

PUBLIC SECTOR AI ADOPTION: INDIA FACTSHEET

A PROJECT BY PUBLIC FIRST FOR THE CENTER FOR DATA INNOVATION, SPONSORED BY GOOGLE



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 **289 public sector workers in India**, comprising **107** from local or regional government entities, **172** from national government or national government entities and **10** from other public sector entities.

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 India, set against international peers. Full results are available on the [main index webpage](#).

PUBLIC SECTOR AI ADOPTION: INDIA CONTEXT

India has emerged as one of the world's most dynamic public sector adopters of AI, driven by scale, momentum and a strong digital public infrastructure. National initiatives such as **Digital India**, **Aadhaar**, and **India Stack** have created a foundation of interoperable platforms, data systems and digital services that enable **rapid experimentation and deployment** across government. AI has increasingly been framed as a practical tool to improve service delivery, boost administrative capacity and support economic inclusion.

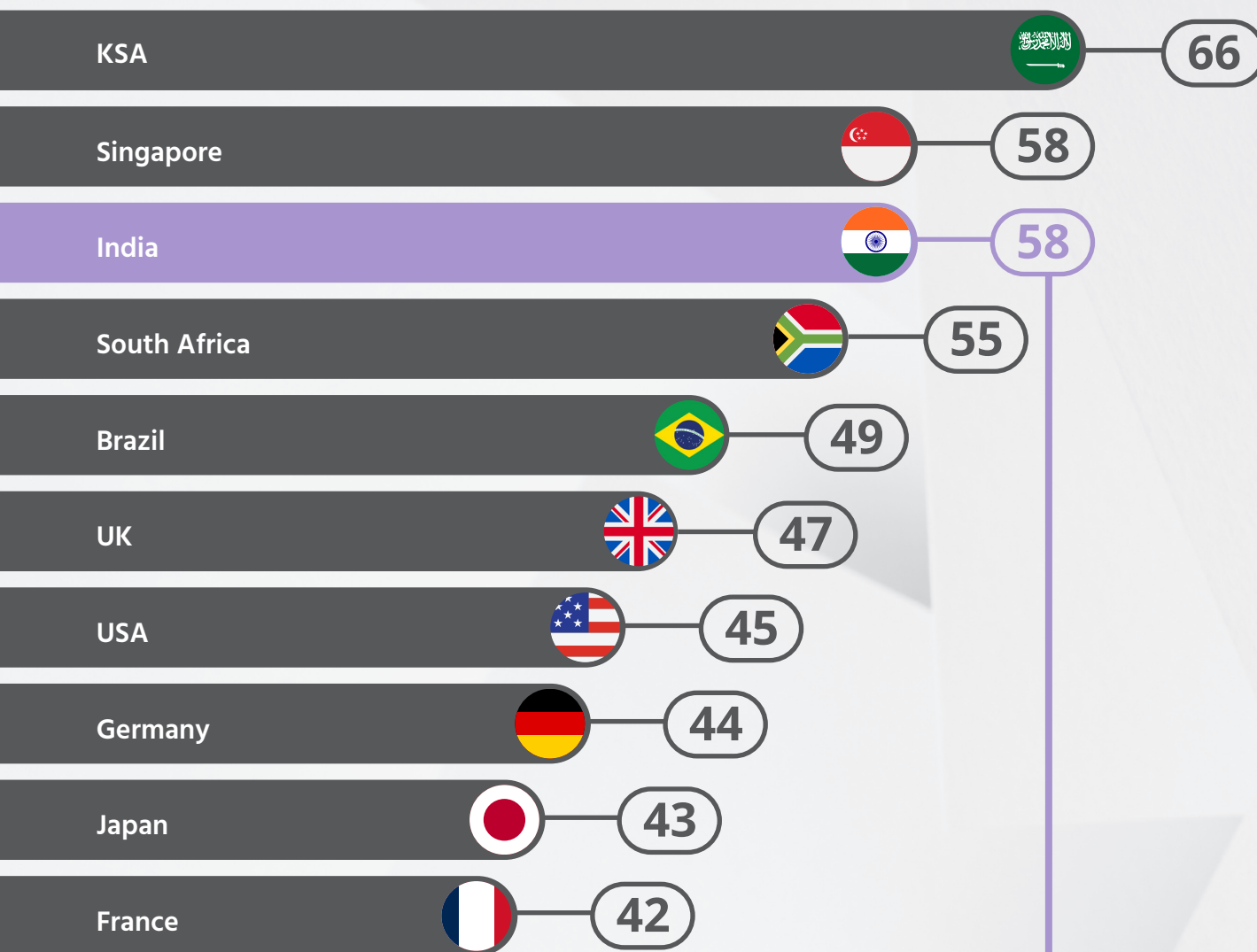
The Indian government has signalled clear ambition through strategies focused on "**AI for All**", alongside growing investment in **digital skills**, **public platforms** and **applied AI use cases**. However, currently there is **no single central Act** or unified "**AI Usage Law**" that sets a consistent approach across government employees in India. Instead, the usage of AI is governed by a mix of **strict department-specific advice** (including **some bans on AI use**), **state-level ethical frameworks**, and **judicial policies**.

