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**NOTE**

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From: Presidency

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To: Delegations

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Subject: Presidency discussion paper on AI in public administration

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In view of the Working Party on Telecommunications and Information Society on 28 January 2025, delegations will find in the annex the discussion paper from the Presidency on AI in public administration.

## Presidency discussion paper on AI in public administration

### Based on the Joint Research Centre's report "Competences and governance practices for artificial intelligence in the public sector" and the Committee of Regions' study "AI and GenAI adoption by local and regional administrations"

Working Party on Telecommunications and Information Society (WP TELECOM)

Polish Presidency of the Council of the European Union – January-June 2025

#### 1. Introduction

On 25 November 2024, the JRC released the report "*Competences and governance practices for artificial intelligence in the public sector*"<sup>1</sup>.

This report takes a systematic approach to identifying the **competences and governance practices required to drive value through AI in the public sector**. It introduces two comprehensive frameworks: one for the key competences public managers should have and one for the governance practices public organisations should adopt. The study is based on a systematic literature review, expert workshops and 19 interviews with managers in public organisations from Czechia, Denmark, Germany, Greece, Italy, the Netherlands and Norway. **The competence framework** is structured around three core dimensions: **technical**, **managerial**, and **policy, legal**, and **ethical** competences. **The governance practices framework** is organised into procedural, structural and relational practices, which are organised in three corresponding levels of governance: strategic, tactical and operational.

The JRC report makes a contribution to existing knowledge, offering new theoretical insights and a practical framework to guide AI adoption. Moreover, it provides policymakers and practitioners with concrete recommendations and actionable steps to implement and scale AI solutions in the public sector.

Building on these frameworks, the report outlines **recommendations** that aim to develop the necessary competences and governance practices for AI in the public sector in Europe. Findings of the JRC Report can be supplemented by the G7 Toolkit for AI in the Public Sector (OECD & UNESCO)<sup>2</sup> and series of studies from Member States.

In parallel, on 19 December 2024, the European Committee of the Regions (CoR) issued a study "*AI and GenAI adoption by local and regional administrations*"<sup>3</sup>.

This report addresses the issue of adoption of AI in the public sector from **the perspective of local and regional authorities**. It analyses the results of recent studies, including those of the Public Sector Tech Watch and JRC. The report also delves deeper into the **opportunities and challenges** subnational authorities have with the AI and GenAI adoption. Additionally, it examines the impact this has on the quality of their interactions with citizens and the efficiency of internal and cross-administration processes. The study also investigates whether and **how AI and GenAI could contribute to bridging digital divides** across different types of territories and/or groups of citizens. It further examines the **role of political leaders** in promoting AI, scalability, knowledge sharing and the need for cooperation between the technical and political levels to ensure boost of AI use. In the end, the study offers a number of **recommendations** for enhancing the adoption and effectiveness of AI and GenAI at subnational level.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://publications.jrc.ec.europa.eu/repository/handle/JRC138702>

<sup>2</sup> <https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000391566>

<sup>3</sup> <https://op.europa.eu/s/z1aS>

It is based on a combination of a desk research, an online survey with 153 respondents, interviews conducted to build eight case studies and a foresight analysis in view of policy and action recommendations.

## 2. Recommendations

The JRC report provides two types of recommendations: on competences and on governance practices for AI in public sector (six in total). Each recommendation is followed by three corresponding actions. On the other hand, the CoR study provides eight recommendations in total, with some of them are aligned with the ones offered by the JRC report. The table below provides an overview of these recommendations.

