Trust: Switzerland's edge in the new AI world order

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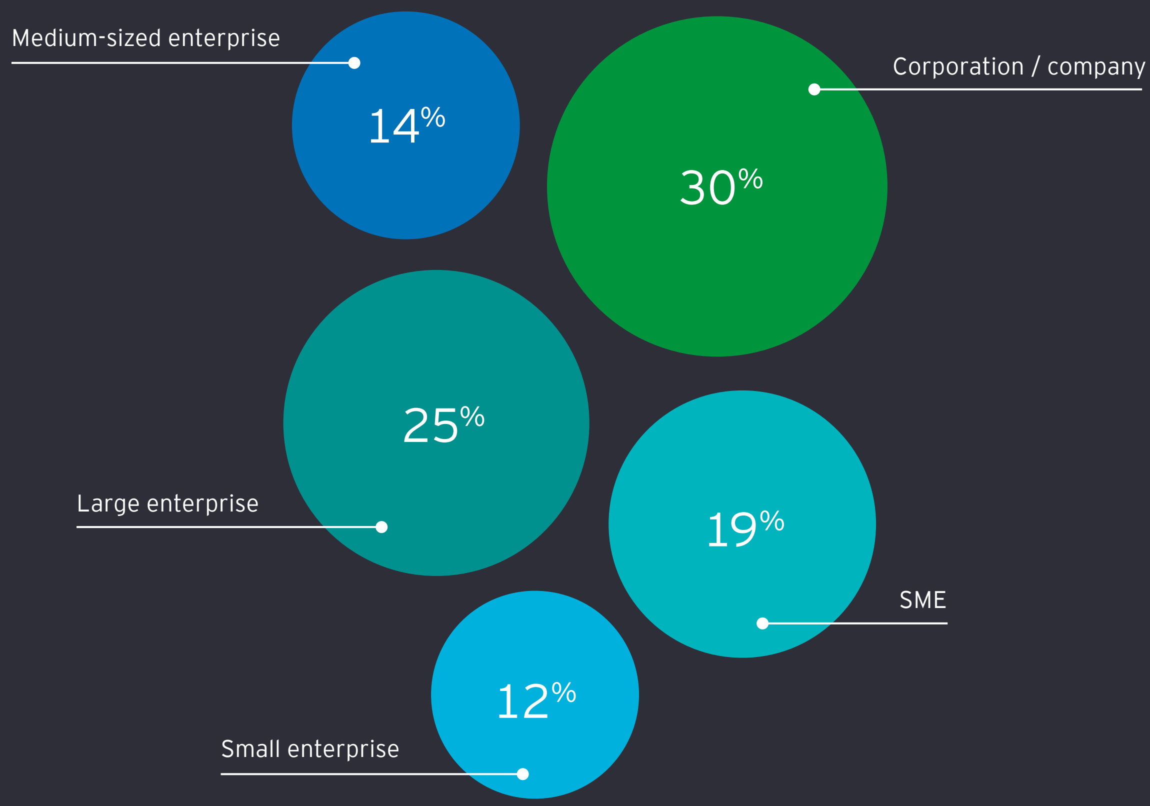
Turning AI into real business impact

