

2025

# Artificial Intelligence, Data, and Analytics Officers Artificial Intelligence Report



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### Methodology

In an online survey, conducted in summer 2025, we asked participants to provide information on their role structure and industry, alongside data on compensation including current base salary and bonus for the most recent fiscal year. All data is self-reported anonymously and in aggregate.

# Market context

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Across industries, organizations are racing to integrate artificial intelligence (AI) into their operations, but few would describe themselves as experts. Nearly every company is experimenting, often through multiple pilot programs or proofs of concept (POC), yet most still consider themselves in early implementation phases. The prevailing sentiment is one of collective learning: progress is real, but maturity remains elusive. In some cases, the drive to move quickly has led to setbacks, including litigation and compliance risks that have made many leaders more cautious about scaling AI too aggressively.

Governance models are evolving. Most organizations manage AI through centralized or hybrid structures where a central body defines guardrails, though regional differences persist. US companies tend to favor hybrid models, while European organizations lean more toward business-unit-led approaches, reflecting their more conservative regulatory environments and lower appetite for rapid upskilling. Data quality, security, and compliance continue to be the most consistent barriers to scale, underscoring that even as AI reshapes business priorities, few organizations have yet figured out how to operationalize it sustainably.

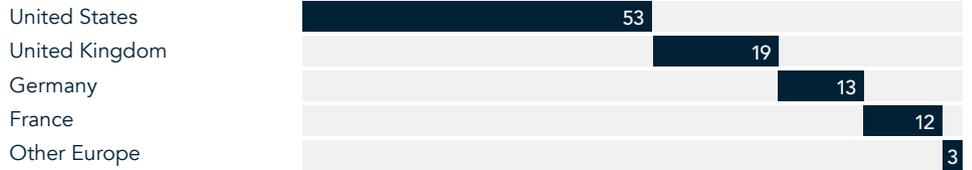
Leadership and compensation structures around AI are evolving unevenly. Many companies have rebranded existing executive roles to include AI oversight, which blurs the definition of true AI leadership and pushes compensation benchmarks upward faster than role clarity or technical scope. At the workforce level, demand is shifting toward change management and cloud engineering, while once-critical skills like prompt engineering are already declining. Notably, research and technical AI skills are now harder to find than strategic ones, suggesting that while the technology is advancing rapidly, organizations are making steady progress embedding AI into their ways of working, resulting in a fast-moving talent market where clarity, skills, and pay remain out of sync.

# Demographics

## Location

Survey respondents were located almost evenly across the United States and Europe. Only a small fraction work in APAC markets or Canada, and 84% are based in the same country as their company's headquarters.

### Personal location (%)



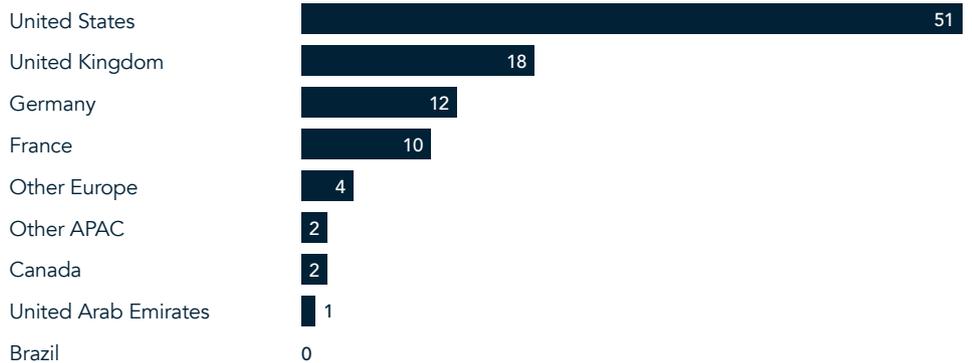
n=318

### Located in same location as company headquarters (%)



n=318

### Company headquarters location (%)



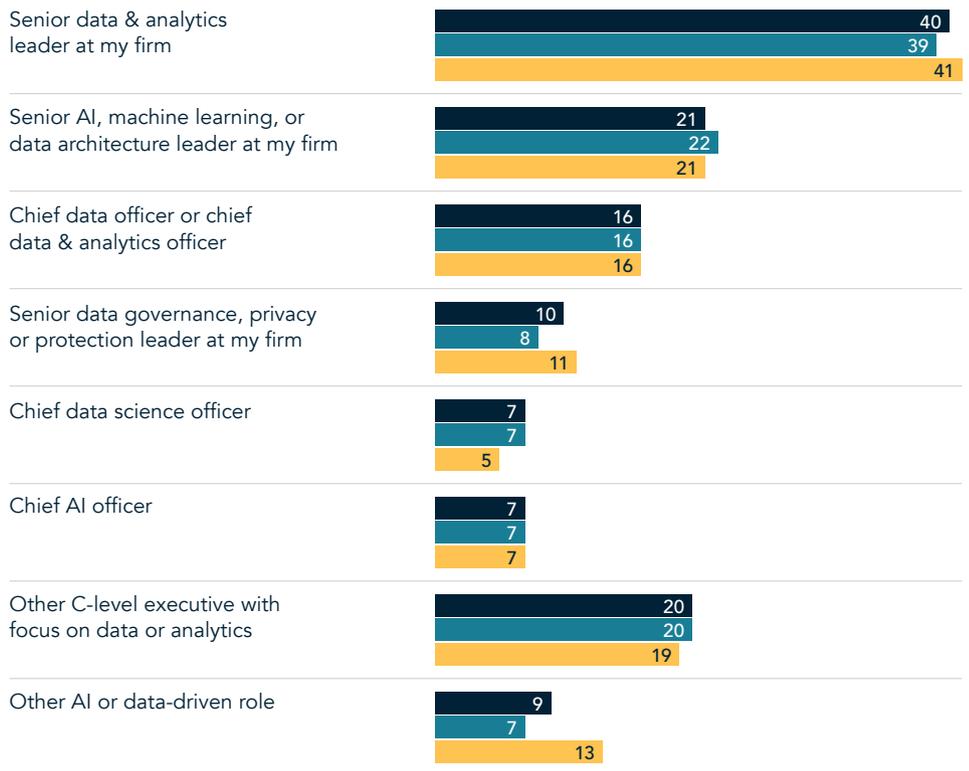
n=318

## Current role

Forty percent of respondents are senior data and analytics leaders at their firms. Three-quarters are two to four levels below the CEO.

