



AI Watch

3rd Peer-Learning Workshop on the use and impact of AI in the public sector

Analysis of the National Strategies on AI in the Public Sector

Colin van Noordt

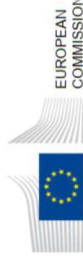
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External Expert, AI Watch*

24 June 2021

Joint
Research
Centre

National AI Strategies

- Revised European Action Plan: Make the public sector a trailblazer for using AI
 - High-impact area for AI
 - Contribute to better public services
 - First mover role in adopting secure, trustworthy and sustainable AI
- Development of National AI Strategies
 - Part of the Coordinated Action Plan
 - To coordinate and share implementation measures on AI



Brussels, 21.4.2021
COM(2021) 205 final
ANNEX

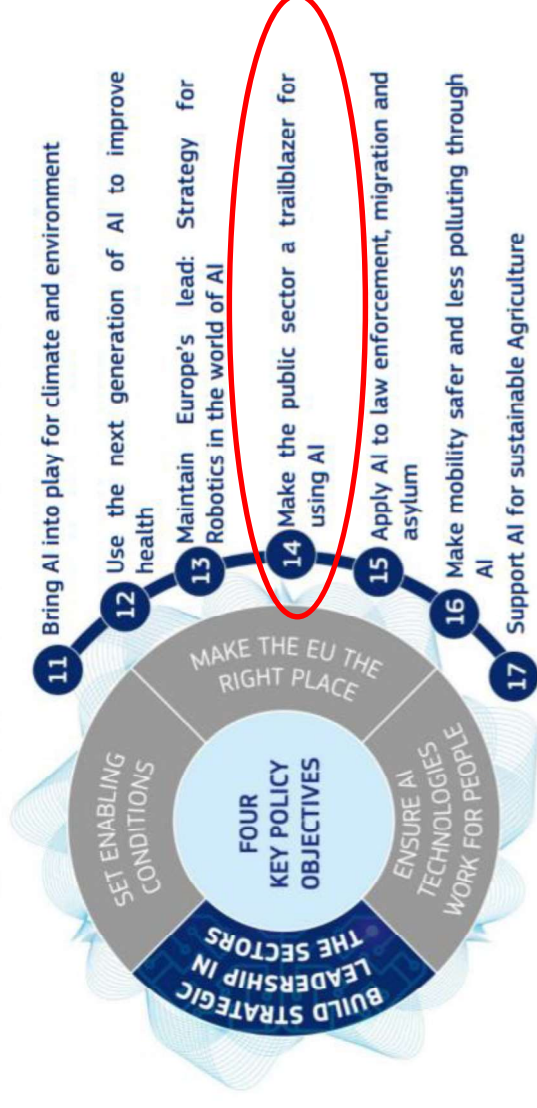
ANNEXES

to the

Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the European Council, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions

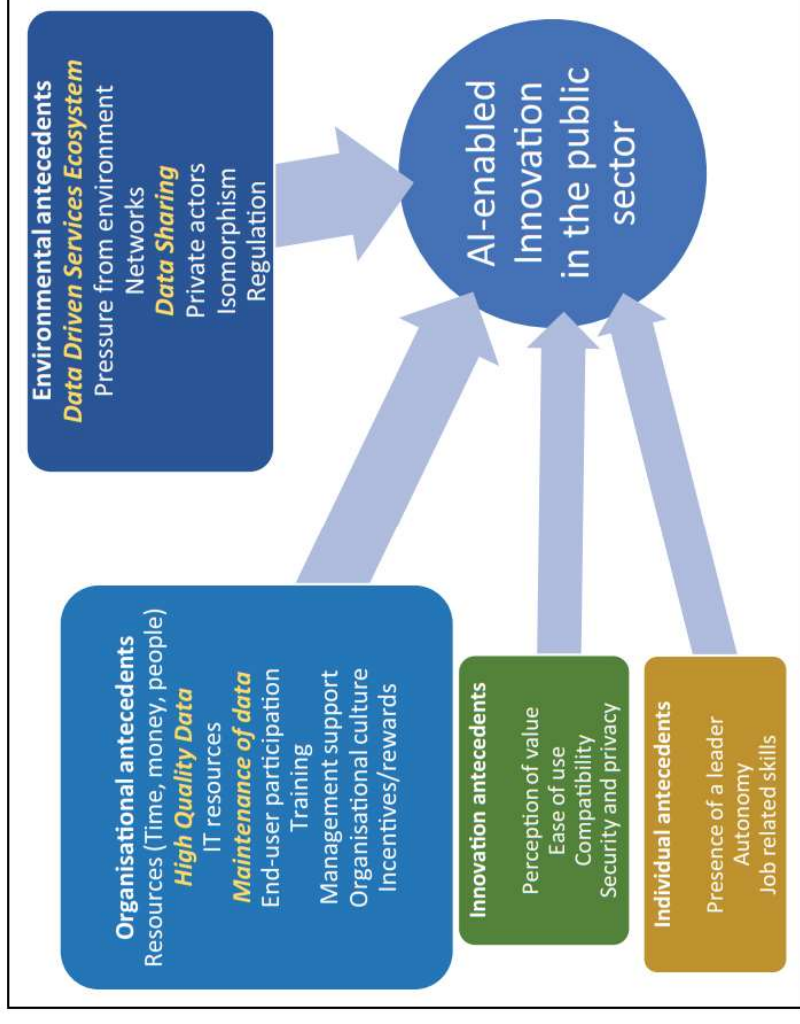
Fostering a European approach to Artificial Intelligence

