

Artificial Intelligence Strategy

6/10

SOVEREIGNTY SCORE

Prime Minister Mark Carney and Artificial Intelligence and Digital Innovation Minister Evan Solomon released the government's national artificial intelligence strategy

While the strategy makes several important commitments that will support Canadian firms and reduce our reliance on foreign hyperscalers, it fails to provide an overarching governance plan and to justify how it provides value to Canadians.

June 4, 2026



SOVEREIGNTY BY DESIGN

The “AI for All” strategy gets a 6/10 on the Canadian Shield Institute’s Sovereignty Score.

On June 4, 2026, Prime Minister Mark Carney and Artificial Intelligence and Digital Innovation Minister Evan Solomon released the government’s national artificial intelligence strategy — “[AI for All](#).”

The document presents Canadians’ distrust and reticence to use AI as a national economic productivity concern, and the government is seeking to increase AI adoption through a mix of funding and new national policies.

With over \$2 billion in committed funding, the strategy includes measures for skills development, capital investment, and infrastructure development. The government is also promising a new national data privacy law to boost Canadians’ trust in the technology.

While the strategy makes several important commitments that will support Canadian firms and reduce our reliance on foreign hyperscalers, it fails to provide an overarching governance plan and to justify how it provides value to Canadians.

The “AI for All” strategy receives a 6/10 on the Sovereignty Score.

Sovereignty Score

Sovereignty: This section measures if and how the policy choice increases Canada's sovereignty and strategic autonomy.

Does the policy reduce dependence on foreign firms or diversify supply and value chains?

Yes – When the strategy is implemented, it will reduce our reliance on foreign firms by supporting Canadian AI champions and expanding sovereign national infrastructure — including networks, semiconductor and cloud capacity. However, the impact of these measures will depend on whether expanded infrastructure capacity continues to rely on foreign hyperscalers.

Does the policy put Canada in a stronger position to govern technology systems?

No – The AI strategy says that a future data governance law will be coming, to build trust and protect Canadians from the potential harms of data abuse, but the strategy does not include details of what the legislation will entail.

Shield will score the privacy and online harms bills when they come out, but until then, the strategy lacks clarity on how the technology will be meaningfully governed. Other commitments in the strategy — a Trusted AI Certification Program and supporting domestic standards-setting capacity and unlocking the value of data — demonstrate that the government is thinking about governance, but those ideas are not fully developed.

Does the policy enhance Canadian national security and industrial capacity?

Yes – Seeking to shift some essential compute capacity away from reliance on foreign hyperscalers enhances our resilience and national security. The strategy also explicitly aims to increase our industrial capacity in specific sectors, like chip manufacturing.

Does the policy lead to greater competition and broader market participation, and avoid further entrenching monopoly power or market concentration?

Yes - The strategy includes several measures designed to support Canadian small- and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) and invest in innovative Canadian firms, which will likely reduce our reliance on foreign firms and create more domestic opportunities. The strategy also talks about promoting open-source AI models, which could also support greater competition. However, it will be essential that a diversity of Canadian companies are supported and can access government procurement channels.

At the same time, the \$700 million top-up to the Sovereign Compute Access Fund risks only subsidizing access to hyperscaler tools for Canadian SMEs, which will further entrench the dominant AI providers.

Does the policy support the development and growth of Canadian innovation?

Yes – The policy provides \$500 million in new funding to Canadian firms through the Tech Growth Fund, which is designed to provide scaling capital. The government is also talking about using strategic procurement to support Canadian companies.

Economic Prosperity: This section measures how the policy delivers economic growth, and how it shapes the Canadian economy.

Does the policy lead to the generation of intangible assets or economic value that is primarily retained by Canadian firms or public entities?

Yes – Canada is attempting to retain economic value and intellectual property by addressing one of the largest avenues for IP loss to foreign jurisdictions — a lack of market capital to scale and sustain firms here in Canada. The government will do this by potentially taking direct investment stakes in “national champion” AI companies. The strategy also contemplates a mechanism for taking profits from these investments and reinvesting the money in other Canadian AI startups.

Does the policy create, sustain or improve quality jobs in Canada?

No – The “AI for All” strategy projects “over 250,000 new AI-relevant jobs” by 2031 and promises “up to 90,000 AI-related job opportunities” through multiple programs. However, beyond direct government involvement, the avenues for quality job creation remain speculative and vague, and the strategy fails to seriously address the possibility of job losses resulting from AI adoption in Canadian workplaces.

Does the policy increase skill utilization or broaden the skill base of Canadian workers?

Yes – The strategy aims to enhance the skill base of Canadians through the creation of a National AI Literacy Initiative, implementing AI literacy programs in post-secondary and K-12 institutions, and seeking to provide personal AI agents for students in post-secondary. To translate this broadened skill base of Canadians into skills utilization, the federal government is creating an AI-powered job placement matching system through the Canada Job Bank.

Is the policy designed to ensure that economic benefits create shared prosperity?

No – The strategy rests on the core assumption that AI adoption and education will inherently lead to productivity gains and prosperity. The strategy includes policies to increase AI literacy and create avenues for open access to AI tools, but without a clear roadmap for how this will translate into broad economic benefit, there is no guarantee that adoption will actually create shared economic prosperity.

Does the policy increase affordability and deliver pro-social benefits to Canadians?

No – Canada will promote the development and adoption of AI tools, but the idea that AI adoption leads to affordability for consumers is shaky at best. While AI tools may help public service and healthcare delivery, such pro-social benefits will be highly contingent upon the specific implementation. Absent these details, it cannot be assumed that the AI strategy as it is will provide either affordability or social benefits to Canadians.

About The Canadian Shield Institute for Public Policy

The Canadian Shield Institute is a next-generation policy studio focused on developing Canada's sovereignty and driving economic transformation. We work across infrastructure, industry, and innovation to confront systemic risks, retain economic value, and build the domestic capacity Canada needs to thrive. Our goal is a more prosperous, resilient, and independent future for all Canadians

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