Table 1. Overview of recommendation provided by the JRC and CoR reports

JRC report		CoR study
Recommendations	Proposed Action	Recommendations
<i>Recommendations on competences for AI in the public sector (JRC &amp; CoR reports)</i>		
1. Develop focused, interdisciplinary AI competence training programme	1a. Incorporate AI modules into existing public sector training programmes	Local and regional authorities (LRAs) should promote inclusive practices such as training and affordable access to digital tools to prevent disparities in AI adoption (p. 98) <sup>4</sup>
	1b. Create specialized AI training pathways for different public sector roles	
	1c. Collaborate with academic and industry partners for AI training	
2. Promote applied interdisciplinary research on AI competences	2a. Fund applied interdisciplinary research projects focusing on competences for AI in the public sector	
	2b. Establish research consortia to investigate competences for AI in the public sector	
	2c. Promote knowledge exchange and dissemination of research findings on competences for AI in the public sector	
3. Establish dedicated hiring processes and devote additional resources to attracting specialists with AI competences	3a. Develop a public sector AI talent recruitment strategy	
	3b. Create AI fellowship and internship programmes for young professionals	
	3c. Enhance collaboration with AI research centres and innovation hubs	
<i>Recommendation on governance practices for AI in the public sector (JRC &amp; CoR reports)</i>		

<sup>4</sup> All page numbers refer to CoR report “AI and GenAI adoption by local and regional administrations”.

JRC report		CoR study
Recommendations	Proposed Action	Recommendations
1) Develop communication and collaboration networks	1a. Create connections with relevant stakeholders	The EU, together with Member States, should facilitate partnerships between public, private, and academic sectors that can support LRAs access advanced technologies and expertise (p. 99)
	1b. Deploy digital platforms for communication and collaboration with involved entities	LRAs shall invest in creating governance procedures to facilitate inter-regional data sharing and cooperation. Efforts should include workshops and events for building networks and improving data governance across stakeholders (p. 101)
	1c. Finance synergy grants for private and public collaborations and knowledge exchange	
2) Foster an active learning and capacity building environment for responsible AI governance	2a. Develop educational material on how to integrate responsible AI practices into governance	
	2b. Organize thematic seminars on aspects that are important to consider during AI governance	
	2c. Create a toolbox of best practices that is readily available to practitioners	
3) Enable stakeholders-in-the-loop processes	3a. Facilitate forums to involve relevant stakeholders	LRAs should involve citizens in the AI development process through co-creation, feedback collection, and transparent communication (p. 96)
	3b. Require that public bodies include relevant stakeholders in AI projects	
	3c. Finance projects on co-creation of AI projects in critical areas of public administration	
		<i>Additional recommendations (CoR report)</i>
		The EU should support LRAs with standardised frameworks and KPIs to assess AI's impact and effectiveness (p. 95)
		The EU and Member States should encourage the establishment of controlled environments to test AI solutions before deployment, ensuring compliance and innovation (p. 97)

JRC report		CoR study
Recommendations	Proposed Action	Recommendations
		National governments should prioritise the adoption of open-source technologies to reduce dependency on proprietary systems, promote interoperability, and enhance EU digital sovereignty (p. 100)
		The EU and Member States should leverage AI to support international sustainability goals while reducing its environmental footprint (p. 102)

### 3. Guiding questions:

Building on the recommendations outlined in the JRC report “*Competences and governance practices for artificial intelligence in the public sector*” and the Committee of Regions' report “*AI and GenAI adoption by local and regional administrations*”, we would like to put for discussion with Member States the following questions:

1. Which recommendations of these reports would you consider as particularly relevant for your country and how are you planning to address them?
2. Which additional points, if any, would you consider also relevant for your country to address, and how do you plan to address them?
3. Where do you see the biggest challenges in addressing these recommendations and points?
4. How could in your view, the Commission help Member States in overcoming these challenges?
5. Which systemic solutions do you consider relevant to enhance cooperation between central and regional/local administrations?

### 4. Contribution to the future works of the Commission

The comprehensive findings and key conclusions from the discussion in the WP TELECOM will be consolidated into a Presidency report which will be shared with the Member States and the European Commission. The overall aim of this exercise is to contribute to the ongoing works on the Apply AI Strategy by the Commission.