### Current title (%)

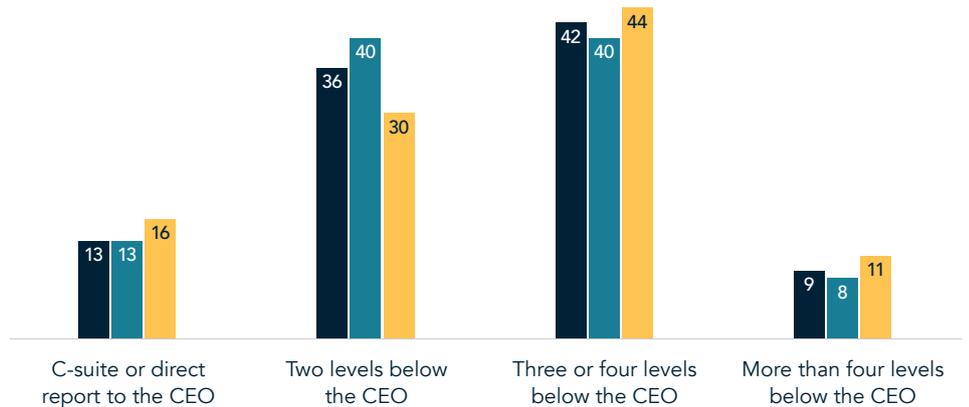
Overall United States Europe



n=318. "Select all that apply."

### Seniority of role at company (%)

Overall United States Europe

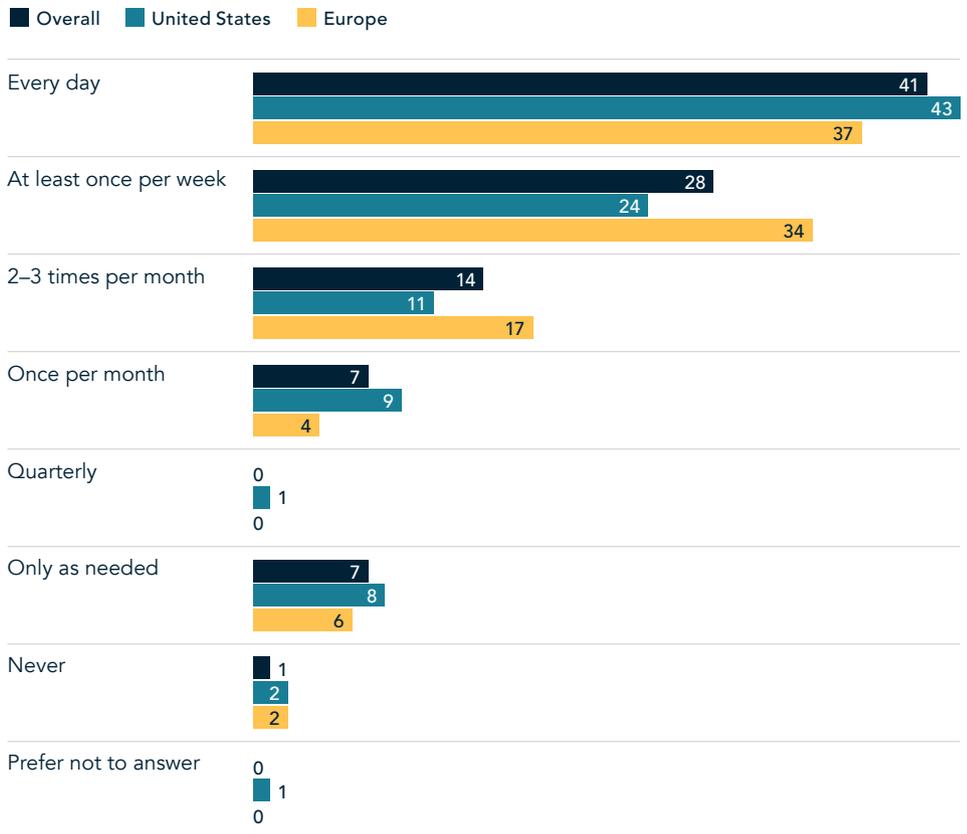


n=318

## Work setting

More than two-thirds of respondents work from a corporate office location at least once per week, yet only 37% live within 50 miles of one.

