

Moving faster:

Reinventing compliance to
speed up, not trip up



Introduction – Winning through compliance innovation

Global regulation – driven by myriad macro forces and crises – is adding unprecedented complexity and cost to companies. Against a backdrop of commercial pressures, some have adapted and become ‘compliance pioneers’, evolving their processes, technology and talent model to mitigate risks, manage cost and offer new insights. For others, this complexity has diverted management attention and resources and undermined confidence, causing them to lose their balance and momentum in pursuing strategic and competitive goals.

But what if there was a different way? A way to reinvent compliance to navigate complexity, build trust, and take risk intelligently to speed up – and stay in the race.

PwC's Global Compliance Survey 2025

PwC conducted a survey of executives to obtain their perspectives on compliance practices, challenges, and ways they are evolving to remain fit for the future. Our survey represents feedback from:

- 1,802 executives in the first, second and third line, including business leaders (38%), Chief Compliance Officers (25%), Chief Risk Officers (14%), Chief Audit Executives (9%), and General Counsel/Heads of Legal (5%)
- 63 territories, covering Europe (29%), North America (26%), Asia Pacific (22%), Latin America (15%), Middle East (6%) and Africa (2%)
- A broad mix of industry sectors, including financial services (29%), industrial products and services (20%), technology, media and telecommunications (14%), consumer markets (14%), and health industries (10%)
- Companies operating domestically and internationally. 54% have annual revenues greater than \$1 billion

71%

expect to undertake digital transformation initiatives over the next three years that require the support of Compliance.

41%

need support related to new business models.

PwC Global Compliance Survey 2025



Helping you get ahead

The insights shared in this report can help you to:

Compliance leaders

- Optimise your compliance strategies and plan
- Build an investment case for compliance transformation
- Reposition compliance to have more effective stakeholder conversations
- Develop future compliance talent
- Reinforce the value of compliance to achieving company objectives

Board and business leaders

- Understand how compliance can support reinvention
- Leverage compliance to move faster on new commercial initiatives
- Address blind spots that undermine market trust
- Increase speed-to-market for product innovation
- Support measures to increase company resilience
- Reinforce need for connected and reliable data

Other second and third line leaders (e.g. risk, internal audit)

- Collaborate and align on compliance activities to improve efficiency
- Consider new and emerging risk areas and threats
- Generate ideas on where data and technology could be shared or co-developed
- Reinforce messages on risk and compliance culture





Amongst the findings in our survey

1

The compliance ecosystem is more complex and connected than ever before, driven by transformation, cross-industry reinvention and new business models. The common denominator is the **focus on technology risks**, particularly cyber security and data privacy and protection – a top priority for 51% of respondents.

2

A majority of respondents (77%) stated that their company had been negatively impacted to some or a great extent by compliance complexity across several areas that drive growth. This creates an imperative for companies to evolve compliance to **alleviate the commercial impact and unlock its potential for 'value creation'**.

3

Companies have to tailor compliance models that are right for them, but **'connected compliance' is important for better decision-making, transparency and culture**. 59% of respondents cited greater confidence in compliance decision-making because of better coordination.

4

Compliance technology is already helping companies **move faster, navigate complexity, and avoid hazards**. This includes better visibility of risks and risk management activities (64%), faster identification and proactive response to compliance issues (53%), higher quality/more insightful reporting (48%), and increased productivity and cost savings (43%).

5

There is a sense of urgency and an opportunity to **accelerate transformation and pioneer new approaches**. Only 7% of respondents currently consider themselves to be leading in compliance, yet 38% aim to be leading within three years.

The compliance ecosystem





Why compliance matters

Regulation is designed to promote the health of markets and industries and help them function as intended. They support resilience and longevity at the macro level, and protect customers, employees, investors, vendors, and other stakeholders at the individual level. The ability to comply with rules represents the minimum threshold for companies to build trust and operate in a global market that increasingly expects transparency and the highest standards from its leaders and employees. The health of a company's compliance systems can determine how agile it is when avoiding hazards, outpacing competitors, and capturing new opportunities, including:

- Launching new products and services
- Accessing new markets and industries
- Implementing and leveraging new technology and data
- Responding to market changes and requirements
- Building trust with investors, customers, suppliers, regulators and other stakeholders

A living risk landscape

In today's world, regulation pervades most areas of a company, and new requirements are emerging with increasing velocity. Regulation is shaping standards relating to products and services, governance and transparency, reporting, tax, sustainability, IT systems and data, ethics and behaviours, workforce, health and safety, and trade and sanctions, amongst others. This is creating a multidimensional risk environment for leaders that operates like an 'eco-system' – dynamic and changing and connected across the organisation, value chain, and industry.

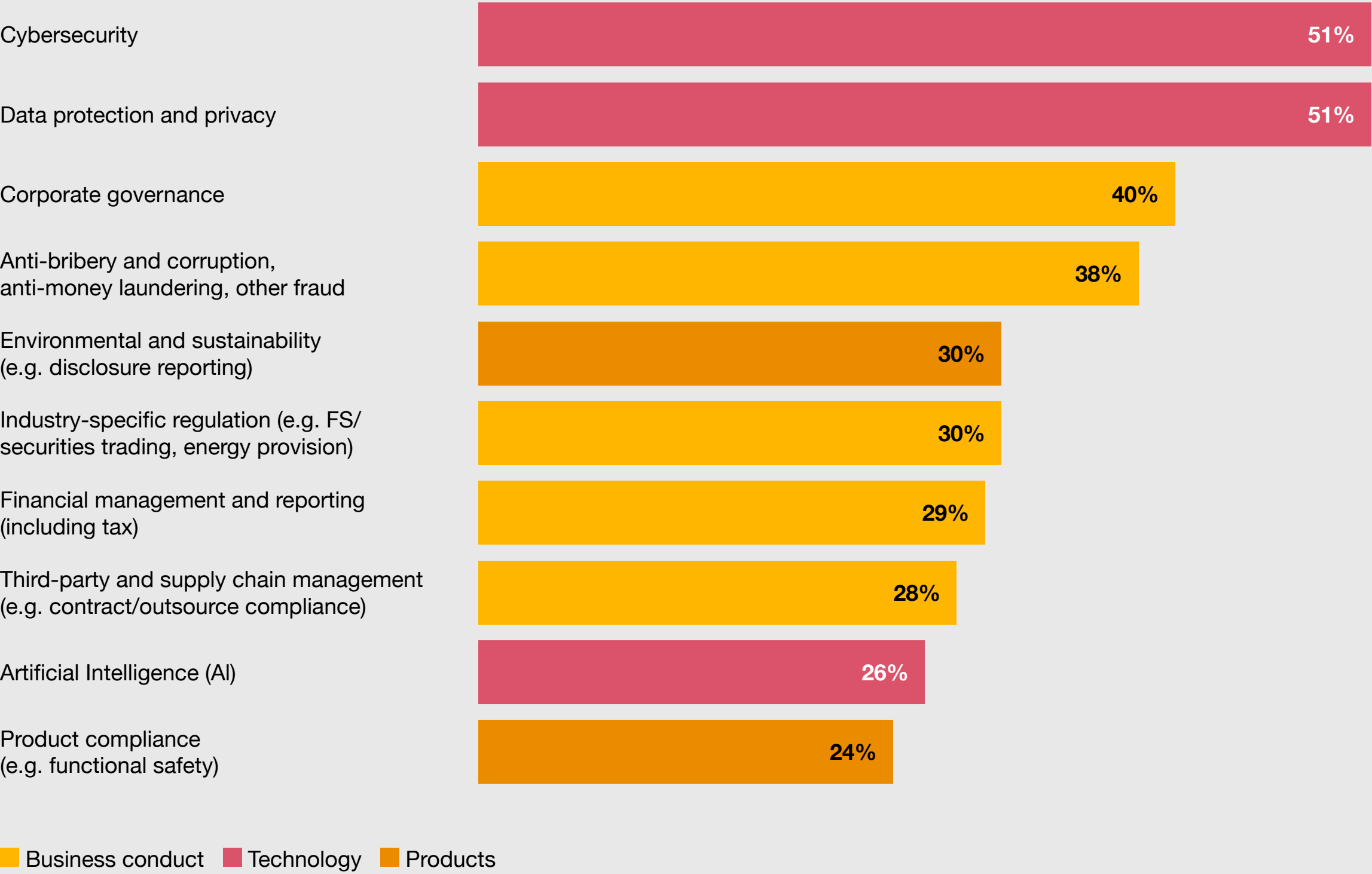
Our survey asked executives to rank their top five compliance risk priorities across the regulatory spectrum. Technology is top of the agenda, with cybersecurity and data protection and privacy cited as key priorities for over half of respondents. PwC's 2025 [Global Digital Trust Insights Survey](#) reinforced these priorities. It found that even Chief Information Security Officers (CISOs), who are on the cybersecurity front line, feel less certain than CEOs about

cyber compliance capabilities, noting the biggest gaps relate to AI, resilience and critical infrastructure.

Of the priorities listed, corporate governance (40%), Anti-Bribery/ Anti-Corruption (ABAC), Anti-Money Laundering (AML) and fraud risks (38%) also ranked high. Whilst these are not new topics, their elevated ranking may reflect the changes underway in various countries and industries to reinforce corporate conduct and transparency rules and to address an uptick in AML and ABAC-related matters, potentially driven by broader economic pressures on companies and individuals. PwC's [Global Economic Crime Survey 2024](#) found, for example, that 41% of respondents feel anti-corruption laws and enforcement are increasing and becoming more robust in the countries in which they operate. For corporate governance, this may reflect the increased accountability – with real penalties – that Board members, Directors and Non-Executive Directors are subject to and the spectrum of risks they are being asked to manage. Nearly 90% of survey respondents reported their breadth of compliance responsibilities has increased in the last three years.

Key priorities ranked within top 5

Q: Which of the following areas of compliance have been identified as key priorities for your organisation?
Base: All Respondents (1,802). Showing top 10 only.



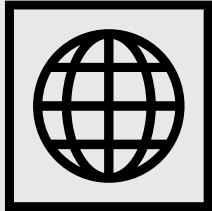
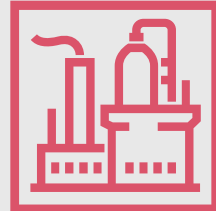
Industries evolving

From an industry lens, cybersecurity and data privacy and protection ranked as the highest priorities for all industries, apart from Energy, Utilities and Resources (EUR), which placed compliance with environmental and sustainability rules as its priority. This difference likely reflects not only the complex regulations that EUR companies face, but also their wider role in supporting energy transition across other industries. The EU’s Green Deal, for example, includes provisions for climate-spending; however, regulatory stability is needed to give investors the confidence to take risk and invest in cross-sector infrastructure that will shape tomorrow’s energy ecosystems. Sustainable Finance Disclosure Regulation, which is designed to help investor decision-making, and broader sustainability requirements like the [Corporate Sustainability Reporting Directive](#) (CSRD), are other examples of the regulation that aims to support this new landscape. You can explore more in PwC’s [De-risking the energy transition in Europe](#) publication.

PwC’s [28th Global CEO Survey](#) found that almost 40% of CEOs said their companies started to compete in new sectors in the last five years. As fresh business models, products and services emerge in response to a new commercial and risk environment, there has been a convergence of different industry ecosystems, fundamental shifts in business models, and a need for more connected thinking. Examples include the expansion of fintech and payment technology in consumer markets; the new power infrastructure for electronic vehicles (EVs); the shift towards digital healthcare delivery; and AI use in product design and manufacturing. This is forcing companies to tackle new or unfamiliar regulatory fields – many of which are still evolving, like AI regulation – and rethink how they approach compliance to keep pace. A common denominator to these new business models is technology and data use – a topic that is also driving change in compliance strategies and talent. Many Compliance and Risk leaders have had to build new capabilities ‘under one roof’ to respond to increasingly inter-connected risks which can no longer be tackled in isolation.

Key priorities - by sector

Q: Which of the following areas of compliance have been identified as key priorities for your organisation? Base: All Respondents (1,802).

							
	Global	Financial Services	Health Industries	Technology, Media & Telecoms	Consumer Markets	Industrials & Services	Energy, Utilities & Resources
1	Cyber security 51%	Data protection & privacy 58%	Data protection & privacy 57%	Data protection & privacy 61%	Cyber security 49%	Cyber security 51%	Environmental & sustainability 50%
2	Data protection & privacy 51%	Cyber security 54%	Cyber security 45%	Cyber security 60%	Data protection & privacy 47%	Data protection & privacy 39%	Anti bribery & corruption, AML and other fraud 43%
3	Corporate governance 40%	Anti bribery & corruption, AML and other fraud 51%	Corporate governance 33%	Artificial Intelligence 45%	Corporate governance 39%	Corporate governance 38%	Corporate governance 42%

PwC US's [Next in Pharma 2025](#) publication lays out changes to business models in the pharmaceutical industry and the disruption driving it, including pricing and commercial pressures (in some cases impacted by regulation like the US Inflation Reduction Act) and AI (which opens opportunities for companies to become 'R&D Disrupters'). It highlights core capabilities that underpin a company's ability to respond to change, including how it forges closer connections with others across the ecosystem and integrates its risk management capabilities.

Interestingly, in our survey, AI was only ranked in the top three compliance priorities for the Technology, Media and Telecommunications (TMT) industry. This is understandable given the technology sector's role in driving AI, but there is an expectation AI risks will rise rapidly in the priority list for other industries. We are seeing, for example, companies in various sectors consider their AI usage policies and implement 'responsible AI' frameworks as a way of helping accelerate their AI adoption.



Actions to stay ahead

Compliance leaders

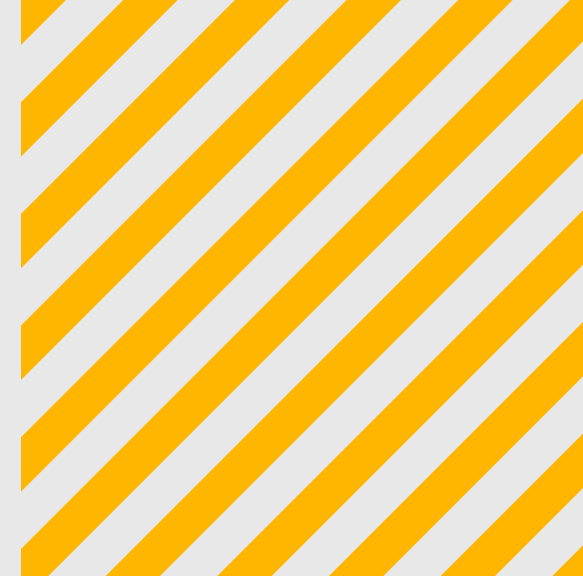
- Map the various compliance activities across the company to help visualise and build connections (the 'compliance ecosystem')
- Look at compliance trends in other industries and consider potential intersect points or opportunities to learn and adopt practices

Board and business leaders

- Review your Enterprise Risk Management (ERM) framework to check that the latest compliance risks are addressed
- Establish a forum for leadership to discuss compliance risks, trends, and impact on business strategy (and vice versa)



The commercial conundrum



Impact of regulatory complexity

Despite the importance of regulation in a healthy corporate ecosystem, PwC’s [27th Global CEO Survey](#) found that the regulatory environment was the number one barrier to re-invention, with 64% agreeing that it inhibits their company from delivering value. One significant factor is complexity.

It is not surprising that 85% of survey respondents stated that compliance requirements have become more complex in the last three years. This was a trend that was consistently felt across industries, with those in the financial services (FS) (90%), industrials and services (86%), consumer markets (83%), health industries (84%) and TMT (81%) all experiencing the impact of rising regulation. Half of survey respondents have a global remit and must navigate different laws and regulations across multiple jurisdictions, which amplifies compliance complexity. Companies in mature jurisdictions, and with strong, centralised Compliance functions, may find it easier to set minimum standards, but many struggle on how to implement and monitor them consistently across their organisation.

Understanding complexity is important, but it’s just the first step. Arguably the more relevant focus is addressing the negative impact it’s creating. The majority of respondents (77%) stated that their company had been negatively impacted to some or a great extent in five or more areas that can drive growth.

