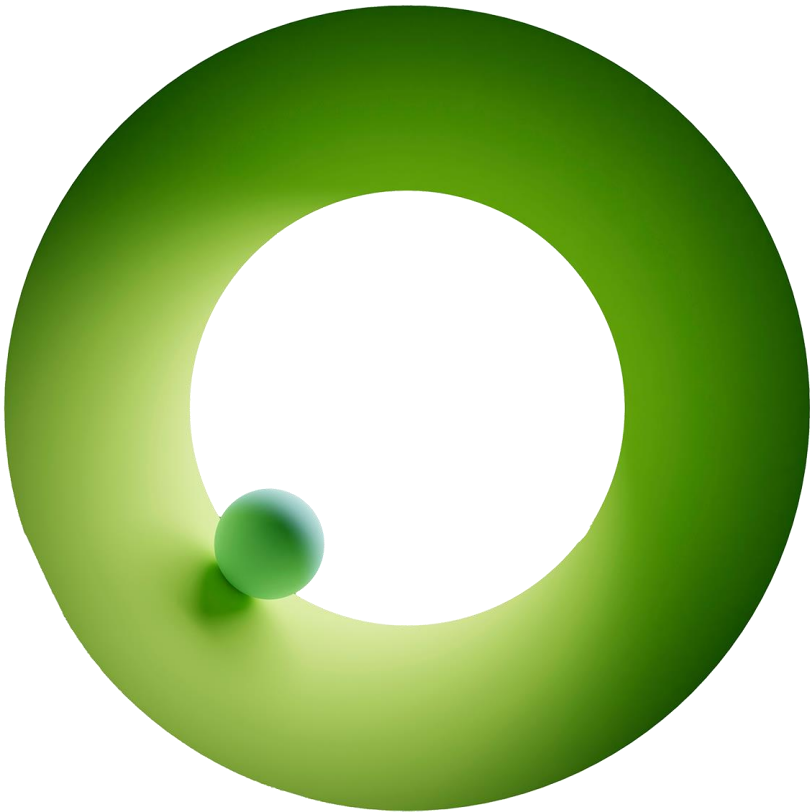




# Governments recommitting to delivering their promises

Where does Switzerland stand?

June 2025



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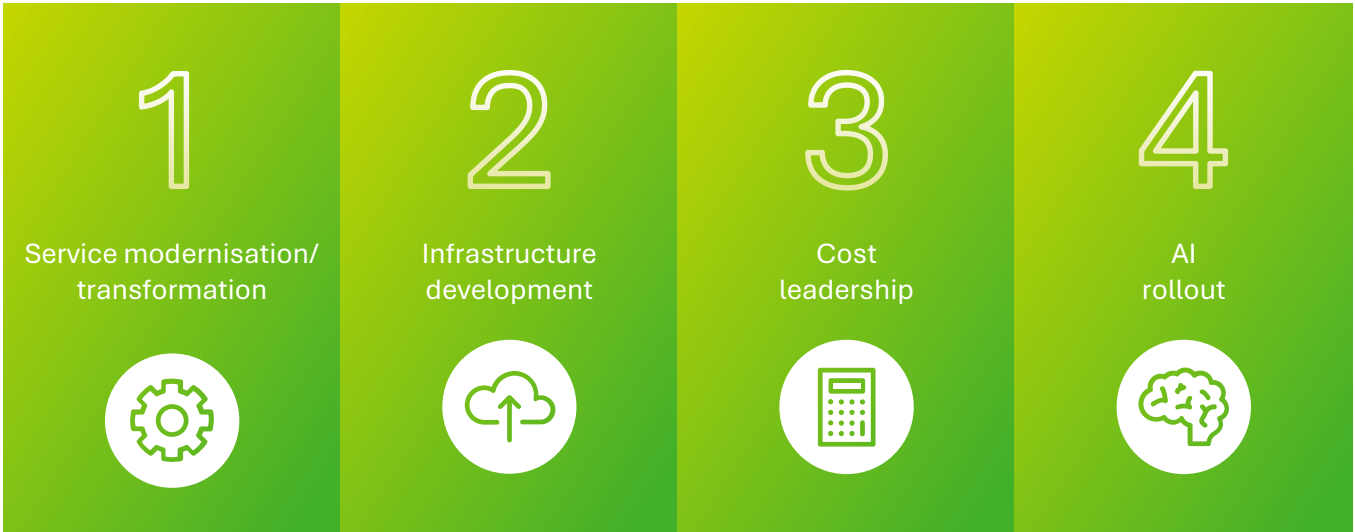
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## Four global trends with impact on the public sector in Switzerland