### How often do you work from a corporate office? (%)



n=318

### How far away is your primary work location from any of your company's corporate offices? (%)



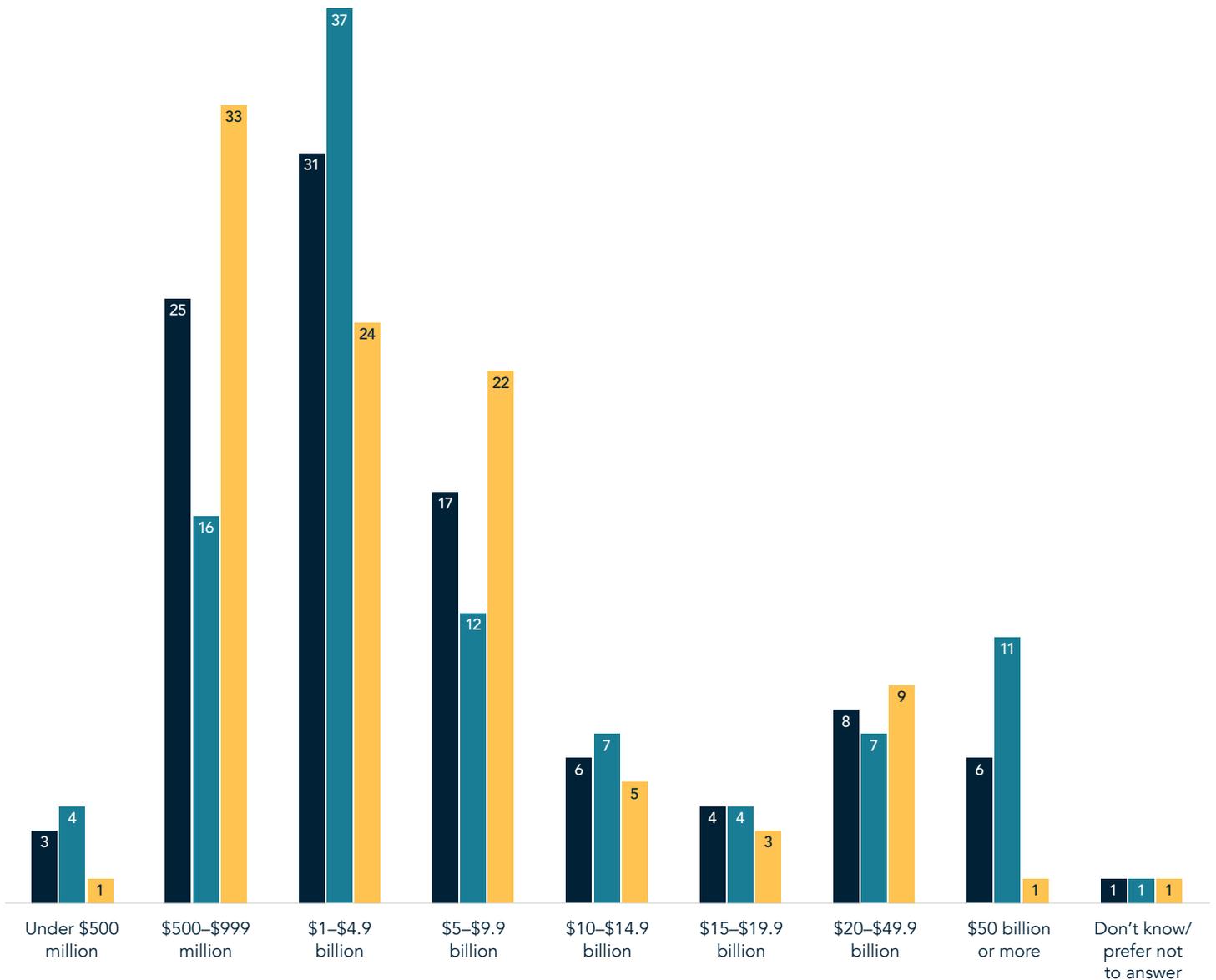
n=96

## Company information

Slightly less than half of respondents work for companies with annual revenues above \$5 billion.

### Company annual revenue (USD, %)

Overall United States Europe

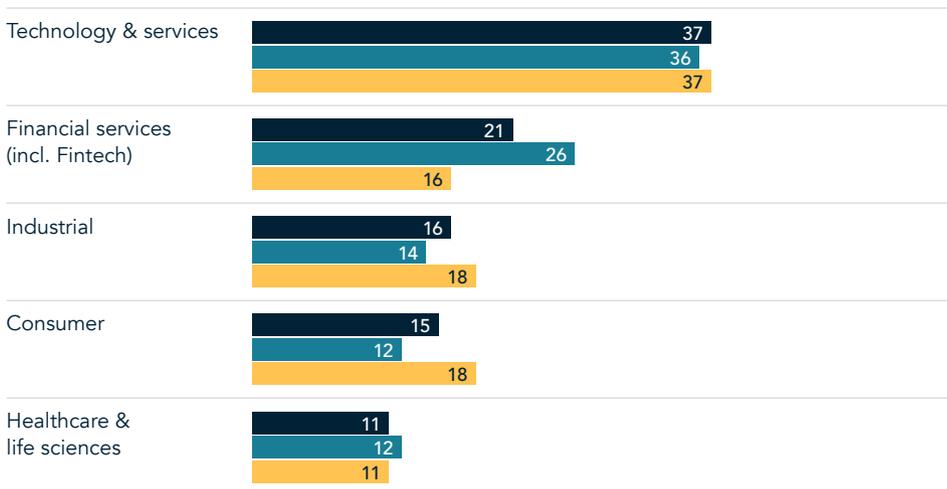


n=312

The technology and services sector is the most represented, accounting for 37% of respondents. About half of all respondents work for publicly traded companies.

### Industry (%)

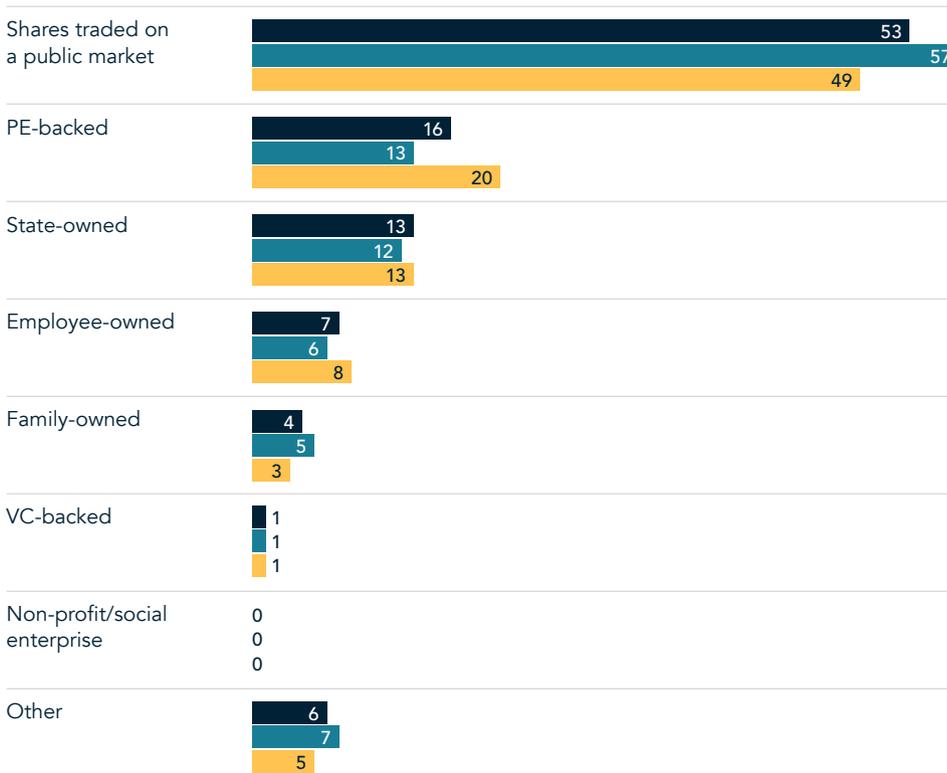
Overall United States Europe



n=312

### Ownership structure (%)

Overall United States Europe



n=312

# AI observations

## Executive summary

AI adoption is now widespread, with nearly all organizations actively engaged, but most remaining in an exploratory phase. While governance structures are often in place, ownership models and execution approaches continue to evolve. Organizations are experimenting rapidly and moving quickly from proof of concept to early deployment; however, full operationalization remains limited.

Overall, the landscape reflects strong momentum and broad participation, alongside continued uncertainty as organizations test, learn, and refine how AI can be scaled for sustained business impact.

This experimentation is already reshaping the workforce. Organizations are investing heavily in upskilling employees while simultaneously reconfiguring roles. Nearly half of

organizations have added new AI leadership roles while reducing headcount in automatable jobs, creating a polarized talent landscape marked by strategic investment at the top and efficiency-driven reductions below. For leaders, the challenge is no longer whether to adopt AI, but how to shape the workforce and operating model before experimentation hardens into structure.

