

# PUBLIC SECTOR AI ADOPTION: FRANCE FACTSHEET

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This factsheet draws on findings from the Global AI Adoption Index for Public Services, based on a survey of 3,335 public sector workers across ten countries. This research included a sample of **342 public sector workers in France**, comprising **143** from local or regional government entities, **128** from national government entities and **71** from other public sector entities. Findings in this report are largely based on this sample.

The index measures how AI is experienced in practice. What is written in government strategies does not automatically translate into real-world impact. Approaches across countries are varied, the index helps explore these differences and make recommendations to improve AI use.

It brings together five indicators that shape real-world adoption: **enthusiasm** for AI, **education** and skills, **empowerment** through clear permission and governance, **enablement** via access to tools, and **embedding** into everyday workflows. Together, these provide a practical snapshot of AI adoption in France, set against international peers. Full results are available on the [main index webpage](#).

## PUBLIC SECTOR AI ADOPTION: FRANCE CONTEXT

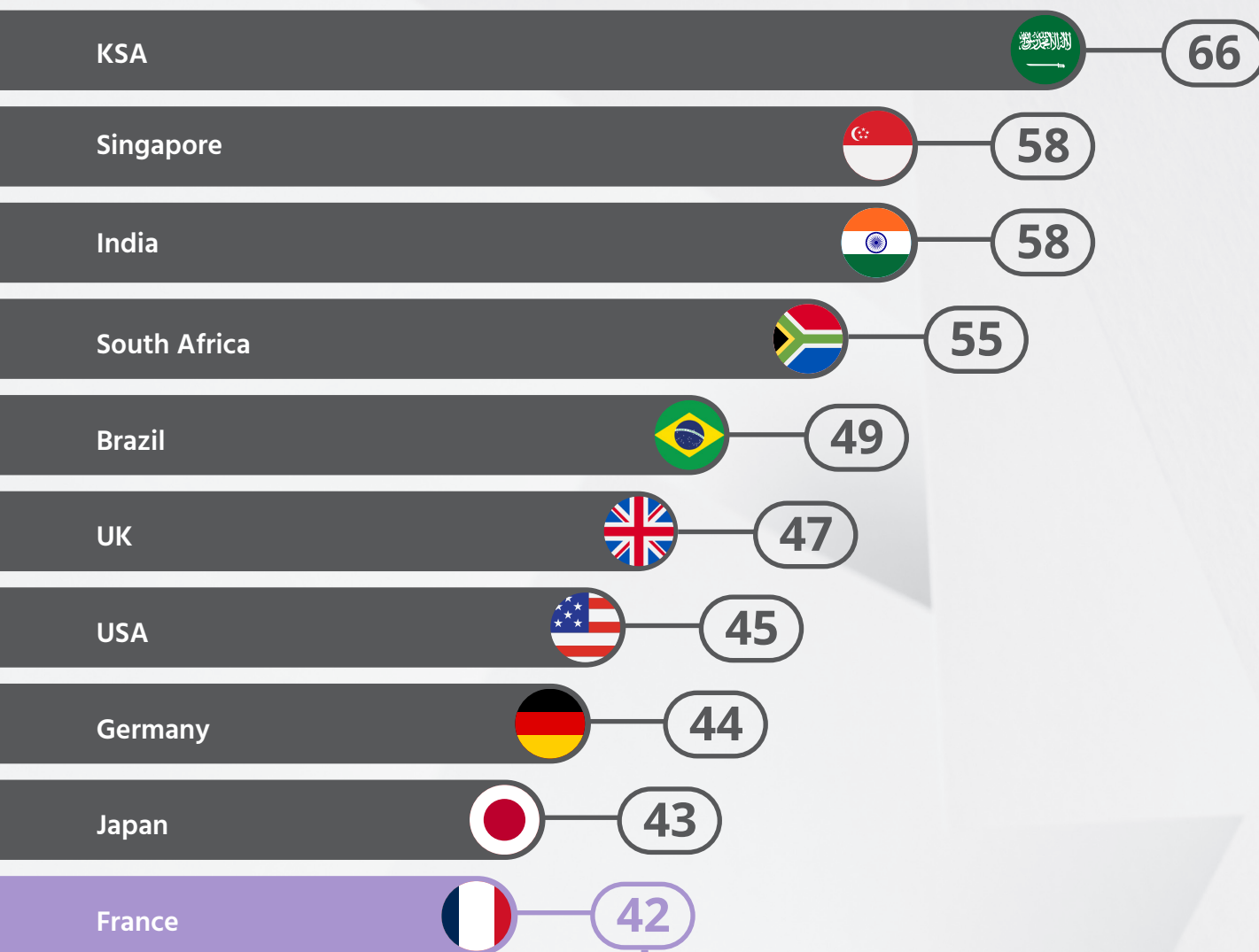
Guided by the National Strategy for AI, France is cultivating a strong ecosystem aimed at positioning the country as a leading hub for global innovation. Since the launch of its national AI strategy in **2018**, reinforced by the **France 2030** initiative, France has invested heavily in **research, talent and public-private partnerships**, establishing AI as a strategic lever for economic competitiveness and **public service modernisation**.