Deloitte recently identified the main trends reflecting governments’ recommitment to delivering their promises in their global Government Trends 2025 report. In light of citizens today expecting more as the gap between what is and what could be becomes greater every year, the global focus is on delivering innovative services, eliminating inefficiency and delivering a better tomorrow.

Nine trends were identified: Cost leadership, AI rollout, Reducing red tape, Service modernisation/transformation, Infrastructure development, Quality of life, Energy-resilient future, Jobs of tomorrow and Space development growth.

With this global view in mind, Deloitte Switzerland considered the role of these specific trends for the public sector in Switzerland and found four trends that are of particular relevance:



These four trends were discussed in-depth with digital government experts to assess where Swiss government and public administration stand and how they can further progress and deliver on their promises.





## Service modernisation/transformation – Switzerland made progress, but more transformation is needed

Governments globally have started to transform inefficient, rigid institutions through innovation, technology and agility, to enable effective, transparent and responsive solutions. In response to growing societal demands and the need for greater public trust, governments are recommitting to delivering on their promises through transformative action. There is a renewed focus on meeting citizen's expectations in a fast-changing world. This transformation is not only external but also deeply internal, requiring governments to re-engineer how they operate and deliver key services.

*“Deep transformation we see in other countries at this stage is something we only observe in some areas or sectors in Switzerland, but not across the entire government landscape. We hope that programmes such as DigiSanté will truly support a deep transformation, in this example how we digitise the healthcare ecosystem in Switzerland.”*

Rolf Brügger, Partner and Government & Public Services Industry Leader at Deloitte

The Swiss government has made good progress on national, cantonal and municipal levels by making many services faster, cheaper and better. There are examples of citizen services on national level and in several cantons and municipalities being designed to offer more seamless and intuitive experiences that

minimize frustration and enhance the citizen experience – for example, citizens' user accounts/apps which reduce waiting times and cut costs through process improvements.<sup>1</sup>

Such service modernization, however, remains the exception to the rule and in most instances external modernization is in contrast to the time-consuming internal processes embedded in many public administrations. By international comparison, Switzerland still lags in key digital services offered by governments globally.

For example, the national e-ID<sup>2</sup> is finally expected by 2026, but e-voting<sup>3</sup> still remains in trial phases in a few cantons and legislation of electronic patient records (EPR)<sup>4</sup> is under revision. There is much more to be done and it is clear that deep internal transformation is required.

*“While digitalisation in public administration is happening in Switzerland, it is not necessarily on the level of deep transformation and innovation. Harmonization and automation of key processes is often lacking.”*

Prof. Dr. Christian Geiger, Assistant Professor for Digital Government, Innovation & Transformation at the Berner Fachhochschule (BFH)

Modernizing high-touch services will not just be about service delivery, it will also be about rebuilding trust and engagement between governments and the communities they serve. Data sharing between different government entities remains especially difficult because of the federal structure. Processes for standardization and harmonization of data across the layers of the public administration exist but are at different stages. The 'once only' principle that enables citizens to provide certain details to the authorities just once, still remains at pilot project stage.<sup>5</sup>

One Big Challenge according to Prof. Guenduez remains the prevailing culture/mindset.