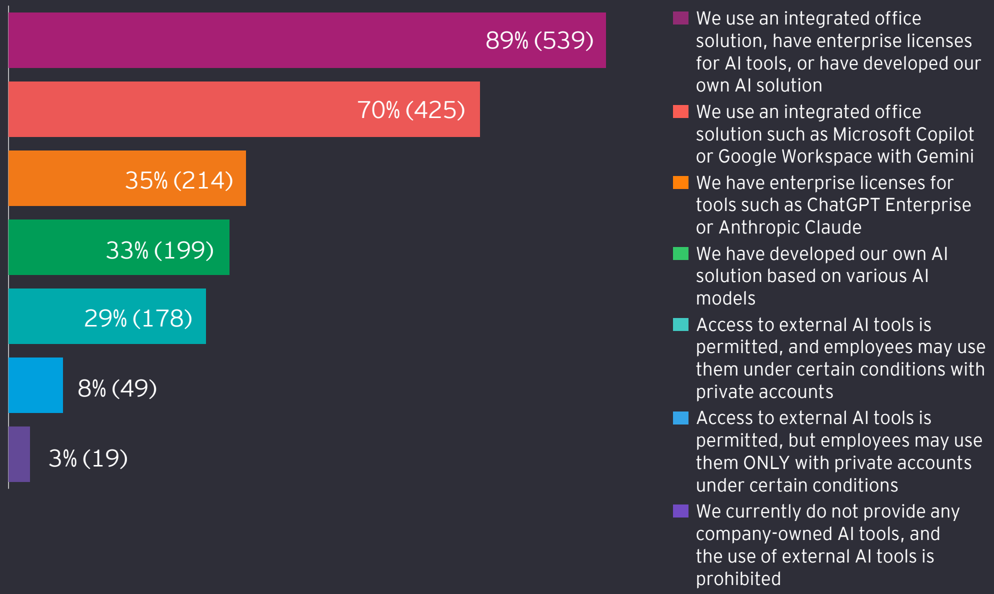
Swiss businesses have embraced AI. The challenge now is turning adoption into lasting business value. The following insights from the latest edition of the EY AI Survey of Swiss businesses reveal why trust, cybersecurity and data digital sovereignty are becoming essential foundations for Switzerland's future as a leading business hub.

Sample composition - company size



AI adoption has reached the mainstream

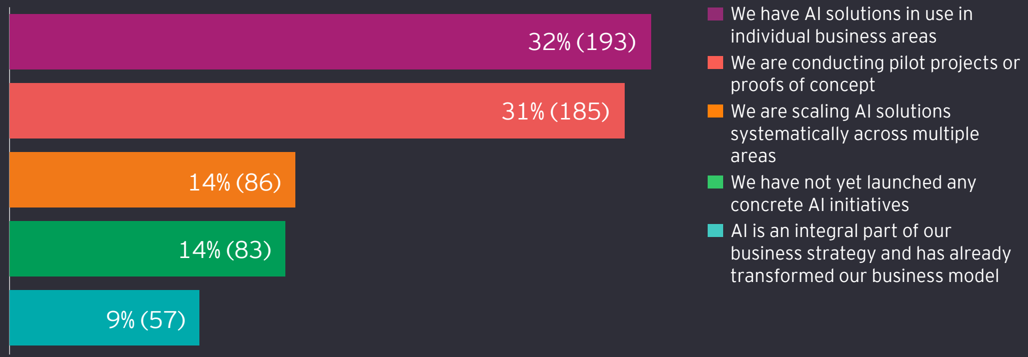
What possibilities does someone generally have in your company to use AI in their daily work?



AI has become part of everyday work across Swiss businesses. Access is increasingly provided through integrated workplace tools, while specialized and proprietary solutions continue to gain traction and some organizations permit the use of private AI accounts. Only a small minority still completely refrains from using AI.

The next challenge is turning adoption into transformation

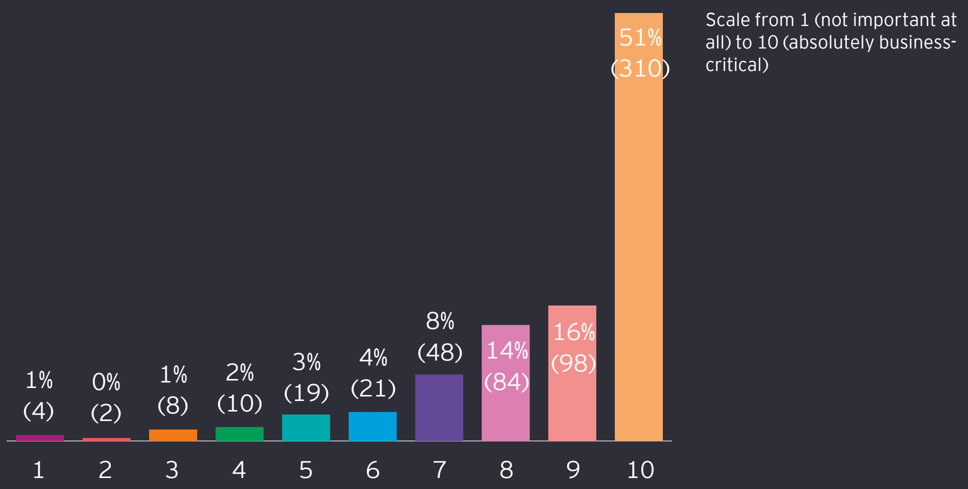
Independent of general AI access: How advanced is your company in developing targeted AI solutions or AI agents for specific business areas?