In the public sector, early efforts have focused on building trust in AI through a strong emphasis on ethics, transparency and technological sovereignty. The French government has prioritised the development of a '**trusted AI**' framework, closely aligned with **EU AI Act requirements**. This has helped create a clear and robust policy foundation, providing assurance on how AI should be developed and used.

As this framework matures, the opportunity for France is to build on these foundations by accelerating the translation of strategy into practice — expanding access to tools, training and systems that support confident, consistent use of AI by public servants in their everyday work.



## FRANCE IN THE GLOBAL INDEX



France has been one of Europe's earliest and most deliberate movers on AI, underpinned by strong national strategy, world-class research institutions and a clear commitment to trustworthy and sovereign AI. The next phase is about translating this strategic leadership and ethical foundations into everyday tools and practices that public servants can use in their daily work.

- In practice, AI use in French public services remains limited and highly uneven. Adoption is largely confined to **specialist projects and pilots**, with France sitting towards the **bottom of the global index** on overall workplace use and enthusiasm.
- Access to AI tools is particularly constrained. Only **27%** of public servants say their organisation has **invested in AI tools**, and integration with existing systems is limited, leaving AI **isolated** rather than **embedded into routine workflows**. Organisational structures to support scaling are weak, reinforcing France's low performance on embedding.
- This low level of practical exposure shapes attitudes and expectations. **Almost one in three** public servants believe that **nothing they do at work can be accomplished by AI**, and France is the **least optimistic country** in the index about AI's relevance to public sector work. Without seeing AI save time, improve decisions or enhance service delivery, its value remains abstract for many public servants.

This points to a clear challenge for France. Strong national strategy and ethical frameworks have created a robust policy environment, but without clearer organisational direction, practical training and wider access to tools, AI risks remaining something done in isolated programmes rather than a technology that helps public servants do their jobs better.