*"Switzerland has a tradition of providing reliable and efficient public services. At the same time, digitalization opens up additional opportunities for user-friendly services, more efficient processes, and better collaboration. We should make more targeted use of this potential."*

Prof. Dr. Ali A. Guenduez, Assistant Professor of Digital Government, Head Smart Government Lab, University of St.Gallen (HSG)





## Infrastructure development – More technology investments are needed to keep infrastructure future-ready

Spurred by evolving economic and social dynamics, governments globally are pouring trillions into revamping their infrastructure to be more digital, resilient, inclusive and future-ready. To deliver this level of broad infrastructure transformation at the necessary speed and scale, governments must control costs and handle the financial risks in funding these projects.

*“We need to be bolder with our transformation goals and pursue it together across the federal levels. This should include the courage to jointly sponsor, finance and run digitization projects within the same federal level – for example, across departments within the Federal Government.”*

Rolf Brügger, Partner and Government & Public Services Industry Leader at Deloitte

They also need to manage competing priorities of different stakeholders and cultivate the talent required to execute vast and often highly technical infrastructure transformations.

Switzerland is making some progress with new digital technology infrastructure. For example, the announced plan of the Federal Office of Information Technology, Systems and Telecommunication (FOITT) to set up the Swiss Government Cloud (SGC)<sup>6</sup> by 2032 will be a much-needed investment in the digital infrastructure of Switzerland.

New hybrid multi-cloud infrastructure tailored to the needs of administrative organizations could also potentially benefit cantons and cities. Some cantons and municipalities have already started developing their cloud guidelines and strategies – for example, Zurich and Berne, with more expected to follow suit.

Building digital infrastructure within a federal structure is not easy – however, federalism also has the potential to foster innovation.

*“Federalism and digitalization are not a contradiction but combining them is challenging. When it comes to digital infrastructure, thinking in terms of small projects rather than large contexts still dominates. To make federalism fit for the future, we need common platforms and scalable solutions.”*

Prof. Dr. Ali A. Guenduez, Assistant Professor of Digital Government, Head Smart Government Lab, University of St. Gallen (HSG)

For example, more centralized digital solutions that are provided for cantons and municipalities in an open-sourced and modular way or cluster solutions and digital infrastructure developed by all or at least several cantons together should be encouraged. Collaboration and coordination will result ultimately in better digital infrastructure and digital solutions.





## Cost leadership – Focus on efficient service provision in light of announced cost saving by Swiss government

Governments globally are cutting costs and boosting operational efficiency – for example by accelerating permit processes, managerial flexibility and generative AI, amongst other initiatives. Across many countries the biggest components of government expenditure include social benefits, operating costs and employee compensation. Traditional cost saving approaches are no longer keeping up with the growing demands and complexities of modern public service delivery.

*“AI and automation are often associated with high expectations. However, the crucial question is whether we correctly identify the problems and whether the technology actually offers solutions for them.”*

[Prof. Dr. Ali A. Guenduez, Assistant Professor of Digital Government, Head Smart Government Lab, University of St.Gallen \(HSG\)](#)

To address this, governments are rethinking their structures and adopting an ecosystem view. This involves breaking down silos, fostering better integration, embracing next-gen technology and implementing better oversight processes. The focus is on significantly reducing costs while enhancing efficiency. In Switzerland, investments by the public sector are set off against the large savings goals announced by the Swiss government in its proposed relief package 27<sup>9</sup>. The proposal is intended to relieve the federal budget by 2.7 to 3.6 billion francs from 2027. There are 59 proposed measures to bring it back into balance.

In light of this new and ambitious cost saving initiative, efficient service provision is increasingly critical for government entities in Switzerland. The Federal Statistical Office (FSO) is just one example of a government entity that already has been asked to reprioritize their services, cut back their offerings and work with less personnel resources – because it can no longer afford the costs.<sup>10</sup>

However, another way of achieving cost benefits is using a mix of technological and business tools like human centred design or emerging technologies like AI to streamline internal government processes and external services, while, at the same time, still offering better and faster services to businesses and citizens. According to Prof. Guenduez, AI and automation hold huge potential for cost leadership – because successful AI implementation results in efficiency and cost savings and could maybe even help to harmonise the interfaces between the different levels of government.

