient, personalized, and inclusive.[25]

8. Environment

1 The UK government's AI-powered tool Connect aims to help the Department for Energy Security and Net Zero (DESNZ) manage grid connections for renewable energy projects, reducing connection times from over **five years to six months** and potentially generating a £75 billion economic benefit.[26]

9. Cross-departmental AI use cases

1 AI can analyze shared data across government departments such as education, justice, and community support to identify risks early, enabling proactive and effective interventions for community well-being.

2 AI can be used to improve laws by identifying weaknesses and gaps, formulating enforceable regulations, and monitoring the regulatory landscape across all domains.

3 AI can be used to streamline complex procedures across multiple government domains, including industrial plant approvals, social benefits, and procurement.

4 AI can be used to standardize and organize data across different departments, making it easier to share and understand.

5 AI assistants can be used to extract and organize information from unstructured data in public registers, making it easier to use and understand.

02

Public sector organizations have high AI ambitions

Most public sector organizations are already on the way to adopting Gen AI

Nearly two-thirds (64%) of public sector organizations are either exploring Gen AI or have progressed to pilots and scaled deployments (see Figure 2). This interest varies across segments, organization sizes, and agency levels:

- **Segment:** Defense, healthcare, and security agencies are more advanced in their adoption of Gen AI, with 82%, 75%, and 70%, respectively working on Gen AI initiatives. In contrast, those in public administration have the lowest share, at 54%.
- **Organization size:** Larger organizations (annual program budget over $1 billion) have initiated Gen AI projects to a much greater extent (78%) than smaller organizations (annual program budget under $50 million), at 38%.
- **Agency level:** National agencies lead the way in Gen AI adoption, with 76% exploring or implementing Gen AI, while regional agencies follow at 59% and local agencies at 52%.

These findings indicate that there is a budgetary threshold for public sector organizations to effectively leverage AI. Consequently, smaller and local agencies risk falling behind.

82%

of defense agencies are exploring or implementing Gen AI.

Figure 2.

Close to two-thirds (64%) of public sector organizations are either exploring or actively working on
Gen AI initiatives

Percentage of respondents who agree with the statements below
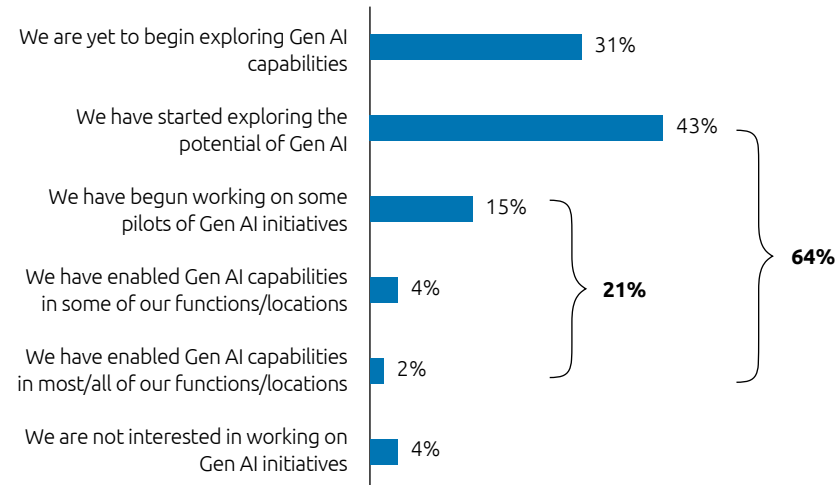
Statement	%
We are yet to begin exploring Gen AI capabilities	31%
We have started exploring the potential of Gen AI	43%
We have begun working on some pilots of Gen AI initiatives	15%
We have enabled Gen AI capabilities in some of our functions/locations	4%
We have enabled Gen AI capabilities in most/all of our functions/locations	2%
We are not interested in working on Gen AI initiatives	4%

21% **64%**

Source: Capgemini Research Institute, Data mastery in government survey, December 2024–January 2025, N = 350 public sector
organizations (two respondents from each: one from the IT/data function and one from a line of business (LOB)).

Gen AI can transform public sector operations in significant
ways:

Enhancing citizen experience: Our recent research
revealed that only 25% of citizens are satisfied with
customer service from government agencies.[27] Gen
AI-powered virtual assistants can improve service delivery
by providing 24/7 support to citizens, answering queries
quickly, generating contextually relevant answers, and
guiding citizens through various processes. For example, a
Gen AI-powered chatbot could offer personalized guidance
on tax benefits and payments, saving time and resources for
citizens and tax authorities while reducing errors.

Improving efficiency: By automating repetitive
administrative tasks, Gen AI enables faster workflows,
leading to more efficient processes and reduced operating
costs, while freeing up human resources to focus on more
complex tasks. For example, a large language model (LLM)
can act as an administrative assistant for a city's support
desk, processing cases and automating data entry to reduce
processing times.

Facilitating informed decision-making: Gen AI can assist
in analyzing large volumes of data (including unstructured
data) to provide insights that support decision-making and
policy development.

76%

of national agencies are exploring or implementing Gen AI, compared to 59% of regional and 52% of local agencies.

Sullivan County in New York has deployed a Gen AI-powered virtual agent named Saige to answer common questions posed to its website in real time, such as queries about operating hours and document filing. As a result, inbound call volume has decreased by 56%, enhancing service quality and reducing staff workload, despite limited resources. *"Our employees are happy that they can get more done, and that they're able to provide a better customer service experience for our residents and visitors,"* says Josh Potosek, County Manager.[28]

Public sector organizations are exploring a variety of Gen AI use cases, demonstrating its broad applicability across various government functions and services.

Figure 3.

Top Gen AI use cases in the public sector include knowledge management, self-service bots, and content summarization
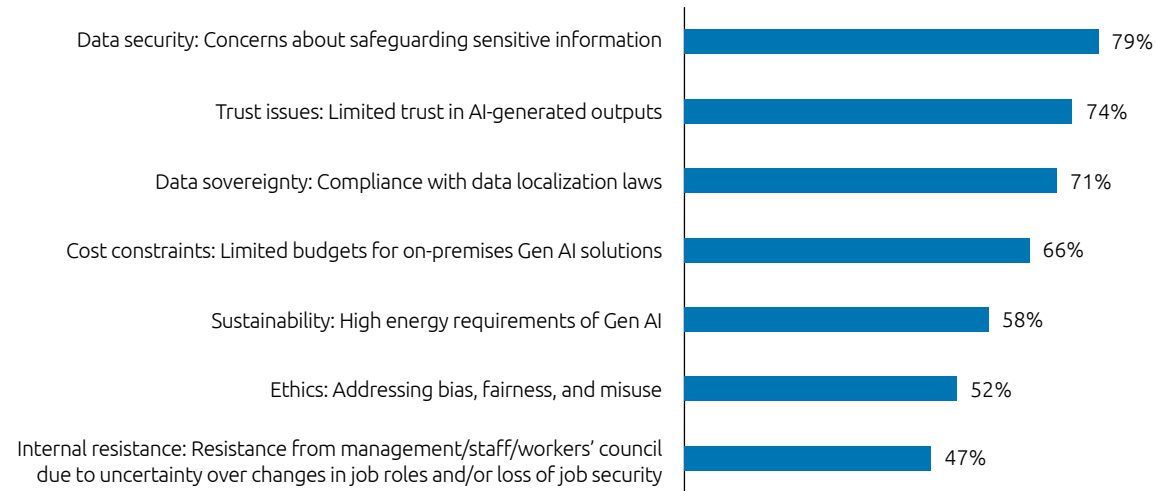
Gen AI use cases in the public sector (implementation status)
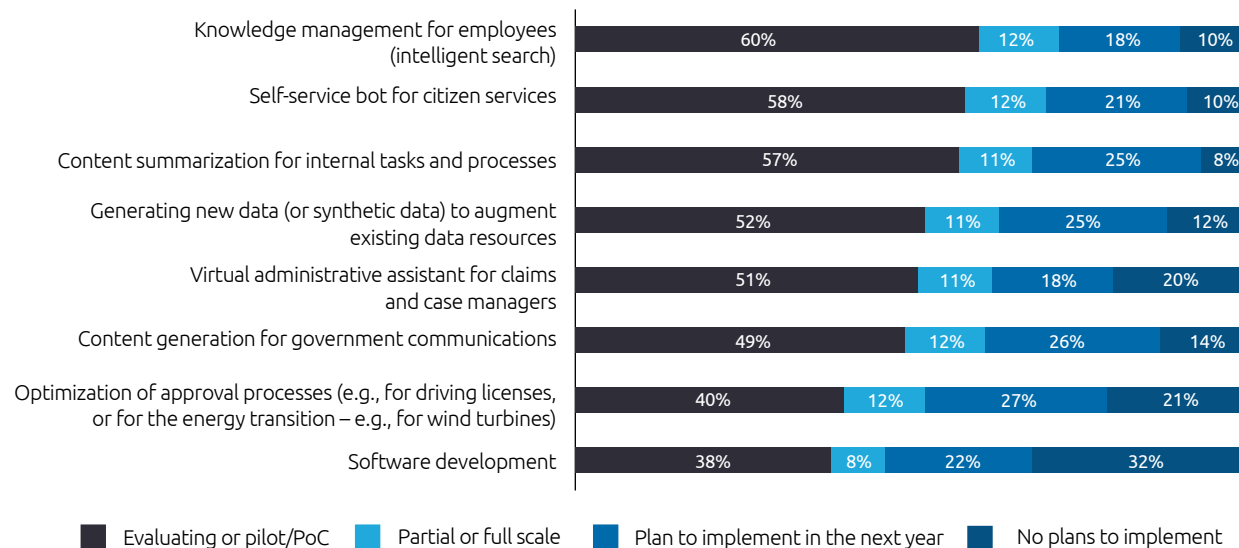
Source: Capgemini Research Institute, Data mastery in government survey, December 2024–January 2025, N = 350 public sector organizations (two respondents from each: one from the IT/data function and one from a line of business (LOB)).

Figure 4.

Factors limiting the adoption of Gen AI in public sector organizations

Which factors are limiting the widespread adoption of generative AI in your organization?

Data security: Concerns about safeguarding sensitive information	79%
Trust issues: Limited trust in AI-generated outputs	74%
Data sovereignty: Compliance with data localization laws	71%
Cost constraints: Limited budgets for on-premises Gen AI solutions	66%
Sustainability: High energy requirements of Gen AI	58%
Ethics: Addressing bias, fairness, and misuse	52%
Internal resistance: Resistance from management/staff/workers' council due to uncertainty over changes in job roles and/or loss of job security	47%

As Figure 3 shows, public sector organizations are exploring a variety of Gen AI use cases, demonstrating its broad applicability across various government functions and services. The top Gen AI use cases in the public sector that are currently being evaluated or implemented include knowledge management, self-service bots, and content summarization. Notably, while software development ranks higher in other industries, it is ranked last in the public sector. This could be because not all public sector agencies surveyed engage in software development.

However, despite strong interest, progress remains slow, with only 21% of public sector organizations having moved to pilots or actual deployment of Gen AI. Further, only 6% have put Gen AI into production, showing that the public sector still has a long way to go to extract value from Gen AI at scale.

only **6%**

of public sector organizations have put Gen AI initiatives into production.

Key issues include:

- **Data security and trust:** These are among the primary factors hindering adoption, with 79% and 74% of executives, respectively, citing these concerns (see Figure 4). These concerns stem from the need to protect sensitive citizen data and ensure the accuracy and fairness of AI systems. Challenges related to reliability, potential biases, and the risk of data breaches from Gen AI systems contribute to these concerns. As a result, government agencies frequently limit the use of Gen AI to internal processes and are hesitant to deploy it for direct interactions with citizens.
- **Data sovereignty:** Data sovereignty concerns also play a significant role in hindering the wider adoption of Gen AI (for 71% of surveyed agencies). Public sector organizations often need to comply with data localization laws and maintain control over sensitive information. This becomes particularly challenging when using AI services hosted in foreign jurisdictions.
- **Cost constraints:** Cost constraints pose significant challenges for the wider adoption of Gen AI, affecting around two-thirds of organizations. Budget limitations are a common issue in the public sector, making it difficult to allocate sufficient resources for Gen AI initiatives.

We discuss how these issues can be addressed later in the report.

Agentic AI adoption is on the horizon

In 2025, a new wave of AI is emerging, adding to Gen AI: agentic AI. An AI agent is a reasoning engine that autonomously perceives, reasons, and acts to achieve a goal without constant human input, while adapting to changing environments and collaborating as multi-agent systems. It represents a transformative advancement in AI as it allows for the automation of complex tasks that could not be handled by traditional rule-based automation. As agentic AI systems scale, they will become more specialized and autonomous, handling repetitive tasks independently and freeing up human resources to focus on more complex, mission-critical issues that require human judgement. Agentic AI can be particularly valuable for handling large volumes of citizen queries and case work.

