# I didn't think of that. Public opinions on AI use in the public sector

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**Abstract:** This study explores the nascent deployment of AI in Romania's public administration and its alignment with citizen expectations. A review of government documents and interviews indicates that few Romanian agencies have articulated formal AI policies or strategies, reflecting the country's lagging digital adoption. Others have noted that realizing AI's promise in government will require concrete action plans at the ministry or agency level, underscoring the gap between strategy and implementation.

We supplement this institutional analysis with an ongoing national survey about AI in both public and private services. These provisional survey results reveal a cautiously open yet demanding public. Many respondents view AI as a potential efficiency and transparency: a majority believe AI could help reduce corruption in public institutions, and most respondents are weary of data protection problems associated with AI use and insist on strict human oversight and legal safeguards. A large share would prefer interacting with a real person rather than a chatbot or fully autonomous system for public services. Only a small minority views AI as purely negative.

These exploratory findings – based on preliminary survey data – suggest that Romanian citizens are open to AI but expect transparency, fairness and human control in its deployment. The study underscores the policy relevance of these attitudes: aligning AI adoption in government with public expectations and strengthening institutional readiness will be critical to building trust and legitimacy in Romania's digital transformation.