OUR KEY PROPOSALS TO BUILD STRATEGIC LEADERSHIP



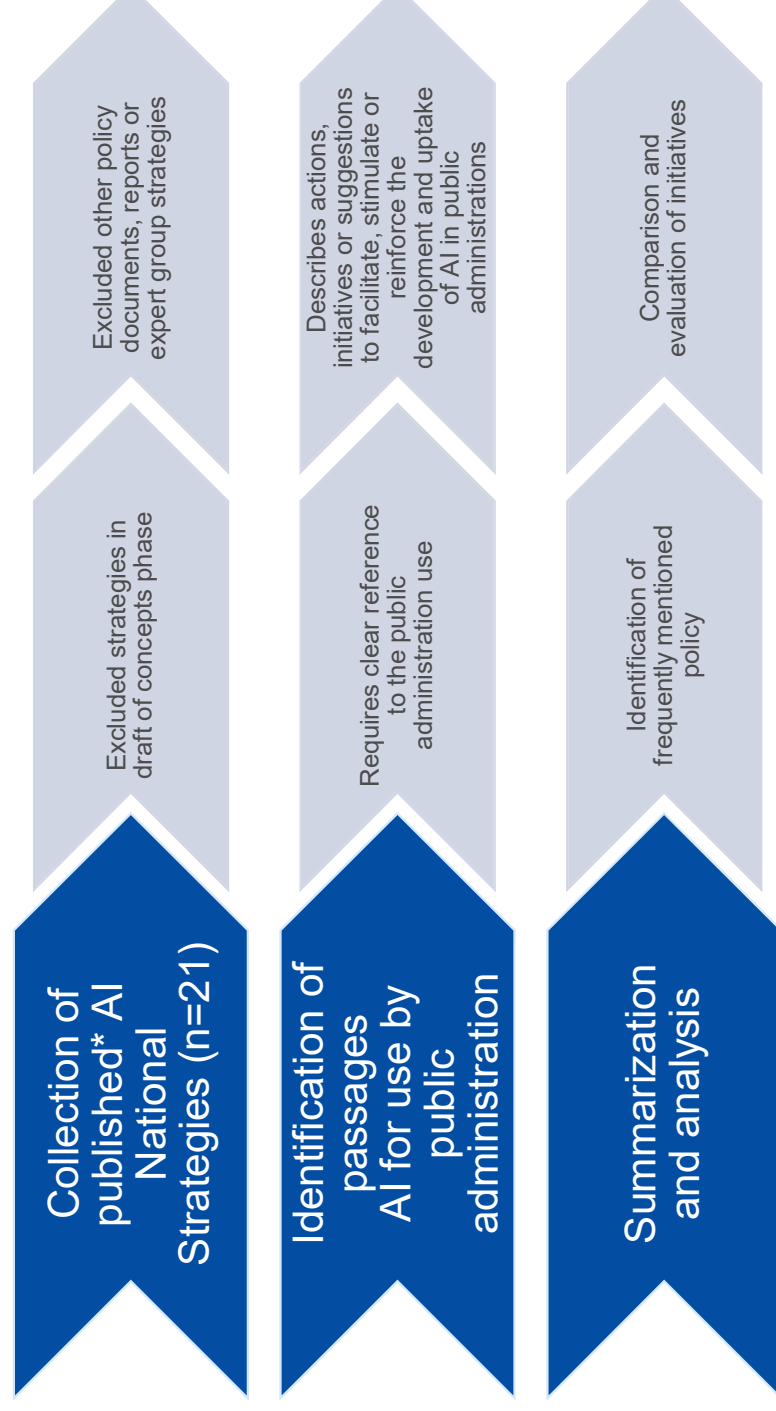
Barriers limiting AI in government

- **Technological challenges**
 - Data barriers; poor data quantity, quality, collection or governance
- **Legal barriers**
 - Privacy regulation or lack of mandate
 - Procurement regulation
- **Ethical barriers**
 - Legally justifiable development and use
- **Societal barriers**
 - Legitimacy challenges of using AI
- **Societal barriers**
 - Trust by citizens in use of AI
 - Lack of digital and AI-related skills