While AI adoption is widespread, relatively few companies have embedded AI into their core business strategy. Most remain in the implementation or pilot phase, highlighting a significant gap between experimentation and transformation.

Digital sovereignty is becoming a strategic imperative

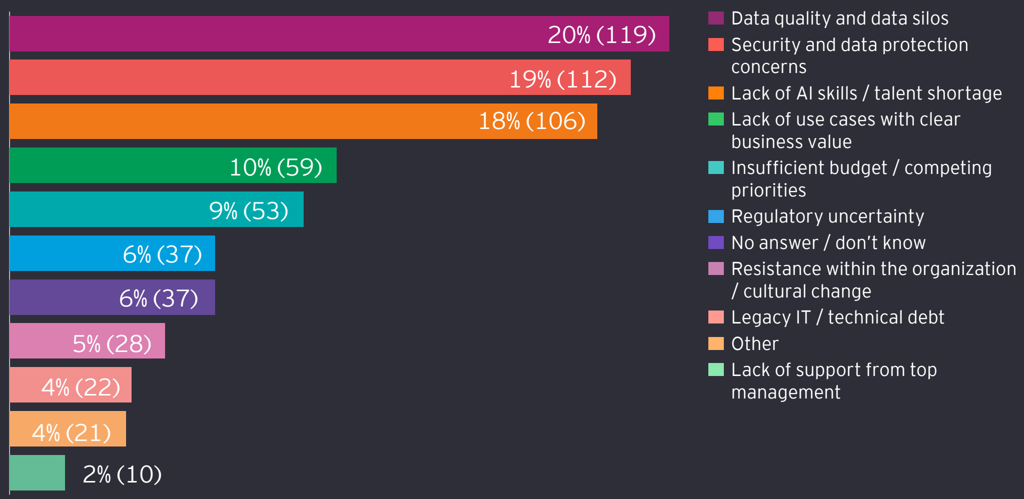
How important is it for your company that AI systems comply with Swiss or European data protection standards and that data is processed within Switzerland or the EU?



For many organizations, AI adoption depends on confidence in how data is managed. Requirements around data location, regulatory compliance and control over data flows are becoming increasingly important.

Key trust criteria – cybersecurity and data quality – are the primary scaling challenges

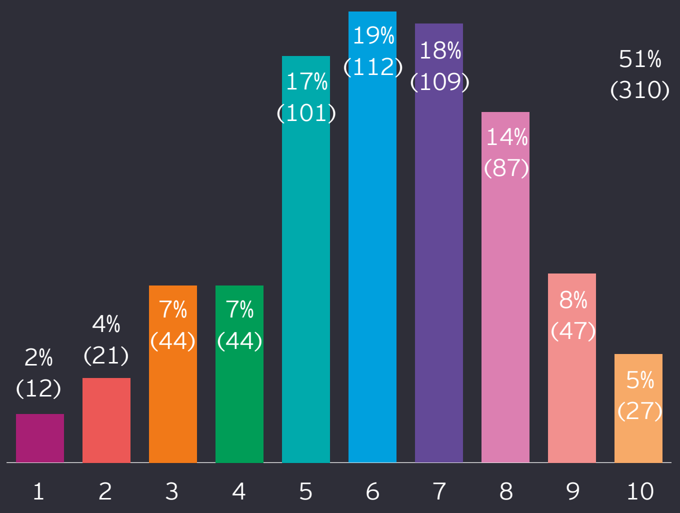
What is currently the main obstacle to successfully using AI in your company?