Our research highlights strong public sector interest in agentic AI, with 90% of organizations planning to explore, pilot or implement it within the next two to three years. This is particularly noteworthy given that agentic AI is a nascent technology. The strong interest indicates that the public sector recognizes the potential of agentic AI to enhance efficiency, improve citizen experiences, and address resource constraints. Specifically, 84% plan to evaluate the technology or explore pilots, while 6% foresee scaling their initiatives within that timeframe. The trend toward agentic AI adoption is consistent across various segments, levels of government, and organization sizes. The defense sector stands out, with a majority (68%) planning to progress to pilot stage within the same timeframe (see Figure 5). This underscores the strategic importance of agentic AI for defense operations.

The US Department of Defense, for instance, has initiated the integration of AI agents into military planning and operations through its Thunderforge program, spearheaded by the Defense Innovation Unit (DIU).[29] Bryce Goodman, DIU Thunderforge Program Lead and contractor, says: *"Today's military planning processes rely on decades-old technology and methodologies, creating a fundamental mismatch between the speed of modern warfare and our ability to respond. Thunderforge brings AI-powered analysis and automation to operational and strategic planning, allowing decision-makers to operate at the pace required for emerging conflicts."[30]*
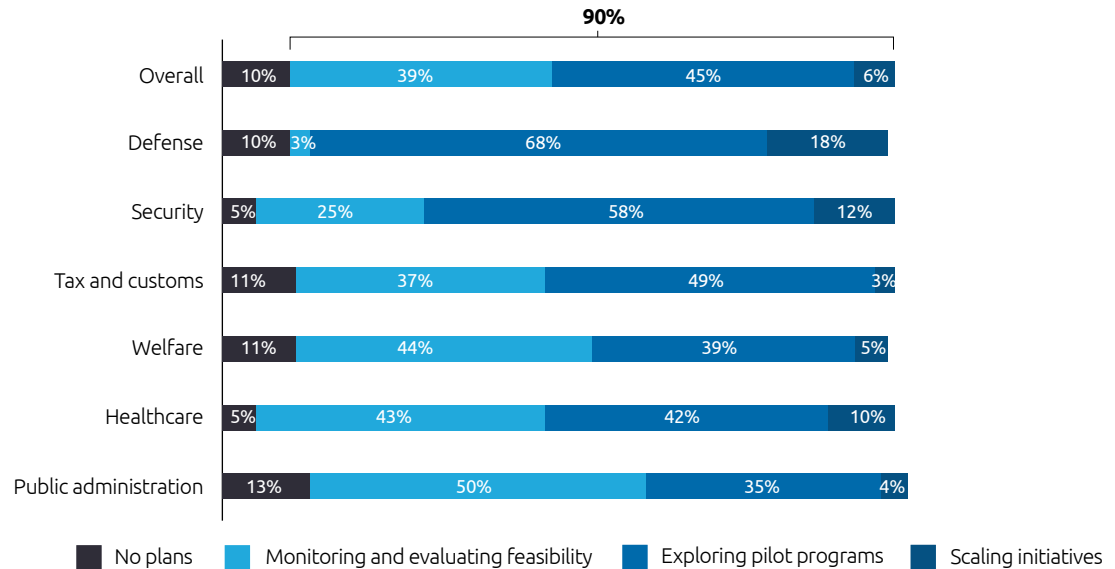
68%

of public sector organizations in the
defense sector plan to pilot agentic
AI initiatives in the next 2–3 years.

Jean d'Amour, Senior Advisor for Data Management at the
Ministry of Economic Affairs, the Netherlands, says: *"In
the current situation agentic AI is a must. However, it must be
approached critically, with preventive measures to mitigate risks
and ensure data remains secure and optimally used. I foresee its
adoption in the near future."*

Figure 5.

The defense sector is leading the way in exploring agentic AI

What plans does your organization have for adopting agentic AI in the next 2–3 years?

90%

	No plans	Monitoring and evaluating feasibility	Exploring pilot programs	Scaling initiatives
Overall	10%	39%	45%	6%
Defense	10%	3%	68%	18%
Security	5%	25%	58%	12%
Tax and customs	11%	37%	49%	3%
Welfare	11%	44%	39%	5%
Healthcare	5%	43%	42%	10%
Public administration	13%	50%	35%	4%

Source: Capgemini Research Institute, Data mastery in government survey, December 2024–January 2025, N = 350 public sector
organizations with N = 100 from public administration, N = 80 from tax and customs, N = 80 from welfare, N = 30 from defense, N
= 30 from security, and N = 30 from healthcare (two respondents from each: one from the IT/data function and one from a line of
business (LOB)).

"As AI begins to influence how decisions are made, policies are shaped, and services are delivered, governments have a rare opportunity – to redefine trust, accountability, and citizen empowerment in the digital era. **Citizens may not remember how advanced our AI was. They will remember whether it made their lives fairer, safer, and more dignified."**

Debarati Ganguly
Director, Data & AI – Global Public
Sector, Capgemini

Public sector organizations lack confidence in their ability to comply with the EU AI Act

While there is a general sense of preparedness among EU-based government organizations regarding data-related regulations, there is a significant gap in confidence when it comes to AI. Only 36% of organizations in the EU say they are confident in being able to comply with the EU AI Act. The Act, which came into force in August 2024 and is applicable to all 27 EU member states, requires AI systems to be safe, transparent, traceable, and non-discriminatory, making compliance a complex but crucial endeavor. Under the Act, AI systems need to be risk-classified and high-risk AI systems (e.g., AI systems used for assessing claims for public services and benefits or for law enforcement by judicial authorities) must comply with the Act's provisions by 2026. Implementing the requirements of the Act necessitates a comprehensive approach, defining and adhering to processes and responsibilities throughout the AI lifecycle, including data, models, systems, and use cases, while aligning with technical, procedural, and regulatory requirements.[31]
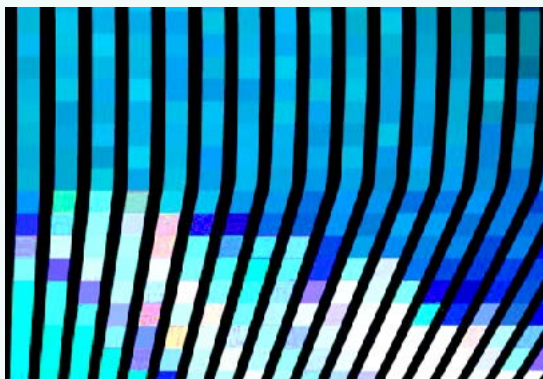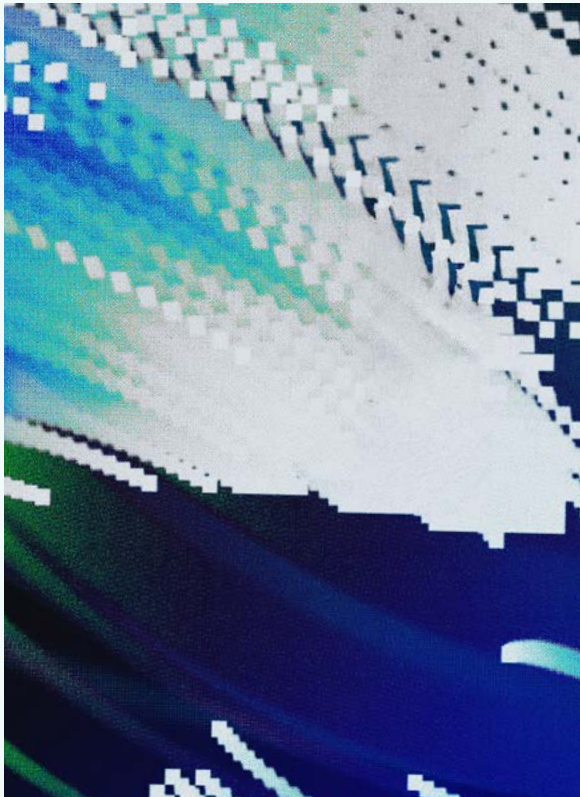
Figure 6.

Only 36% of EU-based public sector organizations feel confident in their ability to comply with the EU AI Act

How confident is your organization in its ability to comply with the requirements outlined in the following Acts?

Data Act — 72%
Data Governance Act — 61%
EU AI Act — 36%

■ Percentage of respondents who say their organization is confident

Source: Capgemini Research Institute, Data mastery in government survey, December 2024–January 2025, N = 150 public sector organizations in the EU (two respondents from each: one from the IT/data function and one from a line of business (LOB)).

US government agencies are taking the lead on Gen AI, ahead of those in Europe

Most public sector organizations in the US are exploring or piloting Gen AI initiatives, while a significant portion in Europe have yet to start (see Figure 7). However, the proportion that has scaled Gen AI remains low in both the US and Europe, underscoring the broader challenge that the public sector faces in deploying Gen AI into production.

However, interest in agentic AI is high in both regions, reflecting widespread recognition of its potential. Close to 90% of organizations in both regions say they plan to explore, pilot, or implement agentic AI in the next 2–3 years.

Figure 7.

72% of US public sector organizations are exploring or piloting Gen AI, compared to 55% in Europe

Percentage of respondents who agree with the statements below

We are yet to begin exploring Gen AI capabilities: All regions 31%, US 16%, Europe 35%

We have started exploring the potential of Gen AI: All regions 43%, US 47%, Europe 44%

We have begun working on some pilots of Gen AI initiatives: All regions 15%, US 25%, Europe 11%

We have enabled Gen AI capabilities in some of our locations/functions: All regions 4%, US 6%, Europe 4%

We have enabled Gen AI capabilities in most/all of our functions/locations: All regions 2%, US 1%, Europe 2%

We are not interested in working on Gen AI initiatives: All regions 4%, US 4%, Europe 4%

Legend: All regions, US, Europe (including UK)

Source: Source: Capgemini Research Institute, Data mastery in government, December 2024–January 2025, N = 350 public sector organizations with N = 70 from the US and N = 180 from Europe including UK (two respondents from each: one from the IT/data function and one from a line of business (LOB)).

Smarter decisions, efficiency, and regulatory compliance are the top drivers of data use
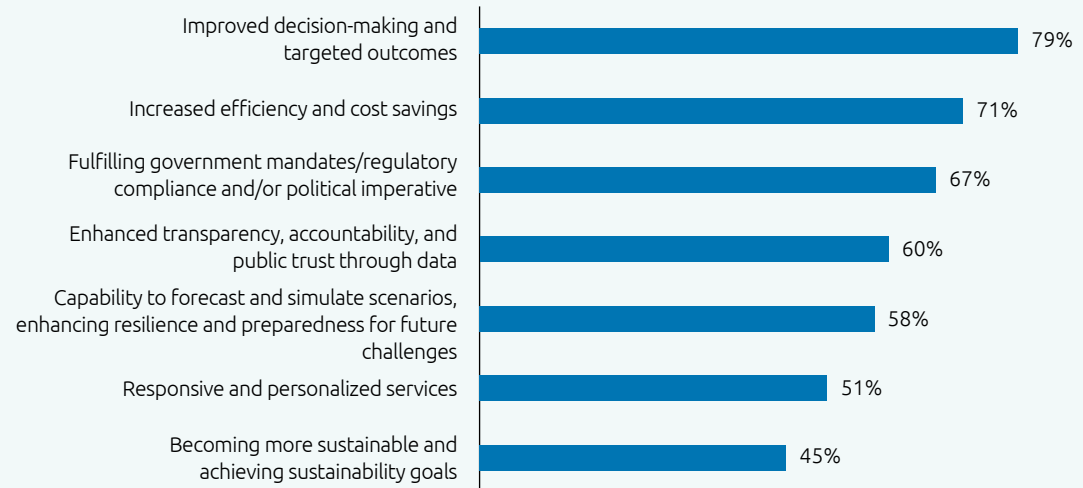
Our survey findings highlight that a significant majority of public sector organizations are prioritizing improved decision-making and targeted outcomes through data use (see Figure 8). Increased efficiency and cost savings are also top goals for many, eclipsing goals about transforming services themselves (as Figure 8 shows, governments place a lower priority on using data to drive responsive and personalized services). This reflects the defining mood of 2025.

Additionally, regulatory compliance is a key driver of data use, highlighting the critical role of regulations in shaping data strategies.

Figure 8.

Public sector organizations cite a range of drivers for using data

Percentage of exectives (LoB and IT/data) who rate the following goals as important

Goal	Percentage
Improved decision-making and targeted outcomes	79%
Increased efficiency and cost savings	71%
Fulfilling government mandates/regulatory compliance and/or political imperative	67%
Enhanced transparency, accountability, and public trust through data	60%
Capability to forecast and simulate scenarios, enhancing resilience and preparedness for future challenges	58%
Responsive and personalized services	51%
Becoming more sustainable and achieving sustainability goals	45%

Source: Capgemini Research Institute, Data mastery in government survey, December 2024–January 2025, N = 350 public sector organizations (two respondents from each: one from the IT/data function and one from a line of business (LOB)).