*“AI is here to stay, and it will have a profound effect on public administration especially when it comes to efficiency.”*

[Prof. Dr. Christian Geiger, Assistant Professor for Digital Government, Innovation & Transformation at the Berner Fachhochschule \(BFH\)](#)

In addition, it could also help in “Addressing the skills shortage that the public administration is facing as more and more employees retire in the near future.”





## AI rollout – Taking advantage of AI to support and deliver on public services promises

Governments around the world are exploring ways to take advantage of generative AI. To truly capitalise on AI's potential, governments need to embed AI in government workflows, build AI capacity and develop trustworthy AI. While recognising the transformative potential of AI, governments realise that the value of that potential can only be realised by adopting AI at scale. To effectively scale AI, government organisations need to find ways to measure mission outcomes and give the workforce wide access to the technology.

Like many other countries, the Swiss Federal government is developing an AI strategy as part of its broader Digital Switzerland strategy.<sup>11</sup> In addition to the Federal Government level, we also see this at the cantonal level (for example Aargau has just published its AI strategy).<sup>12</sup> Overall, the aim is to balance innovation and responsible AI development, by focusing on making Switzerland an AI hub while safeguarding fundamental rights and building public trust. However, a stronger focus on prioritizing high value AI use cases, developing AI adoption strategies and building AI talent is still needed.

*“Much more digital data and AI literacy will be required for the future.”*

[Prof. Dr. Christian Geiger, Assistant Professor for Digital Government, Innovation & Transformation at the Berner Fachhochschule \(BFH\)](#)

According to, Prof. Geiger, more digital data and AI literacy will be required for the future. There will also be much more communication between the decision makers in public administration and the subject matter experts who know the potential of digitalisation and new technologies. It is important to remember that government is a unique environment and requires unique scaling, different from its commercial counterparts.

Prof. Dr. Christian Geiger thinks that especially AI, when applied in the right context, has huge potential to deliver unique solutions:

*“When AI is not just used for simple information gathering, sharing and displaying – for example, AI chatbot that informs citizens about waste disposal schedule – but can also support or take on specialist procedures – for example, help with the assessment of tax returns – only then will you get the real value-add and higher productivity that AI offers.”*

[Prof. Dr. Christian Geiger, Assistant Professor for Digital Government, Innovation & Transformation at the Berner Fachhochschule \(BFH\)](#)

With this in mind, governments should focus on developing the necessary skills for an AI-driven future and leveraging AI to revolutionise workforce development.

AI powered learning platforms are scaling up training efforts and offering personalised experiences to a broader audience. This data-driven, AI-enhanced approach allows governments to better prepare their workforce for future job requirements and economic shifts.

*“I believe the main approach is to look at AI as a key technology we can leverage to expedite the service modernization and deep transformation that is already in progress. It has to be viewed as a key enabler to achieve our digitisation objectives and it has the potential to deeply transform how we produce and deliver public services.”*

Rolf Brügger, Partner and Government & Public Services Industry Leader at Deloitte

The majority of AI use cases will be infused via major platforms. In addition to talent, fundamental investments in infrastructure and platforms will be required.