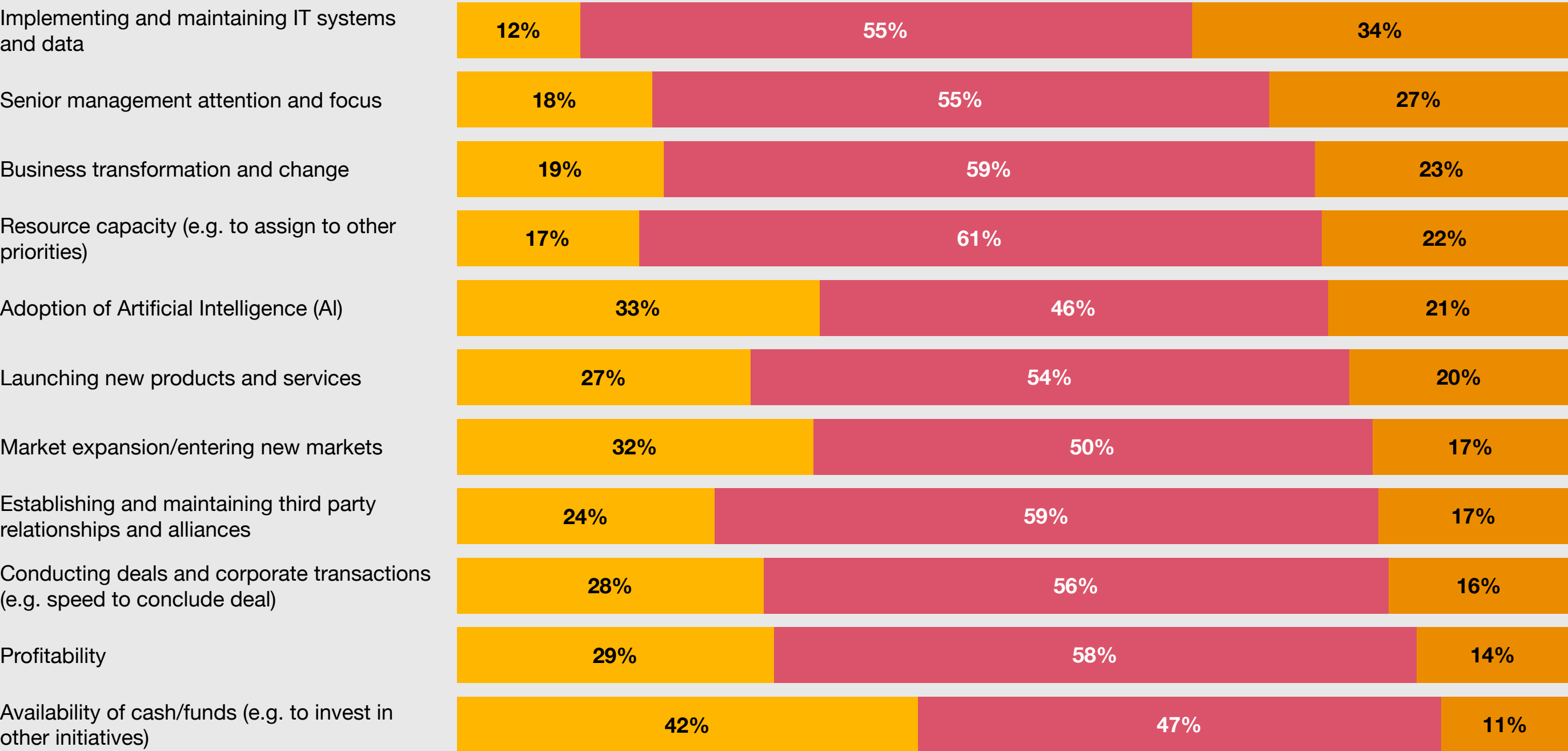
85%

feel that compliance requirements have become more complex in the last three years.

PwC Global Compliance Survey 2025

Negative impacts of increased complexity

Q: To what extent, if at all, has the increasing complexity of compliance requirements negatively impacted the following in your organisation? Base: Respondents whose organisation compliance requirements have become more complex in last 3 years (1,527)



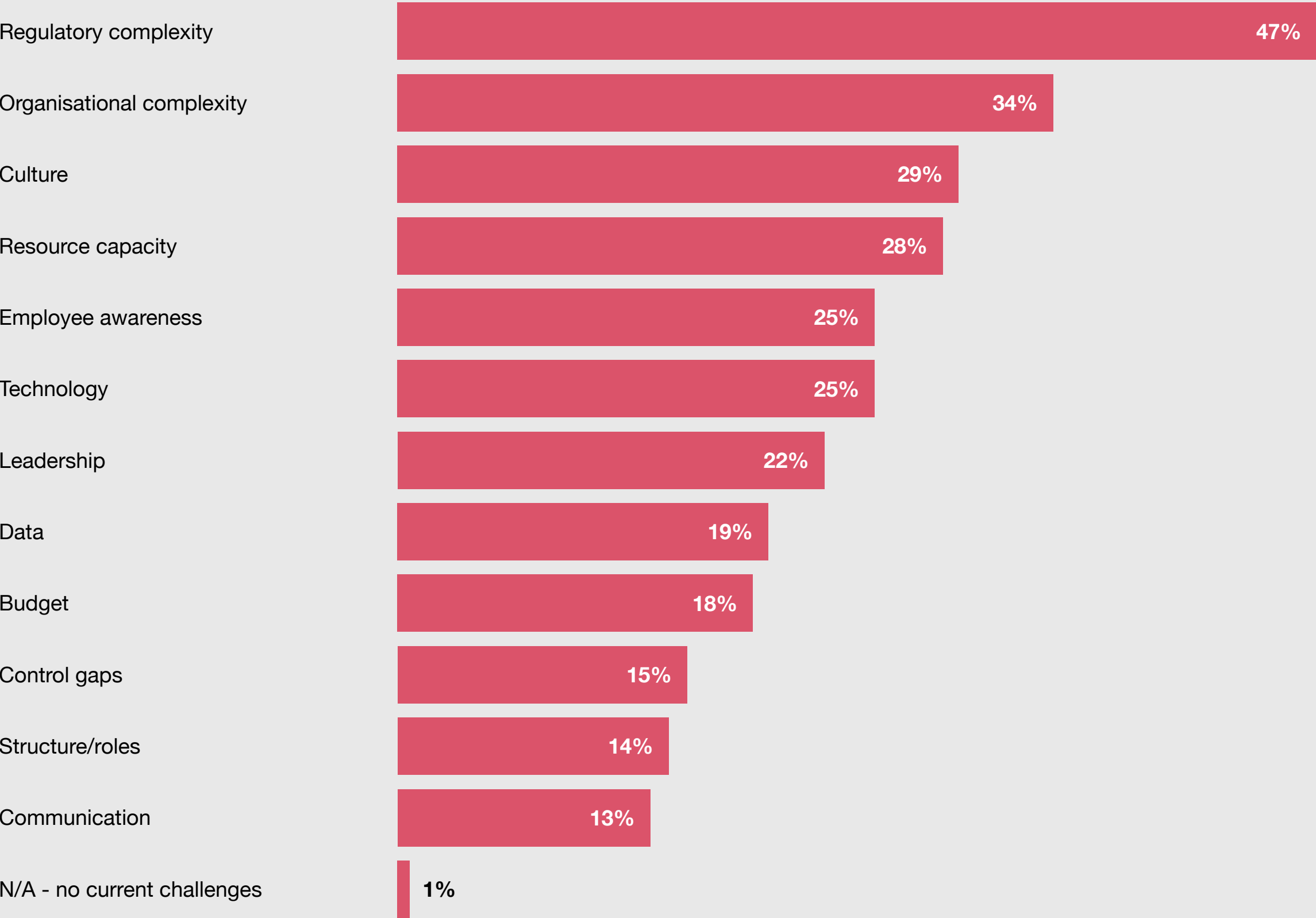
Not at all To some extent To a great extent

The foremost area affected is technology. Nearly 90% of respondents said their ability to implement and maintain IT systems and data is being negatively impacted by increased compliance complexity. Over recent years, companies have had unprecedented access to powerful tools and technology that change the way they interact with customers, develop and manufacture products and services, consume and report data, and model and operate their business. Alongside this, however, more stringent rules have been introduced around the world related to areas like cyber security, AI, cloud, data privacy, operational technology, digital resilience and third-party providers, as well as sector-specific areas like fintech (e.g. crypto assets). Two-thirds of respondents also felt that compliance requirements are limiting their adoption of AI, which is considered by many organisations as critical in being able to transform and compete in the future.

The results also highlighted regional differences. Whilst nine of 10 respondents in North America and Western Europe stated their compliance requirements have become more complex, just four in 10 in the Middle East agreed. Respondents in the Middle East were also less likely to experience negative impacts from increasing complexity, particularly in market expansion and establishing/maintaining third party relationships and alliances. The relative significance of this regional difference is not easy to determine given the number of variables involved, but it shows another global dynamic that companies are contending with – and one which could factor into investment decisions.

Main factors that make effective compliance more challenging

Q: In your experience, which are the main factors that make effective compliance more challenging?
Base: All Respondents (1,802)



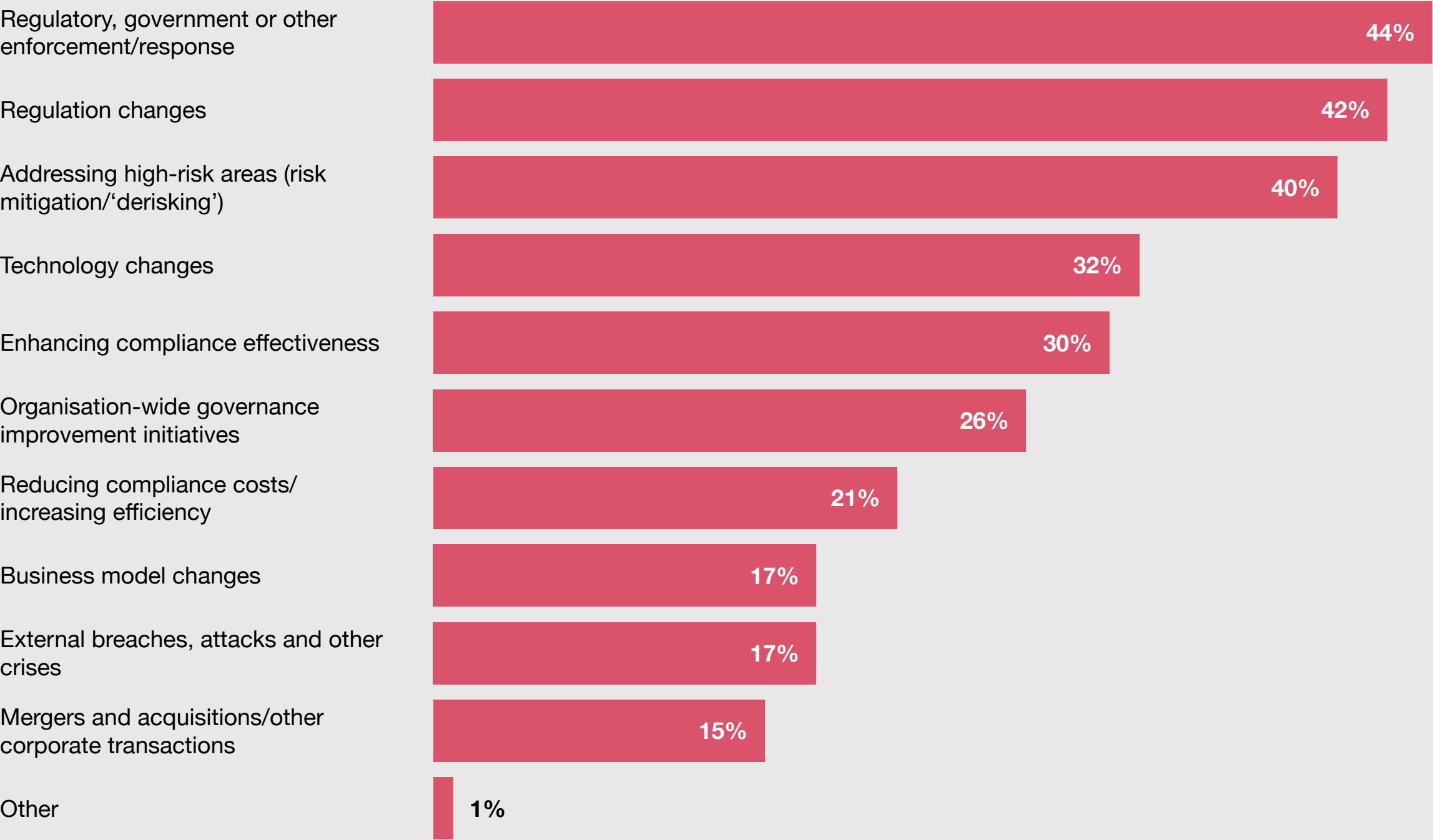


Compliance complexity has also impacted the human dimension: 82% said compliance complexity has negatively affected senior leadership focus. The impact on leadership is arguably more pervasive, and important, to an organisation as it can impact confidence and decision-making that drive growth and strategy. Whilst businesses need to transform faster, 81% saw increasing compliance complexity negatively impacting their transformation and change activities to some or a large extent. Moreover, a volatile geopolitical landscape – and the willingness (and ability) of governments, regulators, and companies to challenge the status quo (see the 2024 ruling on the [Chevron doctrine](#) in the US as an example) – is adding to this uncertainty and unpredictability.

Whilst 47% of respondents said it is the complexity of regulation itself that makes compliance more challenging, there are several other factors that limit compliance effectiveness and potentially stifle the value it provides to companies. Respondents cited organisational complexity (34%), culture (29%), resource capacity (28%), employee awareness (25%), technology (25%), and leadership (22%) as examples. This suggests a broader, multidisciplinary approach is needed to compliance transformation.

Main factors influencing investment decisions

Q: Which of the following have been the main factors in influencing your organisation’s compliance investment decisions? Base: All Respondents (1,802)



Driving new decisions

All of this presents a conundrum: If regulation is intended to protect market and industry ecosystems and help them thrive, is the complexity that it has created actually doing the opposite?

Answering this question requires understanding what value can be unlocked by approaching compliance differently, and what companies are doing to reinvent their compliance models. Many companies are relooking at their compliance models to help keep pace with regulation, minimise risk, manage costs, and respond to issues. When asked what has influenced investment in compliance, being able to respond to regulatory issues and regulation changes were the two primary drivers for respondents (44% and 42% respectively), with risk mitigation a close third (40%). Given the regulatory complexity described earlier, these investment motives are not surprising. The more interesting shift has been the number of companies investing in compliance to take advantage of new technology (32%), enhance effectiveness (30%) and reduce costs (21%). This trend is also seen in areas such as tax compliance; PwC UK’s [Future of the Tax Function](#) publication highlights similar moves to connect disjointed systems and data and standardise finance and tax processes.

Such changes are refocusing attention on the financial dimensions of compliance and helping compliance models achieve the right balance between value protection and value creation.

Actions to stay ahead

Compliance leaders

- Revisit longstanding compliance processes to explore opportunities to optimise them
 - Consider whether compliance objectives and performance metrics balance value protection (risk mitigation) and value creation (growth and cost control)
-

Board and business leaders

- Work with Compliance teams to measure the impact of increasing compliance requirements on the business – and develop a plan to alleviate this, where possible
- Scope compliance activities into broader business optimisation/ simplification initiatives (e.g. data transformation, workforce changes)



Compliance model reinvention



A different way

PwC is seeing companies change their approach to compliance in a variety of ways, from incremental improvement to more wide-ranging transformation. This includes:

- Centralising and aligning compliance activities, including coordination across first, second and third line
- Leveraging new technology, including AI, to automate compliance activities and generate new insights
- Consolidating and using data differently to help see and manage compliance risks, and support better decision-making
- Embedding compliance mechanisms earlier in product development and strategic initiatives to address issues sooner and increase speed-to-market
- Changing the compliance talent model and bringing in new capabilities and specialist skills

PwC US's [Risk and Compliance Reimagined](#) paper explores other ideas on how companies are changing their risk and compliance models to unlock hidden savings and performance gains as costs and complexity increase.

Whilst many companies still struggle with compliance activities being fragmented and siloed, our survey suggests that companies have seen some level of progress in addressing it. Half stated they have a centralised, dedicated Compliance function, and 37% have compliance teams embedded in different functions but are aligned. Only 10% of companies have embedded functional teams without any alignment and 3% have no clear compliance organisational structure.

59%

cited greater confidence in decision-making regarding compliance matters because of better coordination.