03 | The public sector still needs to build the data foundations to harness AI

AI can change the future of government. But only if government data is ready for it. Figure 9 outlines the core dimensions of data readiness crucial for harnessing AI effectively.
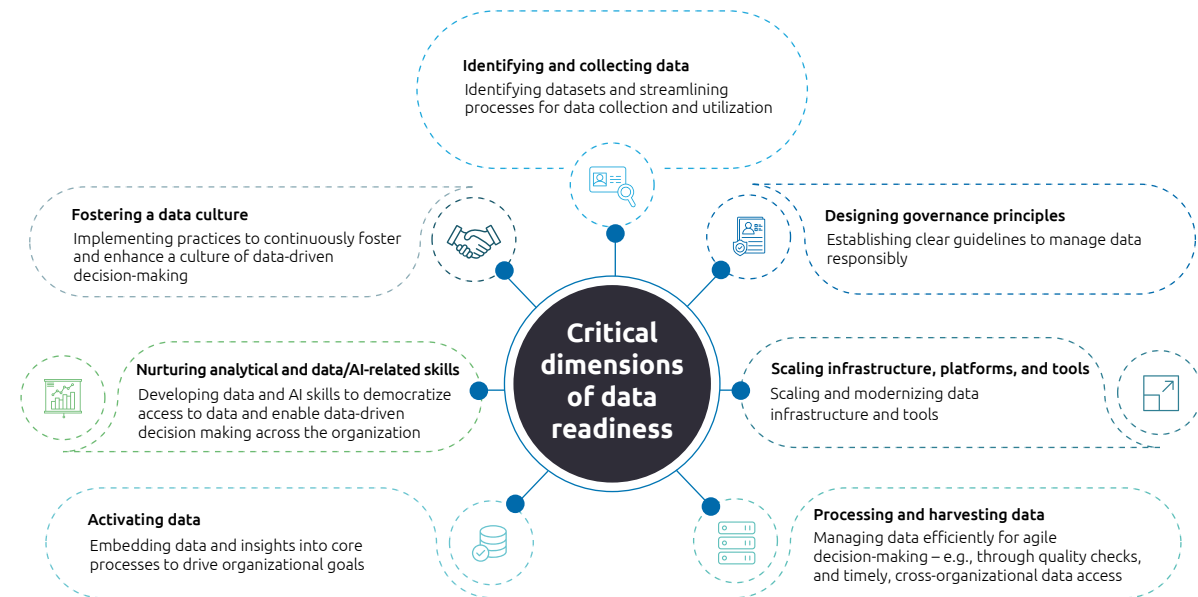
> *"There is a strong focus on data and AI, especially with numerous central government announcements in the UK about transforming public sector services through AI. To achieve this transformation, excellent data management and governance are essential at both local and national government levels."*

Gurpreet Muctor
Chief Data and Technology Officer,
Westminster City Council, UK

Figure 9.
Critical dimensions of data readiness essential for effective AI adoption

Critical dimensions of data readiness

Identifying and collecting data
Identifying datasets and streamlining processes for data collection and utilization

Designing governance principles
Establishing clear guidelines to manage data responsibly

Fostering a data culture
Implementing practices to continuously foster and enhance a culture of data-driven decision-making

Scaling infrastructure, platforms, and tools
Scaling and modernizing data infrastructure and tools

Nurturing analytical and data/AI-related skills
Developing data and AI skills to democratize access to data and enable data-driven decision making across the organization

Processing and harvesting data
Managing data efficiently for agile decision-making – e.g., through quality checks, and timely, cross-organizational data access

Activating data
Embedding data and insights into core processes to drive organizational goals

Source: Capgemini Research Institute analysis.

"Public sector organizations recognize the immense potential of analytics and AI in achieving their mission-critical priorities. *And they view upskilling their staff, leveraging modern technologies, platforms, and tools, and enhancing their data governance and management practices as key for capitalizing on this potential. But they also need strong political support, often through regulatory innovation and the allocation of necessary budgets to make further progress."*

Philipp Fuerst
VP, Global Public Sector Team,
Capgemini

Less than a quarter of public sector organizations report high maturity in any aspect of data readiness

Although public sector organizations are eager to leverage AI, few have undertaken the necessary groundwork to manage data and AI at scale. As Figure 10 shows, no more than one-quarter of public sector organizations report high maturity in any dimension of data readiness. Just 10% report high maturity in scaling data infrastructure, platforms, and tools, which are vital to supporting data processing and AI operations at scale. Further, only 12% consider themselves very mature in activating data, indicating that public sector organizations lag in applying data and AI to drive decision-making. The lack of maturity in nurturing analytical and data/AI skills, as well as fostering a data culture, also stands out. These deficiencies will significantly impede the public sector's ability to implement AI effectively.
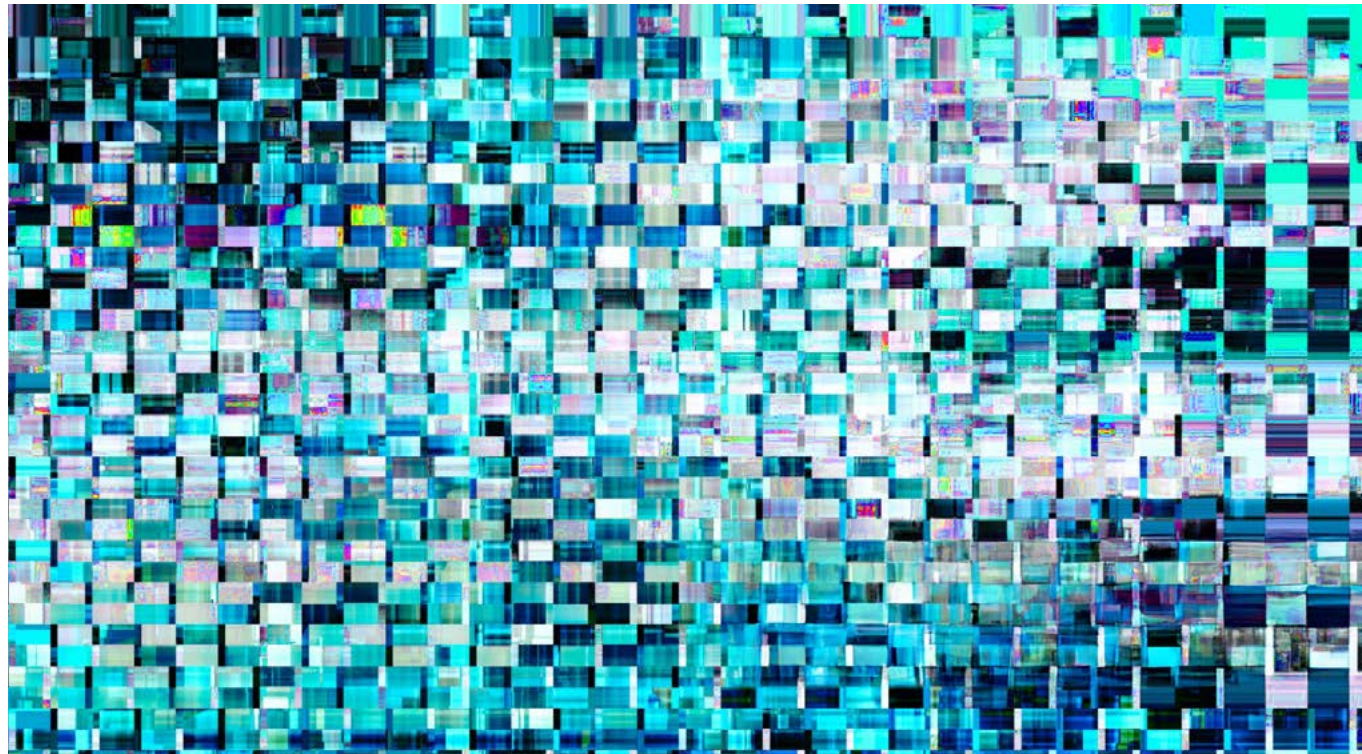
Figure 10.

Public sector organizations exhibit low maturity in critical data-related areas
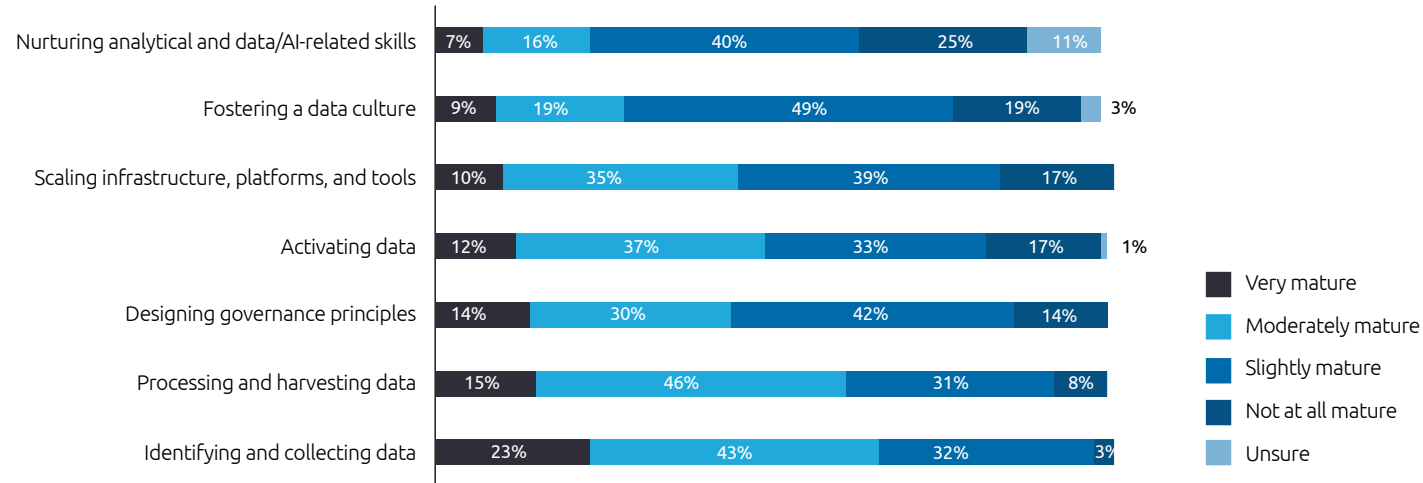
	Very mature	Moderately mature	Slightly mature	Not at all mature	Unsure
Nurturing analytical and data/AI-related skills	7%	16%	40%	25%	11%
Fostering a data culture	9%	19%	49%	19%	3%
Scaling infrastructure, platforms, and tools	10%	35%	39%	17%	
Activating data	12%	37%	33%	17%	1%
Designing governance principles	14%	30%	42%	14%	
Processing and harvesting data	15%	46%	31%	8%	
Identifying and collecting data	23%	43%	32%	3%	

Source: Capgemini Research Institute, Data mastery in government survey, December 2024–January 2025, N = 350 public sector organizations (two respondents from each: one from the IT/data function and one from a line of business (LOB)).

Since 2020, the public sector has made limited progress in data management and utilization

Areas where the lack of progress is particularly acute are:

- **Scaling infrastructure, platforms, and tools:** While public sector organizations have invested in advanced analytics tools and applications, they have not advanced in expanding data, business intelligence (BI), and analytics on the cloud. Cloud-based solutions are essential for providing the scalability and computational power for effective AI adoption.
- **Processing and harvesting data:** Public sector organizations have made progress in maintaining data catalogs to enhance visibility into their data landscape, establishing quality checks for datasets, and democratizing data access. However, they have not progressed in key areas such as the automation of data collection processes or enabling access to data at the speed required for decision-making. The lack of a modern, scalable infrastructure – predominantly on-premises rather than cloud-based – and the lack of automated data collection processes continue to impede access to data.
- **Nurturing skills:** While progress has been made in upskilling data teams, broader upskilling programs aimed at business users are lacking.
- **Fostering a data culture:** Compared with 2020, public sector organizations have improved alignment between data strategy and overall business strategy. But lack of progress in fostering collaboration between data and organizational units is impeding the development of a strong data culture.
- **Data activation:** The challenges discussed above may have influenced the limited progress public sector organizations have made in utilizing data to optimize internal operations and enhance services.

only **12%**

of public sector organizations consider themselves very mature in activating data.

Figure 11.

Progress on the maturity of public sector organizations' data practices

Dimensions	Progress
Identify and collect data	●
Design governance principles	◐
Scale infrastructure, platforms, and tools	○
Process and harvest data	◔
Activate data	◔
Nurture skills	○
Foster data culture	◔

Legend	
○	No progress
◔	Slight progress
◐	Moderate progress
●	Significant progress

Source: Capgemini Research Institute, Data-powered enterprises survey, August 2020, N=100 public sector organizations; Capgemini Research Institute, Data mastery in government survey, December 2024–January 2025, N = 350 public sector organizations (two respondents from each: one from the IT/data function and one from a line of business (LOB)).

Only a third of public sector organizations are equipping themselves holistically to harness data and AI

We assessed public sector organizations across several dimensions that contribute to the two pillars of data mastery: data enablers and data behaviors. Data enablers encompass the essential tools and technologies that enable an organization to effectively identify, collect, process and utilize data. Data behaviors encompass the skills, culture, and processes necessary to drive data-driven decision-making. Together, these pillars foster data mastery. For more details on the parameters included in the two pillars, please refer to the Appendix.

Only a third of public sector organizations in our research qualify as frontrunners (see Figure 12). These organizations are building capabilities across both pillars of data mastery and have begun to reap greater benefits from data use, including enhanced decision-making, cost savings through improved resource utilization and process optimization, the ability to deliver personalized citizen services, and better regulatory compliance.