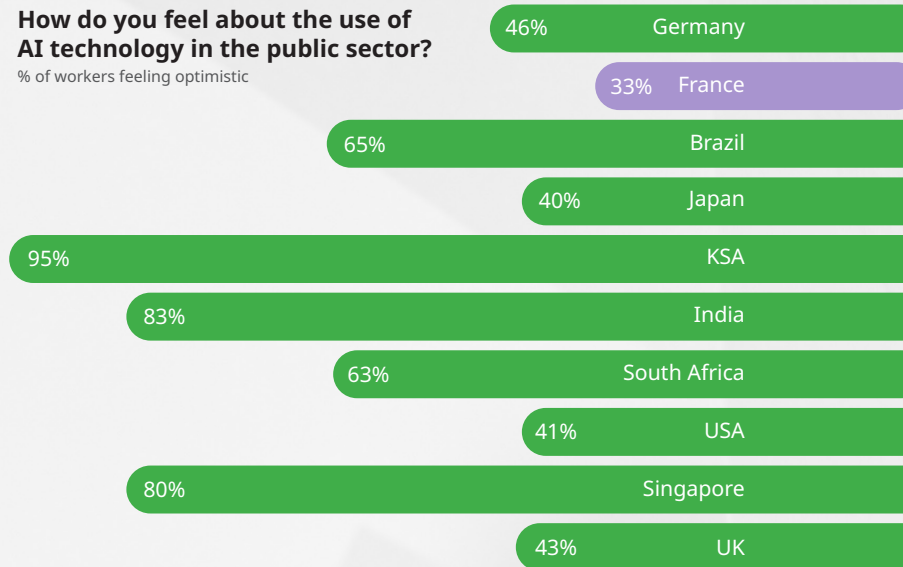
# WHAT OUR RESEARCH SHOWS

Our research suggests France sits towards the bottom of the AI adoption index, reflecting low workplace adoption, limited organisational support, and subdued expectations about AI's relevance to public sector work.

Embedding is France's weakest area across the index. Organisational investment is low, with only **27%** of workers saying their organisation has **invested in AI tools**, and fewer reporting access to enterprise systems, custom tools or formal structures to scale use. Integration with existing software is limited, leaving AI isolated rather than institutionalised.

## How do you feel about the use of AI technology in the public sector?

% of workers feeling optimistic



France's weak embedding score is reinforced by gaps in education, enablement and empowerment. Access to appropriate tools is uneven, and technical support is often lacking. At the same time, rules and expectations are poorly communicated. **Over 50%** disagree that leaders provide **clear communication or direction** on AI use.

With little exposure to meaningful or scaled use, almost one in three French public servants believe that nothing they do at work can be accomplished by AI. France is consequently the least optimistic country in the index, with many workers expressing neutrality or scepticism rather than confidence in AI's value for the public sector.

Overall, the French case reflects a self-reinforcing cycle: weak embedding limits adoption; low adoption limits visible benefits; and the absence of benefits sustains low optimism. Breaking this cycle will require better access to tools, internal strategies, stronger integration with core systems, and practical training that connects AI directly to everyday public sector work.



**Enthusiasm**  
46/100

AI is approached with scepticism or concern, with limited evidence of benefit and low levels of experimentation or discussion. AI is more often perceived as ineffective, overwhelming, or risky than empowering.



**Education**  
46/100

Training is limited, low quality, or absent, leading to low confidence and difficulty understanding AI systems. The lack of knowledge and upskilling opportunities is a primary constraint on adoption.



**Empowerment**  
39/100

AI use is constrained by unclear, overly restrictive, or poorly communicated rules, leading to hesitation and risk aversion. Concerns about compliance, security, or leadership support significantly discourage use.



**Enablement**  
42/100

Tool access is limited or poorly matched to work needs, resulting in heavy dependence on personal, unapproved tools or leading to no AI use at all. Lack of technical support and organisational provision is a major barrier to support routine or advanced use.

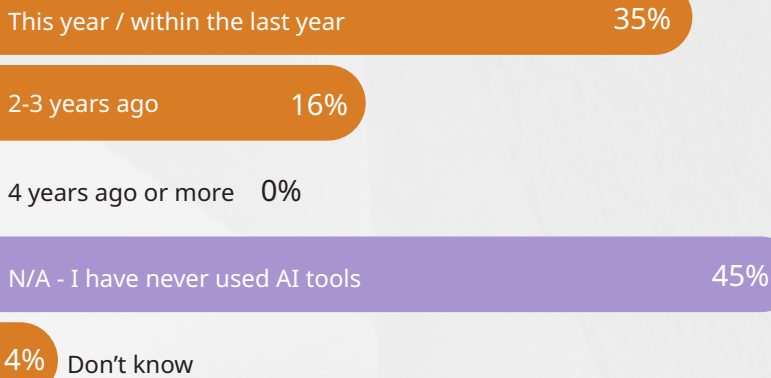


**Embedding**  
36/100

Minimal formal infrastructure, with few supporting structures, limited investment, and significant barriers to integration with existing systems. Structural barriers significantly limit the ability to scale AI use.