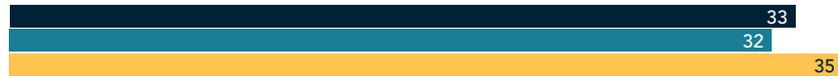
The vast majority of respondents' companies (95%) have established an AI governance policy, yet their approaches differ significantly. Organizations are split among fully centralized models, business-unit-led structures, and hybrid frameworks.

### AI governance structure (%)

■ Overall ■ United States ■ Europe

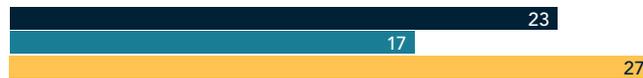
#### Entirely centralized:

a single enterprise team or committee sets policy, provides tools, and approves AI initiatives



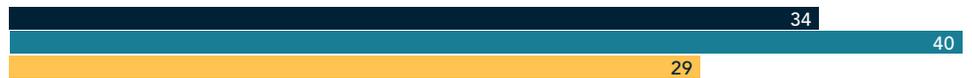
#### Business-unit led:

each business unit or function owns its own AI standards and approval processes



#### Hybrid:

central body defines guardrails and day-to-day governance is delegated to business units or product teams



#### Primarily external:

governance frameworks or assessments are largely outsourced to vendors or consultants



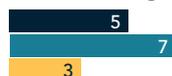
#### Other

0

0

1

#### No formal AI governance in place yet

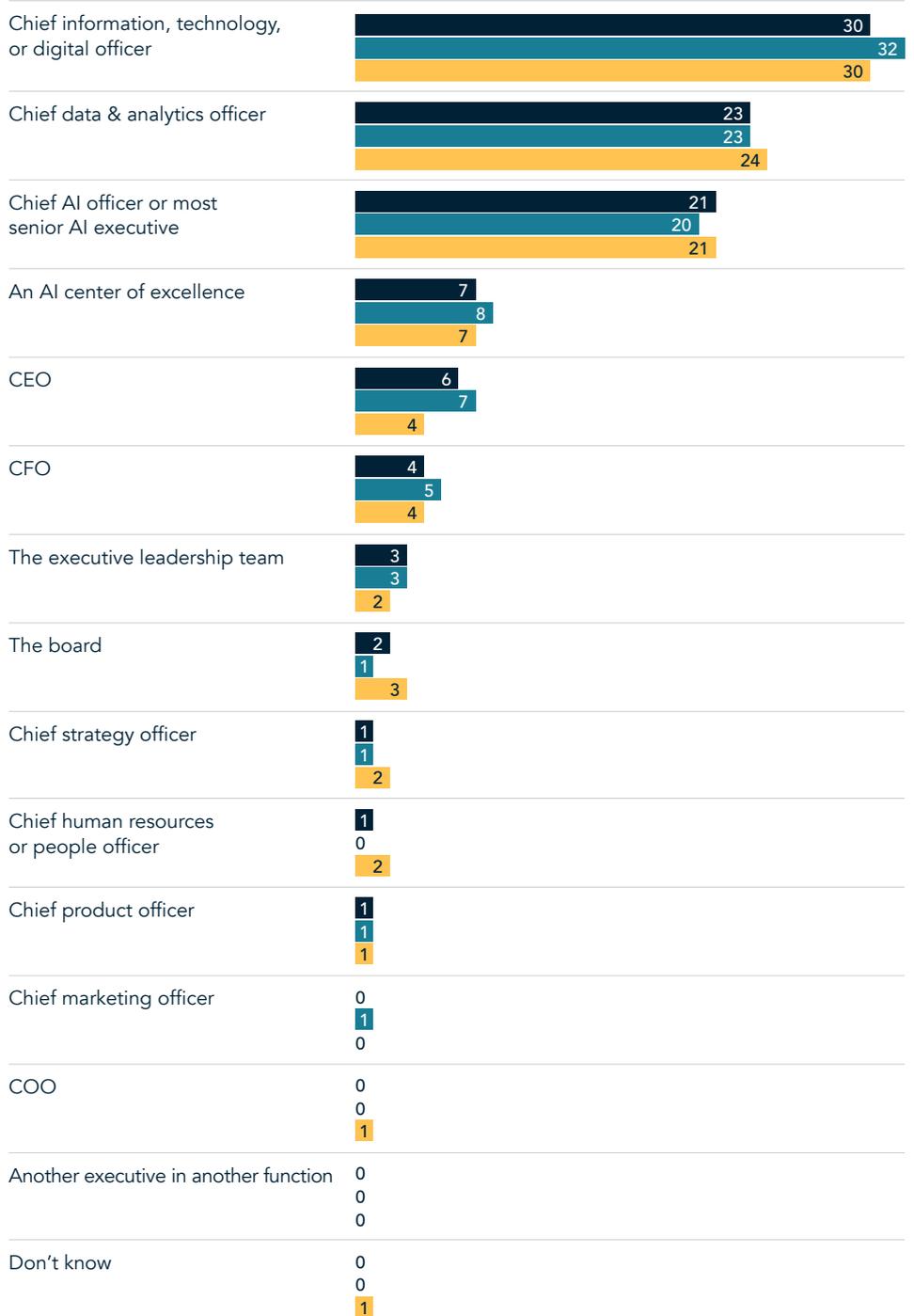


n=3242

Responsibility for AI strategy has also shifted since 2023: it is now most commonly led by chief information, technology, or digital officers, rather than by chief data and analytics officers.