However, the majority (67%) of public sector organizations are falling behind in their efforts and progress on one or both pillars of data mastery. This highlights the urgent need for significant action to address all elements of data readiness, including tools, technology, culture, skills, and governance. This is especially critical given the slow pace of progress on key data readiness dimensions since 2020.

67%

of public sector organizations are falling behind in their efforts and progress on one or both pillars of data mastery.
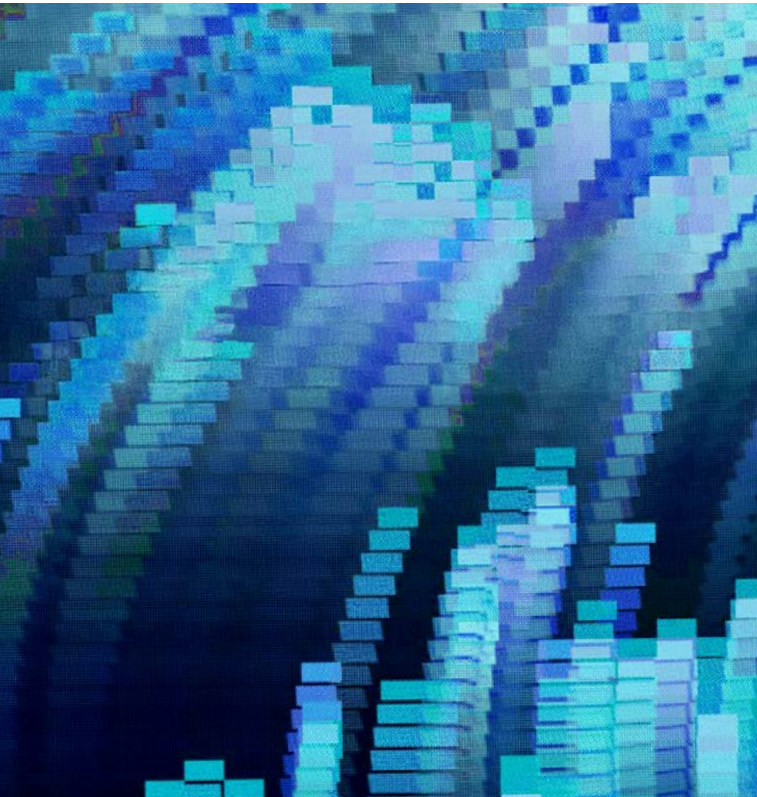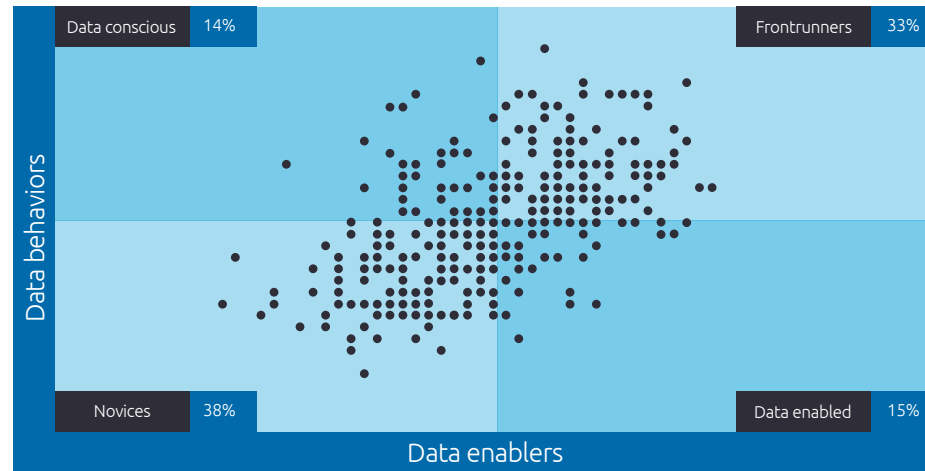
Figure 12.

The majority of public sector organizations are falling behind in holistically building data mastery

*The cutoffs for the four quadrants were established based on the average scores for the two axes: data enablers and data behaviors. Frontrunners are those who score above average on both axes.
Source: Capgemini Research Institute, Data-powered enterprises survey, August 2020, N=100 public sector organizations; Capgemini Research Institute, Data mastery in government survey, December 2024–January 2025, N = 350 public sector organizations (2 respondents from each: one from the IT/data function and one from a line of business (LOB)).

Key characteristics of frontrunners versus other cohorts

Cohorts	Definitions
Novices	Organizations in this cohort are in the early phases of their data journey, with limited visibility into assets, fragmented infrastructure and minimal automation **(Enablers)**, minimal governance structures, skills and a culture **(Behaviors)** that does not yet prioritize data. Efforts are largely exploratory, with early recognition of data's potential but few formalized practices in place.
Data enabled	These organizations are actively building technical data capabilities but are still evolving behaviorally. Infrastructure is being modernized, with growing adoption of cloud platforms, data catalogs, and quality checks **(Enablers)**. However, gaps remain in data governance, culture, and skills. Upskilling is underway but not yet pervasive. **(Behaviors)**
Data conscious	These organizations are cultivating strong data behaviors, even as their technical foundations are still catching up. A growing data culture is taking root, with structured upskilling programs and emerging governance frameworks **(Behaviors)**. However, infrastructure modernization, cloud adoption, automation, and data cataloging are in early stages **(Enablers)**.
Frontrunners	Organizations in this cohort are laying the groundwork to holistically build and continuously evolve their data capabilities. They are integrating advanced cloud-based and scalable infrastructure and tools including automation and data cataloging **(Enablers)**, and deeply embedding agile governance, role-based upskilling programs and data culture **(Behaviors)**, to drive innovation and strategic advantage.

Source: Capgemini Research Institute analysis.

Data sharing is key to AI success, but implementation lags

Data sharing within the public sector and beyond is essential for complementing an agency's existing data with information from other sources, to enhance decision-making and address complex societal issues. It is also key to the success of AI initiatives, as it increases the volume and diversity of data, boosting AI model performance. All public sector organizations surveyed either have or plan to have data sharing initiatives, highlighting broad acknowledgement of the significance of data sharing. Among these organizations, 13% are currently in the planning stage, while the rest have moved on to pilots and full-scale deployments.

Compared to our 2022 research on data sharing in the public sector,[32] there has been some progress. Previously, 20% of organizations were in the planning stage. However, progress remains inadequate. The share of organizations rolling out or fully deploying data sharing initiatives is still only 35% (up from 27% in 2022). Further, only 8% have fully deployed these initiatives (see Figure 13).

This trend is consistent across regions and segments, with most public sector organizations still in the planning and pilot stages of data sharing. National-level agencies perform better, with 54% having moved to wider rollouts, compared to just 28% at the regional level and 20% at the local level. These findings highlight the need for significant action to advance data sharing initiatives, especially at regional and local levels. Our discussions with experts revealed that culture and trust issues remain significant obstacles to data sharing in the public sector.

The Île-de-France regional government's Smart Services platform illustrates the transformative power of data sharing. The platform integrates data from public and private sources to create a comprehensive digital twin of the region, supporting over 50 services in areas such as environment, energy, and employment, for citizens, NGOs, and companies.[33]

Gwennaelle Costa Le Vaillant, Director of Digital, Innovation, and Smart Region, Region Île-de-France, highlights the pivotal role of data sharing and collaboration in the platform's development: *"The Île-de-France Smart Service Platform is underpinned by a partner ecosystem and data sharing, with over 200 partners sharing more than 9,000 datasets. Partners retain ownership of their datasets and have the flexibility to decide whether to share their data to create specific services. This collaborative effort aims to enhance public services, foster innovation, and strengthen our competitiveness on the international stage."*

Recognizing the criticality of high-quality datasets in training AI systems, the US federal government, for instance, is investing in shared public datasets and making federal data, models and computing resources available to AI researchers and experts.[34] In Europe, the Common European Data Spaces initiative aims to create a secure and trustworthy environment for data sharing, underpinned by common data infrastructures and governance frameworks, to make data more accessible for the benefit of public administrations, businesses and citizens.[35] The International Data Spaces Association (IDSA), a non-profit organization, focuses on establishing standards for data spaces to foster the creation of trusted environments for data sharing.[36] Crucially, only 21% of surveyed public sector organizations say that they have the required data to train and fine-tune AI models (including Gen AI models). Data sharing is vital for addressing these gaps.

"It has become an undeniable truth that these days very few public sector actors have all the data they need to maximize their AI and data usage potential in order to deliver citizen services and optimize processes. **This is why sharing data in a controlled, sovereign and trustworthy way is essential to turning data-driven government into more than an aspiration."**
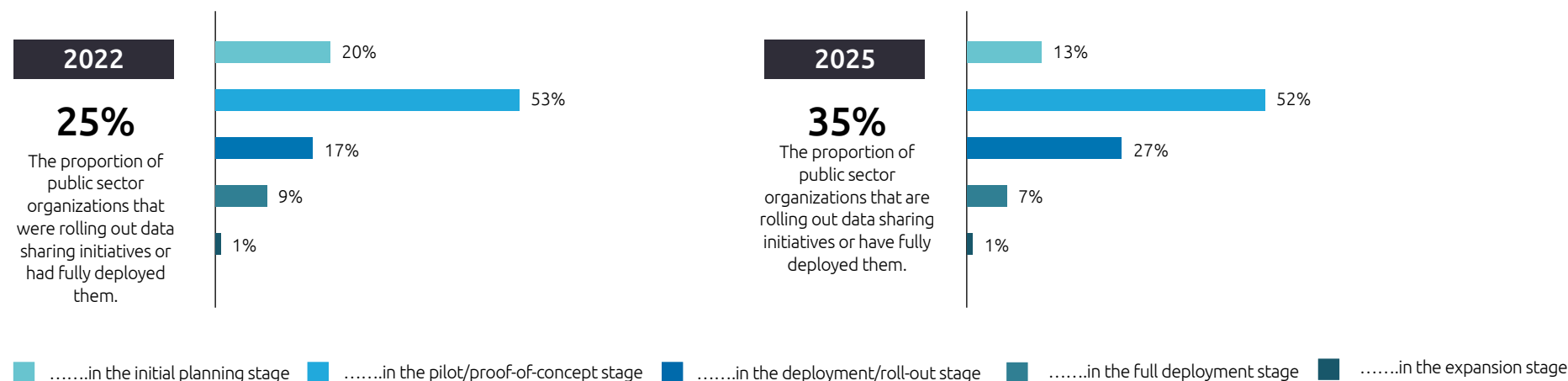
Peter Kraemer
Director, Data Sovereignty Solutions,
Capgemini

Figure 13.

Most public sector organizations are yet to fully deploy data sharing initiatives

How would you rate the current maturity of your data sharing initiatives?

2022

25%

The proportion of public sector organizations that were rolling out data sharing initiatives or had fully deployed them.

- 20%
- 53%
- 17%
- 9%
- 1%

2025

35%

The proportion of public sector organizations that are rolling out data sharing initiatives or have fully deployed them.

- 13%
- 52%
- 27%
- 7%
- 1%

■ ....in the initial planning stage ■ ....in the pilot/proof-of-concept stage ■ ....in the deployment/roll-out stage ■ ....in the full deployment stage ■ ....in the expansion stage

Deployment/roll-out stages: The organization has tested a data sharing use case and is deploying it.
Full deployment stage: The organization has fully deployed data sharing initiatives.
Expansion phase: The organization is expanding its fully deployed data sharing initiatives (adding more participants, data sources, and data activation and insight-generation capabilities).
*While the 2022 survey was designed to filter out organizations who did not have or were not planning to work on data ecosystems, no organization was filtered out due to this criterion.
Source: Capgemini Research Institute, Data ecosystems in the public sector survey, June 2022, N = 1,000 public sector organizations that are working on or planning to work on data ecosystems; Capgemini Research Institute, Data mastery in government survey, December 2024–January 2025, N = 350 public sector organizations (two respondents from each: one from the IT/data function and one from a line of business (LOB)).

"The Île-de-France Smart Service Platform is underpinned by a partner ecosystem and data sharing, with over 200 partners sharing more than 9,000 datasets. Partners retain ownership of their datasets and have the flexibility to decide whether to share their data to create specific services. This collaborative effort aims to enhance public services, foster innovation, and strengthen our competitiveness on the international stage."*

Gwennaelle Costa Le Vaillant
Director of Digital, Innovation, and
Smart Region,
Region Île-de-France

Data, cloud, and AI sovereignty are significant concerns

Governments want to maintain their agency and control in the digital sphere. As many as 64% express concern about data sovereignty, which has long been a key consideration for the public sector. However, governments' sovereignty concerns now extend beyond data. Specifically, 58% are concerned about cloud sovereignty, emphasizing the need for cloud-computing environments that are owned, deployed, governed, and managed locally or regionally within a single nation or jurisdiction. This concern is particularly relevant in the context of AI adoption, given that AI models are often deployed on the cloud. Additionally, most governments' sovereignty ambitions now

encompass AI, with 52% expressing concern about AI sovereignty (see Figure 14).