These rules make system-wide adoption difficult; however, Indian AI adoption in the public sector has been characterised less by central mandates and more by bottom-up enthusiasm. Public servants are actively experimenting with AI to save time, improve quality and develop new skills.

India's opportunity lies in consolidating this momentum. Ensuring consistent access to trusted tools, clearer institutional support and scalable governance will be critical to translating widespread experimentation into reliable, system-wide impact across a complex and diverse public sector.



INDIA IN THE GLOBAL INDEX



India has built one of the world's most dynamic foundations for AI adoption in public services, driven by strong digital infrastructure, bottom-up momentum and a highly engaged workforce. The next phase is about consolidating this energy into consistent, system-wide impact across a large and complex public sector.

- Indian public servants report some of the highest levels of enthusiasm, confidence and hands-on experimentation with AI in the global index. Use is widespread and growing rapidly, with most uptake occurring within the last year and many public servants reporting clear, tangible benefits from everyday use.
- Access to AI tools is relatively high, with around **two-thirds (63%)** of public servants saying their organisation has **invested in AI tools**. This places India among the stronger performers in the index on enablement, though access remains uneven across institutions and roles.
- There is a gap between strong individual momentum and consistent institutional support. While confidence is high — with nearly half of public servants saying they feel very confident using AI — use is often informal and includes shadow AI use. **Over 70%** report having used AI **without their manager knowing** at least once, and many rely on **personal accounts** to access tools not provided by their employer.

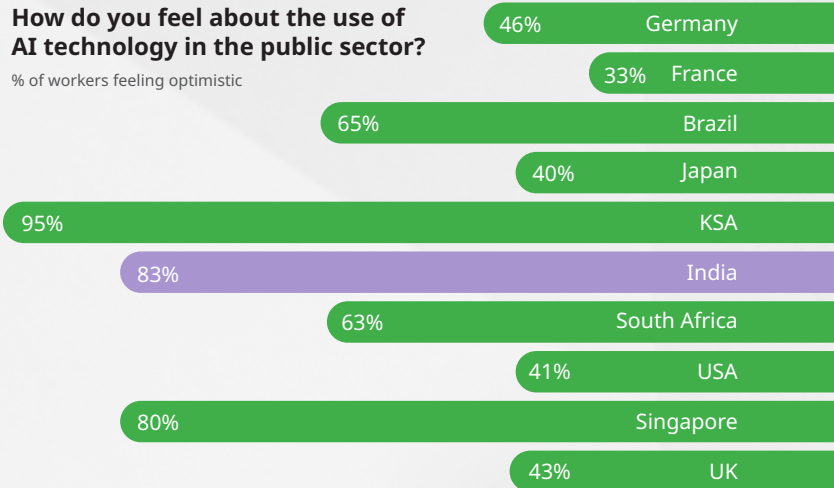
This points to a major opportunity. With clearer permission from leadership and more consistent access to secure tools India could rapidly translate widespread experimentation into reliable, secure and transformative impact across its public services.