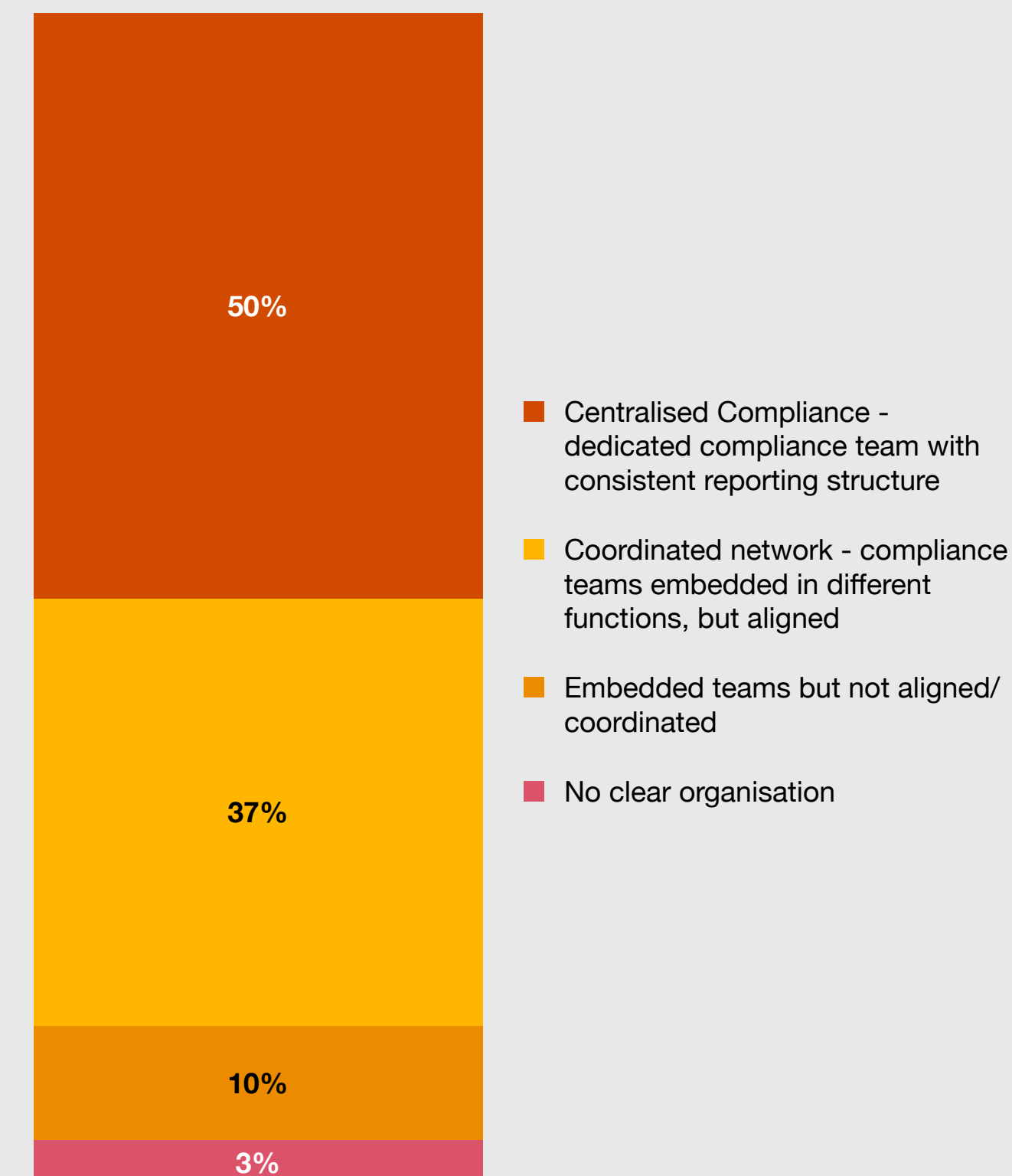
PwC Global Compliance Survey 2025

Although compliance structures may be centralised or aligned 'on paper', in practice they still rely on effective human communication and the right data flowing through them. Like any ecosystem, compliance structures are dynamic - not static – so they require regular review and evolution, particularly as the business changes, otherwise they can fall out of sync.

Companies have realised several benefits from better coordination. Over half cited this resulted in better decision-making (59%), increased transparency and visibility (58%), and improved awareness and culture (56%) in relation to compliance matters.

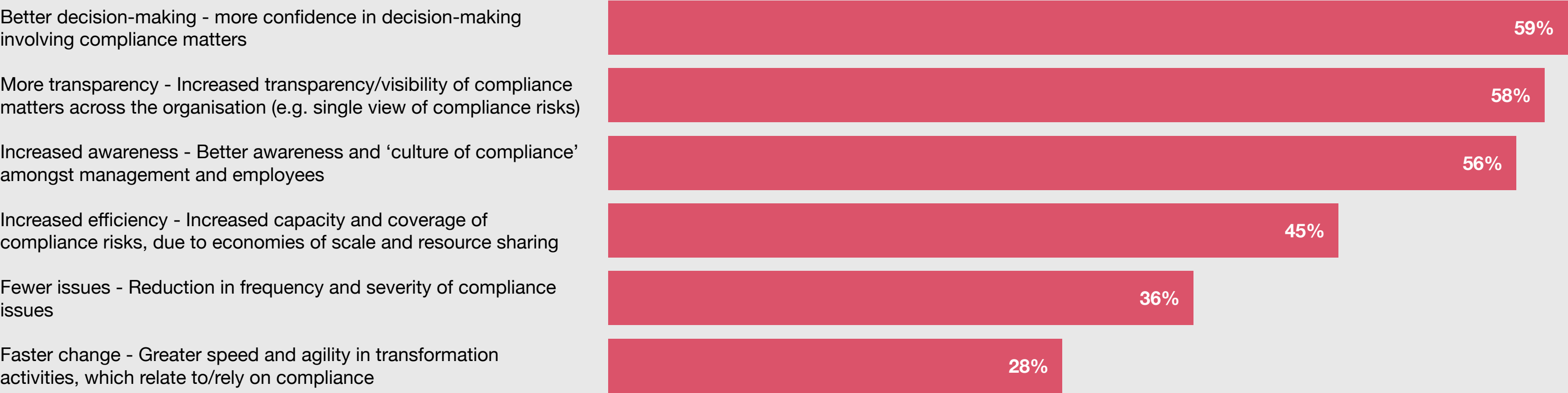
Compliance structure

Q: Which of the following best describes how compliance activities are organised in your organisation? Base: All Respondents (1,802)



Benefits of effective compliance coordination

Q: What benefits have you seen from effective coordination of compliance activities in your organisation? (Rank 1-3) Base: Respondents with centralised or coordinated compliance activities (1,567)



Some companies have taken the opportunity to relook at the demarcation between the traditional organisational lines in their compliance model, including responsibilities between the first and second lines to reinforce a ‘culture of compliance’ and raise awareness. This has been a focus of companies and regulators in several sectors, particularly FS where there has been an emphasis on conduct and culture. The onus for compliance activities has been shifting from Compliance functions to those developing and delivering services. This also represents a behavioural shift; historically, first line teams have been incentivised to grow the

business and let others manage the risks associated with taking on new customers, entering new geographies, and launching new products, for example. Now, there is an emphasis on growing responsibly and rebalancing metrics to prioritise high quality and sustainable growth. It is not helpful to drive growth by taking on customers that other institutions won’t, particularly where this might lead to compliance issues and losses. In some cases, Risk and Control Officers are being embedded in the business, creating a line ‘1.5’ that can help the business transform faster and with more agility.

When asked about the most important factors in enhancing the culture of compliance, 37% cited effective coordination between the different teams involved in compliance as very important (ranked third most important).

Our survey found a relationship between companies with a perceived stronger culture and involvement of compliance earlier in the product and service development lifecycle. In each stage up to launch, companies with a strong perceived compliance culture had more involvement than those with a poorer perceived culture, particularly at the pre-development/concept stage (58% vs 34%).

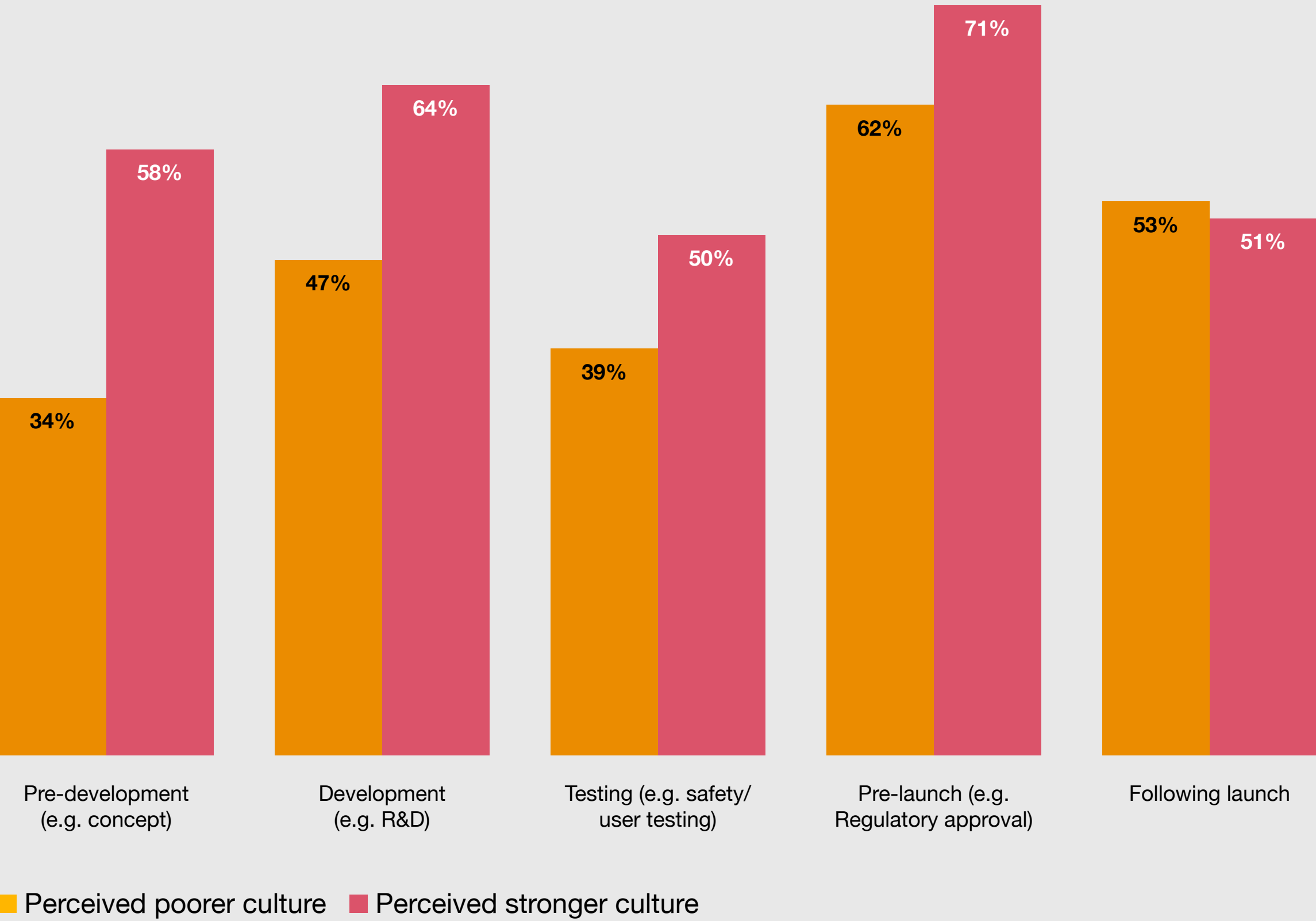


Innovation, innovation everywhere

Earlier involvement of Compliance is one way companies are unlocking the value it can provide, positioning them as an advisor to the business to help identify risks and avoid issues sooner. This may be beneficial for companies with significant research and development (R&D) activities, where competition is increasing pressure to speed up development and bring new products and services to market faster. In the pharmaceutical sector, for example, the pandemic forced companies to find new approaches to drug development and clinical trials, including how virtual patient data is used. This spurred innovation around how traditional processes can be digitised and automated to move quicker, increase quality, and use data differently, including reporting to stakeholders and regulators. The whitepaper PwC developed with Merck on [Digitally Enhanced Reference Materials](#), focused on using blockchain to enhance trust, is an example of new thinking in this area.

New product/service development process

Q: In your organisation, during which stage(s) of the development process of new products or services is compliance involved? Base: Perceived poorer culture (159), Perceived stronger culture (989) – excludes N/A





Compliance is not just about passing audits. Compliance now requires instrumentation and mechanisms to ensure your obligations, to your customers, are being met - all the time. Organizations that take this responsibility seriously, will enable market trust and confidence in their products. Focus on doing the right things by design, and invest in innovation that enables quicker detection and remediation of compliance drift.”

Anil Markose, Chief Compliance Officer,
Oracle SaaS

Technology companies, who are at the forefront of digital innovation, are having to understand and build compliance into their products and services to meet the spectrum of obligations their customers face across jurisdictions, including government security and data sovereignty restrictions. This requires highly coordinated compliance programmes that balance central ‘command and control’ with functional agility, for example, having compliance specialists embedded in first line teams. This also includes effective coordination between everyone with compliance responsibilities, including the CISO who plays a vital role in areas like data privacy and security. Survey respondents in the TMT and FS industries were more likely to involve compliance in the development phase of new products and services (60% and 59% respectively compared to other industries).

The drive for innovation is creating similar patterns for those in the automotive and industrial sectors. They are having to balance the demand for new products with increasingly complex regulations relating to environmental impact, data security and confidentiality, intellectual property (IP), health and safety, and issues down the value and supply chains, such as the EU’s Corporate Sustainability Due Diligence Directive (CSDDD). Companies are responding by increasing connectivity between different compliance activities, reinforcing capabilities ‘on the ground’ with more compliance training, bolstering capacity in ‘line 1.5’ (e.g. Quality and Control teams) to support the first line, and putting compliance systems and data in the hands of those who own the risks and commercial objectives.

New channels, new opportunities for Compliance

Technology is reshaping traditional business models in the pharmaceutical sector. Some companies have leveraged technology to establish new digital Direct-to-Consumer (DTC) sales channels. This is allowing companies to engage directly with healthcare professionals (HCPs), pharmacies and patients to increase accessibility and tailor healthcare solutions. It also brings a new strategic imperative for Compliance functions to support change and maintain safeguards. One Compliance Leader, who had a pivotal role in the design and implementation of new DTC capabilities, identified three factors that were important to success:

- 1. Culture** – a commitment to ethics, accountability and transparency. This is crucial to a culture of compliance (doing the right thing), particularly as this relates to high-risk areas, such as inducements (or perceived inducements) for prescriptions.
- 2. Trust** – a clear focus on building trust in new products and services amongst internal and external stakeholders, including employees, customers, HCPs and regulators – and understanding the impact on reputation.
- 3. Confidence to expand** – designing a compliance framework – together with practical support and advice - to give decision-makers and project teams the confidence to deploy technology and services and expand business (knowing that they can maintain compliance and navigate risks).

Connected compliance

The concept of 'connected compliance' is important not just within the organisation, but externally as industry ecosystems increasingly involve more diverse data flows, supply chains, and reliance on third parties, including affiliates, alliances and vendors. Two-thirds (64%) of survey respondents, for example, use a third-party for selling and delivering products. Typically, organisations rely on service providers for key parts of their operations, including their cloud and data centre infrastructure, back-office processing, and manufacturing and logistics. Governments and regulators are also continuing to introduce regulation for service providers to build trust with customers. Japan's Information system Security Management and Assessment Program (ISMAP), for example, is designed to promote security and resilience in relation to cloud services, similar to the US Federal Risk and Authorization Management Program (FedRAMP). In the FS industry, regulator focus on infrastructure continues. The EU's Digital Operational Resilience Act (DORA), for example, came into force in 2023 (applicable from 2025) and aims to bolster the security and resilience of FS institutions against disruption. This inevitably involves significant third-party risks across their complex operations and raises the bar on demonstrating compliance with the new rules. PwC's paper [How managed services can bring peace of mind to DORA third-party risk management](#) explores this further.

Companies are changing how they tackle third-party compliance risks, with more robust due diligence during contracting, increased compliance monitoring, and greater involvement of internal audit and independent audit firms. Platforms like PwC's [Know Your Business Partner](#) can be integrated into compliance models to help automate compliance over business partner management, increase coverage of third parties, and reduce costs. Indeed, oversight is

increasingly required for fourth and fifth parties down the value chain, with confidence sought over their resilience and compliance to mitigate operational and reputational issues that might 'ripple' across the ecosystem. Companies are investing, for example, in more technology-driven incident response and early-warning systems, particularly for fast-moving cyber-attacks.

With increasing value chains, volumes of data, costs, and regulatory complexity, it is no longer practical for companies to manage compliance manually. Compliance functions have been compelled to incorporate technology into their operational models just to remain relevant and keep pace with broader business change. PwC's [Global Investor Survey 2024](#) found that over 70% of investors identified technological change as the most important factor in encouraging companies to change the way they create, deliver and capture value.



