AI and the Future of the Public Service

Summary

Toronto Metropolitan University's (TMU) leading policy think tank, *The Dias*, has released a landmark **report** on the impact of artificial intelligence on government employees at all levels.

The report finds that public service jobs face a significantly higher risk of AI-driven automation than the broader Canadian workforce (75% vs. 56%). But AI isn't just replacing tasks, it is reshaping job classifications, altering daily work routines, and redefining how public services are delivered.

The study stresses the need for strong human oversight, equitable access to AI tools and training, and ethical governance to ensure responsible adoption.

However, without targeted upskilling and reskilling, public service professionals will be left behind. These initiatives can only take place through stronger collaboration between the federal government, unions, and public institutions to safeguard workers while advancing innovation.

In an AI-driven economy, PIPSC must play a central role in protecting members' jobs and securing their future at the heart of Canada's public service.

Case study: Navigar & the IT Training Fund

Preparing members for the future of work is already well underway at PIPSC. In 2024, the IT Group secured $4.75 million to deliver training through Navigar and instructor-led programs. Currently, 40% of the group's 23,000 members have already activated and are using Navigar regularly.

This momentum demonstrates both the demand for and the effectiveness of targeted upskilling and reskilling initiatives. It also reinforces the report's warning: without scalable, sustained investment in training across all groups–not just IT–public service professionals risk being impacted as AI transforms their work.

Navigar and the Public Service

Navigar's success with the IT Group is just the beginning. For PIPSC members, Navigar is more than just an online training platform– it's a tool to help build the skills needed to thrive in a rapidly changing workplace. As AI and automation continue to reshape the public service, Navigar provides opportunities to build critical future-focused skills, from digital literacy and problem-solving to emerging areas like machine learning.

As the union representing professions highly affected by AI, PIPSC is uniquely positioned to safeguard members' interests–by pushing for strong protections, negotiating AI-focused training into collective agreements, and ensuring workers' voices guide adoption strategies.

Building on the success of the IT Training Fund, there is now an opportunity to scale this model across all PIPSC groups. Through Navigar, members can access curated training, AI literacy resources, and career transition tools (supported by real labour market data) to stay ahead of the changes reshaping the public service.