WHAT OUR RESEARCH SHOWS

Our research indicates that India ranks among the world's leading adopters of AI in the public sector, following a confidence-building trajectory shaped by strong enthusiasm and a highly engaged workforce.

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

% of workers feeling optimistic



AI use in the public sector is generally perceived with optimism, experimentation is widespread, peer-to-peer discussion is active, and hands-on use often results in tangible benefits such as **time savings (91%)** and **helpful outcomes (81%)**. Education, Empowerment and Embedding are all comparatively strong. **67%** of Indian public servants report receiving some form of workplace training on how to use AI tools, whether formal or informal, and among those trained, **84%** say it has **significantly boosted team productivity**.

However, AI use policies are not widely applied. Under a third (**29%**) of Indian public servants reported that their organisation had a **formal AI policy** in place. Promisingly, **32%** reported that their organisations were **actively developing an AI policy** meaning we could see more consistent **permission to use AI** in the near future.

Institutional Enablement is also less consistent. While **63%** of workers say their organisation has **invested in AI tools**, access is **uneven across institutions**. Compared with countries at a similar level of the Index, AI tools developed in-house or adapted specifically for the workplace are less common, and around **1 in 5** public servants still disagree that their workplace provides the **resources, tools, training or guidance** needed to use AI effectively.



Enthusiasm
71/100

AI is viewed positively and with optimism, experimentation is common, and experiences with AI frequently deliver tangible benefits such as time savings or improved quality of work. AI generates discussion, peer learning, and a sense of urgency about keeping pace with technological change (**71/100**).



Education
63/100

Training is timely, practical, and effective, resulting in strong confidence and clarity on how to use AI. Learning is (**63/100**) prioritised and translates into real capability.



Empowerment
59/100

Guidance on AI use is clear, formalised, and well communicated, with strong confidence that usage aligns with organisational policy. Rules are perceived as balanced, and leadership is seen as (**59/100**) modelling effective AI use.



Enablement
48/100

Some AI tools and resources are available, but access is uneven across departments or not well matched to everyday needs. Gaps in coverage, support, or role-specific access prevent consistent and scalable use across the organisation (**48/100**).

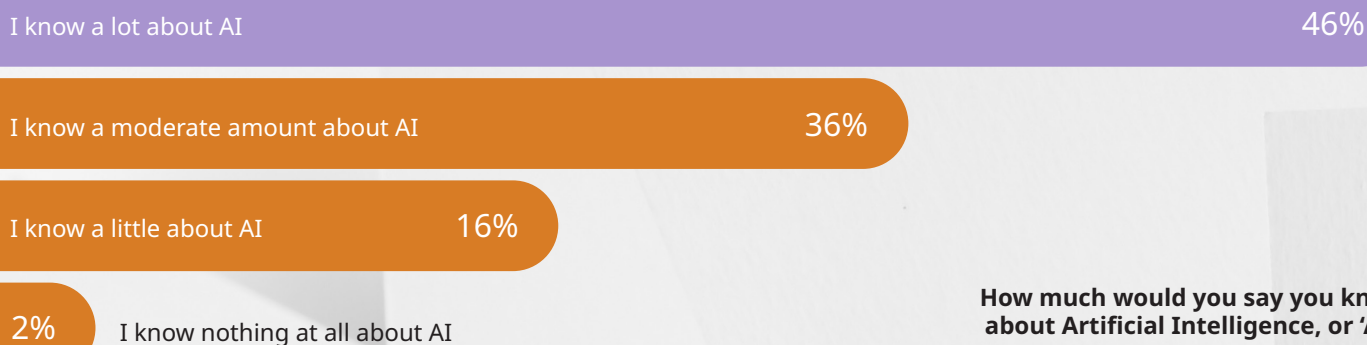


Embedding
50/100

AI use is supported by formal processes, shared learning mechanisms, and dedicated investment, enabling consistent adoption across teams. Tools and workflows are integrated, and opportunities (**50/100**) to experiment and scale are actively supported.