# 02



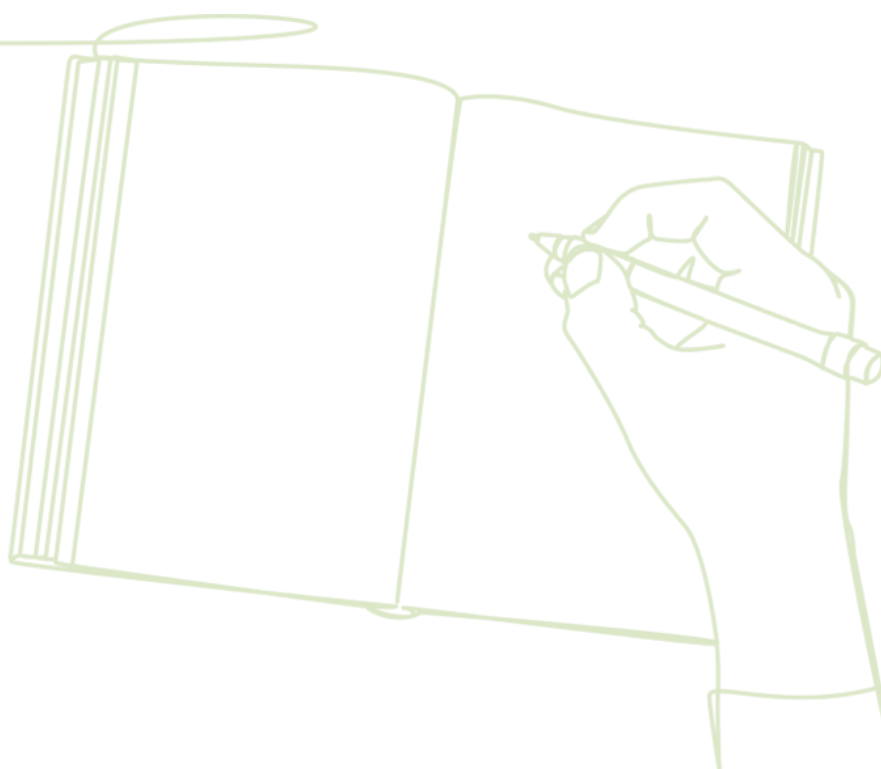
## Concluding remarks

While there has been progress in Switzerland, more needs to be done to actively transform Swiss public administrations through innovation and new technologies. Service modernisation has progressed, but deep transformation of organisations is lagging, with analogue processes still deeply embedded.

While most of these analogue processes and services have been working well, not all of them might be future-ready in light of potential economic shifts and changing demographics. The federal landscape means that the Federal Government, cantons and municipalities are at different points in their development of digital strategy and this impacts the scale and pace of technical infrastructure transformations.

Investments in innovation and new digital

technologies will also need to be offset against the ambitious cost saving goals announced by the Swiss government. In line with global trends, an AI strategy is being developed as part of the broader digital Switzerland strategy taking into account appropriate platforms and talent, and building public trust will be key while preparing for the transformative impacts of generative AI.



There are four steps that the governmental organisations across the federal layers in Switzerland should consider while facilitating successful Deep transformation, Infrastructure development, Cost leadership and AI rollout:

## STEPS

1

### Think big and be bolder

Small project thinking still dominates in Switzerland, but when it comes to deep transformation and new infrastructure development, thinking big is more appropriate. Government entities need to rethink how they can create value not just today, but also in the future. Thinking big and setting bold ambitions that go beyond incremental change can help to unlock the value of transformation, free hidden opportunities and generate new value.

2

### Build digital knowledge and mindset

Digital knowledge is often lacking in many Swiss government entities or concentrated in a few people. More ongoing education, upskilling and training is required. There is also a need to generally increase the digital mindset across public administration. Bold moves in digitalisation and transformation will only be successful, when people have the right mindset, digital skills and project competencies.

3

### Cooperate broadly

Cooperation is not only needed within Swiss government entities, but also across different federal levels. Good communication and coordination between decision makers and subject matter experts is key, when planning, building and running digital projects successfully. Broader federal government level, inter-cantonal or regional cooperation would increase synergies, reduce cost and drive transformation, while reducing the dyssynergies that result from everybody developing their own digital solution.

4

### Embrace innovation and new technologies fully

Innovation is not just about incremental improvements on existing processes, systems or services. Innovation is evolving faster than ever, requiring government entities to also embrace new technologies, specifically AI. AI is not just a passing trend but will redefine how the public sector is processing information, engaging with citizens and delivering services in the future. Further driving AI use cases, developing AI adoption strategies and building AI talent will be essential.