The biggest barriers to AI adoption are not lack of support from senior leadership or budgets. Companies are primarily struggling with operational and organizational issues, most notably data quality, cybersecurity concerns and access to talent.

Trust in AI must be led from the boardroom

How would you rate the AI competence of your executive leadership or board of directors?

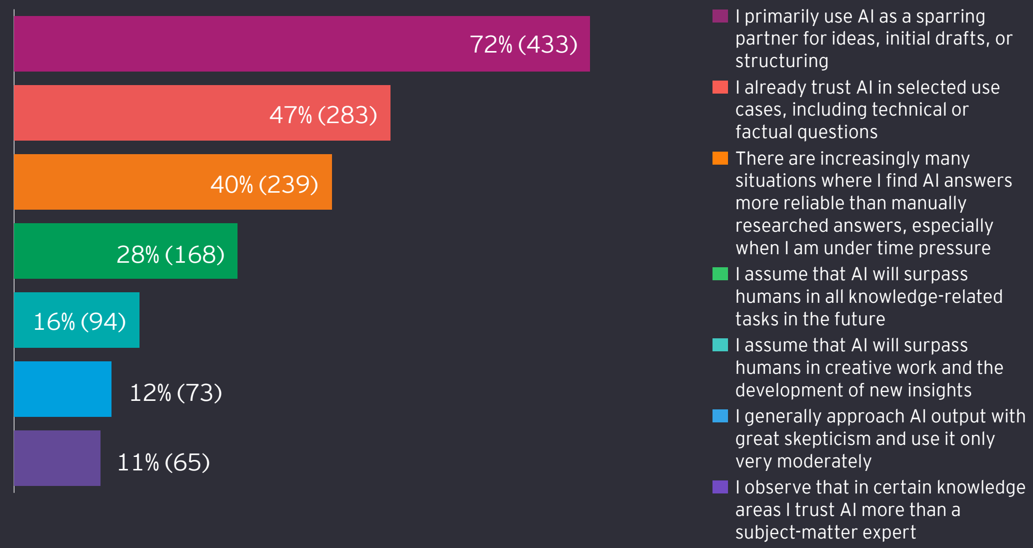


Scale from 1 (very little understanding; AI is largely delegated) to 10 (deep understanding; active steering of the AI strategy)

AI competence in management is generally viewed as moderate. As organizations scale AI, leaders will play a critical role in shaping governance, trust and responsible adoption.

Trust in AI is earned through practical use

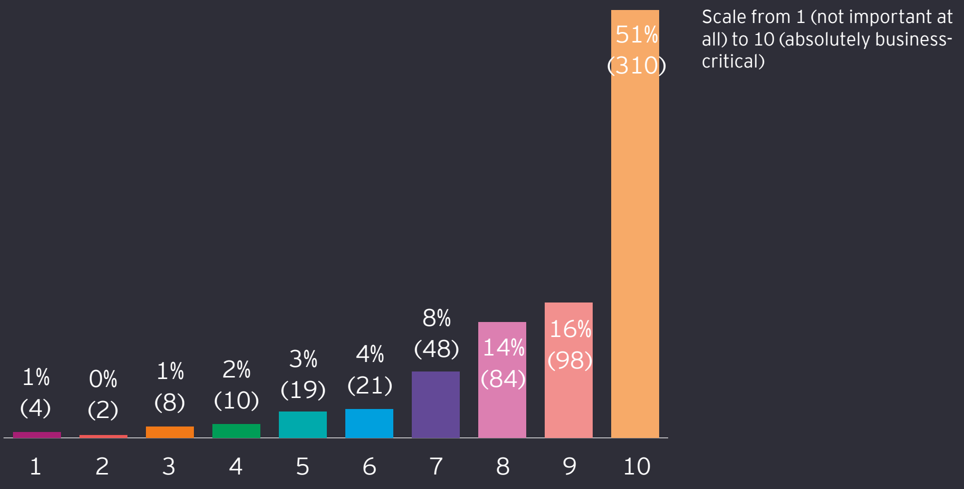
Which of the following statements best describes your current attitude towards AI?