## UNIQUE FEATURES OF FRANCE

### When did you first start using AI tools at work?



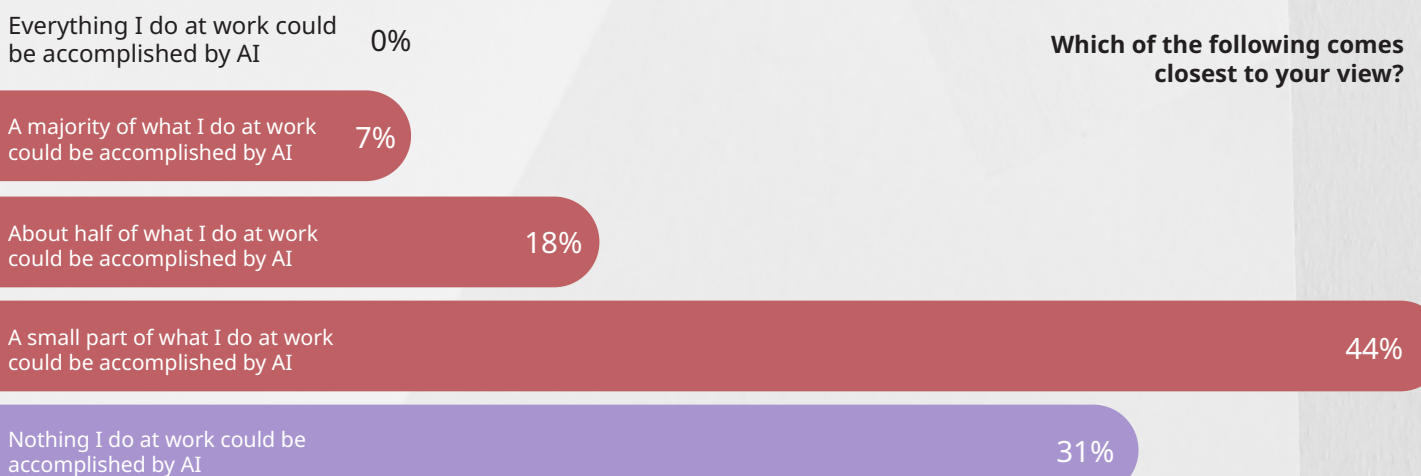
France performs poorly in our index compared to other countries, and seems to lack momentum behind AI adoption in the public sector. **Over half** of French public sector workers report that AI use has **stagnated or declined** over the past year, and around **45% have never used AI** in their role—the weakest adoption profile in the index.

Compared to other countries, public sector workers in France are unlikely to believe their workplace will introduce AI to create efficiencies, and a majority think the public sector is falling behind the private sector in its use of AI. **Nearly one in three** public sector workers say their workplace **actively makes it difficult** to use AI where it would be helpful, pointing to persistent challenges around system compatibility, processes, and organisational readiness.

Empowerment is low in France as this low adoption is reinforced by a lack of clarity and support. **More than 2 in 5** of French public servants are unsure whether their workplace even has a **policy governing AI use**, and **two-thirds (66%)** report receiving **no training** on how to use AI. More than 1 in 3 say they are unclear about what they can and cannot use AI tools for at work, creating uncertainty that discourages experimentation and routine use.

This lack of empowerment is reinforced by overlapping compliance requirements, including with the EU AI Act, GDPR, and France's Data Protection Act (Loi Informatique et Libertés). Together, these frameworks raise the perceived legal and operational risk of experimentation, slowing the transition from tightly controlled pilots to routine, organisation-wide use.