Actions to stay ahead

Compliance leaders

- Lay out the short-, medium- and long-term vision for compliance, including the roadmap and investment needed to achieve it
- Review compliance structure regularly to check that it remains in sync with organisation structure and strategy

Board and business leaders

- Design a governance model to promote alignment of compliance, risk and assurance activities across first, second and third lines, including consistency of strategies and plans
- Check that oversight, risk management, and compliance activities extend down the value chain and have sufficient resources to actively monitor and manage them

Technology at the heart of compliance

‘Peddle down’ on technology

Companies are increasingly using technology to automate, optimise and speed up a range of compliance activities. Our survey found that 49% of respondents are using technology for 11 or more compliance activities. Training (82%), risk assessment (76%), and compliance and transaction monitoring (75%) comprised the top three areas of technology use. This was closely followed by customer due diligence/assessments (75%) and regulatory disclosures and reporting (72%). On average, 82% of companies are planning on investing more in at least one technology to automate and optimise compliance activities, indicating continuing momentum in digitising compliance models.

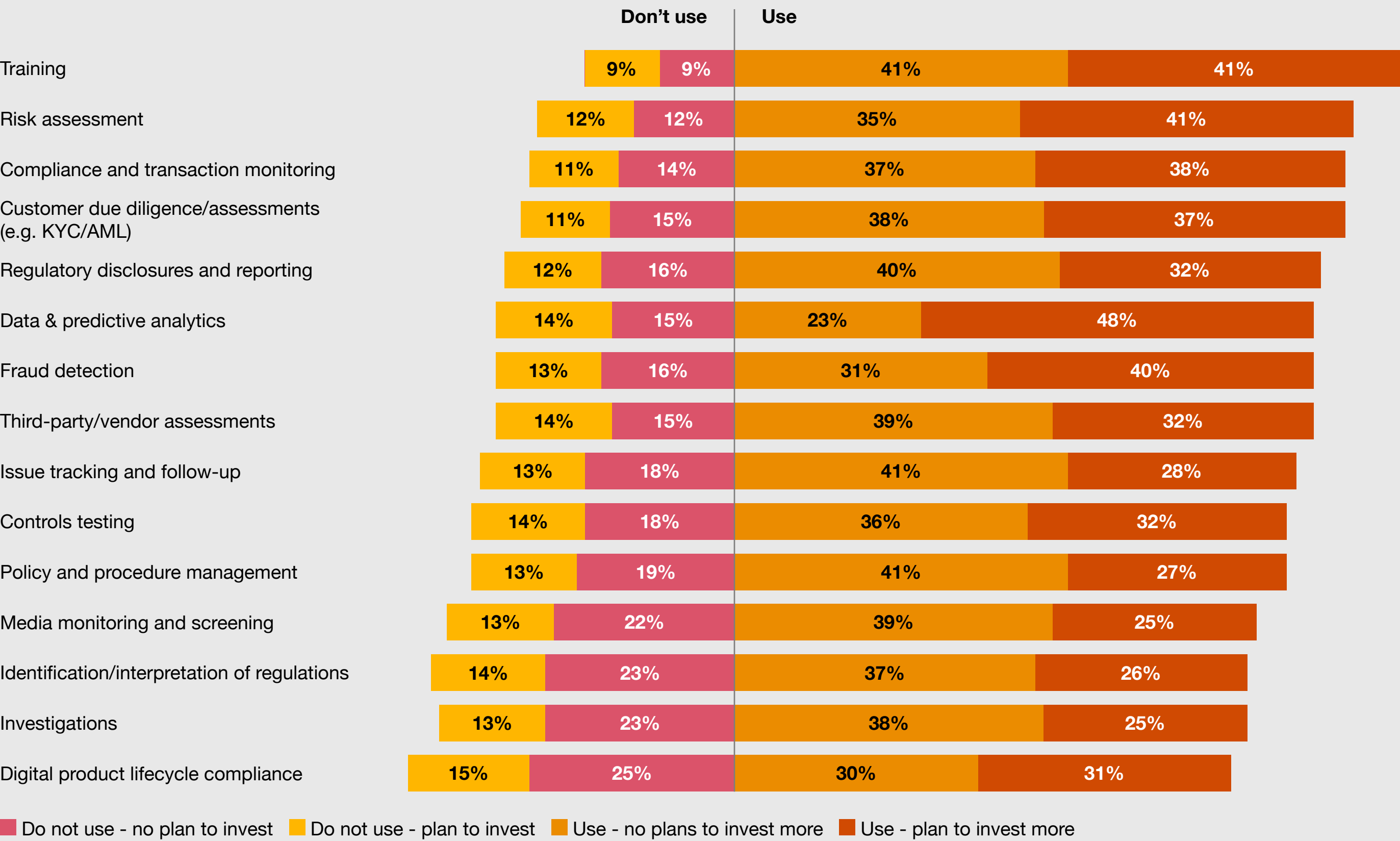
82%

plan to invest more in technology to drive compliance activities.

PwC Global Compliance Survey 2025

Use of technology to automate and optimise compliance activities

Q: To what extent does your organisation currently use, or are planning on investing in, technology and data to automate and optimise the following compliance activities? Base: All Respondents (1,798).

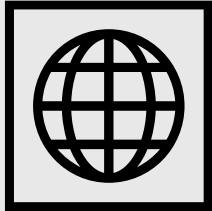
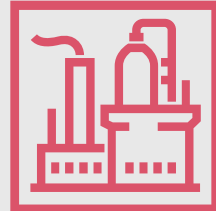


Companies in the technology sector are leading the way in the breadth of areas they are deploying digital solutions for compliance, but all industry sectors are showing a level of digital adoption. Respondents in the industrials and services sector included regulatory disclosures and reporting in their top three areas of technology deployment. This is an area where we have seen significant opportunities to unify and standardise processes and data. As investors and regulators look for increased transparency and disclosure relating to finances, governance, risk management, cyber, and sustainability, companies are seeking better ways to consolidate, review, present and report this information in the right way. Some technology platforms have focused on connecting data sources and streamlining the management of statutory reporting, Sarbanes-Oxley (SOX) compliance, and Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) disclosures. Companies are using such platforms to increase visibility and access to relevant data and risk information for those with compliance responsibilities, and 'connect-the-dots' where common data and controls satisfy different reporting obligations. PwC's Global Connected Tax Compliance article, [See Risk and Compliance Differently](#), explores how this is being done in relation to tax compliance reporting. This centres on a more data-centric approach and better connectivity and transparency across jurisdictions in complex tax ecosystems.



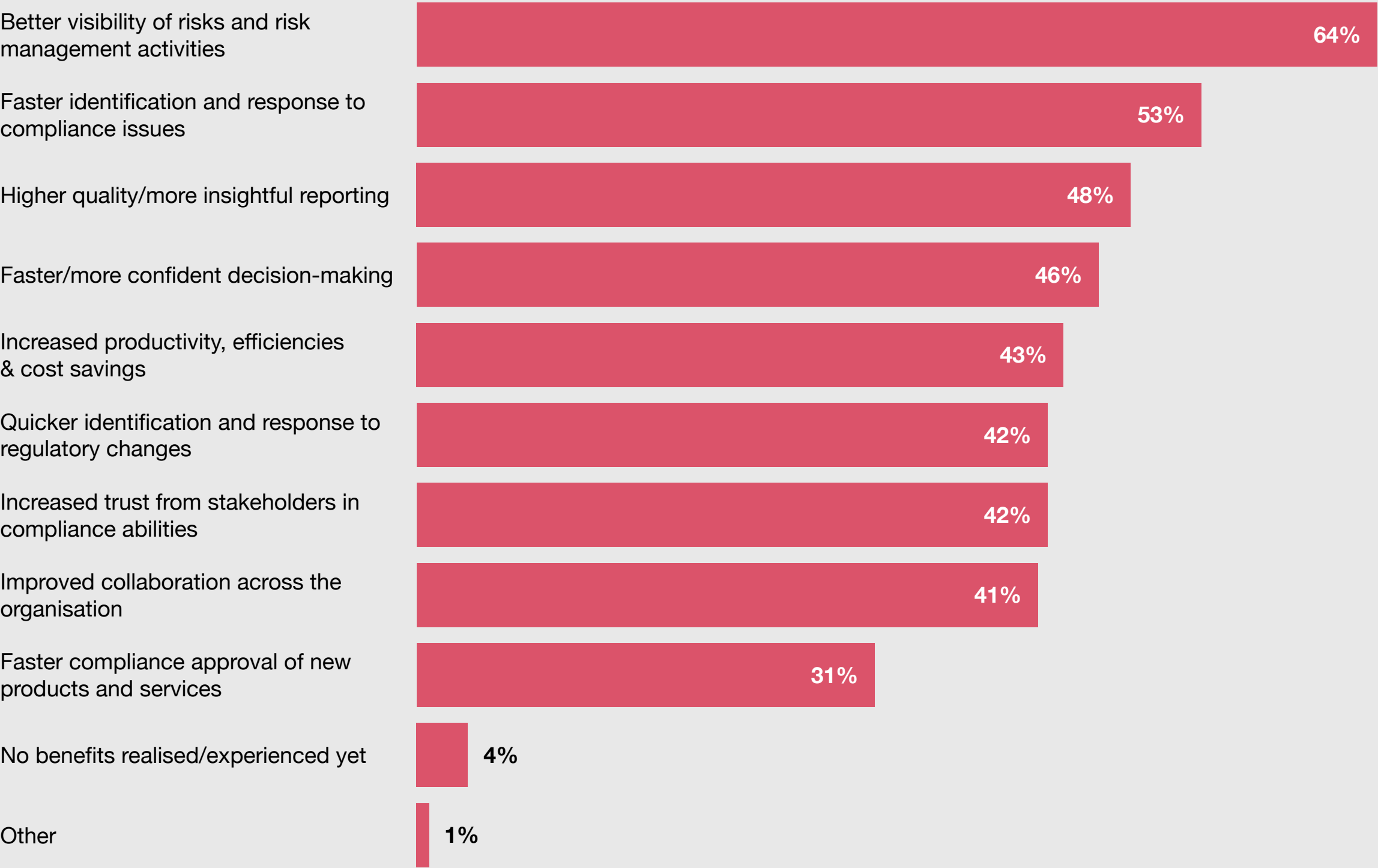
Use of technology to automate/optimize compliance activities - by sector

Q: To what extent does your organisation currently use, or are planning on investing in, technology and data to automate and optimise the following compliance activities? Base: All Respondents (1,798)

							
	Global	Financial Services	Health Industries	Technology, Media & Telecoms	Consumer Markets	Industrials & Services	Energy, Utilities & Resources
1	Training 82%	Compliance & transaction monitoring 84%	Training 82%	Risk assessment 83%	Training 81%	Training 82%	Training 80%
2	Risk assessment 76%	Training 83%	Data & predictive analytics 77%	Training 83%	Risk assessment 74%	Risk assessment 74%	Risk assessment 74%
3	Compliance & transaction monitoring 75%	Customer due diligence/assessments 81%	Risk assessment 75%	Compliance & transaction monitoring 80%	Fraud detection 74%	Regulatory disclosures reporting 72%	Customer due diligence/Assessments 70%

Benefits realised from technology investment

Q: As a result of your organisation’s investments in technology, what are the main benefits you have experienced in relation to your compliance activities? Base: Respondents who use technology and data to automate compliance activities (1,802)



Our survey showed that technology investment has benefited company compliance activities in a variety of ways. These include better visibility of risks and risk management activities (64%), faster identification and response to compliance issues (53%), higher quality/more insightful reporting (48%), faster/more confident decision-making (46%) and increased productivity, efficiencies and cost savings (43%). Each is important in enabling compliance to help companies move faster in the market, navigate complexity, and avoid hazards.

Certain industry sectors experienced benefits to a greater extent. 50% of those from FS, for example, cited increased productivity, efficiencies and cost savings from technology compared to the average of 43% across all sectors. This is likely in response to the volume of regulation FS companies face and the greater opportunity for technology to reduce overhead cost. We have seen concerted efforts to consolidate compliance and control efforts using technology, including:

- Replacing redundant risk and compliance platforms that don’t work together, which also helps save on licensing and maintenance costs
- Leveraging and sharing technology across the first, second- and third-line teams
- Mapping compliance controls across functions, where there are ‘one-to-many’ relationships
- Rationalising and consolidating data sources to provide a ‘single version of the truth’

For those in the health industry – another highly regulated market – 70% cited better visibility of risks and risk management activities as a key benefit, along with 51% experiencing faster and more confident decision-making (compared to the survey average of 46%). This potentially reflects how compliance decisions have had to keep pace with significant changes in the health industry ecosystem, accelerated by the pandemic and patient expectations. PwC’s [The Future of Compliance in the Pharmaceutical Industry](#) publication lays out ways in which pharma companies are using technology to respond to new trends in the sector, including the use of automation and data, and the skills needed to get the most out of it.

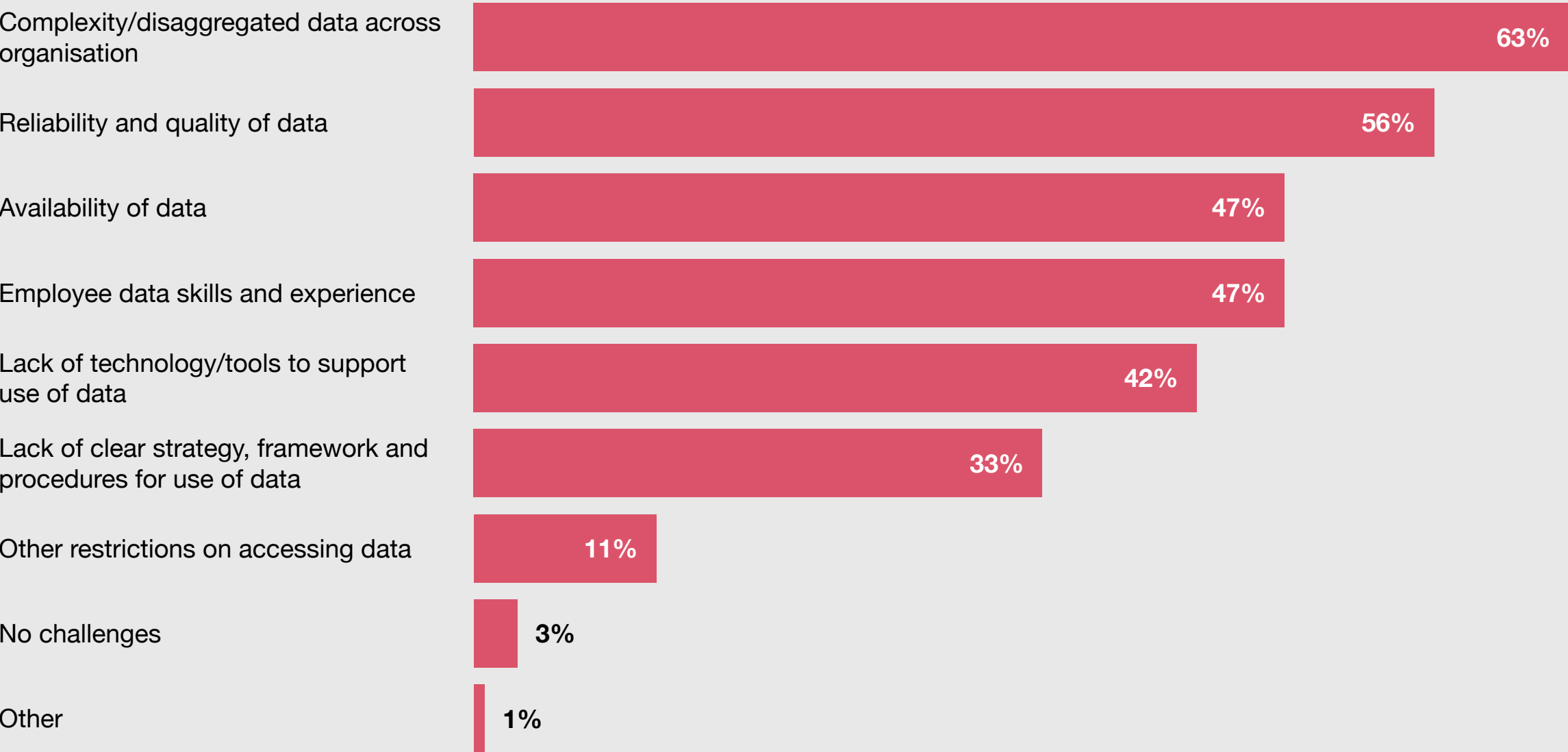
Data flowing through everything

If these benefits are to be realised, many organisations face a common challenge: data. Whilst technology infrastructure and applications provide the compliance ecosystem backbone, it relies on the flow of accurate, timely and consistent data to function effectively. 63% of respondents, however, said that the complexity and disaggregated nature of data across the organisation made compliance more difficult (this rose to 70% in North America). Respondents also cited the reliability and quality (56%) and availability (47%) of data as challenging, along with a lack of skills and experience (47%) to manage and use the data.