UNIQUE FEATURES OF INDIA

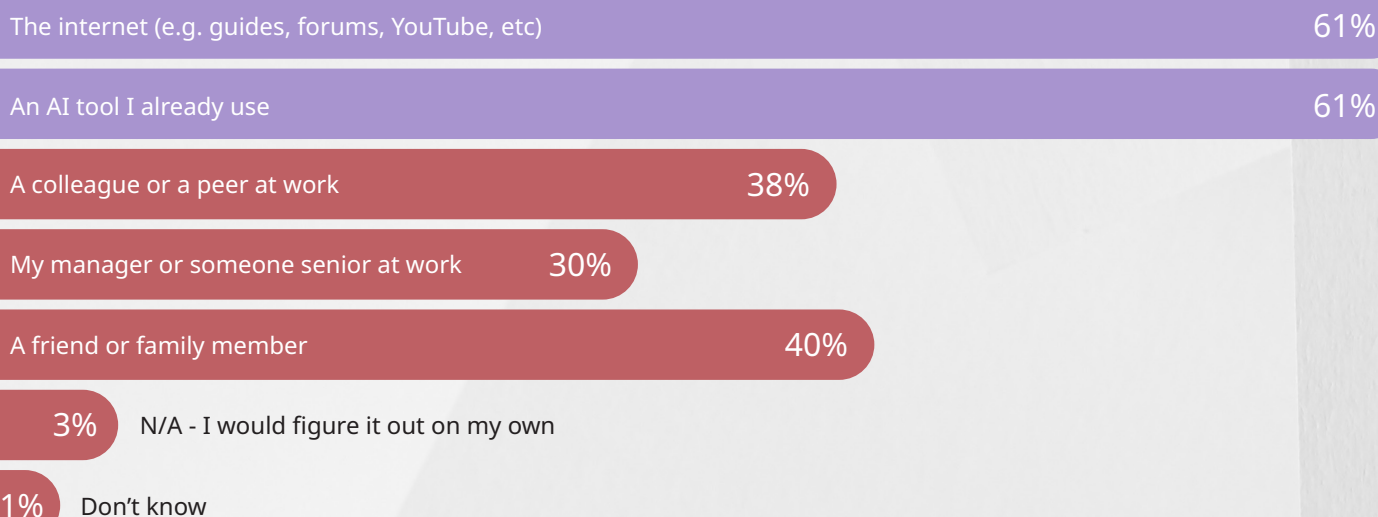
India stands out in the index for the speed and intensity of its AI adoption, driven by bottom-up momentum. Enthusiasm is impressively high in India. While more than one in three public servants began using AI two to three years ago, most uptake has occurred within the last year (**55%**), with **84%** reporting an **increase in use** in the workplace over that period. Use is driven more by perceived value than by mandate. The strongest motivations are improving the quality of work (**63%**), developing career-relevant skills (**54%**), and curiosity (**40%**).



How much would you say you know about Artificial Intelligence, or 'AI'?

India also excels in its education score, as growing use has been matched by growing confidence. Nearly half of public servants say they feel very confident using AI, and a similar share report strong knowledge of the technology. This confidence is shaped by a strong culture of proactive peer learning: most **discuss AI use with colleagues (84%)**, **learn new approaches from peers (74%)**, and use cases often **spread informally across teams (72%)**.