Sovereignty concerns are fueling global efforts to achieve digital autonomy:[37]

- A 2024 European Commission report revealed that 80% of Europe's digital technologies and infrastructure is imported. The EuroStack initiative aims to achieve strategic autonomy by closing gaps in the technology stack and ensuring European solutions are available. The initiative covers resources, chips, networks, connected devices, cloud infrastructure, software platforms, data and AI, and envisages a total investment of €300 billion over ten years.[38]
- The US government's efforts toward technology independence include the CHIPS and Science Act, which funds semiconductor manufacturing and research and the National AI Initiative Act, which prioritizes AI R&D.[39]
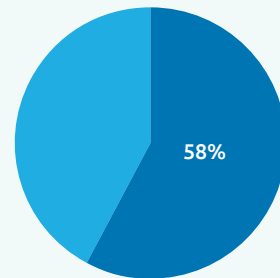
Figure 14.

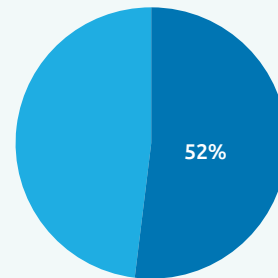Most public sector organizations are concerned about data, cloud and AI sovereignty

Share of public sector organizations concerned about the following dimensions of sovereignty

64%

Data sovereignty

58%

Cloud sovereignty

52%
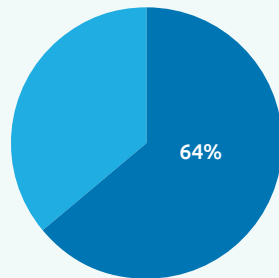
AI sovereignty

Definitions:

- Data sovereignty: Data sovereignty involves ensuring that data is hosted, used, stored, or processed within a preferred location or jurisdiction, typically within the home country, region, or territory.
- Cloud sovereignty: Focusing on a cloud-computing environment that is owned, deployed, governed, and managed locally or regionally within a single nation or jurisdiction.
- AI sovereignty: A nation or organization maintaining autonomy and ownership over the development, deployment, and governance of AI technologies within their jurisdiction or domain.

Source: Capgemini Research Institute, Data mastery in government survey, December 2024–January 2025, N = 350 public sector organizations (two respondents from each: one from the IT/data function and one from a line of business (LOB)).

AI sovereignty

The primary concern regarding AI sovereignty is lack of control over data fed into training models, with 72% of respondents emphasizing this and 52% identifying the insufficiency of data for training models. Additionally, 45% of respondents expressed concerns about the shortage of AI skills (see Figure 15).
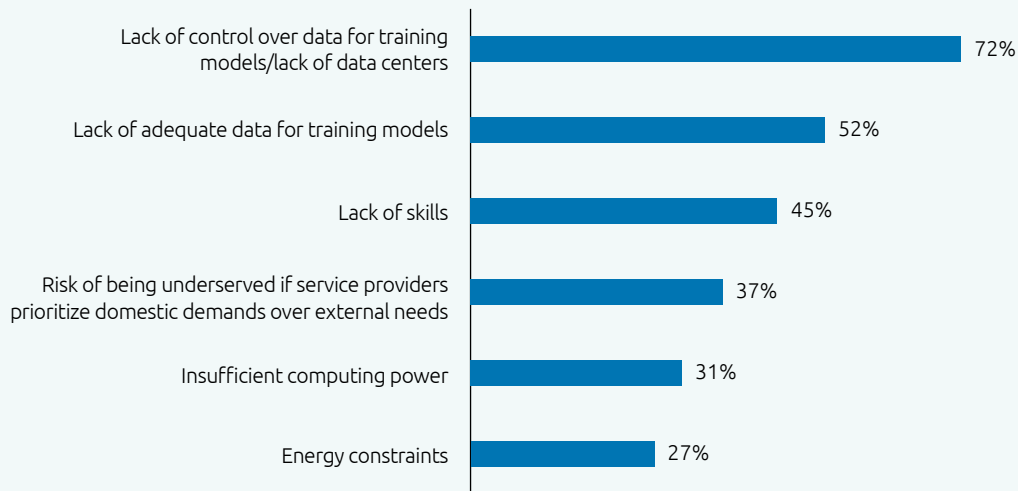
Dr. Markus Richter, State Secretary at the Federal Ministry for Digital Affairs and State Modernization (BMDS) in Germany, says: *"It is becoming clear that the greatest challenge in AI is not just its development, but its responsible use. This requires a willingness to change and raises questions about aspects of sovereignty. In Germany, the Center for Digital Sovereignty (ZenDiS) is making an important contribution to this effort."*

ZenDiS was established in 2022 to boost the German public sector's digital autonomy. The center's mission is to promote and develop open-source solutions and foster a robust open-source ecosystem in Germany and Europe by reducing reliance on a limited number of technology providers.[40]

Figure 15.
AI sovereignty concerns in the public sector mainly revolve around lack of data control and a shortage of training data

What are your primary concerns regarding AI sovereignty?

Concern	Percentage
Lack of control over data for training models/lack of data centers	72%
Lack of adequate data for training models	52%
Lack of skills	45%
Risk of being underserved if service providers prioritize domestic demands over external needs	37%
Insufficient computing power	31%
Energy constraints	27%

Source: Capgemini Research Institute, Data mastery in government survey, December 2024–January 2025, N = 182 public sector organizations that are concerned about AI sovereignty (two respondents from each: one from the IT/data function and one from a line of business (LOB)).

Source: Henning Schacht

"It is becoming clear that the greatest challenge in AI is not just its development, but its responsible use. This requires a willingness to change and raises questions about aspects of sovereignty. In Germany, the Center for Digital Sovereignty (ZenDiS) is making an important contribution to this effort."

Dr. Markus Richter
State Secretary at the Federal
Ministry for Digital Affairs and State
Modernization (BMDS), Germany

04

Recommendations: How can public sector organizations bridge the gap between AI ambitions and current data readiness?
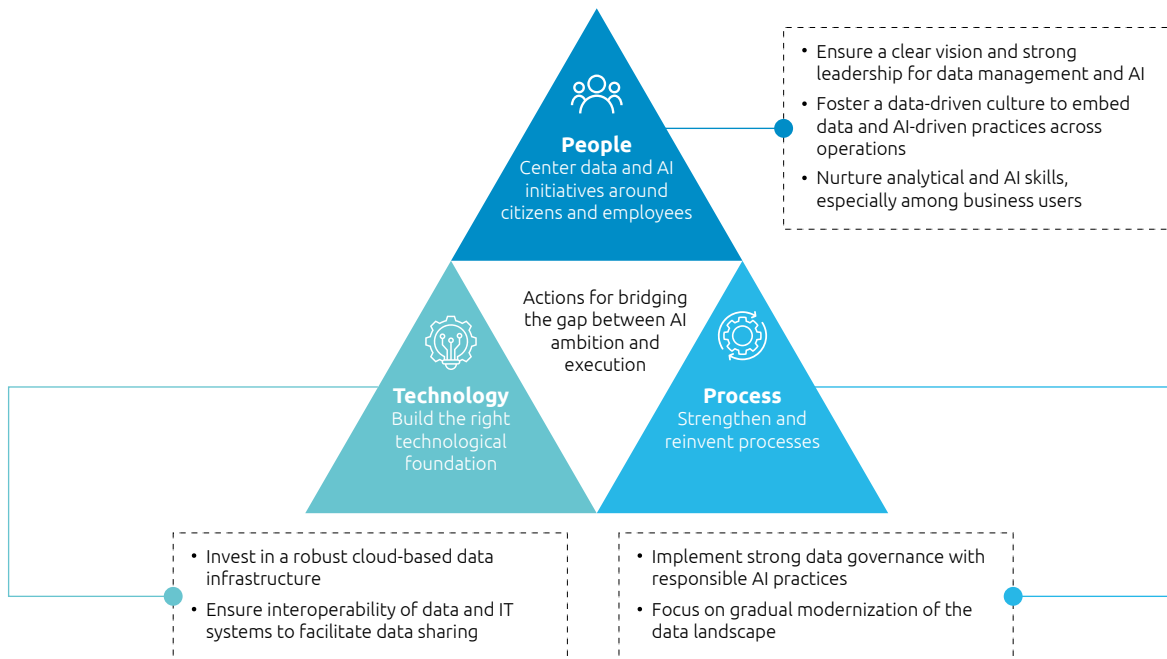
To unlock the value of data and AI at scale, the public sector needs to strengthen its data foundations. This requires a transformation journey that encompasses people, processes and technology. This section explores actions to navigate this transformation and bridge the gap between AI ambition and current execution.

"Data and AI have the power to transform our public services, unlock cross-government efficiencies, and boost economic growth. To successfully unlock value requires moving with intent to deliver on governments' missions and addressing whole of system change, considerate of shifting culture, skills and talent, process and policy, data and technology. This requires strong vision and commitment, staying focused on priorities, and coordinated investment and execution of work."

Craig Suckling
Chief AI Officer, Europe,
Capgemini

77%

of public sector organizations cite the lack of a modern, scalable infrastructure as a barrier to using data.

Figure 16.

Actions for bridging the gap between AI ambition and execution

People
Center data and AI initiatives around citizens and employees

- Ensure a clear vision and strong leadership for data management and AI
- Foster a data-driven culture to embed data and AI-driven practices across operations
- Nurture analytical and AI skills, especially among business users

Actions for bridging the gap between AI ambition and execution

Technology
Build the right technological foundation

Process
Strengthen and reinvent processes

- Invest in a robust cloud-based data infrastructure
- Ensure interoperability of data and IT systems to facilitate data sharing

- Implement strong data governance with responsible AI practices
- Focus on gradual modernization of the data landscape

Source: Capgemini Research Institute analysis.

Center data and AI initiatives around citizens and employees

For data and AI initiatives to be relevant, impactful, and user-centric, they should be designed around the needs and perspectives of citizens and employees. By focusing on a clear vision and strong leadership, fostering a data-driven culture, and nurturing essential skills, public sector organizations can more effectively meet these needs, leading to smoother integration and greater acceptance of data and AI technologies.

Ensure a clear vision and strong leadership for data management and AI

Effective utilization of data and AI requires a clear vision and strong leadership to align efforts strategically and prioritize the development of core capabilities.

Our research shows that over 60% of government agencies already have a CDO, with 24% planning to appoint one, and only 12% having no plans to do so (see Figure 17). The growing prevalence of the CDO role highlights the importance of data management and governance in the public sector.

However, despite executive support for data initiatives, the lack of adequate budgets is often cited as a significant obstacle (see Figure 18). This suggests that even with C-level backing, insufficient funding may render the CDO role ineffective in many cases. Additionally, the responsibilities

and scope of the CDO role vary widely. Some CDOs focus on developing national or regional data ecosystems, while others aim to enhance organizational performance.[41] To ensure their effectiveness, public sector organizations should provide CDOs with clear missions, appropriate authority, and sufficient budgets.

Additionally, our research indicates that the CAIO role is gaining prominence in the public sector. Over a quarter (27%) have already appointed a CAIO, while 41% plan to appoint one, highlighting the strong recognition of AI's strategic value (see Figure 17). As with CDOs, CAIOs need to be provided with appropriate authority and budgets to maximize their impact.

over 60%

of government agencies already have a CDO, with 24% planning to appoint one.

27%

of government agencies have already appointed a Chief AI Officer (CAIO), while 41% plan to appoint one.
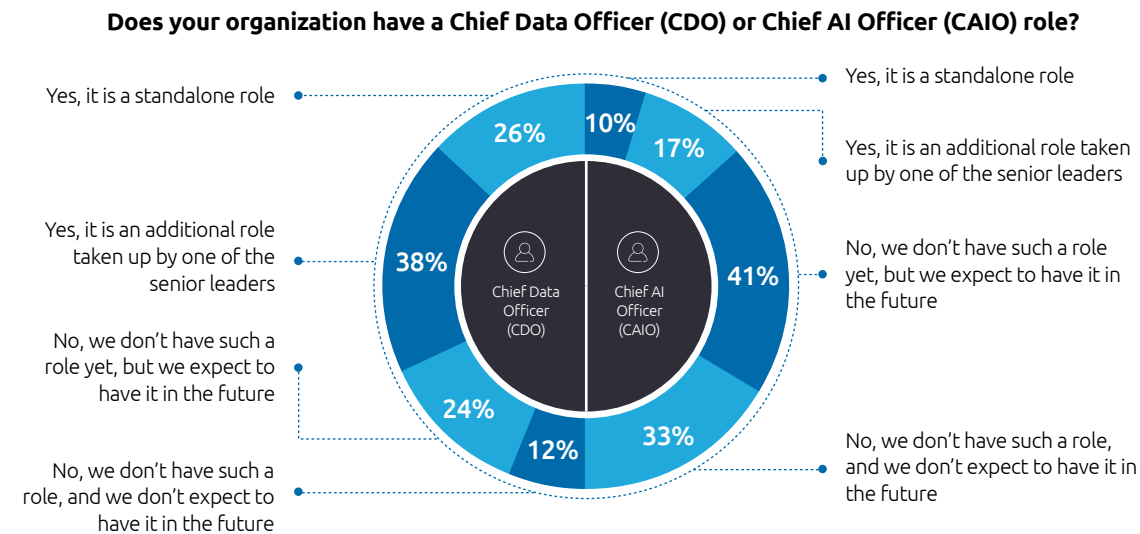
"In the public sector, the adoption of Gen AI often stalls not due to lack of interest, but because of a layered set of challenges. **True leadership support goes beyond verbal endorsement – it requires prioritization and financial commitment. As we've seen, the journey typically unfolds in three stages: first, securing funding and executive buy-in; second, addressing technical hurdles like legacy systems and skills gaps; and third, cultivating a culture that embraces innovation. Without progress across all three, even the most promising initiatives struggle to gain traction."**

Matthew Lyon
Chief Analyst (Deputy Director of Data Science, Analysis and Economics) in the UK Cabinet Office

Figure 17.