The good news is that, of the areas being flagged for more investment, data and predictive analytics was at the top, with 48% of respondents indicating they are planning on investing more. This is consistent with the focus we have seen many companies place on the importance of data to help them see, take and manage compliance risks. More generally, numerous companies are looking at their broader data governance and management frameworks, which have a pervasive impact on functions across the business. One key driver is the rise of AI, which is ‘supercharging’ the availability and consumption of data.

Challenges in data use for compliance

Q: What are the main challenges your organisation faces, if any, when using data to support your compliance activities? Base: All Respondents (1,802)



The data ‘magic wand’

Our survey asked respondents: “If you had access to any data you wanted in your organisation, what is the one thing you would like to do in relation to compliance that you cannot currently do?” Responses covered a broad spectrum, but common themes emerged:

Theme	Data-driven needs of business and compliance leaders
Data access and integration	■ Centralised data sources (to break down data silos) ■ Transparent data across processes, with cross-functional collaboration ■ Integration of legacy systems, including compliance, risk, and operational workflows ■ Automation of repetitive compliance tasks, with standardised data
Risk mitigation	■ Risk management data linked to compliance systems ■ Access to data that informs risk evaluation and prioritisation, such as Key Risk Indicators (KRIs)
Analytics and reporting	■ Predictive analytics to identify trends, before risks escalate ■ Analytics to help make informed decisions ■ Quick and accurate reporting to regulators
Oversight and behaviours	■ Continuous monitoring of activities and transactions to check policy adherence and flag non-compliance ■ Gauging of employee attitudes to compliance and compliance initiatives

“

There tends to be a piece meal approach with each department in charge of its own compliance reporting. I’d like to see better departmental roll-ups into company views.”

Global Compliance Survey Respondent

“

Implementing AI could enable predictive analytics to forecast areas where non-compliance is likely to occur.”

Global Compliance Survey Respondent

Augmented with AI

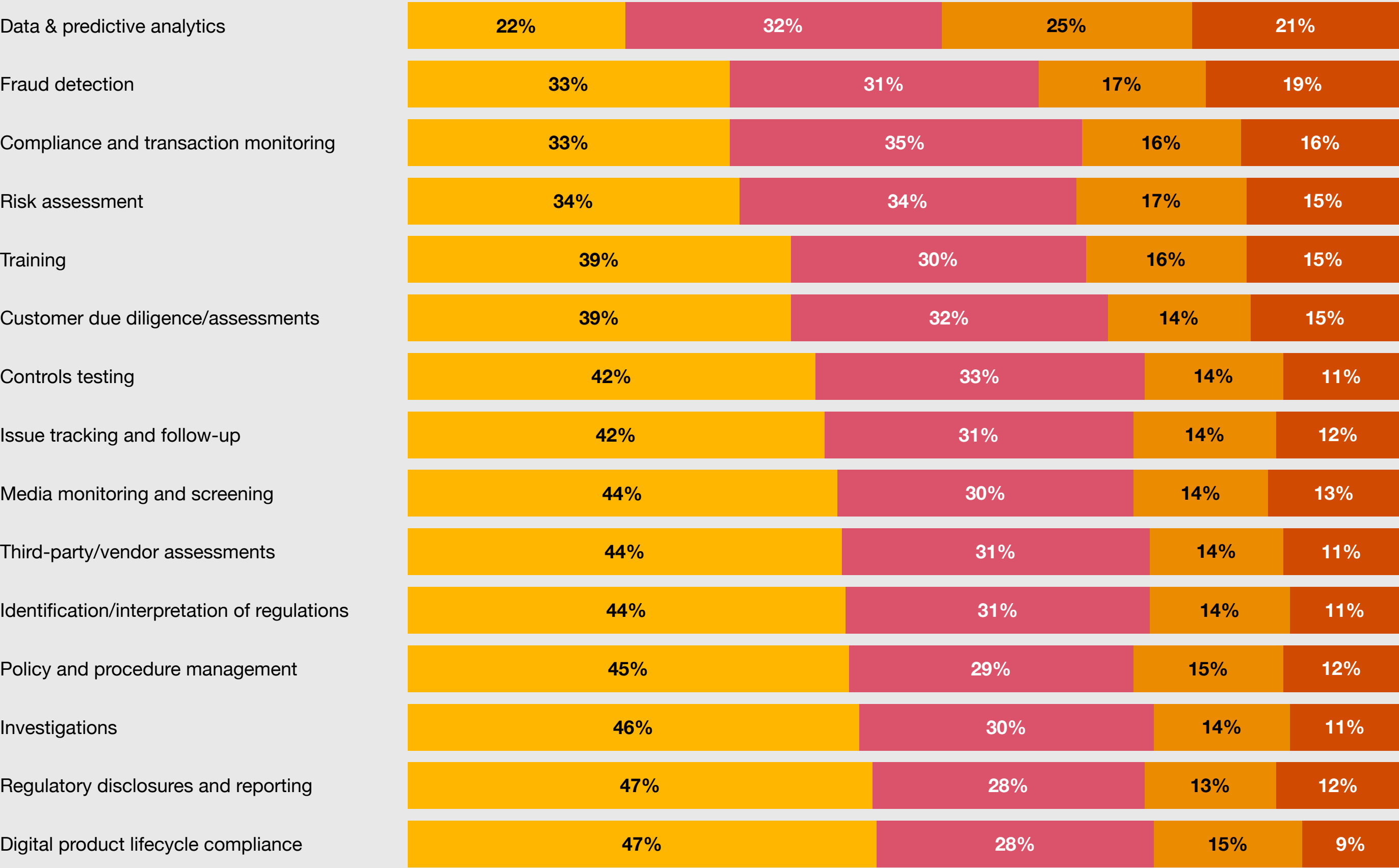
AI is driving changes to business models, increasing competition, and creating demand for new skills from the workforce. PwC’s [28th Global CEO Survey](#) found that almost half of CEOs say that their biggest priorities over the next three years are integrating AI (including generative AI (GenAI)) into technology platforms as well as business processes and workflows. It also found that those using GenAI report efficiencies in how employees use their time and increases in revenue and profitability.

This brings new opportunities for compliance too. Our survey found that the majority of respondents (71%) believe that AI will have a net positive impact overall on compliance. Currently just under half (46%) reported piloting or using AI in data and predictive analytics and 36% are piloting or using it for fraud detection. We are seeing examples of sophisticated AI being used in this area as approaches that were pioneered in FS companies are deployed more widely, such as in payment service providers, to analyse and target transactions. There is also significant opportunity to apply such techniques to help non-FS sectors focus on higher risk fraud and compliance scenarios.

Robert Paffen, PwC’s Risk Services Digital Leader, notes that “many of our clients expect a net positive impact of AI on compliance management. To realise this, it will be crucial to have an aligned AI, data and cyber security risk mitigation strategy as each area is reliant on the others”. Whilst AI in compliance is still in its early stages it is expected to develop rapidly alongside new and emerging regulatory frameworks and have applicability to most areas of compliance. This will not, however, happen unless Compliance functions are bold and have a plan for adoption. Our survey found that 32% of respondents said they are not currently piloting or using AI for any compliance activities – so there is still work to do.

Use of AI for compliance

Q: Is your organisation planning on using, or already using, Artificial Intelligence (AI) in any of the following areas? Base: All Respondents (1,802)

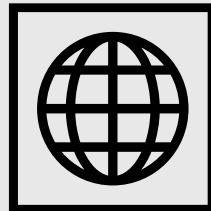
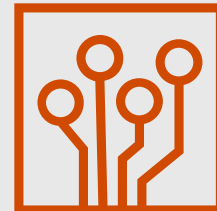
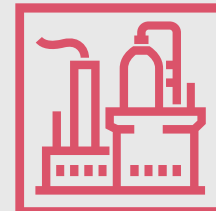


Not in use: No plans Planning to use In use: Currently piloting Already using

Our survey saw geographical differences in AI adoption for compliance. Respondents in the Middle East, for example, stated that they are more likely to be using AI, compared to those in Western Europe. AI use also differs between industries. Those in TMT sectors are more likely to already be using AI across several different compliance areas, and EUR companies are least likely to have plans to use AI. Data and predictive analytics remain a top focus for all of them, however, with some planning a significant increase in usage, such as those in the industrials and services sector (from 43% to 62%).

Compliance activities piloting or already using AI

Q: Is your organisation planning on using, or already using, Artificial Intelligence (AI) in any of the following areas? Base: All Respondents (1,798)

1		Global	Data & predictive analytics 46%
		Financial Services	Data & predictive analytics 45%
		Health Industries	Data & predictive analytics 45%
2		Technology, Media & Telecoms	Data & predictive analytics 65%
		Consumer Markets	Data & predictive analytics 50%
		Industrials & Services	Data & predictive analytics 43%
3		Energy, Utilities & Resources	Data & predictive analytics 31%
2			
3			
2			
3			
2			
3			
2			
3			
2			
3			
2			
3			
2			
3			
2			
3			
2			
3			
2			
3			
2			
3			
2			
3			
2			
3			
2			
3			
2			
3			
2			
3			
2			
3			
2			
3			
2			
3			
2			
3			
2			
3			
2			
3			
2			
3			
2			
3			
2			
3			
2			
3			
2			
3			
2			
3			
2			
3			
2			
3			
2			
3			
2			
3			
2			
3			
2			
3			
2			
3			
2			
3			
2			
3			
2			
3			
2			
3			
2			
3			
2			
3			
2			
3			
2			
3			
2			
3			
2			
3			
2			
3			
2			
3			
2			
3			
2			
3			
2			
3			
2			
3			
2			
3			
2			
3			
2			
3			
2			
3			
2			
3			
2			
3			
2			
3			
2			
3			
2			
3			
2			
3			
2			
3			
2			
3			
2			
3			
2			
3			
2			
3			
2			
3			
2			
3			
2			
3			
2			
3			
2			
3			
2			
3			
2			
3			
2			
3			
2			
3			
2			
3			
2			
3			
2			
3			
2			
3			
2			
3			
2			
3			
2			
3			
2			
3			
2			
3			
2			
3			
2			
3			
2			
3			
2			
3			
2			
3			
2			
3			
2			
3			
2			
3			
2			
3			
2			
3			
2			
3			
2			
3			
2			
3			
2			
3			
2			
3			
2			
3			
2			
3			
2			
3			
2			
3			
2			
3			
2			

In FS, there is a growing number of AI use cases that are helping companies to identify, interpret, analyse and manage compliance to address the volume of regulatory requirements. This includes 'horizon scanning' across the market to help anticipate and respond faster to new rules or emerging threats. PwC's [Risk Link](#) tool, for example, has been developed with AI technology to track regulatory changes in near real time to allow companies to understand their obligations and map regulations to their risk and compliance processes and controls. This is helping to cut through complexity, speed up response to regulation and tackle costs. Fast, efficient and effective compliance mechanisms are important for other industries too. The technology sector, for example, has to keep pace with their customers' innovation needs whilst maintaining compliance with new waves of regulatory requirements around data, cyber security, cloud platforms and AI.

89%

are concerned about data privacy and security in relation to adopting AI for compliance activities.

PwC Global Compliance Survey 2025

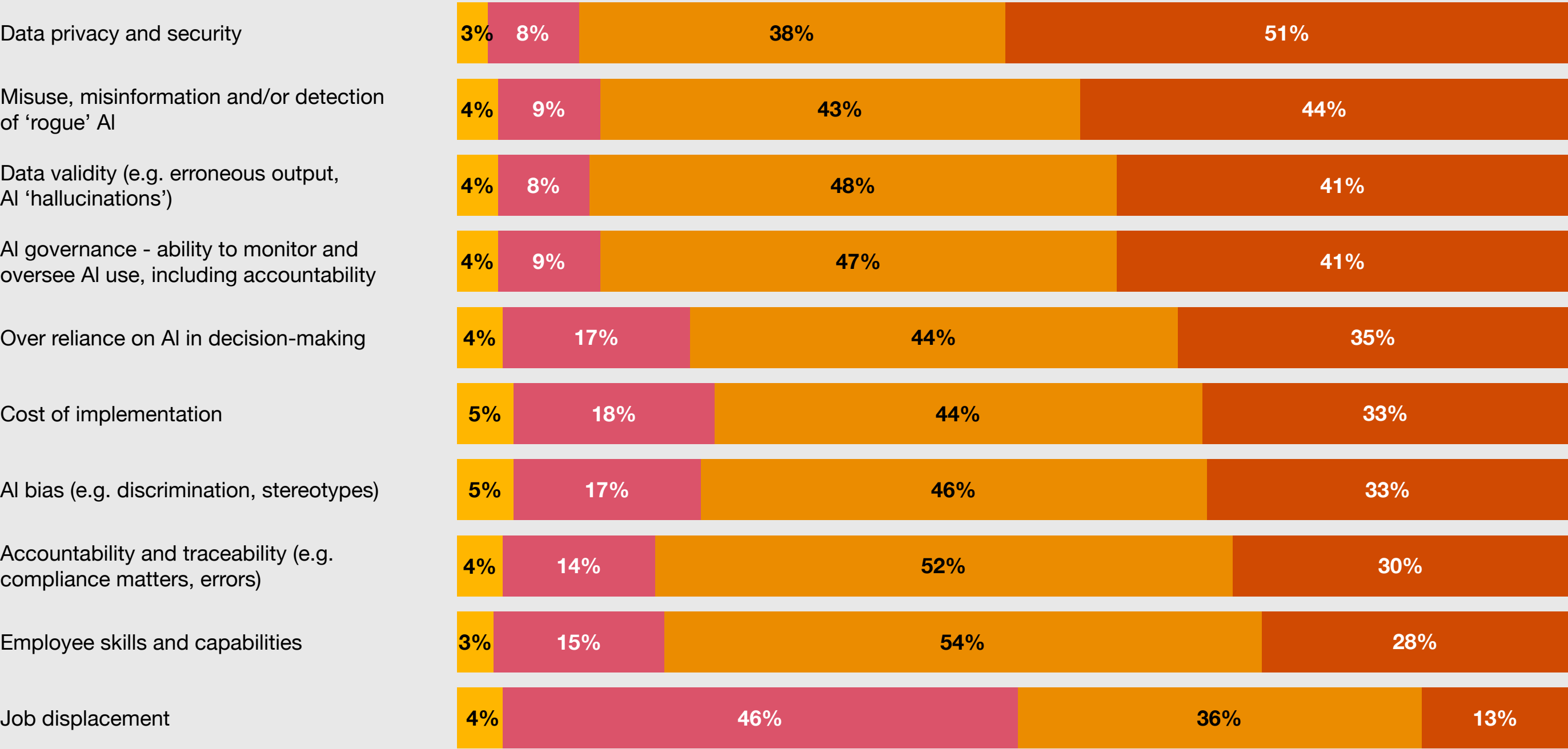
With great power, comes great responsibility

AI is helping businesses to become faster and smarter and do new things; but it comes with an obligation to use it responsibly. This is being driven by new and emerging regulation and frameworks designed to build trust in AI and manage risks around data privacy and security, misuse, misinformation, bias, and accountability and explainability. There are no consistent global AI standards yet, and many countries are still in the process of drafting their rules. One of the first such frameworks is the EU's AI Act, which came into force in August 2024. Whilst it takes a risk-based approach and aims to minimise administrative burdens for businesses, it inevitably adds to an already complex compliance landscape. As other jurisdictions add their own AI rules, multinational companies will need to navigate these across their global operations. In advance of external requirements, we see an increasing number of companies focused on implementing internal frameworks to help govern AI and mitigate risks.

In relation to adopting AI for compliance activities, 89% of survey respondents were somewhat or very concerned about data privacy and security. This is an area that has seen compliance responsibility and accountability move beyond the traditional remit of Legal and IT teams to those in the first line responsible for managing the data. There was also concern about misuse and misinformation (87%), and the risks associated with data validity (89%), governance (88%) and the use of AI in decision-making (79%). PwC UK's [GenAI: Creating value through governance](#) paper elaborates on how companies are addressing the responsible AI challenge.

Level of concern around the use of AI for compliance activities

Q: In relation to the adoption and use of AI for compliance activities, how concerned are you about each of the following risks?
Base: All Respondents (1,802)



Don't know Not at all concerned Somewhat concerned Very concerned

Interestingly, job displacement was not an area of significant concern, with 46% of respondents not at all concerned about this aspect of compliance-related AI risk. This highlights another key dynamic in compliance model evolution – the shift in talent, skills, and mindset needed to both maintain compliance, and extract value from it.