### AI strategy ownership (%)

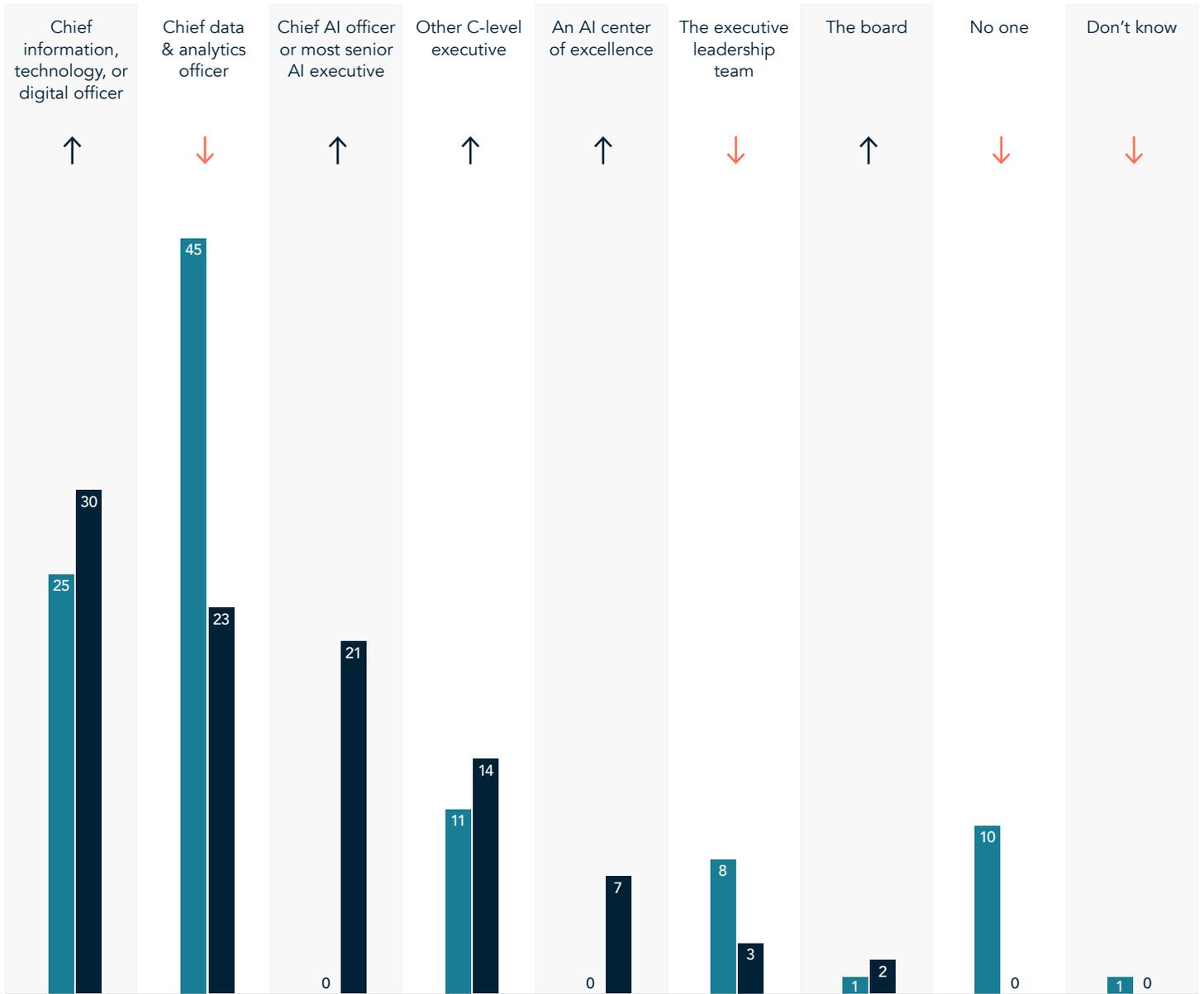
Overall United States Europe



n=242

### AI strategy ownership over time (%)

2023 2025

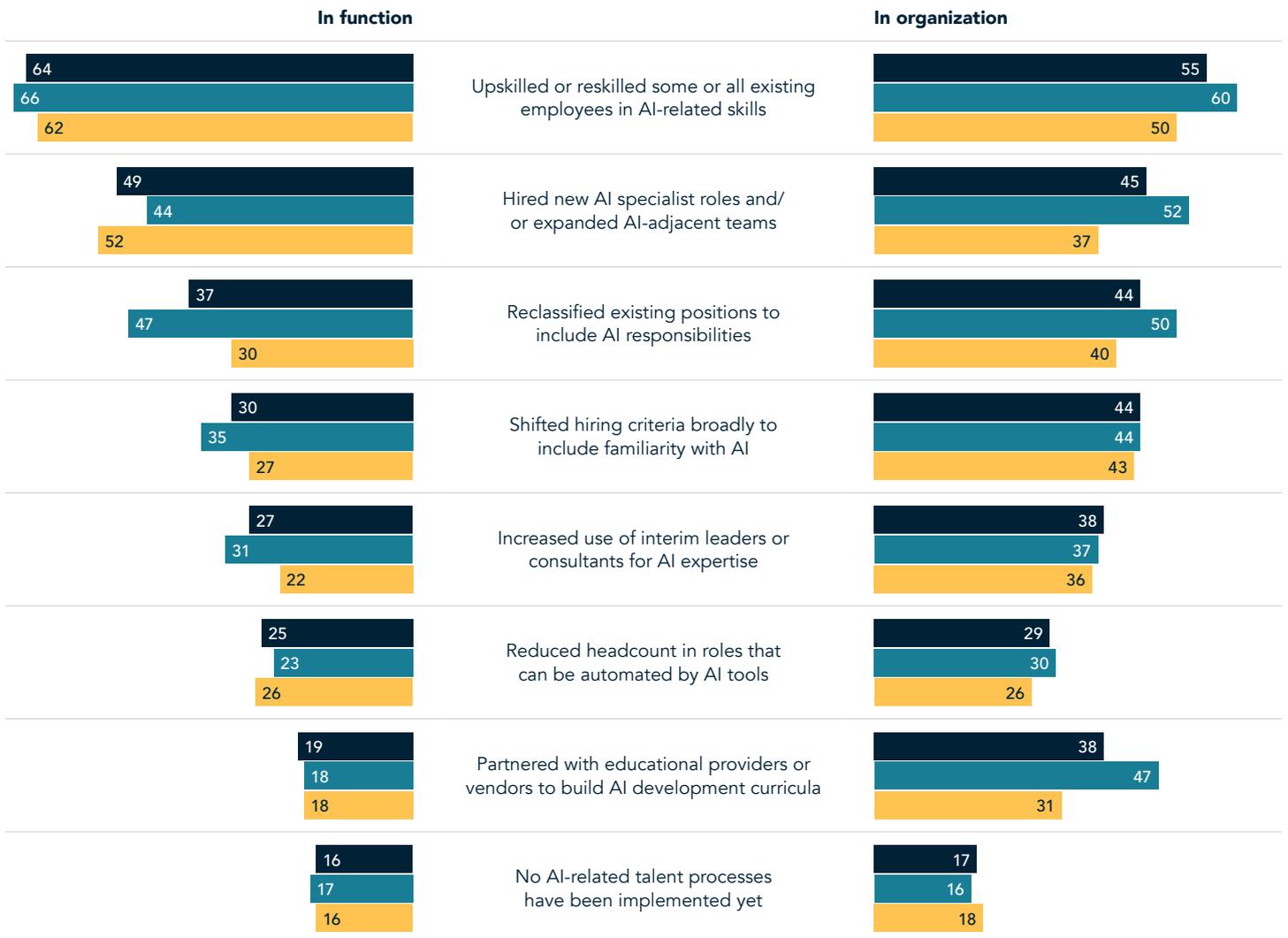


2023: n=158  
2025: n=242

AI is reshaping talent processes as well. The most widespread impact, at both the functional and organizational levels, has been the upskilling or reskilling of employees in AI-related skills. At the same time, AI is influencing workforce structure: 45% of organizations have created new AI leadership roles, while 29% have reduced headcount in jobs that can be automated by AI tools.