# 03



## Interviews





**Rolf Brügger**

**Partner**

Government & Public Services  
Industry Leader  
Deloitte

**Deloitte:** How do you see the progress of Switzerland with service modernisation and deep transformation with innovation, technology and agility to enable effective, transparent and responsive governance?

**Rolf Brügger:** It is generally accepted that Switzerland is not a leader in service modernisation and deep transformation. We are not known for spearheading trends in public services and administration. We rather watch and observe, then take the best from the different approaches we we have seen to create an

efficient and effective model that works for us. A culture of slow and steady leads us to achieve the desired results. While we might be lagging in some global trends, once we adapt and tailor them to the Swiss context, we are quite successful.

**Deloitte:** What are the key challenges to drive service modernisation and achieve deep transformation in public administration in Switzerland?

**Rolf Brügger:** Overall, we need to be bolder with our transformation goals and pursue it together across the federal levels. This includes the courage to jointly sponsor, finance and run digitisation projects within the same federal level – for example, across departments within the Federal Government.

While it is always easier to do something on your own, this can create massive downstream dyssynergies specifically in the digitisation of government services. This can hinder meaningful modernisation and transformation in public administration.

Working more collaboratively and in a coordinated way will result in far better digitisation outcomes and public services in the long term. The deep transformation we see in other countries at this stage is something we only observe in some areas or sectors in Switzerland, but not across the entire government landscape. We hope that programmes such as DigiSanté will truly support a deep transformation, in this example how we digitise the healthcare ecosystem in Switzerland.

**Deloitte:** Can federalism actually work in a digital world? And who would be doing what? Who would be providing what?

**Rolf Brügger:** This is exactly what we have to achieve – digitizing the Swiss public administration within the opportunities and constraints of the federal model. Switzerland's answer to this challenge is the Digital Public Services I am convinced that it is a key instrument in driving digitisation within and across all federal levels in a meaningful way.



We conducted the first evaluation of the DVS last year, and our report indicated a number of key challenges and opportunities for the organisation – first and foremost, that there is a recognized will and need across federal levels and regions in Switzerland to have DVS driving the digitisation more forcefully and strategically, specifically for key projects. Optimisation potential within the current institutional framework needs to be identified, while at the same time developing new institutional instruments to increase the impact. This relates for example to standard development and interoperability in the areas of

basic services and data. These recommendations should be implemented.

**Deloitte:** What is the potential of AI and automation in service modernization and deep transformation and what role should governance play?

**Rolf Brügger:** I believe the main approach is to look at AI as a key technology we can leverage to expedite the service modernization and deep transformation that is already in progress. It has to be viewed as a key enabler to achieve our digitisation objectives and it has the potential to deeply transform how we produce and deliver

public services. Higher efficiency, better quality and improved experience are just some areas, where AI can elevate current services. The underlying asset of AI is data. If we want to truly transform public administration with AI, we need to be able to leverage data across all federal levels and organisations. Finding the right platforms and talent will be key. We need to cut through some of the red tape that blocks us from leveraging data in a variety of contexts. This might also mean more federal data privacy laws in certain areas, as opposed to different regulations for each Canton.



**Prof. Dr. Ali A. Guenduez**

**Assistant Professor of  
Digital Government**

Head Smart Government Lab  
University of St.Gallen (HSG)

**Deloitte:** How do you see the progress of Switzerland with service modernisation and deep transformation with innovation, technology and agility to enable effective, transparent and responsive governance?

**Prof. Dr. Ali A. Guenduez:**

Switzerland has a tradition of providing reliable and efficient public services. This is based on strong public services, clear procedures, and institutional continuity. At the same time, digitalization opens up additional opportunities for user-friendly services, more efficient processes, and better cooperation.