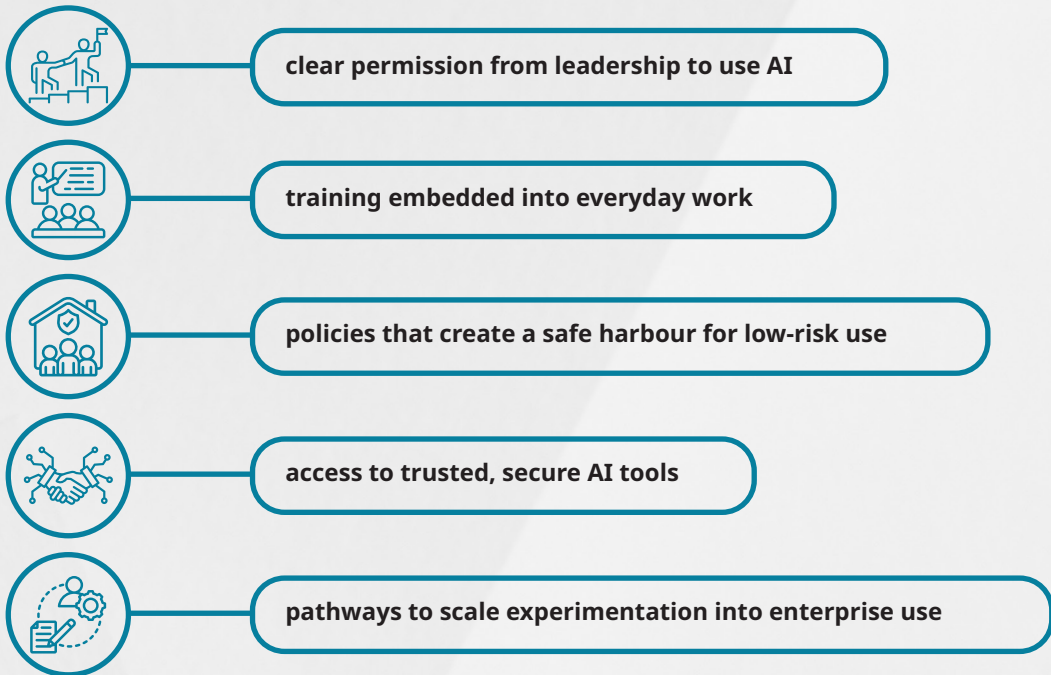
The absence of organisational direction and support is consequently mirrored in workplace culture. **Nearly six in ten French public sector workers (58%)** say they have **never discussed using AI** with a colleague, nor witnessed colleagues expressing excitement about its potential, reflected in the low (46/100) enthusiasm score. Without peer discussion, advocacy, or shared learning, there are few informal pathways through which confidence or curiosity about AI might develop.



In this context, scepticism and low enthusiasm are less a product of ideological resistance than of limited access, weak guidance, and minimal hands-on experience. Without clearer guidance, better integration, and targeted training, AI risks being perceived not as a practical tool for improving public services, but as a technology that is misaligned with the realities of public sector work.

# HOW TO ENHANCE AI USE IN THE PUBLIC SECTOR: STEPS THAT CAN BE TAKEN IN FRANCE

Our research points to five actions that consistently support stronger AI adoption across countries:



Together, these create the conditions for public servants to move from basic experimentation to confident use that can prepare the ground for significant public sector transformation.

## WHAT MATTERS MOST FOR FRANCE

While national strategy and ethical frameworks are well developed, the gap between public servants and the practical relevance of AI is wide. Without **swift leadership action**, AI risks being seen as something **done to public services**, rather than a tool that helps people **do their jobs better**. Three immediate priorities stand out:

# 1

### Move fast to give clear permission and encouragement

Public servants need **unambiguous signals** — now — that using AI is **expected, supported and safe**. Continued ambiguity is reinforcing hesitation and disengagement. Senior leaders must clearly state that AI can and should be used for everyday, low-risk tasks, backed by simple guidance that removes fear of making mistakes. Without this clarity, AI will remain marginal to daily work.

# 2

### Rapidly connect AI to real jobs and real tasks

The core problem in France is **relevance**. Many public servants do not see how AI applies to their role. Fast, practical training focused on concrete use cases — drafting, analysis, case management, service delivery — is essential to close this gap. Unless AI is quickly shown to save time or improve outcomes, scepticism will harden.

# 3

### Actively rebuild workplace culture around AI

Low discussion and low visibility are reinforcing disengagement. Leaders need to create space for experimentation, shared learning and visible success stories that show AI working in practice. Without urgent cultural change, even strong policy frameworks will fail to translate into adoption.