

AI Readiness Scorecard

While tools to assess AI readiness among industry, the non-profit sector, government organisations and even regions exist, there is no tool for policymakers and their advisors that is publicly available and which can be used to assess whole-of-country AI readiness. This is crucial as policymakers think through their core competencies and priorities along the AI value chain.

Informed by our analysis of the Oxford Insights Government AI Readiness Index and the Data Management Maturity Model from Carnegie Mellon University, this scorecard assesses **government policy** (vision, data governance, ethics and regulation), **digital maturity** (data and digital infrastructure), **human capacity** and **technological capability** (computing resources and technology sector) as prerequisites for positioning and prioritising government activities — as a country starts to build out its AI capabilities.

This scorecard is by no means a measure of AI-adoption progress nor is it intended for use as a public index. Rather, it is a simple yet comprehensive tool to jumpstart AI policymaking through holistic self assessment and visibility of AI capabilities. This scorecard can be used most effectively when assessors have a full understanding of the country's existing digital ecosystem, and it can be used by advisors, analysts and officials within government information- and communications-technology ministries — with or without AI expertise.

From 28 questions, with points given spanning from 1 (not considering) to 5 (advanced) for each, countries will fall into these ranges from a total of 140 points:

- 0-34: AI Aware
- 35-69: AI Starter
- 70-104: AI Ready
- 105-140: AI Mature

AI-Aware countries

Countries in this range know the potential of AI, want to harness it and often publicly acknowledge this interest. However, these countries often lack the requisite infrastructure, including high internet penetration and data infrastructure, and have not yet embarked on a full digitalisation-transformation agenda. These countries would be best supported through a whole-of-country digitalisation effort that systematically provides the infrastructure needed for public and private services. Our AI Strategic Adoption Framework for governments, also part of this toolkit, can help policymakers identify impactful AI projects that can be piloted at this stage. (*Example countries: Democratic Republic of the Congo, Malawi*)

AI-Starter countries

These countries have recently embarked on a digital and data-infrastructure programme to catalyse their digital economies. They often have nascent but enthusiastic startup ecosystems, and government interest can quickly materialise change. These starter countries are at a good stage to use our AI Strategic Adoption Framework to align existing AI applications to their current national development priorities and the reality of their ecosystem. They can also use our AI Systems Map to identify appropriate partners for each stage of their journey. With these two tools, governments can create a plan for their country's adoption of AI that is both effective and responsible. *(Example countries: Senegal, Togo, Ethiopia)*

AI-Ready countries

These countries typically have a long-standing and ambitious digital-transformation project (five years-plus) or a robust digital ecosystem, and are ready to capture value from these data-driven initiatives to support their economic-transformation ambitions. Often because of the size of their populations, they have growing volumes of data although their AI ecosystems are still nascent. Typically, these countries are developing national AI strategies although some may have recently published them. These countries can make great use of our AI Strategic Adoption Framework, AI Systems Map and AI Procurement Guide to help them comprehensively embark on an effective and responsible AI-adoption strategy. *(Example countries: Nigeria, Tunisia, Egypt, Mauritius, South Africa, Ghana)*

AI-Mature countries

These countries have mature digital infrastructure and systems in place to harness the potential of AI. Governments and industries own digital and data infrastructure, including high levels of national computing capability, and have robust AI-research ecosystems that put them at the forefront of AI implementation and innovation. However, as a result of increasing geopolitical and domestic pressures, government use of AI and AI governance could be weighted in favour of surveillance and military applications, creating concerns about lack of transparency as well as bias and harm. Our AI Procurement Guide would support these countries in aligning government procurement with responsible practices as per global best practices. *(Example countries: China, United States)*

Countries cited in the examples are ranked as per the Oxford Insights Index and not TBI's objective evaluation of their readiness.

AI READINESS SCORECARD

	Not considering	Considering	Developing	Exists	Advanced
Vision					
Does the country have a national AI strategy/policy/plan?					
Has the country set out a budget for AI development or its strategy/policy/plan?					
Does the country have an implementing body for its strategy/policy?					
Does the country's strategy/policy/plan identify specific areas or use cases to drive AI adoption?					
Ethics and regulation					
Does the country embed human rights and rule-of-law principles into its national strategy/policy/plan, if it exists?					
Are there government-developed ethical guidelines and/or a self-assessment tool(s) for ethical, safe and secure AI for developers?					
Is there a government agency with regulatory oversight or guidance on the procurement of AI services and tools?					
Is there diversity (including gender), inclusion and/or local content assessment related to AI deployment and governance by government (advanced = all)?					
Human capital					
Are there people across government agencies with the capability to implement and deploy AI solutions (i.e. use UNESCO+ITU's assessment for capacity aimed at policymakers)?					
Are there public programmes that train workers, teachers, students and graduates with AI-related skills, and does the training include discussions on ethics, safety and security (advanced)?					
Does the government have robust visa processes to attract and retain AI talent?					
Digital/data infrastructure					
Does the country collect data/stats on digital-inclusion aspects, such as affordable internet and digital literacy across the country, including rural areas (gender and geographic diversity indicators)?					
Are more than 80% of public records digitised?					

AI READINESS SCORECARD

	Not considering	Considering	Developing	Exists	Advanced
Are data collected by the public sector representative of the broadest segment of society?					
Does the government release timely and reliable data sets?					
Does the government offer responsible data-sharing guidelines between institutions and partners (e.g. startups) in public-private partnerships or are they openly available via API? Are they being implemented (advanced)?					
Computing resources					
Do government agencies have access to analytics-based computing capability to derive value from their data (access to national cloud and competitive public-cloud providers)?					
Do startups and students have affordable access to world-class, high-performance computing and cloud services?					
Data governance					
Does the country have a data-protection law with robust data security and privacy policies?					
Are data accessible and terms of use clear for the private and public sectors?					
Is the data-protection agency empowered to communicate, disseminate and enforce data policies in the private and public sectors?					
Beyond the law and the DPA, are the government's data systems secure and continuously maintained?					
Technology sector					
Does the business environment support entrepreneurship and healthy R&D through IP/patent/copyright laws, the ease of opening a business and/or tax incentives for R&D?					
Are there AI companies (5 or more) in the ecosystem?					
Are there policies to incentivise a steady flow of public and private funds to AI companies?					
Are any of the country's universities participating in AI research including public-private-academia partnerships (public sector brings data and the mandate, private brings the tech)?					
TOTAL SCORE:					