Actions to stay ahead

Compliance leaders

- Start pilots on AI, no matter how simple. They will be iterative and help the team learn
- Agree with the Board a target model for the compliance technology environment, including the data requirements and investment required
- Start to estimate/measure benefits from technology to demonstrate Return on Investment (RoI)

Board and business leaders

- Establish a Responsible AI Framework to adopt and use AI with confidence
- Consider opportunities to connect data sources and reporting platforms for integrated compliance reporting (e.g. sustainability, tax)
- Include compliance activities in enterprise data/data transformation initiatives

Investing in the human ecosystem



Culture of compliance

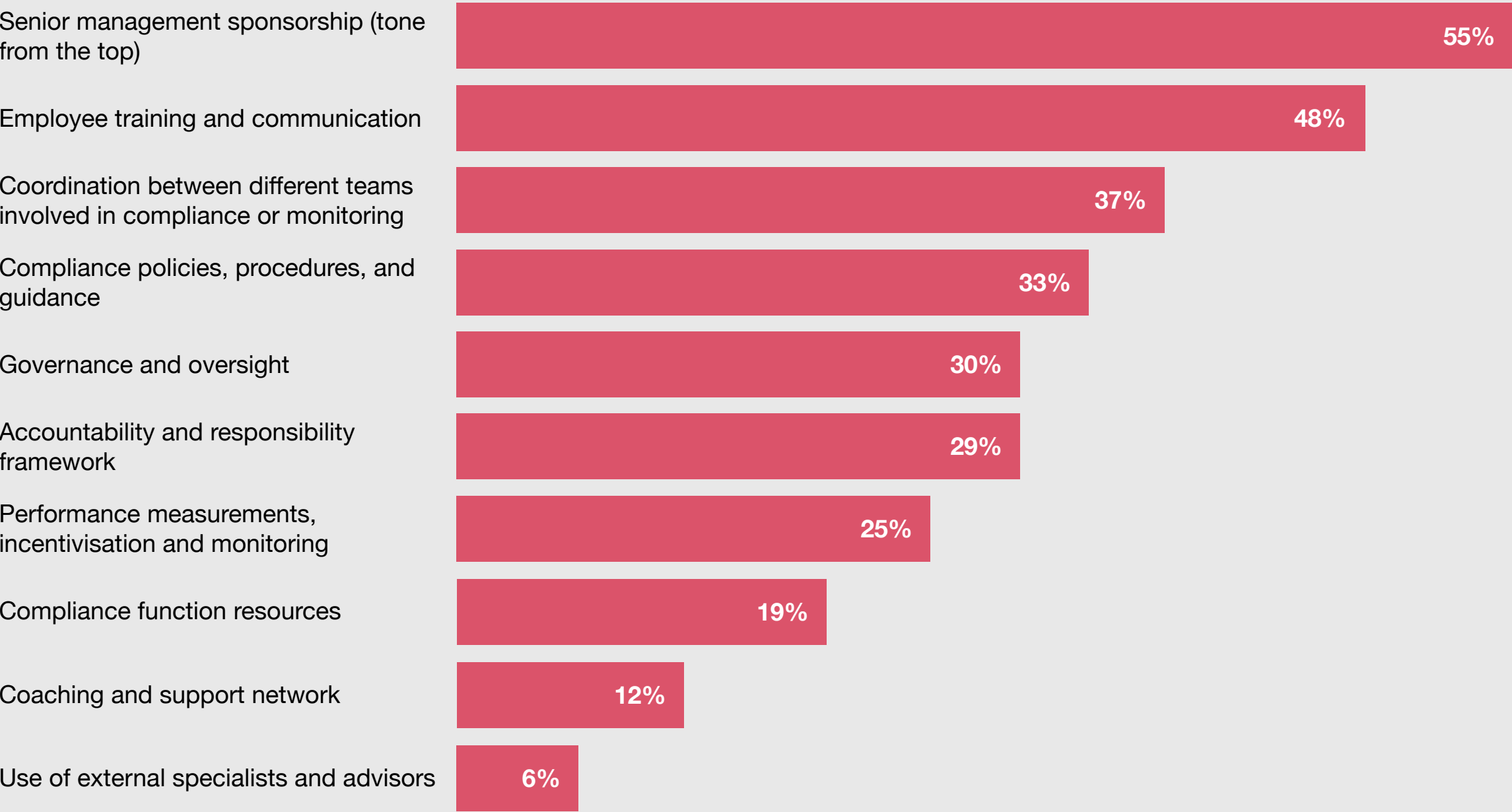
Compliance is critical to every part of an organisation. It helps to define its culture, build trust with customers, suppliers, investors, regulators and other stakeholders and gives it a license to operate in a global market that expects transparency and the highest standards from leaders and employees. This means the human dimension of compliance is evolving as quickly as the regulations.

Our survey found that almost six of 10 respondents (58%) felt their company has a strong compliance culture, with another three of 10 rating themselves average. Whilst this suggests there is room for improvement, the overall result is encouraging, especially because respondents reporting they had a stronger compliance culture were more likely to say that compliance had significant influence on the business in relation to strategic decisions and changes (63% vs 30% with a poorer culture). With greater influence, Compliance functions can help the company avoid hazards and deliver more successful change.

Of the factors companies considered most important in creating a strong compliance culture, senior management sponsorship/’tone at the top’ (55%), employee training and communication (48%), and coordination with compliance teams (37%) were ranked at the top. Moira Cronin, a Digital Risk Partner in PwC Ireland, notes that “Compliance leaders are becoming more adept at embedding ethics and risk-based decision-making into their organisation. This is helping compliance to be ’built into’ business activities and culture, rather than being a ’bolt-on’ burden. When combined with technology, this is helping drive effectiveness and cost efficiency and reducing the regulatory burden many firms are facing.”

Important factors to enhance ‘culture of compliance’

Q: In your opinion, which of the following are the most important in enhancing your organisation’s ‘culture of compliance’ and compliance risk awareness? - Ranked in top three. Base: All Respondents (1,802)

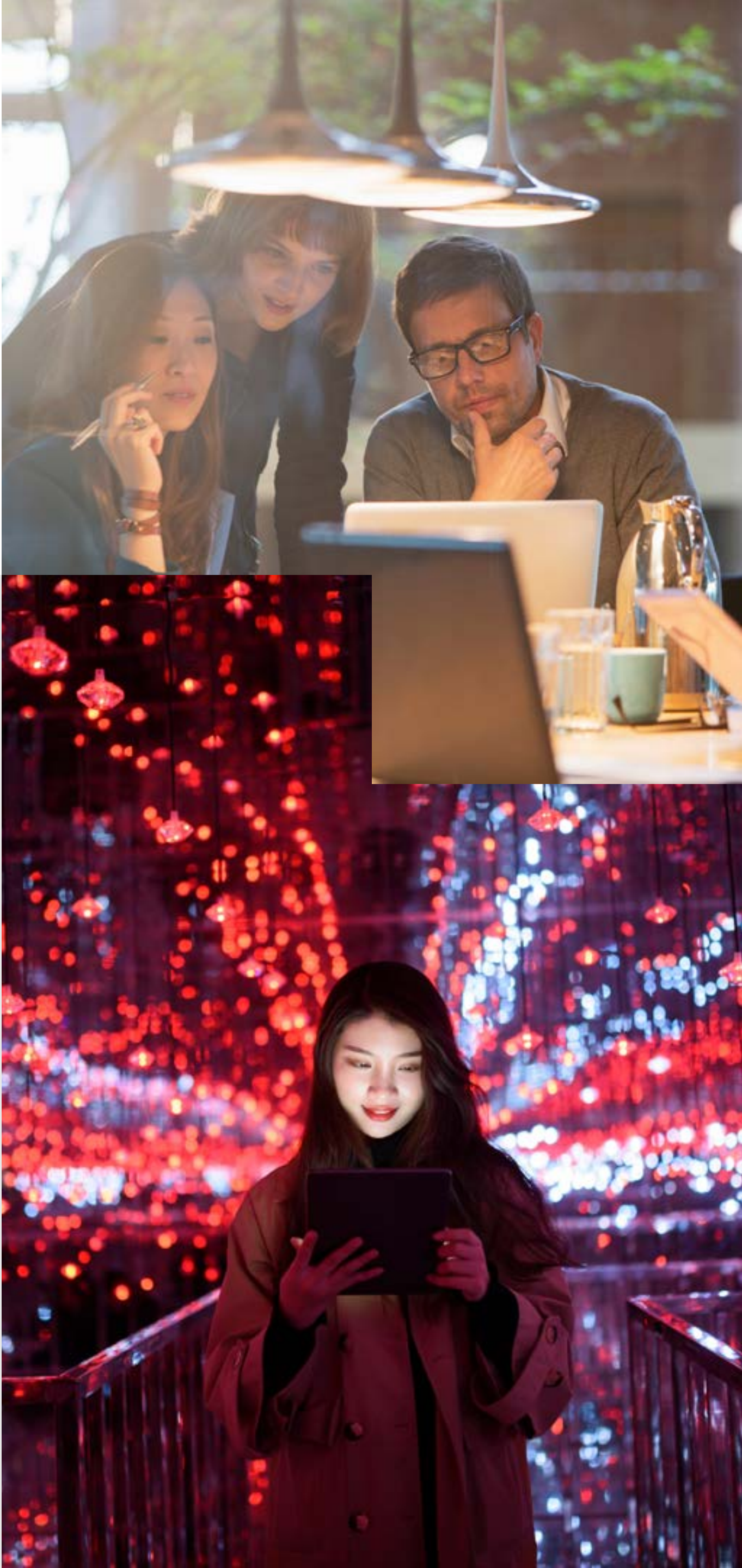
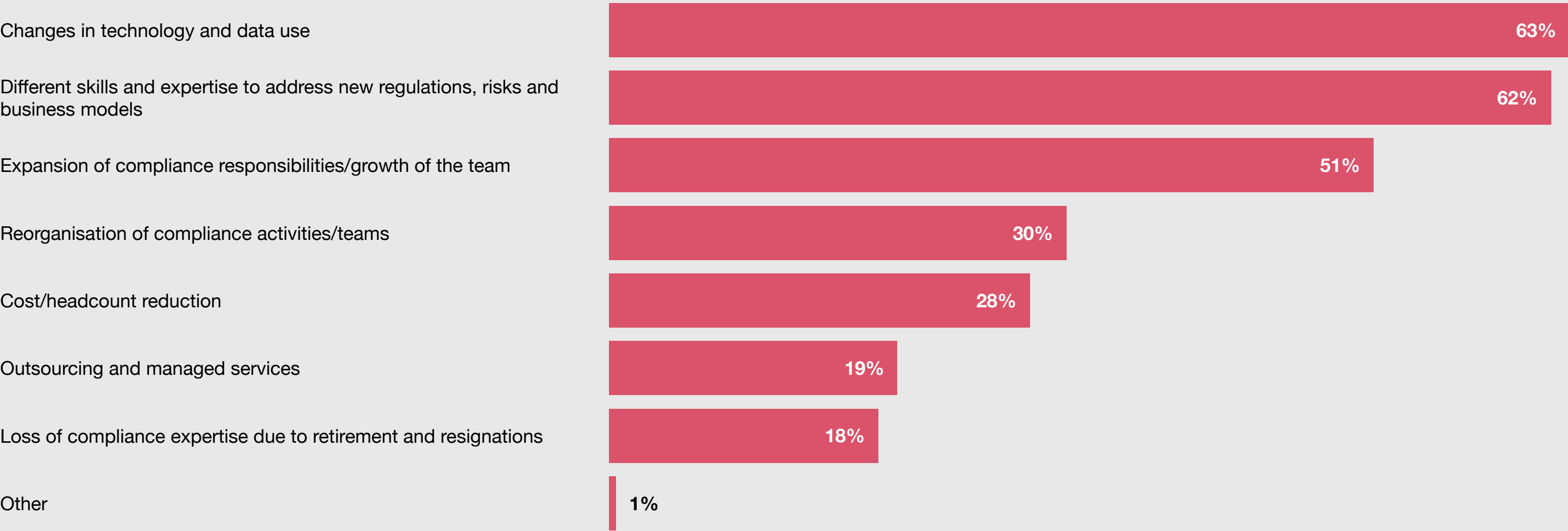


Interestingly, Compliance function resources was ranked lower in importance (19%), perhaps indicating the continued shift in responsibility towards the first line rather than reliance on Compliance functions alone. This might also support the view that compliance resourcing in the new risk environment is less about increasing traditional capabilities and capacity, and more about refocusing skills and capabilities.

Cost pressures, the pace of regulation, and stakeholder expectations are stretching Compliance functions and their resources, often requiring them to do more with less. This is also driving them to adapt their approaches and technology use to meet the challenge. Changes in technology and data use (63%) is now the top factor influencing compliance talent strategy, followed by the need for different skills and expertise to address new regulations, risks and business models (62%).

Factors influencing compliance talent strategy

Q: What are the main factors that you anticipate will influence your organisation’s compliance talent strategy over the next three years? - Ranked in top three. Base: All Respondents (1,802)



Talent in 3D

Leading companies are looking beyond the more one-dimensional talent model and traditional legal, risk and audit backgrounds to incorporate more technology, data, risk modelling, behavioural science, and strategic business experience. Specialist knowledge (53%) and data management (43%) are seen as key skills to maintain effective compliance. More than half of those identifying these skill needs as critical believe their company will have a skills shortage in these areas in the next 12 months.

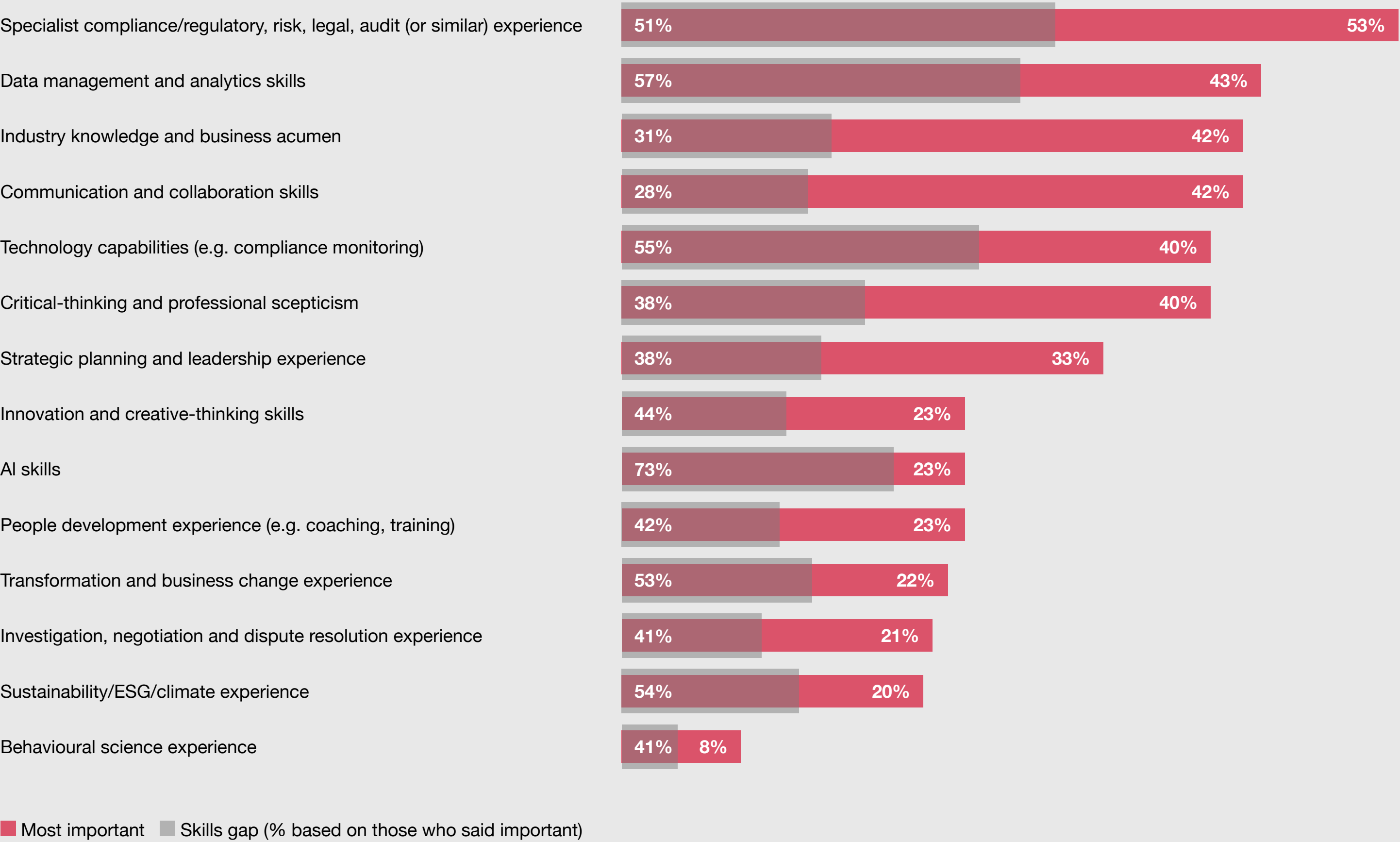
From an industry perspective, the priorities for compliance skills included:

- Consumer Markets - most likely to select strategic planning and leadership experience (42%) as a key skill-set area they value for compliance, possibly reflecting the changes in consumer patterns and global supply chains over recent years
- EUR and Industrials and Services – more likely to prioritise sustainability/ESG experience. This may be in response to the significant changes in energy transition and the attention given the sustainability footprint of manufacturers and their supply chain
- FS – identified industry knowledge/acumen (46%) as important, which has been a factor in driving competition and costs for recruitment and specialist resource to meet complex FS regulation
- TMT – selected technology capabilities (45%) and AI skills (31%) as a priority as companies try to keep pace with technology change and customer demands for innovation

Important skills to maintain effective compliance

Qa: In relation to the skills and experience required to maintain effective compliance at your organisation, which of the following do you consider the most important? Base: All Respondents (1,799)

Qb: Over the next 12 months, which, if any, of these areas do you anticipate will have potential skills gaps within your organisation? Base: Those who anticipate a skills gap (1,791)



The compliance ‘data challenge’ cannot, however, be solved without the team having the skills and experience to analyse, interpret and act on data. Companies are looking at their talent models to achieve the right balance between recruitment, training, external experts, and managed services to meet compliance obligations. Moreover, as compliance activities embed new technology, routine activities can be automated, allowing compliance professionals to focus on more strategic activities. Only 23% of respondents selected AI skills as important for maintaining effective compliance, but we expect this will increase over time. PwC’s [AI Jobs Barometer](#) explores related broader themes on the impact of AI on the future workforce.