**AI effect on talent processes in function and organization in last 12 months (%)**

■ Overall ■ United States ■ Europe



n=240. "Select all that apply."

Across organizations, the most in-demand AI capability is expertise in agentic-AI frameworks. Other skills, such as management-related competencies and prompt engineering, are considered important but are seen as relatively accessible in the labor market.

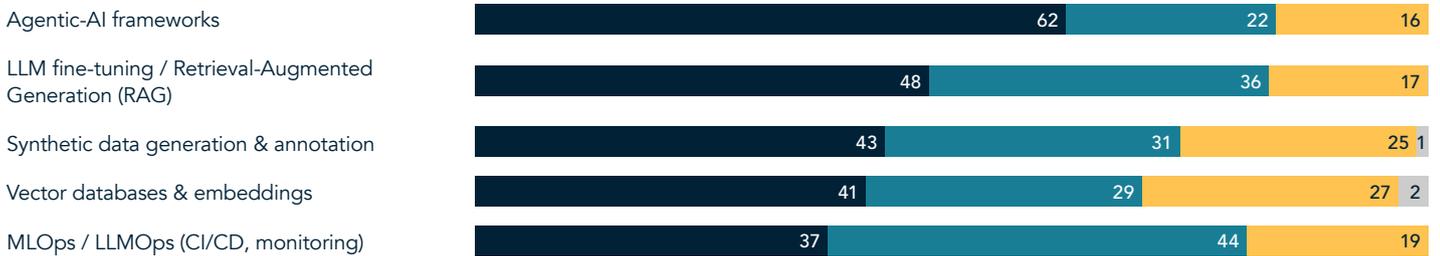
US companies show stronger interest than their European counterparts in areas like vector databases and embeddings; machine learning operations and large language model operations; responsible AI, ethics, and compliance; and prompt engineering and tool orchestration. This difference may reflect a more

innovation-driven mindset in the United States versus a more conservative stance in Europe. Employees with strategic skills are easier to find than those with research and technical skills, a sign that companies continue to make progress in embedding AI into their ways of working even as the technology continues to rapidly evolve.

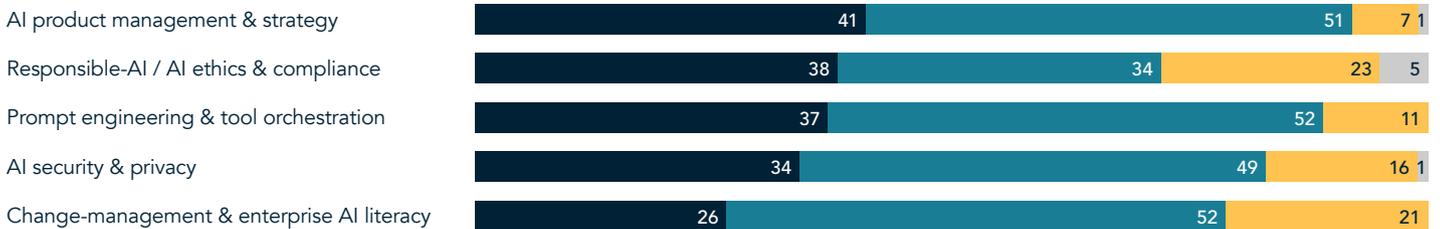
**Priority and availability of each AI-related skill—Overall (%)**

■ High priority, talent hard to find   ■ High priority, talent readily available   ■ Not important/Over-hyped   ■ Don't know

**Research/technical**



**Strategy**



**Engineering**



Note: Numbers may not total 100 due to rounding. n=242

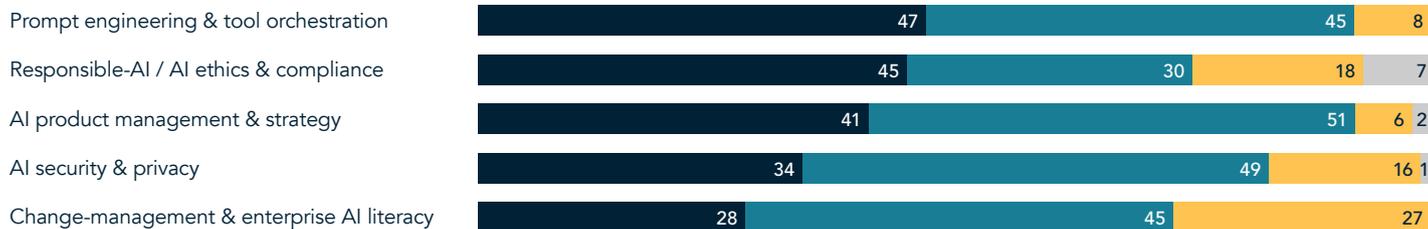
### Priority and availability of each AI-related skill—United States (%)

High priority, talent hard to find
  High priority, talent readily available
  Not important/Over-hyped
  Don't know

#### Research/technical



#### Strategy



#### Engineering



Note: Numbers may not total 100 due to rounding.  
n=111

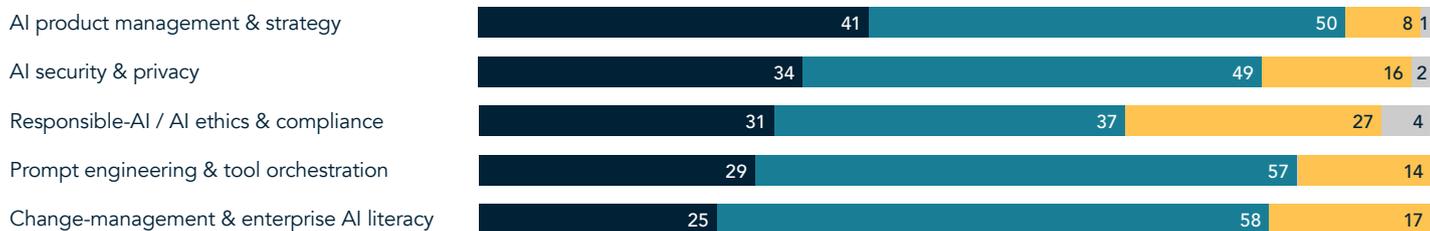
## Priority and availability of each AI-related skill—Europe (%)