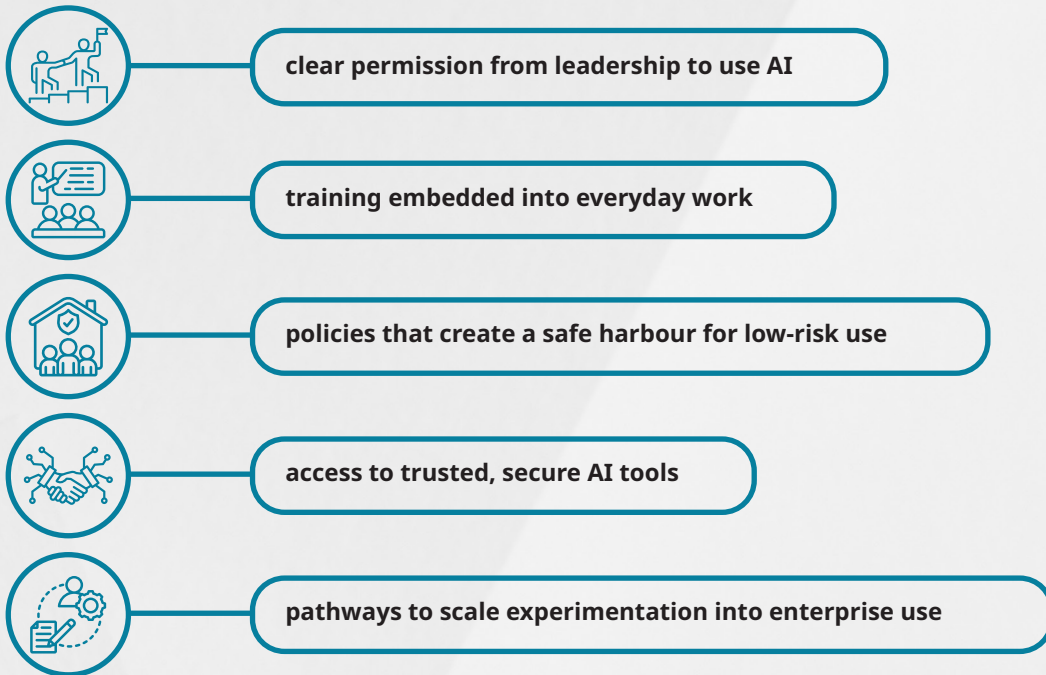
If you wanted to explore how AI could help you in your role at work (e.g. trying a new tool, learning how to use one, or understanding potential use cases) who or what would you turn to? Select up to three of the following



Despite widespread enthusiasm, system-wide enablement remains uneven. **Three in ten** still believe AI is **not being used effectively** across India's public sector, and some organisations struggle to provide **consistent tools and support at scale**. Use is often **informal** and reliant on **workarounds**, with **over 70%** reporting they have used AI **without their manager knowing** at least once, and a **similar share** saying they have logged in with a **personal account** to access tools their employer does not provide.

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

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 INDIA

For India, the opportunity is to convert **grassroots momentum** into **consistent, system-wide impact**. Public servants are already using AI at pace, driven by curiosity, peer learning and clear personal benefits. The next phase is about formalising this energy — creating the permission, structures and pathways needed to move from widespread experimentation to durable public sector transformation. Three priorities stand out:

1

Bring informal and 'shadow' AI use into the open through clear permission

AI use in India is already widespread, but much of it happens informally, outside official tools and processes. Clear signals from leadership — backed by simple, practical AI use policies — are needed to legitimise everyday use and pull experimentation into approved channels. Creating a **safe harbour** for **low-risk tasks** such as **drafting, analysis and summarisation** would reduce reliance on **workarounds** and allow learning to happen **transparently and responsibly**.

2

Formalise learning to complement strong peer-driven adoption

India benefits from a powerful culture of self-directed and peer-to-peer learning, but training remains uneven and often informal. Embedding short, role-specific AI training into onboarding and progression would help turn individual confidence into shared capability. Formal learning pathways can amplify what already works — spreading effective use cases faster and more consistently across teams and institutions.

3

Channel momentum into scalable, system-wide deployment

High enthusiasm and experimentation create a strong foundation, but without structures to scale, impact remains fragmented. **Governed sandboxes, shared platforms** and **clear routes to scale** successful use cases would allow India to translate **local innovation** into **national capability**. Consolidating tools, governance and support will be critical to ensuring that India's AI adoption delivers reliable, secure and transformative outcomes across its vast public sector.