



## Twilio Research Finds 88% of Government Organizations Rate Their Citizen Engagement as Good or Excellent, but Only 44% of Citizens Agree

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*Twilio's Connected Government Report shows that most public organizations have implemented AI solutions, but brings to light an "AI transparency illusion"*

SAN FRANCISCO--(BUSINESS WIRE)--Jul. 23, 2026-- Research from Twilio (NYSE: TWLO), the infrastructure for customer engagement in the AI era, shows a stark perception gap in the public sector: while 88% of government organizations rate their citizen engagement as good or excellent, only 44% of citizens agree. [The Connected Government Report](#) (2026) shows that while public sector agencies are confident in their digital services, citizens report fewer tangible benefits from digital interactions than in previous years. The research explores critical priorities for public sector digital engagement as agencies transition from basic digitization to connected, meaningful communication.

The findings come as AI adoption in government continues to rapidly accelerate. The data shows 97% of public sector organizations have implemented at least one AI use case, and the average number of use cases has increased 50% since 2024. Additionally, while AI is expanding rapidly, few trust it, creating a critical confidence gap as agencies scale intelligent automation.

As part of the research, Twilio categorized public sector organizations into three maturity levels based on their level of conversational digital engagement, personalization, use of citizen data, and cross-department data sharing. These were broken down into three levels: beginners (22% of respondents), developing (50%), and leaders (28%). Digital leaders communicate in ways that are coordinated, personalized, and two-way, sharing data across departments and agencies. These leaders are also significantly more likely to use AI operationally to meet citizen needs.

Additional insights from the report include:

- **Digital transformation has a clear, measurable payoff for public sector organizations.** Public sector organizations that scored highest on digital maturity hit 70% of their engagement strategy goals last year, compared to just 51% for agencies on the beginner end of digital maturity. The differentiator is not just operational focus, but a potent combination of foundational technology adoption backed by a cohesive, cross-agency strategy.
- **A strong consensus exists between public sector leaders and citizens to expand digital channels, but deployment gaps remain.** A striking 89% of organizations say citizens want expanded communication options, and 82% of citizens agree, but important gaps persist. For day-to-day communications, email is a massive unmet need for citizens craving proactive reminders with 65% of citizens preferring email for appointment reminders and deadlines, yet only 58% of public sector organizations use email for these communications. More urgently, over half of citizens (55%) prefer text and SMS for emergency alerts, yet less than half of agencies (48%) currently deliver them, revealing a critical lapse in communication opportunity when timing is most important.
- **A unified digital engagement strategy is the single biggest growth opportunity for public sector agencies.** Currently, just 8% of public sector organizations have a unified strategy in place, leaving a massive whitespace. Despite this, the payoff for breaking down departmental silos is immense, as 94% of organizations with a unified approach call it highly valuable, and 85% of citizens actively want a seamless, connected experience when interacting with government agencies.
- **AI adoption is accelerating quickly, but has outrun citizen trust.** Public sector AI use cases increased 50% between 2024 and 2026, but left an "AI transparency illusion" in their wake. 86% of organizations believe they are transparent about how AI uses citizen data, but only 50% of citizens actually agree.

The report also identifies what stands in the way. Organizations cite technical skills gaps, executive approval, legacy systems, and budget constraints as the top barriers to achieving their digital engagement goals, while lack of citizen trust in AI, data privacy and security, and regulatory compliance top the list of barriers to using AI in citizen engagement.

"Our latest research shows a clear inflection point and opportunity for the public sector. While agencies have done the heavy lifting of basic digitization, technological capabilities and citizen expectations are rising faster than governments can adapt," said Erin Reilly, Chief Social Impact Officer at Twilio. "To bridge this gap, agencies must focus on connecting existing tools into a unified strategy. As AI adoption accelerates, building trust with citizens must be designed directly into the citizen experience from day one."

The Connected Government Report is based on two blind online surveys commissioned by Twilio and conducted by Lawless Research between April and May 2026. The research surveyed 750 manager-level and above employees at US local, state, and federal organizations, alongside a parallel survey of 1,000 US adults who interact with public sector services through digital channels. The full report can be found at: <https://www.twilio.com/en-us/lp/connected-government-report-public-sector-digital-engagement-2026>.

### About Twilio

Twilio (NYSE: TWLO) is the infrastructure for customer engagement in the AI era. By combining global communications, memory, and AI orchestration with identity, governance, and observability, Twilio enables businesses to deliver continuous, contextual, personal, and secure conversations across every channel and participant—human or AI.

Across 180+ countries, hundreds of thousands of the most innovative companies—from the Fortune 500 to startups—and millions of developers, rely

on Twilio's global platform across messaging, voice, email, and beyond, to power trusted customer experiences that drive real results. For more information about Twilio visit [www.twilio.com](https://www.twilio.com).

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