We should make more targeted use of this potential. Switzerland often ranks in the midfield in digitalization rankings, although the significance of these rankings varies depending on the methodology and selection of indicators. The important thing is that the administration, politicians, and citizens want digital transformation. There is broad support for this, even if the priority is not the same everywhere. And a lot is happening at all levels, at the federal, cantonal, and municipal levels. This federal breadth is a strength if we can bring it together more effectively, with greater cooperation and coordination, so that solutions can be scaled up. However, there are well-known obstacles to this: silo structures, unequal distribution of digital know-how with pockets of high expertise and areas with a need to catch up, too little data-oriented work, and highly busy employees, which is why projects often run “on top” of other tasks.

**Deloitte:** What are the key challenges to drive service modernisation and achieve deep transformation in public administration in Switzerland?

**Prof. Dr. Ali A. Guenduez:** The challenges are both structural and cultural in nature. Structural challenges often relate to a lack of skills and expertise, as well as digital leadership not yet being sufficiently established at management level. Limited financial and human resources are also a factor.

In addition, legal frameworks such as strict data protection regulations have a restrictive effect; Rigid organizational silos and unclear responsibilities prevent coordination, while outdated infrastructure, incompatible systems, and dependence on old technologies slow progress. Often, tight budgets also inhibit the central financing of larger projects, and it is not uncommon for the entire lifecycle to be given too little consideration, resulting in high operating costs after implementation.

Cultural challenges lie in deeply entrenched mindsets and habitual behavior patterns that leave little room for innovation. Risk aversion, hierarchical decision-making processes, and weak political coordination further complicate implementation. Added to this is a high workload with competing priorities.

Another problem is that projects are oftentimes driven by technical euphoria before the problems to be solved and the goals to be achieved have been clearly defined, which providers can exploit to sell solutions that do not always meet actual needs.

However, these barriers do not affect everyone to the same extent. The range of digital maturity is wide: some are already well positioned, while others are making slow progress.

**Deloitte:** Can federalism actually work in a digital world? And who would be doing what? Who would be providing what?

**Prof. Dr. Ali A. Guenduez:** Federalism and digitalization are not a contradiction but combining them is challenging. In Switzerland, there has often been a lack of a systematic approach, such as we see in large infrastructure projects like national highways or railways. When it comes to digital infrastructure, however, thinking in terms of small projects rather than large contexts still dominates. To make federalism digitally fit for the future, we need shared platforms and scalable solutions—like the ones we

see in the international GovStack initiative. There, digital building blocks for core functions like identity management or payments are standardized, designed to be interoperable, and provided in a modular way. Approaches like this could also be available to cantons and municipalities—harmonized, compatible, and expandable.

**Deloitte:** What is the potential of AI and automation in service modernization and deep transformation and what role should governance play?

**Prof. Dr. Ali A. Guenduez:** AI and automation are often associated with high expectations: greater efficiency, cost reductions, personalized services, faster processing, improved quality, and reduced workload for employees, to name just a few. With each new wave of digitalization triggered by new technologies, similar potential is promised. Of course, every technology has potential. However, the crucial question is whether we correctly identify the problems and whether the technology actually offers solutions for them. We are still in the early stages of AI. In practice, we see that phases of

euphoria are often followed by disillusionment. Many decision-makers are aware of this and are therefore looking for concrete examples that show how AI can be implemented in a way that makes organizational, technical, and legal sense and creates real added value.

Governance is therefore particularly important here. Expectations vary greatly: citizens accept AI when decisions are transparent, comprehensible, and fair; otherwise, the impression of arbitrariness arises.

Government action needs legitimacy. Authorities need political backing and sufficient time, personnel, and financial resources. Employees, in turn, need guidance in their day-to-day work; they want to know how they can use AI in practice without incurring legal or ethical risks.

Governance must therefore ensure trust and enable innovation – not through a flood of regulations, but through standards, reliable framework conditions, and enough leeway to find out how and where the technology can be used sensibly.



**Prof. Dr. Christian Geiger**  
**Assistant Professor of**  
**Digital Government**  
 Innovation & Transformation  
 Berner Fachhochschule (BFH)

**Deloitte:** How do you see the progress of Switzerland with service modernisation and deep transformation with innovation, technology and agility to enable effective, transparent and responsive governance?