Most employees use AI pragmatically as a tool to support their work. Trust continues to grow through practical application, while outright skepticism is relatively uncommon.

The workforce impact is still taking shape

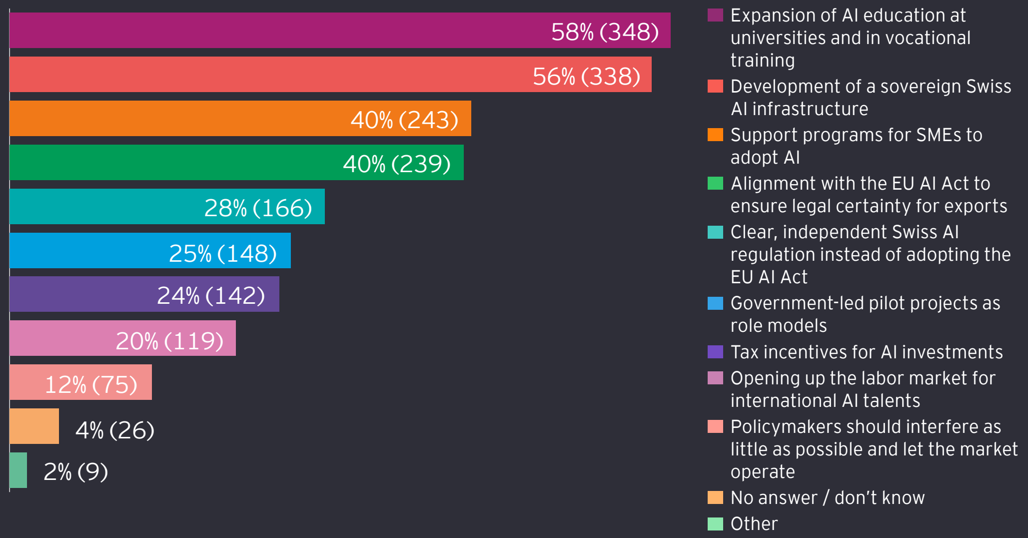
Has AI driven automation had an impact on your company's workforce over the past 12 months?



AI is beginning to reshape workforce dynamics, but the overall impact remains unclear. While some companies are creating new AI-related roles and others are reducing hiring, many are still unable to assess the long-term effects.

Businesses are calling for a trustworthy AI ecosystem

Which measures should Swiss policymakers prioritize in order to strengthen Switzerland as an AI hub?



Businesses have clear expectations for Switzerland's future as an AI hub. Expanding the competence of professionals, strengthening sovereign infrastructure and providing regulatory clarity are viewed as essential priorities for maintaining competitiveness.

Trust is Switzerland's next competitive advantage

The first phase of the AI revolution rewarded adoption. The next phase will reward trust. As AI becomes embedded in business processes, organizations will increasingly gravitate toward locations that combine innovation, cybersecurity, digital sovereignty and regulatory certainty. Switzerland has an opportunity to lead not because it adopts AI faster than others, but because it can deploy AI more securely, more responsibly and with greater trust. The decisions made today on infrastructure, skills and governance will determine whether that opportunity becomes a lasting competitive advantage.

Persons responsible for this survey

Adrian Ott

Partner, Forensic leader and
Chief Artificial Intelligence Office

Maagplatz 1
8005 Zurich

+41 58 286 37 23
adrian.ott@ch.ey.com

Daniele Müller

Associate Director
Brand, Market & Communications

Maagplatz 1
8005 Zurich

+41 58 286 28 32
daniele.mueller@ch.ey.com

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