Public sector organizations place high importance on data and AI leadership

Does your organization have a Chief Data Officer (CDO) or Chief AI Officer (CAIO) role?

Yes, it is a standalone role

Yes, it is a standalone role

Yes, it is an additional role taken up by one of the senior leaders

Yes, it is an additional role taken up by one of the senior leaders

No, we don't have such a role yet, but we expect to have it in the future

No, we don't have such a role yet, but we expect to have it in the future

No, we don't have such a role, and we don't expect to have it in the future

No, we don't have such a role, and we don't expect to have it in the future

Chief Data Officer (CDO): 26%, 10%, 38%, 24%, 12%

Chief AI Officer (CAIO): 17%, 41%, 33%

Source: Capgemini Research Institute, Data mastery in government survey, December 2024–January 2025, N = 350 public sector organizations (two respondents from each: one from the IT/data function and one from a line of business (LOB)).

Foster a data-driven culture to embed data and AI-driven practices across operations

Cultural barriers that impede the use of data and AI in the public sector include a low tolerance for risk and failure, which disincentivizes taking calculated risks that could lead to progress. This is compounded by concerns about the potential consequences if data is exposed unethically or if there are security and privacy risks to sensitive information. Many organizations also operate in silos, with limited collaboration between data, AI, and business teams, hindering the alignment of data and AI initiatives with business objectives (only 39% of public sector executives report collaboration between their data and insights teams and other units). Public mistrust further complicates the situation, as fears of misuse of data and AI can erode already fragile citizen trust.

Unlocking the potential of data and AI requires a cultural shift. Key actions include:

- **Establish a common vision:** Cultivate a collective understanding of the value of data and AI and clearly define success to align stakeholders towards shared goals.

- **Adopt a test-and-learn approach:** Encourage a culture of piloting and testing use cases to safely demonstrate the value of data and AI, while mitigating risks. Only 37% of surveyed public sector organizations have a structured process for prioritizing, incubating, piloting, and testing hypotheses for AI use cases.

- **Build public trust:** Prioritize ethics and involve citizens in the journey of change, ensuring transparency and accountability throughout the process.
- **Break down silos to unlock innovation:** Democratize access to data and foster collaboration to unlock innovation across the organization.

- **Embrace new ways of thinking:** AI relies on probabilistic models, introducing uncertainty in outcomes, unlike deterministic models. Public sector organizations need to prepare employees to transition from deterministic to probabilistic decision-making, enabling them to interpret and use probabilistic insights for informed decisions.

Nurture analytical and AI skills, especially among business users

There is a significant need for skill development within the public sector to effectively harness AI. The shortage of AI talent is frequently cited as an issue and only 45% of surveyed public sector organizations are actively hiring for emerging data-related skills, including AI. This makes upskilling even more critical. Tailored training programs are essential, targeting a broad spectrum of users, especially business users. Currently, only 29% of public sector organizations report having role-based data upskilling programs for most of their employees, and only 38% say they train their business line users in analytical and storytelling.

Bintou Boïté, CIO at CNAM (Caisse Nationale de l'Assurance Maladie), the French National Health Insurance Fund, emphasizes the critical need for upskilling as the public sector seeks to leverage AI: *"Gen AI has the potential to act as a springboard for collective initiatives, bringing ministries together by analyzing shared data. However, a major challenge in scaling Gen AI is ensuring users are properly upskilled and reskilled. Without adequate training, they can't fully utilize the technology. Addressing this need is crucial alongside investing in the technology itself."*

"Without clear and precise objectives, leveraging data effectively becomes challenging. It's crucial to identify what to measure and establish a clear vision for using data in decision-making. To support this vision, it's important to communicate the power of data and AI from top managerial levels and integrate this message into daily conversations, ensuring everyone understands their significance. Additionally, demonstrate to employees how data and AI will enhance their roles and contribute to the larger goal of benefiting citizens."*

Henrik Hannedahl
Section Manager at Arbetsförmedlingen,
the Swedish Public Employment Service

"Gen AI has the potential to act as a springboard for collective initiatives, bringing ministries together by analyzing shared data. However, a major challenge in scaling Gen AI is ensuring users are properly upskilled and reskilled. Without adequate training, they can't fully utilize the technology. Addressing this need is crucial alongside investing in the technology itself."*

Bintou Boïté
CIO at CNAM (Caisse Nationale de l'Assurance Maladie), the French National Health Insurance Fund

Jean d'Amour, Senior Advisor for Data Management at the Ministry of Economic Affairs, the Netherlands, says:

"Upskilling is crucial. In our ministries, we conduct various training sessions on data, tailored to different levels – beginners, intermediate, and advanced. This process involves tailored training, legal considerations, and ethical standards."

Strengthen and reinvent processes

Implement strong data governance with responsible AI practices

Around half (53%) of public sector organizations report ineffective data governance (see Figure 18). They should consider the following remedial actions to use AI responsibly and efficiently while minimizing risks:

- Develop a comprehensive AI governance and compliance framework that lays down a long-term vision for AI governance and includes the development of ethical guidelines[42]
- Establish and monitor metrics for quality, fairness, and robustness of data and AI models
- Schedule regular data audits and assessments to ensure compliance with emerging AI regulations, especially those related to data privacy and ethics (currently, only 32% of

public sector organizations surveyed conduct regular AI audits and impact assessments)
- Provide comprehensive training on AI ethics and regulations (currently, only 50% of public sector organizations surveyed offer this to their employees [63% in healthcare])
- Implement clear communication strategies to convey guidelines for responsible data and AI use, ensuring transparency throughout the organization

Focus on gradual modernization of the data landscape

Nearly two-thirds (65%) of public sector executives identify budget constraints as a significant barrier to implementing data initiatives (see Figure 18). This challenge is often compounded by the fragmentation of funding in public sector entities. To navigate these constraints, public sector organizations need to adopt a more frugal approach and create compelling business cases that substantiate the need for data and AI investments. By focusing on gradual improvements tied to specific outcomes, rather than attempting costly and time-consuming overhauls, public sector organizations can demonstrate progress and better secure the necessary budget to enhance their data infrastructure.

Build the right technological foundation

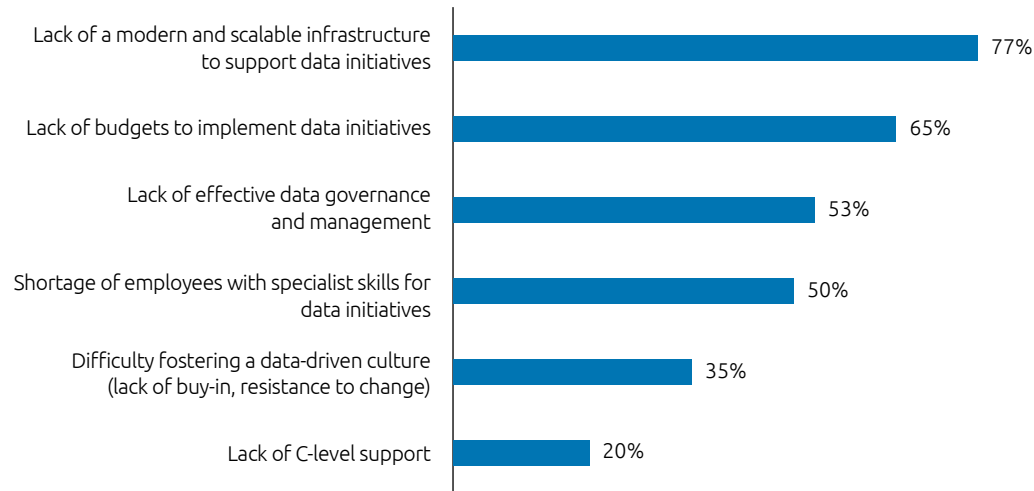### Invest in a robust cloud-based data infrastructure

Cloud platforms are key to building a modern and scalable data infrastructure. Lack of such an infrastructure is the primary obstacle to effective data use (see Figure 18) and hinders access to data at the speed required for decision making (only 41% of public sector executives surveyed say they can access data at the speed at which they need for decision making). Public sector organizations need to prioritize a robust cloud-based data infrastructure to enhance data storage, processing, and analytics capabilities, while ensuring data sovereignty.

Abu Dhabi, for instance, is investing $3.54 billion in a sovereign cloud system as part of its goal of becoming the world's first fully AI-native government by 2027. This initiative is part of the Abu Dhabi Government Digital Strategy 2025–2027 and aims to ensure data sovereignty while leveraging large-scale cloud infrastructure. The sovereign cloud system is expected to handle over 11 million daily digital interactions among government entities, citizens, residents, and businesses. Additionally, it will support the deployment of over 200 AI-driven solutions to enhance public service delivery, increase operational efficiency, and promote environmental sustainability.[43]

Figure 18.

Public sector organizations cite inadequate infrastructure, budget constraints, and poor data governance as major challenges in their efforts to leverage data

What challenges does your organization face in using data?

Challenge	Percentage
Lack of a modern and scalable infrastructure to support data initiatives	77%
Lack of budgets to implement data initiatives	65%
Lack of effective data governance and management	53%
Shortage of employees with specialist skills for data initiatives	50%
Difficulty fostering a data-driven culture (lack of buy-in, resistance to change)	35%
Lack of C-level support	20%

Source: Capgemini Research Institute, Data mastery in government survey, December 2024–January 2025, N = 350 public sector organizations (two respondents from each: one from the IT/data function and one from a line of business (LOB)).

Ensure interoperability of data and IT systems to facilitate data sharing

Interoperability is crucial for data readiness and successful AI adoption, as it enables systems, applications, and data sources to communicate seamlessly. Lack of interoperability impedes public sector responsiveness, as unconnected systems lead to prolonged processing times and inefficiencies in handling citizen requests. Further, it hinders the reuse and sharing of information and solutions between administrations, which is essential for speeding up digital service design, promoting innovation, and enabling quicker delivery of services.

To ensure interoperability holistically, action is needed across four key areas: legal, organizational, semantic, and technical. Legal interoperability involves analyzing relevant regulations early on to identify and address any legal barriers to data sharing. Organizational interoperability requires aligning business processes, structures, roles, and responsibilities to support effective collaboration between different organizations. Semantic interoperability ensures that shared data is understood consistently by all parties, using common terms and formats. Technical interoperability focuses on enabling secure and seamless data exchange between systems by ensuring compatibility across IT infrastructure, components, and interfaces.[44]

Regulatory frameworks like the Interoperable Europe Act provide a strong foundation for interoperability and data sharing, introducing measures such as multilevel governance, interoperability assessments, solution-sharing obligations, and regulatory sandboxes to guide and accelerate the digital transformation of public administrations across the EU.[45]
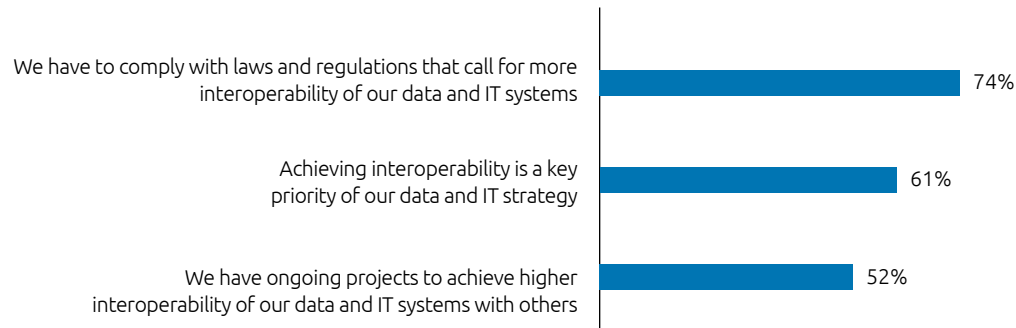
More than six in 10 (61%) public sector organizations cite interoperability as a key priority, and 52% report having ongoing projects to enhance the interoperability of their data and IT systems with others (see Figure 19).

Figure 19.

Interoperability of data and IT systems is a priority for public sector organizations

Percentage of respondents who agree with the following statements on interoperability

We have to comply with laws and regulations that call for more interoperability of our data and IT systems — 74%

Achieving interoperability is a key priority of our data and IT strategy — 61%

We have ongoing projects to achieve higher interoperability of our data and IT systems with others — 52%

Source: Capgemini Research Institute, Data mastery in government survey, December 2024–January 2025, N = 350 public sector organizations (two respondents from each: one from the IT/data function and one from a line of business (LOB)).