**Prof. Dr. Christian Geiger:**  
 The Swiss public administration is well known for being very efficient in paper-based processes and public services. However, Switzerland does not always compare favourably in the digital space by

international comparison. A lot of the services are still mostly analogue but function well. For example – when I moved to Switzerland, I needed to physically register at the municipality's resident's registration office as a foreign national. It was mostly an analogue process but went relatively smoothly. When Switzerland was faced with increased immigration/asylum applications, the response was to not necessarily develop a digital solution but rather to continue analogue and employ more personnel to deal with higher demand.

While digitalisation in public administration is happening in Switzerland, it is not necessarily on the level of deep transformation and innovation. Harmonization and automation of key processes is often lacking. Digitalisation is still mainly understood as digital services.

**Deloitte:** What are the key challenges to drive service modernisation and achieve deep transformation in public administration in Switzerland?

**Prof. Dr. Christian Geiger:**  
 There is a lot of potential for automation and deep transformation of processes.

The questions are always 'Where do we want to start?' and 'What do we want to digitise?' Often, the decision makers in the public administration are not the right people to make that call because they do not communicate enough with the subject matter experts. The experts know the potential of digitalisation to solve problems, improve efficiency, increase agility etc. There is often a lack of technical competencies and skills within the public administration, so this mutual communication is key. Digital thinking needs to be embedded at leadership level and discussed with subject matter experts. Importantly, it will also need to be a culture change so that our public service employees are open to technological change.

Much more digital data and AI literacy will be required for the future. We also need to draw a distinction between 'digital' (the what) and 'IT' (the how) – what needs to be digitised and

how can we do it? Often, the time of decision makers in the public administration is mainly taken up with operational matters. There is minimal time for large scale digital projects to achieve deep transformation. There is also not enough focus on improving digital services end-to-end through better and more user-friendly processes. Overall, if IT and the business work more closely together more services could be transformed and modernised.

**Deloitte:** Can federalism actually work in a digital world? And who would be doing what? Who would be providing what?

**Prof. Dr. Christian Geiger:** Federalism is certainly not a disadvantage. It introduces more competition which can be very good when you want to foster innovation. If all decisions were made at national level and then cascaded top down, transformation would be very slow. For example – the digital eMovingCH platform that helps private persons/citizens to deregister and register in Switzerland when moving house, was developed in the Canton of Zurich and initially adopted only by a few cantons.

However, other cantons were drawn to it and adopted it and now the digital platform is supported across most cantons and many municipalities.

Another example would be the citizens' user accounts that were developed in the Cantons of Zug (eZug) and Schaffhausen (eID+). You need to have some pioneering and workable solutions on local levels first to push national development – for example AGOV, the Authentication service of the Swiss authorities that is now rolled out in more and more cantons.

**Deloitte:** What is the potential of AI and automation in service modernization and deep transformation and what role should governance play?

**Prof. Dr. Christian Geiger:** There is a lot of talk around AI in public administration. Because there are already so many applications in use in the work environment and personal life – for example, ChatGPT, Copilot etc. – adoption and acceptance of AI is expected to be much higher. The hype around AI is similar to the one around blockchain. However, AI is here to stay, and it will have a profound effect on

public administration especially when it comes to efficiency and addressing the skills shortage that the public administration is facing as more and more employees retire in the near future.

Automation already allows for more efficient and simplified processes and AI will further enhance this. However, the potential of AI when applied to specialist procedures will be really interesting. When AI is not just used for simple information gathering, sharing and displaying – for example, AI chatbot that informs citizens about waste disposal schedule – but also can support or take on specialist procedures – for example, help with the assessment of tax returns – only then will you get the real value-add and higher productivity that AI offers. When it comes to AI governance, it is important that data security and data protection/privacy is observed at each step of the process within the public administration.

# 04

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