■ High priority, talent hard to find
 ■ High priority, talent readily available
 ■ Not important/Over-hyped
 ■ Don't know

### Research/technical



### Strategy



### Engineering



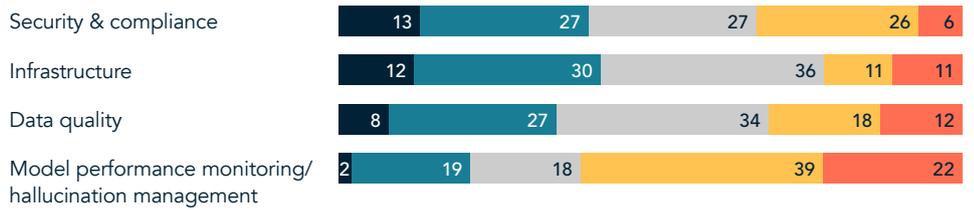
Note: Numbers may not total 100 due to rounding.  
n=131

Despite these variations in skill priorities, respondents across regions report similar levels of readiness to operationalize AI capabilities. Currently, the capabilities most likely to be fully implemented relate to security, compliance, and infrastructure, but even these are fully deployed by only about one in ten organizations. Nearly a quarter of organizations have not begun implementing AI for performance modeling or hallucination management, and another 39% remain in the planning stage for this capability.

### Organizational readiness to manage and operationalize capabilities (%)

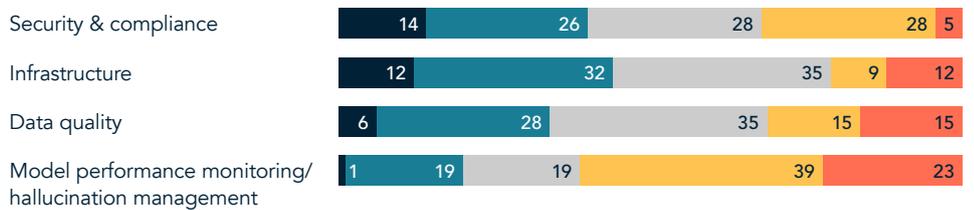
'Fully implemented and scaling
  Piloting/Testing
  Early implementation phase
  In planning stage only
  Haven't started

#### Overall



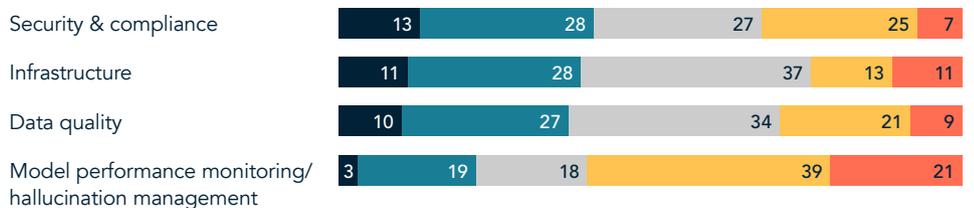
n=242

#### United States



n=111

#### Europe

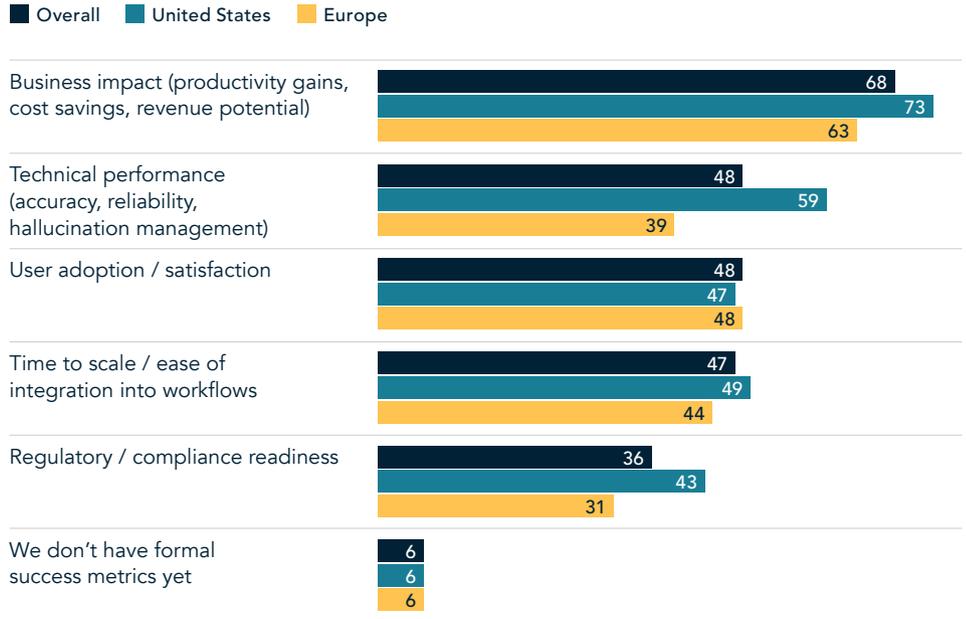


n=131

Note for all: Numbers may not total 100 due to rounding.