Abhijit Gupta, Chief Technology Officer, Environment Protection Authority Victoria (EPA), Australia, outlines essential steps for public sector organizations to advance their data and AI journey: *"Data security, privacy, and timely data activation are all critical for public sector organizations. It is important that data is visible and usable for business purposes. A secure, modern, scalable, cloud-based infrastructure provides the appropriate foundations for developing this capability. Developing skills across the organization is vital, particularly for business users who need to interact with the data regularly. This may include training in prompt engineering and other specialized skills to enable users to effectively access data and generate business value from its use. Finally, strong AI governance will ensure AI models are free from bias, risks have been considered, and data security and privacy are safeguarded."*

"Data security, privacy, and timely data activation are all critical for public sector organizations. **It is important that data is visible and usable for business purposes. A secure, modern, scalable, cloud-based infrastructure provides the appropriate foundations for developing this capability. Developing skills across the organization is vital, particularly for business users who need to interact with the data regularly. This may include training in prompt engineering and other specialized skills to enable users to effectively access data and generate business value from its use. Finally, strong AI governance will ensure AI models are free from bias, risks have been considered, and data security and privacy are safeguarded."**

Abhijit Gupta
Chief Technology Officer, Environment
Protection Authority Victoria (EPA),
Australia
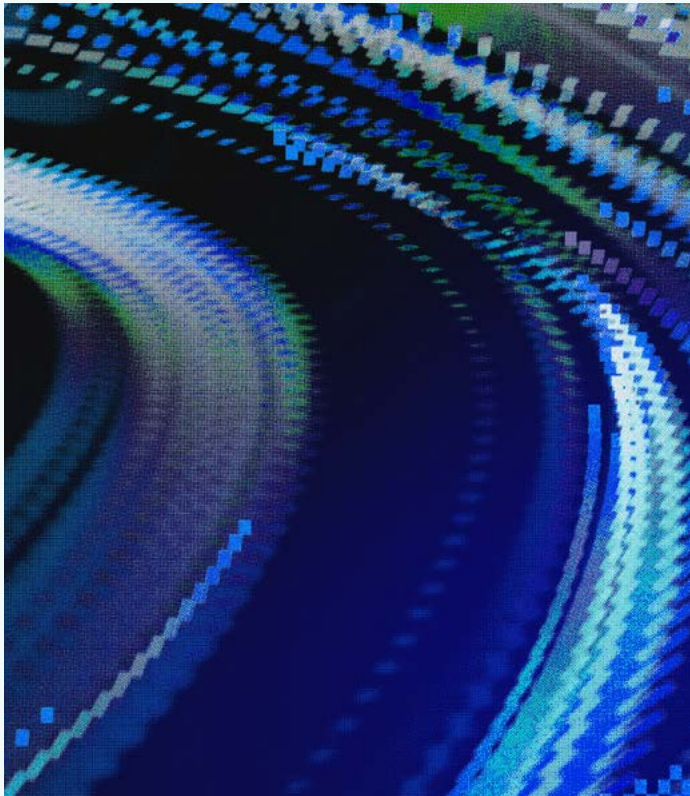
Monitor the environmental impact of AI and wider data management practices

As governments strive to be environmentally sustainable while also ramping up AI, it is critical to closely monitor AI's environmental impact. Our research shows that 75% of government organizations are concerned about the environmental impact of Gen AI but only 59% are taking action to reduce this impact. Additionally, only 35% believe the benefits of Gen AI outweigh its negative impacts on the environment (see Figure 20).

Gen AI requires significant computational power, consuming large amounts of electricity, water, and other resources. Organizations should assess the environmental footprint of Gen AI projects before launch, considering alternative technologies. Sustainable practices should be implemented throughout AI's lifecycle, including hardware, model architecture, energy sources for data centers, and usage policies.

Gen AI can also accelerate sustainability objectives such as ESG reporting, scenario planning, material optimization, and sustainable product design. However, continuous research and monitoring are essential to fully understand and mitigate AI's environmental impact.

The Singapore government's Green Data Centre Roadmap aims to tackle the energy challenges associated with AI infrastructure by reducing energy consumption and utilizing greener energy sources. Additionally, the roadmap defines standards for operating data centers in local conditions, such as Singapore's tropical climate. The government is also exploring ways to develop AI algorithms in a more environmentally friendly manner.[46]

Figure 20.

Around three-quarters of public sector organizations are concerned about the environmental impact of Gen AI

Percentage of respondents who agree with the following statements

Statement	Percentage
We are concerned about the environmental impact (especially CO2 emissions) of our use of Gen AI solutions	75%
Environmental sustainability of data infrastructure and management processes (including collection and storage) is a key consideration in our data strategy	66%
Our organization is conscious of the need to implement and scale Gen AI in a sustainable way	60%
We are actively taking steps to minimize the environmental impact (especially CO2 emissions) of our use of Gen AI solutions	59%
We evaluate vendors (e.g., cloud solution vendors) on their sustainability credentials, before selecting new vendors	50%
The benefits of Gen AI outweigh the negative impacts it has on the environment	35%

Source: Capgemini Research Institute, Data mastery in government survey, December 2024–January 2025, N = 350 public sector organizations (two respondents from each: one from the IT/data function and one from a line of business (LOB)).
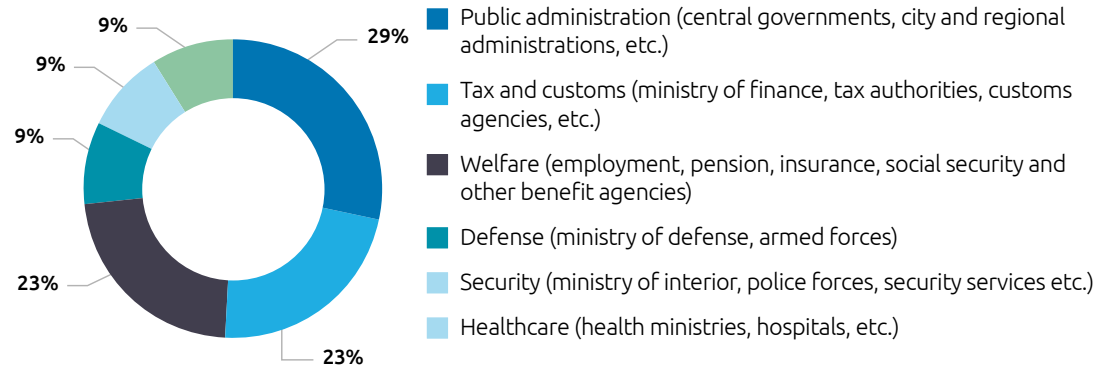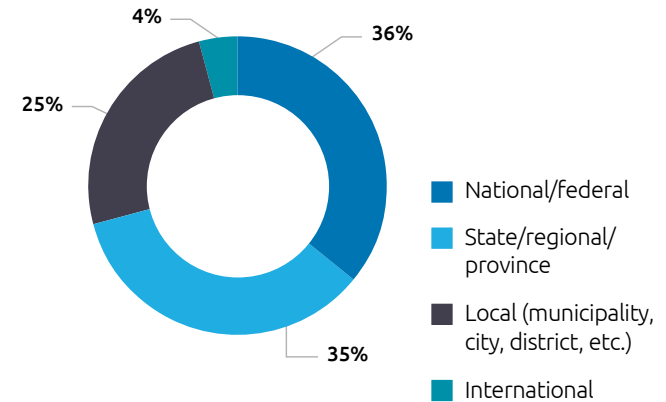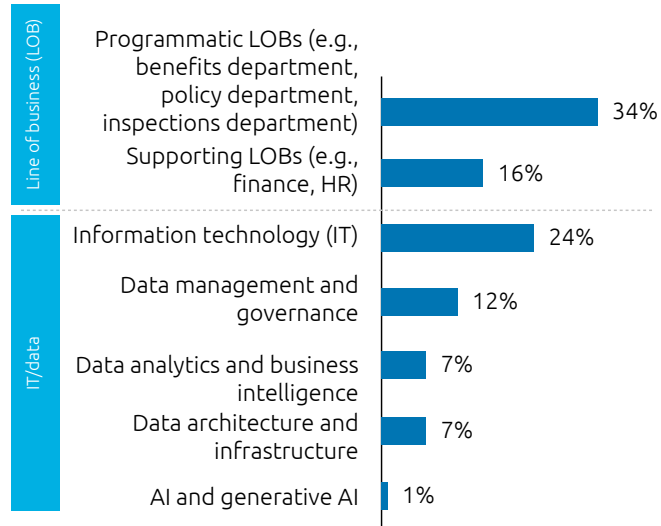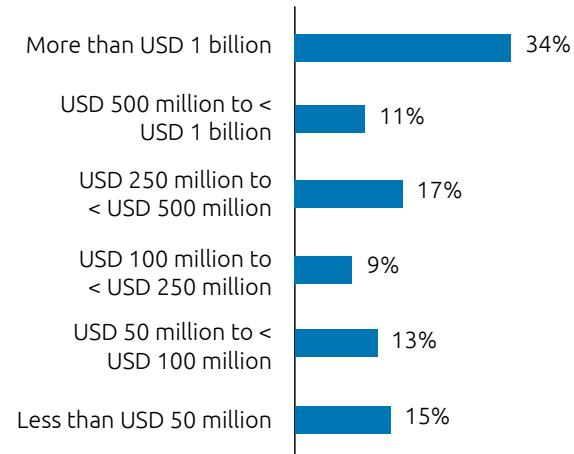
75%

of government organizations are concerned about the environmental impact of Gen AI.

Conclusion

AI is pivotal in helping governments tackle many of their most pressing challenges such as improving efficiency, managing demographic shifts, and addressing complex societal issues. The public sector holds high ambitions for AI. Most public sector organizations are on the way to adopting Gen AI, and agentic AI is on the horizon. However, unlocking AI's potential requires strong foundational data capabilities. Despite widespread desire to harness AI, the public sector falls short on data readiness. To manage data and AI effectively at scale, the public sector needs to modernize its data infrastructure, strengthen data governance, foster a data-driven culture and embed data and AI into its operations. Looking ahead, it is imperative for the public sector to invest in these data capabilities, not only to address current challenges but also to anticipate and prepare for future ones. By doing so, they will be better equipped to harness the transformative power of AI, ultimately leading to more efficient, cost-effective, and responsive governance.

Research methodology

In December 2024 and January 2025, we conducted a survey of executives from 350 public sector organizations with two respondents from each organization – one from the IT/data function and one from a line of business (LOB). These executives represented organizations across six public sector segments: public administration, tax and customs, welfare, defense, security, and healthcare. They operated at various levels of government, including national, regional, local, and international, and were in countries across North America, Europe, APAC, and the Middle East.

The surveys were complemented by interviews with more than 15 public sector leaders. The distribution of survey respondents is provided in the following figures.
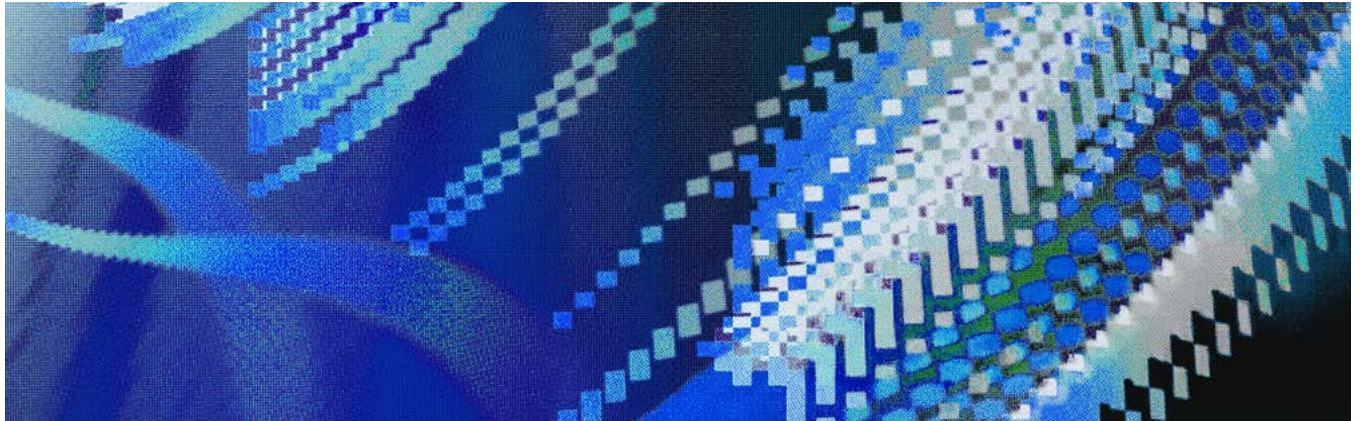
Organizations by location

Location	Percentage
US	20%
UK	9%
France	9%
Germany	9%
Italy	9%
Spain	9%
Netherlands	4%
Sweden	4%
Singapore	4%
India	3%
Australia	7%
KSA	7%
UAE	7%
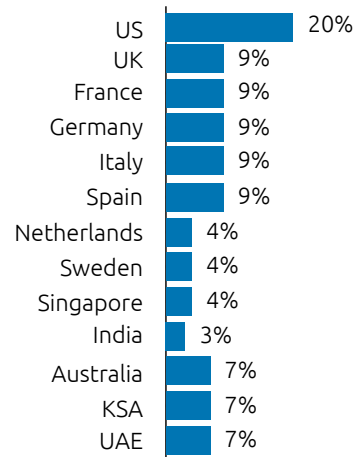
Organizations by region
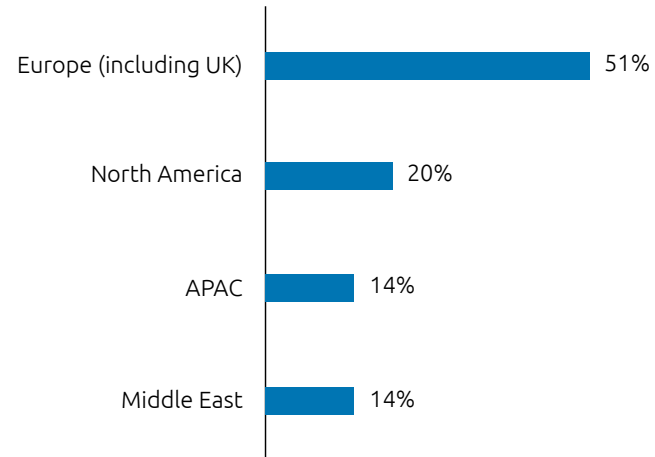
Region	Percentage
Europe (including UK)	51%
North America	20%
APAC	14%
Middle East	14%

Source: Capgemini Research Institute, Data mastery in government survey, December 2024–January 2025, N = 350 public sector organizations.