Antecedents to AI-enabled public sector innovation, in: van Noordt & Misuraca, 2020

Analysing national AI strategies



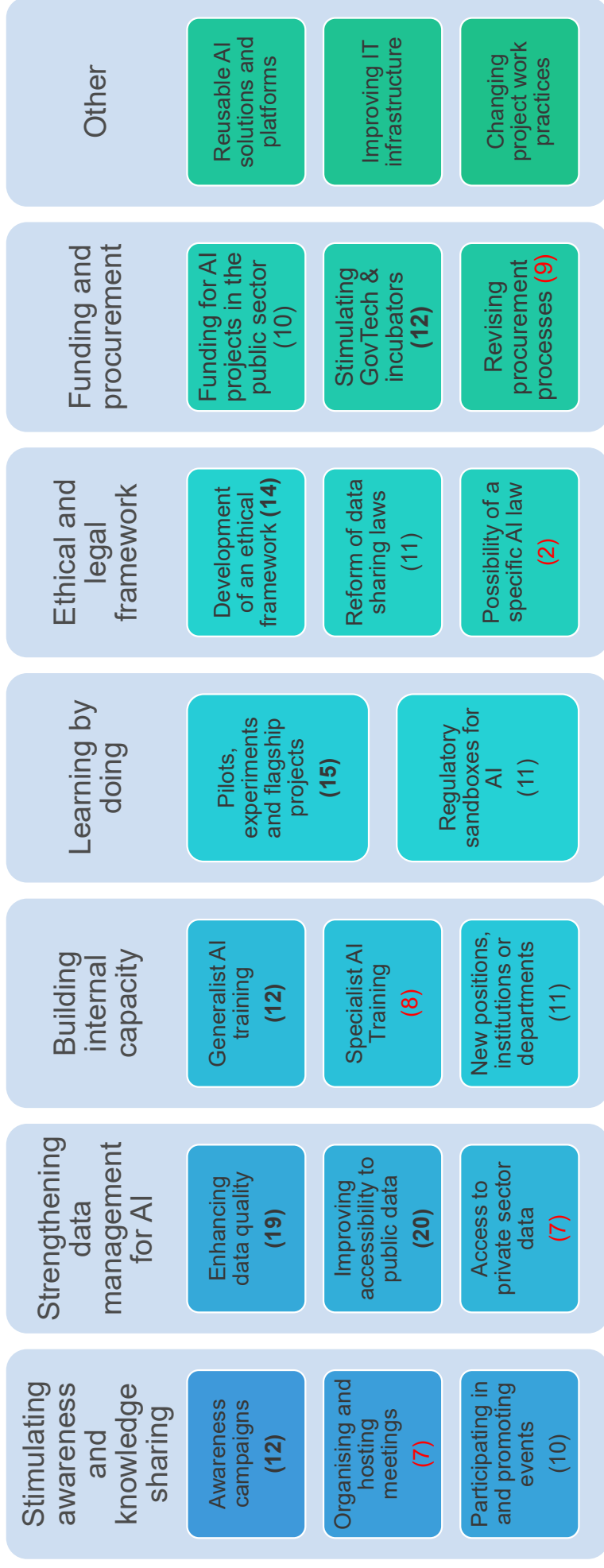
*As of April 2021, there are 21 countries which have published their national AI strategies: Bulgaria, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, The Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Slovakia, Spain, Sweden, and the United Kingdom.

Insights

- Potential for AI in the public sector often acknowledged in strategies
- **The extent and scope of actions to facilitate AI in public sector vary**
 - On average, **9% of the strategy document text** describes actions related to public sector AI
- Sometimes unclear if strategies describe ‘wishes’ or active implementation measures
- Growing levels of ambition



Overview of actions and frequency (n=21)



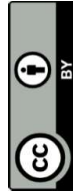
Lessons learned

- **Too strong focus on data-related aspects**
 - Organisational factors and resources needed for AI may be overlooked
- **Close the ‘gap’ between the private and the public sector**
 - Strategies describe many more actions to facilitate at the private sector than public sector
- **Improving and boosting public procurement for AI is promising**
 - However, a successful AI procurement still requires **internal capacity and skills**. Focus on supply and demand side of the procurement process.
- **More funding for AI in the public sector is needed**
 - Not just for **research and development of AI**, but for **piloting and introducing organisational changes**
- **Public administrations should go beyond existing ethical and legal standards**
 - Provide **ethical and legal guidance** for civil servants on AI development, procurement and deployment

Open research questions

- Are there **other initiatives** to improve the development and uptake of AI in the public sector? Please let us know!
- What is the **status of the plans** as presented in the strategy? Are these initiatives ongoing or have already ended?
- What is the **effectiveness of these actions** in overcoming the barriers to public sector AI? Could you share experiences and examples?
- **What else** may be required to overcome the other barriers to AI in the public sector?

Thank you!



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