Whilst AI can reduce manual effort, the ability to interpret, validate and act on its output is important – and this will rely on critical thinking and professional scepticism. Industry and business acumen is seen as a key skill by 42% of survey respondents, but 31% of these believe they will fall short in the next year. Moreover, company leadership, regulators and other compliance stakeholders will also expect higher quality reporting, more proactive business insights, and less compliance issues – all of which will take more than just better technology.

What people want – or expect - from Compliance teams will differ by stakeholder but being able to articulate the compliance implications of industry trends or business changes is critical. In the pharmaceutical sector, for example, there have been shifts in branding and marketing and HCP engagement, with a desire for more medical insight and better interactions. How Compliance teams can respond and support these changes, with different approaches to training, awareness and monitoring, will be important to the impact they can make and the perception of stakeholders.

To unlock real value, compliance professionals need to operate in three dimensions, collaborating with others across the organisation and externally, connect-the-dots, and articulate the upside of compliance in supporting strategic initiatives and transformation.

Actions to stay ahead

Compliance leaders

- Perform a talent and skills gap assessment against the target model, including use of external specialists and managed services
- Challenge the balance between technical and soft skills in compliance, including industry/ business acumen – and adjust training and development, as needed
- Agree the vision for the company’s compliance culture – and the best ways to measure it

Board and business leaders

- Consider compliance activities when embarking on workforce and operational transformation
- Explore internal secondments to the Compliance function as part of future leadership/talent development programmes
- Understand factors driving culture and what investment in compliance talent is needed



The Strategic Compliance Officer



Levelling-up leadership

For Compliance Leaders, the stakes are higher than ever. In some regulated industries, like FS, Compliance Officers have a high degree of liability. In the past, institutions were fined; now, in some jurisdictions, there are personal liabilities that include being disbarred and fined. From a commercial perspective, the stakes are different but arguably just as serious - the risk of being irrelevant.

This is putting the 'Strategic Compliance Officer' at the centre of compliance model reinvention – someone who can help companies see risk, take risk, and manage risk effectively to both protect value and create value. Practically, this means being able to:

- Connect the different threads of compliance and build cooperation across functions in the first, second and third line
- Forge relationships and trust between Compliance Leaders, the Board, other C-suite, and other internal and external stakeholders, including others in a governance, compliance and assurance role, such as the Chief Risk Officer, Chief Information Security Officer, and Chief Audit Executive
- Embed compliance in risk-based decision-making for strategic business initiatives, particularly earlier in the service/product development life cycle
- See and capture the upside of risk, particularly helping the business move faster by anticipating issues and responding more quickly
- Interpret regulations and optimise compliance activities to respond in a cost-effective manner

The Functional Compliance Officer in compliance transformation

In recent years, a global automotive manufacturer has been transforming its compliance organisation to transfer complex regulatory developments and their requirements to business models and products. It re-defined its collaboration model with the first line and forged new interfaces with second line experts. To reduce complexity and manage these interfaces efficiently a new role was defined: the Functional Compliance Officer (FCO). The FCOs are part of the second line but work closely with first line functions, such as Sales, Purchasing, and R&D. The cross-functional collaboration between the first and second line, guided and coordinated by the FCOs, is a key factor for compliant business processes (e.g. product creation). They have played a key role in increasing compliance efficiency and effectiveness by:

- Providing a single point of contact for the business functions to respond to their compliance needs, including bringing in experts, where necessary, for specialist areas, such as AI
- Being able to get close to the business functions and their processes and developing business and commercial insight to tailor and optimise compliance measures
- Providing orientation and support for decision-making, particularly for matters requiring complex interpretation
- Streamlining communication and providing updates to various leaders in both the business and compliance teams
- Focusing on effective implementation and oversight of compliance activities in the functions so they are embedded and deliver success



The good news here is that over half (52%) of executives surveyed describe their Compliance Officers as having significant influence over the strategic business decisions and changes within their organisation, with only 5% having no or minimal influence. Those in the FS sectors were more likely to believe their compliance leadership has significant influence on wider business strategy (59%).

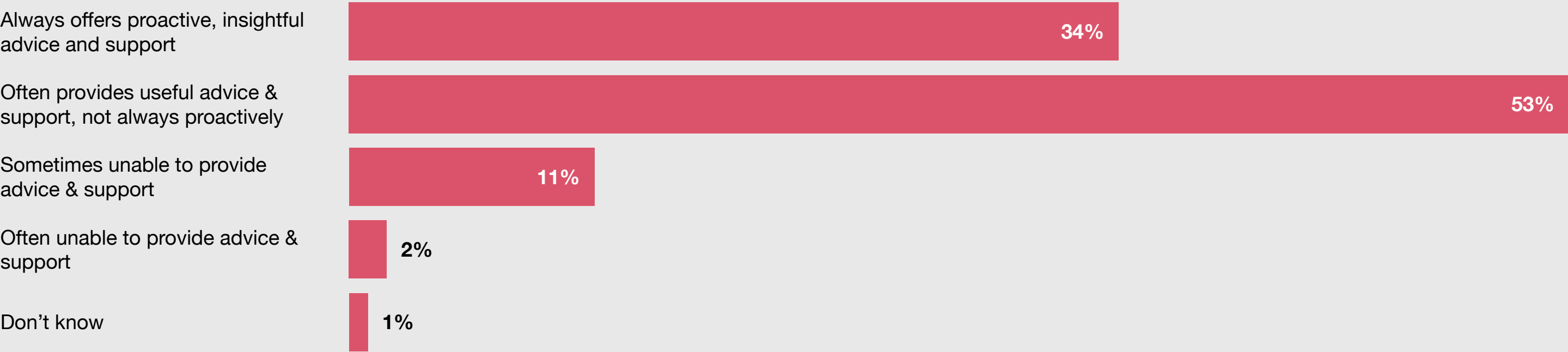
This suggests that compliance is already on its way to having leadership's ear and being able to contribute to strategic value. Moreover, this influence is being well received by non-compliance leadership. One in three organisations described their Compliance function as always offering proactive, insightful advice, and over half are seen as often providing useful advice and support. This, of course, relies on companies having an executive in the position of Chief Compliance Officer (CCO) or equivalent. Sometimes the role is federated across different functions, such as Legal, IT and Finance, but with the level of coordination and strategic direction needed in modern compliance, the role is becoming increasingly important.

From a regional perspective, business leaders in Latin America (51%) and the Middle East (53%) are more likely to say their Compliance teams always offer proactive advice and support. Fewer in North America and Western Europe agree (25% and 26% respectively), but over half (53%) in these regions say useful advice and support are offered often (but not always proactively).

The survey data shows that the Compliance functions that always offer proactive, insightful advice and support are more likely to be involved at all stages of the product and service development process (pre-development, development, testing, and pre-launch activities), which can help increase agility and speed in bringing these to market, along with other strategic initiatives.

Level to which Compliance function supports the business to achieve its objectives (*not asked to chief compliance roles*)

Q: Which of the following best describes how your organisation's Compliance function supports the business to achieve its objectives?
Base: Respondents who are not CCO/Head of Compliance/Chief Ethics and Compliance Officer (1,347)



New strategic value

Looking forward, Compliance has numerous opportunities to demonstrate its value. Survey respondents indicated their companies are planning substantial business changes in the next three years that might require Compliance involvement. Nearly three-quarters (71%), for example, highlighted digital transformation as a key initiative requiring compliance skills, including helping to address cyber and data regulations.

Compliance in digital transformation

There is typically a wide spectrum of risks associated with digital transformation that require different skillsets to address – together with robust oversight, strategic thinking, and effective coordination to manage. These include compliance risks over:

- Cyber security – securing systems and complying with cyber regulations, including new cloud, resilience and AI standards
- Access management – configuring roles, privileges and segregation of duties, which can also underpin controls that address other governance, risk and compliance requirements
- Data privacy and protection – safeguarding the capture, processing and retention of customer data, particularly where this is done across different jurisdictions
- Vendor management – particularly where there is a third-party supporting system implementation, hosting or data management, where there needs to be strict adherence to various standards
- Sustainability – understanding the impact on sustainability targets of new digital infrastructure (and the decommissioning of the old infrastructure)
- Finance and investment – managing financial, contractual and reporting obligations to investors or partners, including tax reporting and confidence that the investment is being used appropriately and delivering the right return

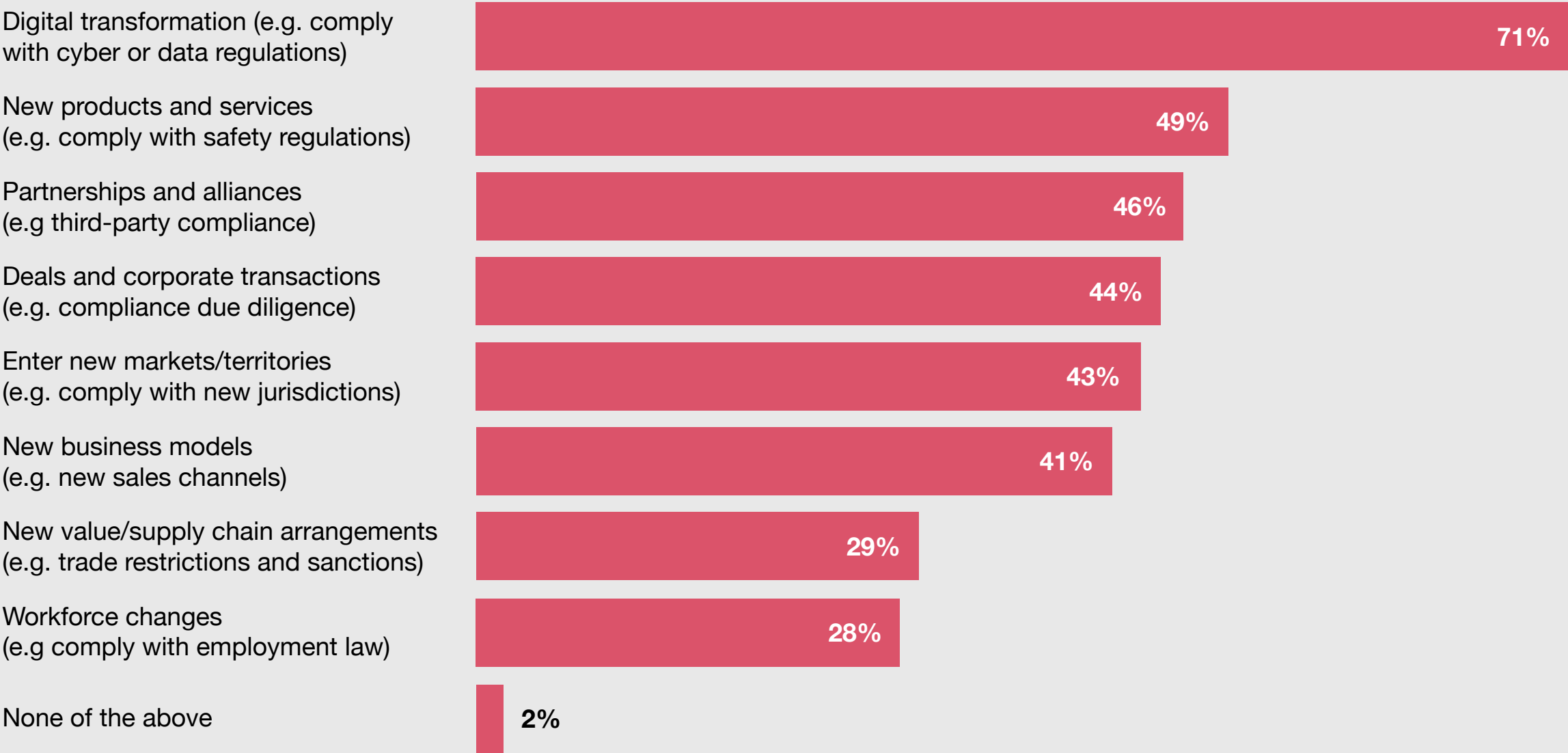
This is where Compliance teams can be effective and use their experience in handling complexity to check that management has considered the different dimensions of transformation – and are prioritising these with strategic objectives.

Almost half (49%) of respondents said they need support in delivering new products and services and four in 10 (41%) respondents indicated planned changes to their business models. Such change can involve significant compliance risks as the company changes its workforce, systems, data, operations and sales channels, for example. How effectively compliance is handled can mean the difference between success and failure of new business models, particularly if they involve a ‘license to operate’, entry to new markets, unfamiliar or untested services, and new relationships or transactions with third parties. Taking risk, however, is the fuel needed for reinvention and growth. This is no longer optional in today’s competitive landscape, so Compliance functions need to be involved early to help mitigate risk and navigate hazards effectively. This upside potential for Compliance functions should not be underestimated and – with the right strategic mindset and strategic steer – offers the chance for a significant shift in how compliance is perceived and the benefits it brings the organisation.



Strategic initiatives planned in next 3 years that may require compliance support

Q: Within the next 3 years, which of the following strategic initiatives, if any, has your organisation planned that may require Compliance? **Base:** All Respondents (1,802)



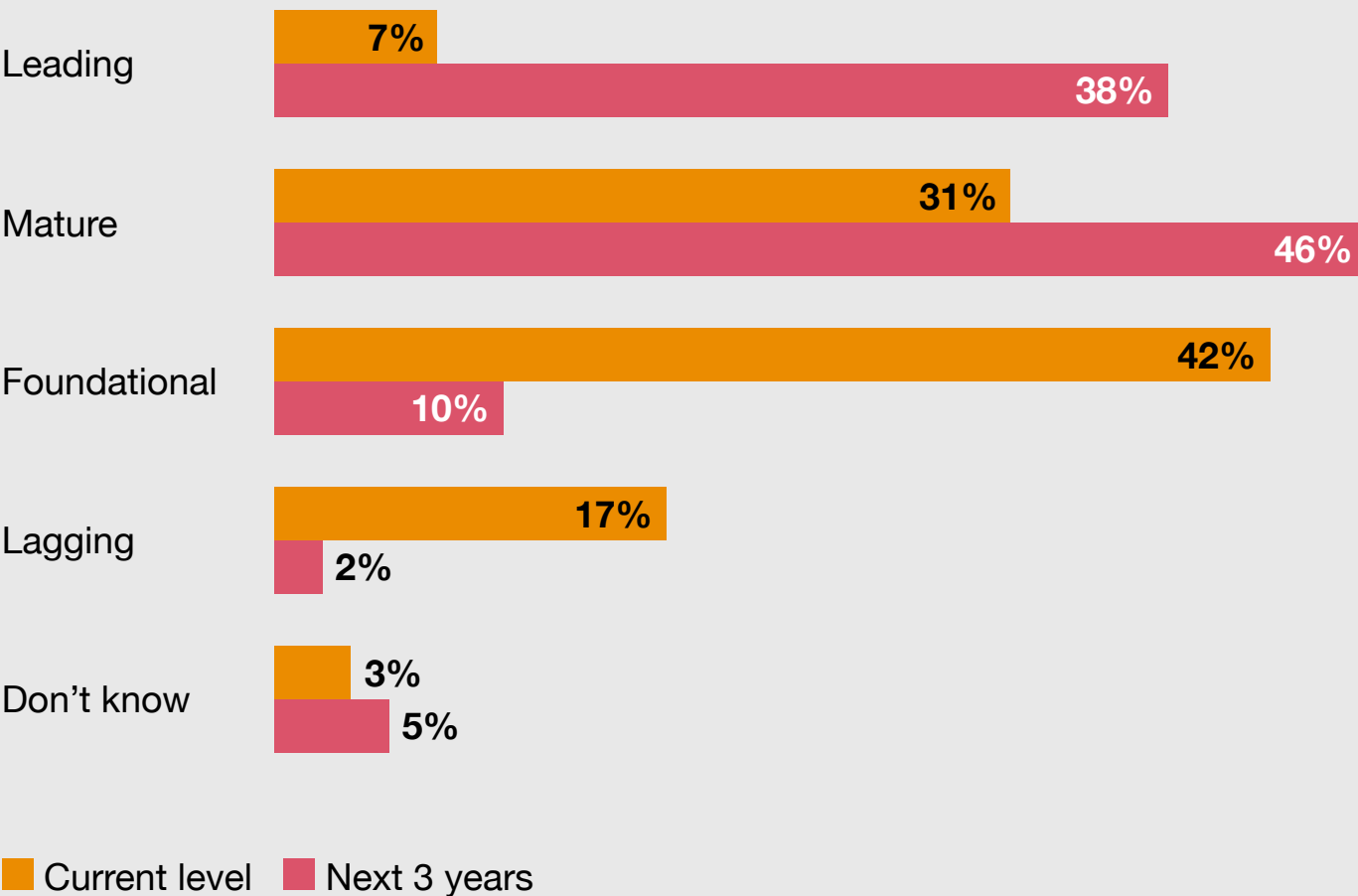
The rise of the Compliance Pioneer

Our survey shows it is possible – and the right time – to reimagine and reframe compliance to protect the organisation, add more strategic value and be fit for the future. When asked to describe their own level of compliance maturity, just 7% of respondents currently consider their company to be leading, and only 31% classify themselves as mature - yet 84% aim to be leading or mature within three years. This highlights both a sense of urgency and an opportunity to accelerate transformation and pioneer new approaches.