Organizations by segment

9%

9%

9%

23%

23%

29%

■ Public administration (central governments, city and regional administrations, etc.)

■ Tax and customs (ministry of finance, tax authorities, customs agencies, etc.)

■ Welfare (employment, pension, insurance, social security and other benefit agencies)

■ Defense (ministry of defense, armed forces)

■ Security (ministry of interior, police forces, security services etc.)

■ Healthcare (health ministries, hospitals, etc.)

Organizations by level of government

4%

36%

25%

35%

■ National/federal

■ State/regional/province

■ Local (municipality, city, district, etc.)

■ International

Source: Capgemini Research Institute, Data mastery in government survey, December 2024–January 2025, N = 350 public sector organizations.

Executives by department/function

Line of business (LOB)

Programmatic LOBs (e.g., benefits department, policy department, inspections department) — 34%

Supporting LOBs (e.g., finance, HR) — 16%

IT/data

Information technology (IT) — 24%

Data management and governance — 12%

Data analytics and business intelligence — 7%

Data architecture and infrastructure — 7%

AI and generative AI — 1%

Organizations by annual program budget* for the current fiscal year

More than USD 1 billion — 34%

USD 500 million to < USD 1 billion — 11%

USD 250 million to < USD 500 million — 17%

USD 100 million to < USD 250 million — 9%

USD 50 million to < USD 100 million — 13%

Less than USD 50 million — 15%

Source: Capgemini Research Institute, Data mastery in government survey, December 2024–January 2025, N = 700 executives from 350 public sector organizations (two respondents from each: one from the IT/data function and from a line of business (LOB)).

*Annual program budget refers to the budget for specific projects, initiatives, or programs.

Organizations by size of workforce
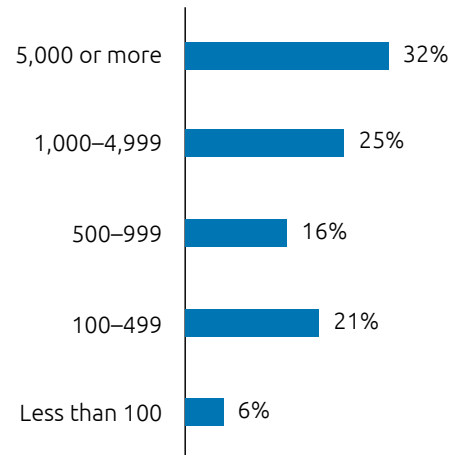
The study findings reflect the views of respondents to our online questionnaire for this research and are aimed at providing directional guidance. Please refer to the methodology for details of respondents and get in touch with a Capgemini expert to discuss specific implications.
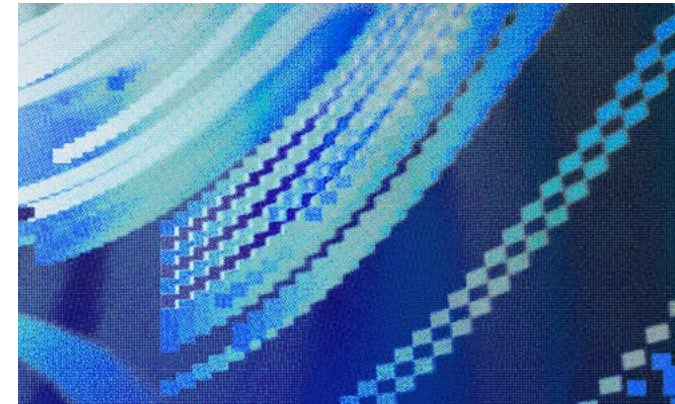
5,000 or more — 32%

1,000–4,999 — 25%

500–999 — 16%

100–499 — 21%

Less than 100 — 6%

Source: Capgemini Research Institute, Data mastery in government survey, December 2024–January 2025, N = 350 public sector organizations.

Appendix

Questions/statements used for assessing data readiness

Sl.No	Dimensions of data readiness	Statements	Category
1	Identify and collect data	We have a complete picture of our data inventory.	**Enablers**
		We have data to construct a detailed end-to-end view of our services (covering everything from planning to the delivery of services).	**Enablers**
		We have the required data to train or fine-tune AI/generative AI models.	**Enablers**
		We have implemented data localization policies (policies for hosting, using, storing, or processing of cloud data in preferred location or jurisdiction).	**Enablers**
2	Design governance principles	We consider the varying data requirements of organizational units while designing our data governance processes.	**Enablers**
		We have clear and defined access policies for all kinds of user roles.	**Behaviors**
		We conduct regular data audits and assessments.	**Behaviors**
		We regularly update our data policies as part of our efforts to ensure compliance with emerging regulations governing AI/generative AI (such as the EU AI Act).	**Behaviors**

For more details, please write to us at research@capgemini.com

To be cont.

3	Scale infrastructure, platforms, and tools	We have designed our data infrastructure to scale our data initiatives seamlessly.	**Enablers**
		We are expanding data, BI, and analytics in the cloud.	**Enablers**
		We are investing in advanced analytics tools and applications.	**Enablers**
		What percentage of your data sources are in the cloud vs. on-premises?	**Enablers**
4	Process and harvest data	We maintain a data catalog that is regularly updated to include new data sources and track their usage.	**Enablers**
		We have automated our data collection process.	**Enablers**
		We have quality checks for all our datasets.	**Enablers**
		We get access to data at the speed at which we need for decision-making.	**Enablers**
		We can access data at all levels of the organization's value chain (including across organizational units).	**Enablers**
		We provide data to individual organizational units in the format in which they require it.	**Enablers**
		We have a structured process for prioritizing, incubating, piloting, and testing hypotheses for AI use cases.	**Enablers**
		What types of data does your organization use?	**Enablers**
		How would you rate the quality of the data used for decision making?	**Enablers**

To be cont.

5	Activate data	We utilize our data to optimize our internal operations.	**Behaviors**
		We utilize our data to improve our services.	**Behaviors**
		What kinds of data/insights are available to your organization's decision-makers?	**Behaviors**
6	Nurture skills	We have role-based data upskilling programs for most of our employees.	**Behaviors**
		We train our business line users in analytical and storytelling skills.	**Behaviors**
		We upskill employees in our data teams on skills such as model training, course correction, and maintenance.	**Behaviors**
		We are actively hiring for emerging data-related skills, including expertise in AI and generative AI.	**Behaviors**
7	Foster data culture	Our data and insights teams collaborate with other organizational units.	**Behaviors**
		Our data/analytics strategy is aligned with our overall business strategy.	**Behaviors**
		Our business strategy communicates how we will use data to drive strategic decisions and business outcomes.	**Behaviors**
		We are working on achieving the optimal balance between the use of data/AI and human expertise.	**Behaviors**

Source: Capgemini Research Institute analysis.

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3. Cloud sovereignty: focusing on a cloud-computing environment that is owned, deployed, governed, and managed locally or regionally within a single nation or jurisdiction.

4. AI sovereignty: a nation or organization maintaining autonomy and ownership over the development, deployment, and governance of AI technologies within their jurisdiction or domain.

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Debarati is a seasoned expert in Data-Driven Government, specializing in data ecosystems, governance, and AI-driven analytics for the public sector worldwide. She collaborates with leaders and AI specialists to drive strategic initiatives, ensuring ethical, sovereign, and anonymized data solutions. Her expertise helps governments and citizens unlock the true value of data, enhancing decision-making, service delivery, and overall public benefit through AI and Generative AI innovations.

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Craig is the Chief AI Officer for Capgemini Insights & Data, Europe. Before joining Capgemini, Craig was Chief Data Officer for the UK Government, accountable for the Government's strategy and change agenda for data and AI, and he was also the global head of Data and AI strategy for Amazon Web Services. Craig has also held numerous roles as a private sector CDO, startup founder and advisory board member. He featured in the top 100 data and AI leaders in Europe in 2020-2025, and the top 100 global data and AI leaders in 2024.

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Meet the Capgemini Research Institute

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Harshada has over 12 years of experience in business and market research, and consulting. She works closely with business and industry leaders to explore challenges and opportunities in areas such as emerging technologies and sustainability.

About the Capgemini Research Institute

The Capgemini Research Institute is Capgemini's in-house think tank on all things digital. The Institute publishes research on the impact of digital technologies on large traditional businesses. The team draws on the worldwide network of Capgemini experts and works closely with academic and technology partners. We are proud to have been ranked #1 in the world for the quality of our research by independent analysts for six consecutive times - an industry first.

Visit us at www.capgemini.com/researchinstitute/

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Your partner in the journey to data-driven government

The public sector today is on the brink of far-reaching transformation. Digital technologies, data and AI create huge potential for public value. This moment calls for a bold vision; but also for approaches that reduce risk, protect sovereignty, and maintain public trust.

We are the leading global system integrator of European heritage, with decades of experience in achieving business transformation for public sector organizations.

Here's how we harness the potential of data and AI to serve their goals.

Government data readiness	Collaborative data ecosystems	Data spaces	Digital sovereignty	Interoperability	AI
Realize the potential of your own data.	**See the bigger picture.**	**Fuel the data-driven economy.**	**Make the right technology choices.**	**Connect services across borders.**	**Build next-level efficiency.**
We help public sector organizations unlock the value in their data, by developing data strategy, culture and skills, data management practices and platforms. This makes it possible to work with high-quality data at the scale and pace necessary to address core mission objectives.	We help clients overcome the barriers to data sharing, and access the data they need to address more complex challenges with their stakeholders and partners. This enables them to exchange information with businesses, organizations, and citizens, while preserving sovereignty and confidentiality.	In the emerging data economy, value creation depends on the data available to you. Data spaces are decentralized ecosystems for combining data, while preserving freedom of choice. We work with governments around the world to facilitate the development of data spaces that offer ways to create new value from data at industry, national, or regional level.	Public sector organizations must have an appropriate level of control over their data, technology and operations. We assist and advise public sector leaders as they navigate a changing technology marketplace, helping them make the right architectural choices and select the environments they need to limit their vulnerabilities.	By making interoperability a design principle for public services, we help the public sector achieve seamless interaction between different authorities and their IT systems in accordance with the Interoperable Europe Act. We bring cross-disciplinary expertise in the legal, semantic and organizational dimensions as well as the digital technology.	AI in all its forms can enable not only productivity and efficiency gains, but more responsive, convenient and personalized services. But only when the data it relies on is mastered first; and when the ethical and environmental questions it raises are addressed in a way that earns public trust. This is how we approach the development of AI strategy for the public sector.

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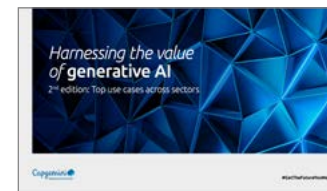

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Notes

About Capgemini

Capgemini is a global business and technology transformation partner, helping organizations to accelerate their dual transition to a digital and sustainable world, while creating tangible impact for enterprises and society. It is a responsible and diverse group of 340,000 team members in more than 50 countries. With its strong over 55-year heritage, Capgemini is trusted by its clients to unlock the value of technology to address the entire breadth of their business needs. It delivers end-to-end services and solutions leveraging strengths from strategy and design to engineering, all fueled by its market leading capabilities in AI, generative AI, cloud and data, combined with its deep industry expertise and partner ecosystem. The Group reported 2024 global revenues of €22.1 billion.

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