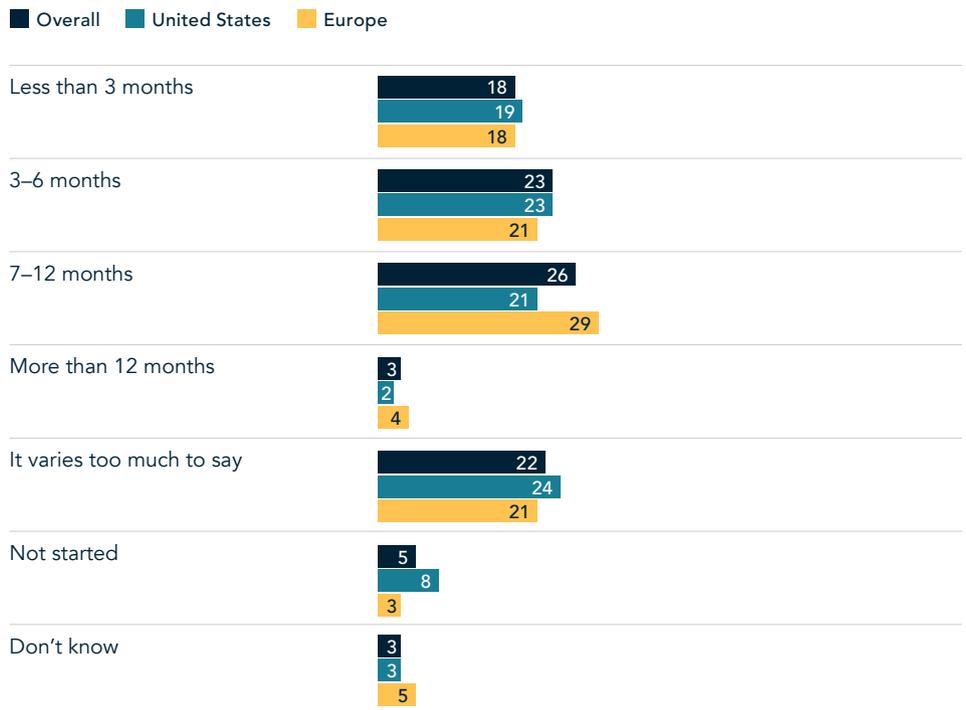
Even so, momentum around experimentation and linking to business results is strong. Eight in ten respondents say their organizations have launched at least one agentic AI POC in the past year, and 68% of those measure success primarily by business impact. US organizations are more likely than European ones to evaluate success based on technical performance. Two-thirds of respondents report that the time from POC to production is under a year. Yet significant challenges remain, with data quality and security and compliance concerns standing out as the biggest barriers to moving from POC to production.

### How success is measured for AI POCs (%)



n=192. "Select all that apply."

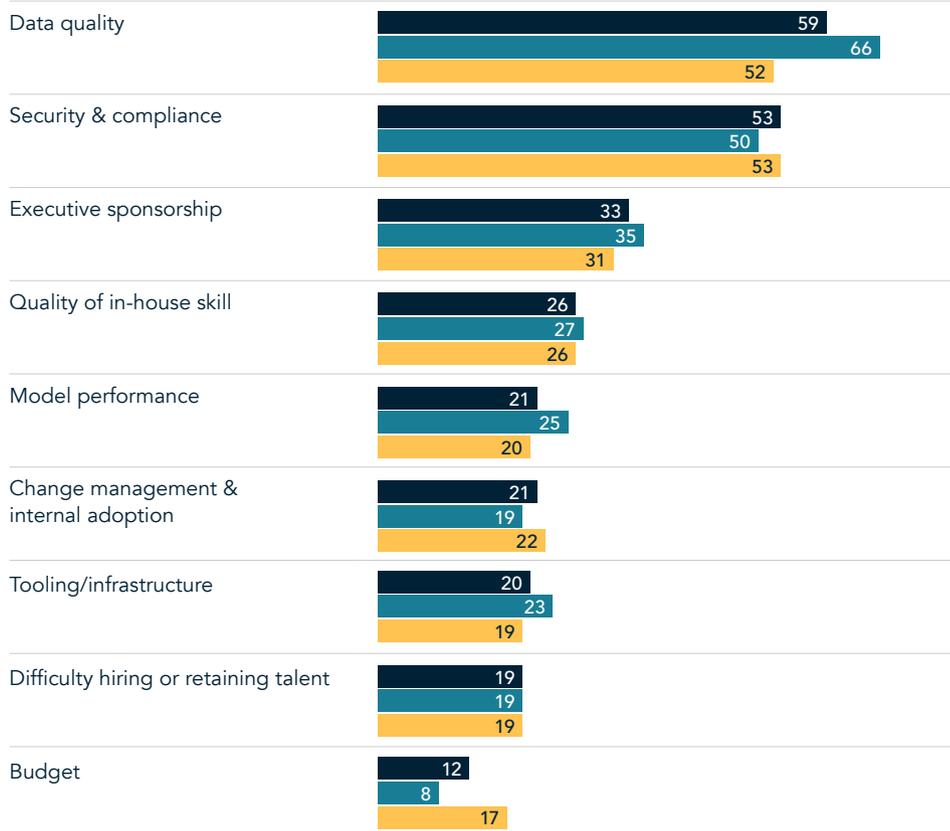
### Time from POC to production (%)



n=242

**Biggest challenges moving from POC to production (%)**

■ Overall
 ■ United States
 ■ Europe



n=242. "Select all that apply."

**About the author****Ryan Bulkoski**

is the global head of the Artificial Intelligence, Data & Analytics Practice; he is based in the San Francisco office.

[rbulkoski@heidrick.com](mailto:rbulkoski@heidrick.com)

# Frontier Tech Practice

## The right leadership for every frontier

Innovation is accelerating—AI, cybersecurity, health tech, cryptocurrencies, defense tech, climate tech, and many others represent vast frontiers of opportunity and challenge for businesses, investors, governments, and consumers. Early-stage investments are fueling rapid growth to a maturity level warranting private equity funding. These rapid, large-scale changes are creating an urgent need for adaptable leadership who can grow quickly in an unfamiliar space, learn on the fly, and match fast-evolving trends with agility, humility, and capability. Yet, demand for these executives far exceeds supply.

Heidrick & Struggles has long operated at the frontier of technology, leveraging our expertise, experience, and commitment to the evolving gamut of sectors and thematic, born out of disruption and opportunity identification at the intersection of industry and technology. Like our clients, we work to identify whitespace opportunities and drive innovation. We help disruptors and incumbents build the leadership they need—wherever the frontier leads.

## Leaders of Heidrick & Struggles' Frontier Tech Practice

Global

Sam Burman  
London  
[sburman@heidrick.com](mailto:sburman@heidrick.com)

Artificial Intelligence,  
Data & Analytics

Ryan Bulkoski  
San Francisco  
[rbulkoski@heidrick.com](mailto:rbulkoski@heidrick.com)

Crypto & Digital Assets

Guy Shaul  
London  
[gshaul@heidrick.com](mailto:gshaul@heidrick.com)

Cybersecurity

Matt Aiello  
San Francisco  
[maiello@heidrick.com](mailto:maiello@heidrick.com)

Government & Defense Tech

Jason Schmucker  
Washington DC  
[jschmucker@heidrick.com](mailto:jschmucker@heidrick.com)

Health Tech

Josh Clarke  
Boston  
[jclarke@heidrick.com](mailto:jclarke@heidrick.com)