



# The Future in 2021: how tech-driven are public sector organisations?

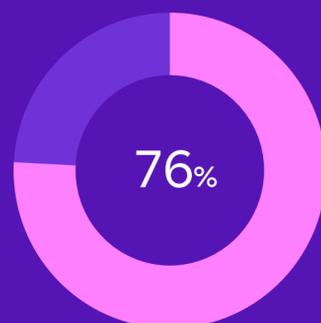
## Inside public sector leaders' approach to emerging tech

As part of our latest [The Future in 2021](#) survey, we've interviewed leaders from public sector organisations in the UK about their tech adoption plans. Specifically, we asked them about 14 emerging technologies, ranging from 5G to AI and SD-WAN. And how – or if – they fit into their short and long-term business strategies. Here are our main findings.

### 1. Tech adoption is growing in the public sector

**76% of leaders from the public sector told us that they've adopted at least one of the 14 technologies.**

It's great to see that the public sector is increasingly investing in tech. Especially in essential solutions like 5G. But this should be just a first step towards greater adoption. Our survey found that the public sector has two main priorities: supporting flexible working and reducing operational costs. Technology is crucial to achieving both. And with the UK rollout of 5G still well underway, more opportunities will no doubt arise in the future.

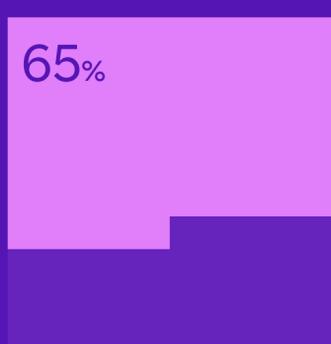


### 2. Long-term investment is on the cards for many leaders

**65% of public sector organisations are planning to invest in at least one emerging tech over the next five years.**

After a year spent mainly focusing on short-term goals, leaders are starting to plan for their next steps. In our survey, public sector leaders were the most likely to select 'lack of understanding', 'too expensive' and 'financial climate' as key challenges standing in the way of their tech adoption. Legacy infrastructure was also often mentioned.

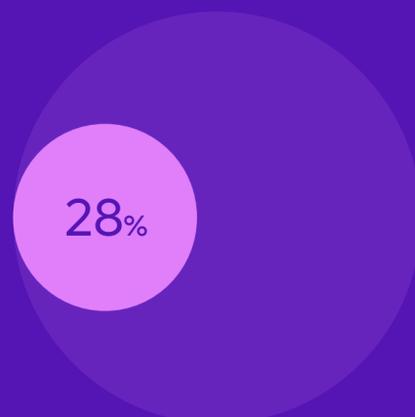
In partnership with Cisco, we've created a guide to help you overcome these barriers. Our [digital transformation playbook](#) is packed with advice on how to build a business case for new tech adoption. And includes tips on how to gain buy-in from stakeholders and make the most of your investment.



### 3. Lack of tech understanding stands in the way of investment

**28% of those interviewed are not investing in emerging technologies because they don't know what they can do, or don't fully understand them.**

Our survey found that leaders who are aware of a specific technology are keen to invest in them. So the fact that a third of our respondents are shying away from it is a huge missed opportunity. This is where we can help. Technology vendors and partners are a great resource when it comes to choosing a solution and implementing it. What's more, we've also created a [series of videos](#) about AI, 5G and cyber-security. Find out how they can benefit your business from our BT experts.

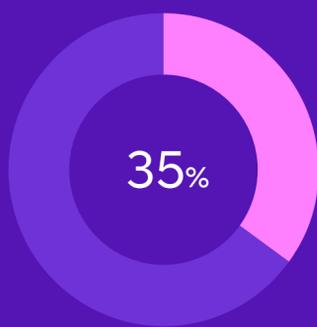


### 4. Leaders recognise there is a skills gap when it comes to technology

**35% of our panel told us that they're facing a shortage of skilled technology professionals that could hinder their performance.**

Skills shortages are a key concern for many of the business leaders we spoke to. But this should be seen as an opportunity rather than a challenge. A chance for the public sector to rethink the entire employee experience – as a means to both retaining staff and recruiting new skilled professionals.

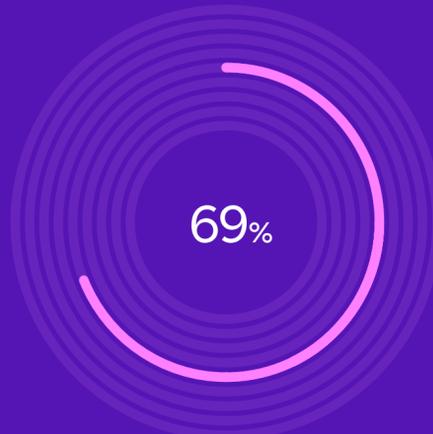
Technology can help them achieve that. Take the [University of Stirling](#) for example. With support from BT, they created a 'living laboratory' that uses 5G and IoT sensors to reduce the labour-intensive time spent on manual inspections. And ultimately improve efficiency.



### Cyber-security remains a key issue for public sector leaders

**69% of our leaders believe that cyber-security is more of a concern compared to last year.**

Public sector organisations typically deal with highly sensitive data, so they're naturally concerned about potential breaches. And with the pandemic shifting work to personal computers, exposure is higher than ever. Again, this is something that tech vendors and partners like BT can help with. Whether you need help choosing the right solution, or to outsource to a Managed Security Service, we're here to help make sure your business is protected.



## Conclusion

It's been a challenging year for the public sector, but there are encouraging signs of recovery. Lots of organisations have already started to embrace new technologies and are now including them in their long-term plans. But as they look at the coming years, many still need support in both understanding these technologies and making sure that they're fully embraced. That's where we want to help. We recently created a range of resources designed to help businesses better understand the potential of emerging technologies and how to use them.

Find out more here: <https://business.bt.com/insights/the-future-in-2021>