Level of maturity of compliance capabilities (self-described)

Qa: Which of the following best describes the overall current level of maturity of your organisation’s compliance capabilities?
Base: All Respondents (1,795).

Qb: Which of the following best describes your organisation’s target level of maturity in the next 3 years?
Base: All Respondents (1,790)



Approximately 10% of respondents are embracing transformation and giving rise to the ‘Compliance Pioneer’. These are respondents who state that compliance leadership have a significant level of influence on business decisions, use technology to optimise compliance activities across a high number of areas and report multiple benefits of technology use. This group is more likely to (percentages are Compliance Pioneers vs all others):

- **Have broad responsibilities** - are responsible for a wider number of compliance areas and report that their responsibilities have increased in the last three years (60% vs 41%)
- **Offer advice** - feel that their company’s Compliance function always offers proactive advice (58% vs 31%)
- **Get involved** - have more strategic initiatives planned in the next three years that involve compliance input and involve compliance at all stages of the development of new products and services
- **Bring in skills** - use third-party providers for a range of compliance activities (to bolster capabilities and coverage)
- **Invest more** - plan to invest in tech to optimise/automate compliance and see data management and analytics (56% vs 42%), tech (52% vs 39%) and AI capabilities (30% vs 22%) as important
- **Use AI** - use AI across multiple areas already and are more likely to see AI’s net benefit (88% vs 69%)
- **Be highly regulated** - come from Banking and Capital Markets compared to other sectors (24% vs 15%)

Actions to stay ahead

Compliance leaders

- Relook at the mandate and vision for compliance to strike the right balance between value protection and value creation
- Identify key senior stakeholders and their strategic priorities – and map relevance to compliance activities
- Understand the various communication paths and interfaces with the business and consider whether these provide sufficient opportunity for timely and meaningful advice (e.g. at early stages of product and service development)

Board and business leaders

- Agree the mandate and vision for compliance and check that it aligns with the long-term business strategy
- Set clear objectives and expectations for Compliance Leaders, including how they can support transformation and interact with business teams
- Check that Compliance Leaders have a ‘seat at the leadership table’ to provide advice and input to strategic initiatives

Conclusion: Winning the race



Navigating the new compliance landscape means understanding how fast your company can move, including how quickly it can see and understand emerging risks, access reliable data at the right time, adopt new processes and technology, and train those responsible for compliance. Go too slow and risk being overtaken; move too fast without the right capabilities, and risk missing the gaps and tripping over new requirements. This requires a clear compliance strategy and plan – and the right strategic compliance leadership to drive it.”

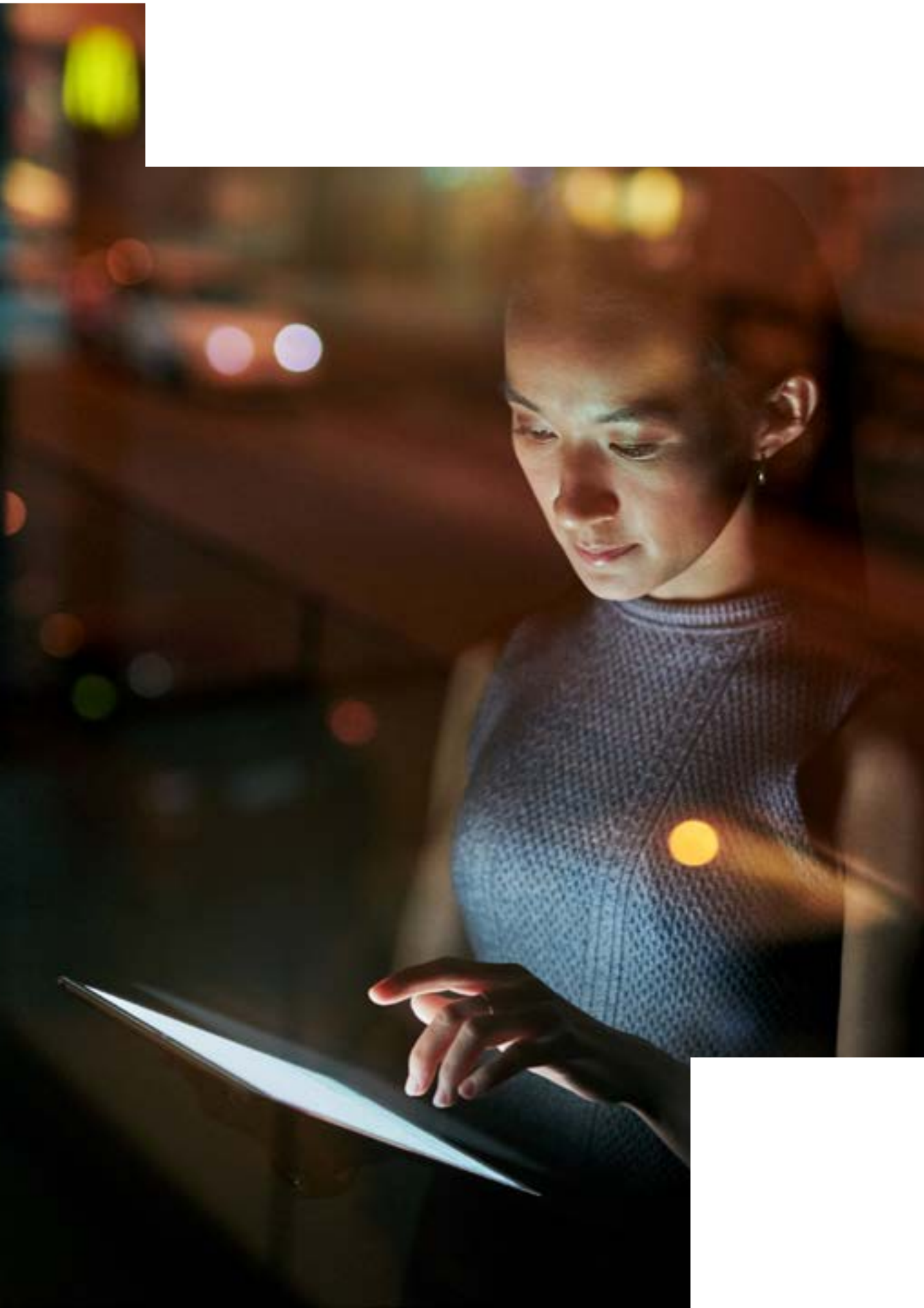
Shaun Willcocks, PwC Global Risk Markets Leader & Global Internal Audit Leader

The level of regulatory change, shifting stakeholder expectations, and changes in industry ecosystems and macro risks, means that responding in a ‘traditional way’ – more people, more controls – is unlikely to be sustainable. New problems call for new thinking. This requires ‘compliance by design’ that brings together new technology, talent, and a strategic mindset to connect-the-dots across functions and build the data flows into the DNA of the organisation.

Done well, such a design can enable companies to ‘see around corners’ to predict threats and empower the business with confidence to navigate the compliance risk landscape faster, avoid hazards, and maintain trust. Ultimately this is the only way that companies can stay ahead of the regulatory changes and issues that will continue to disrupt the market – and win the race.



Appendix: Survey demographics

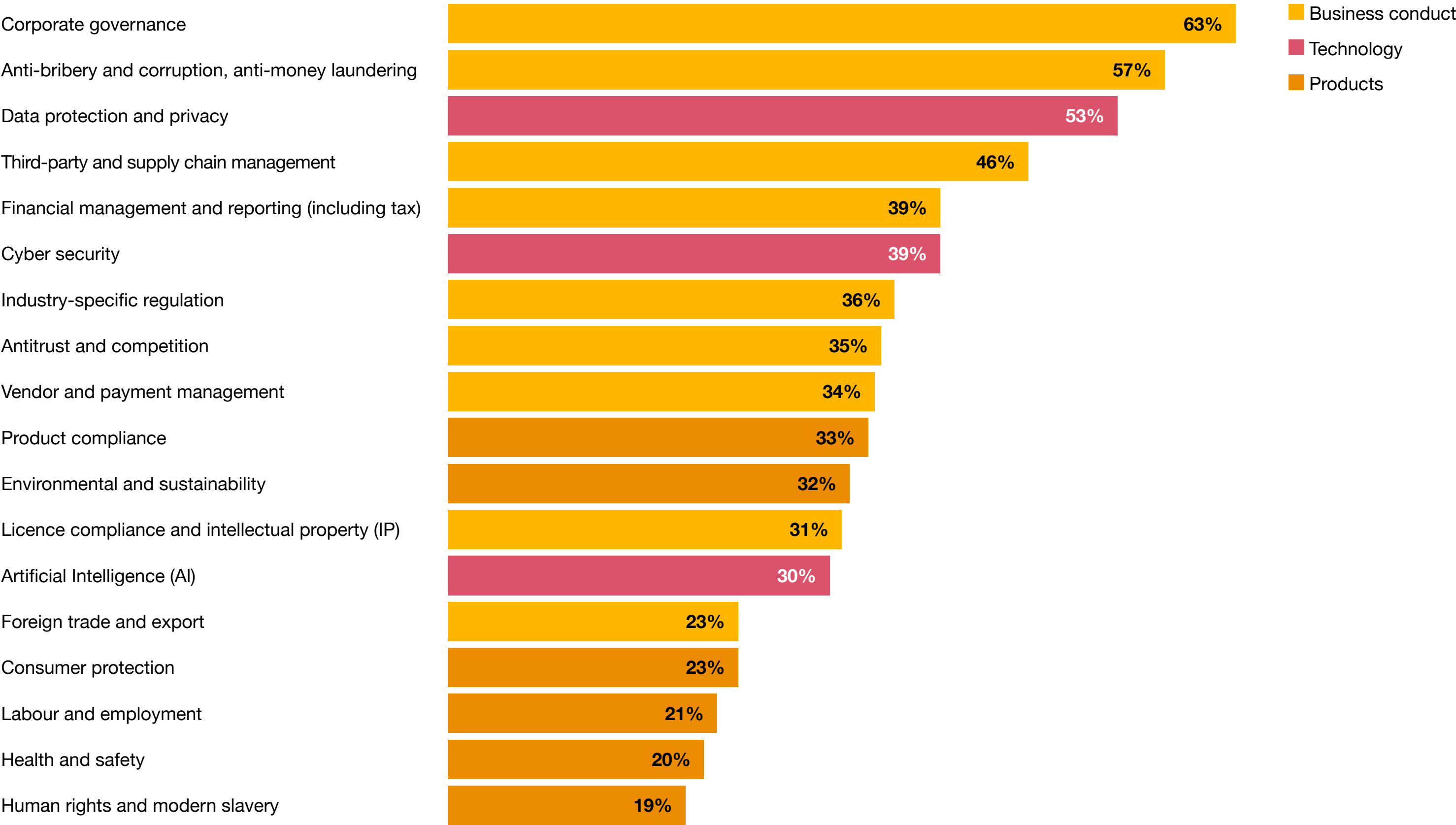


Coverage of compliance risk areas

Respondents were responsible for a broad range of areas across the diverse compliance risk landscape.

Compliance area responsible for

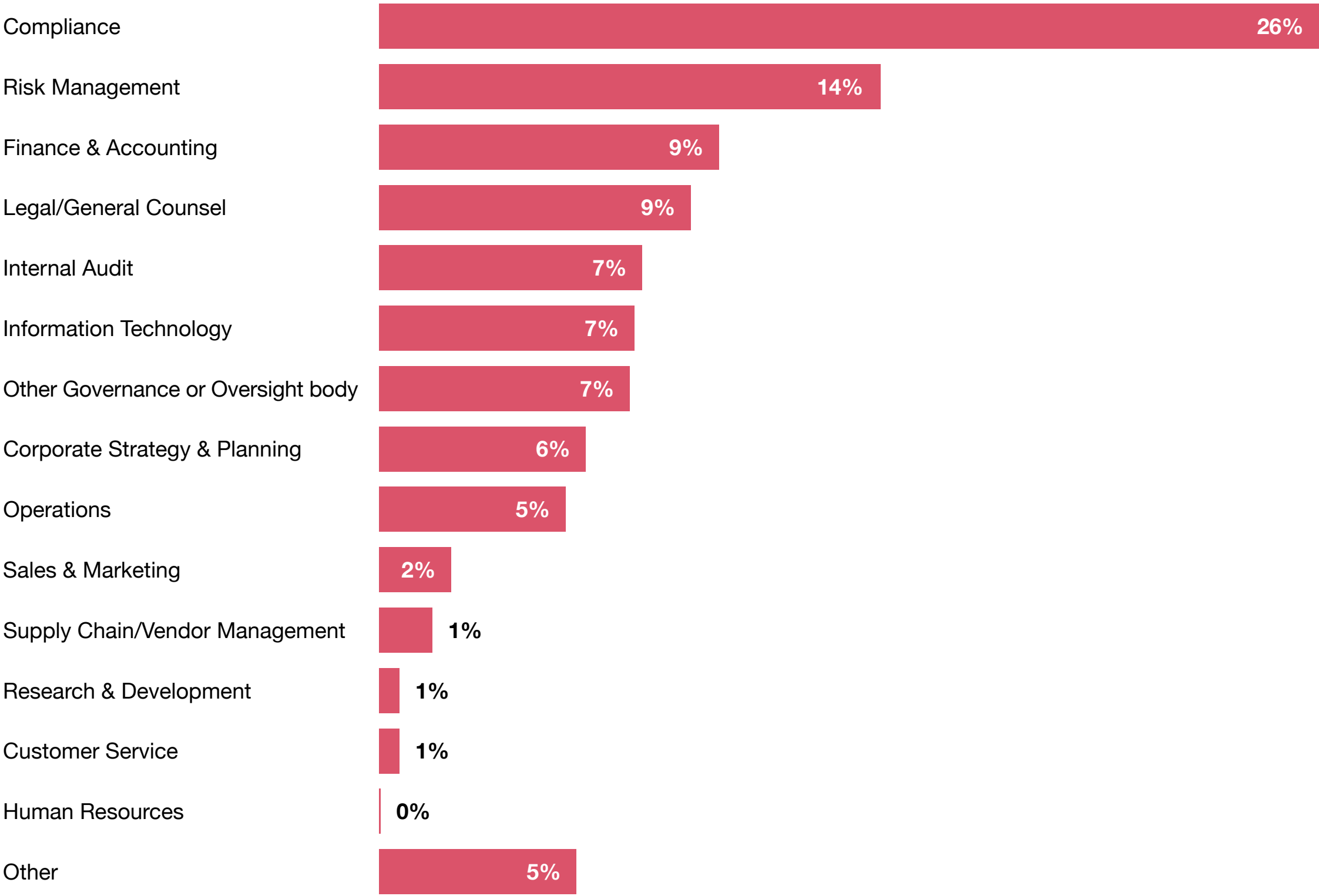
Q: Which of the following areas of compliance are you responsible for/significantly involved in? Base: All Respondents (1,802)



The reporting line of those responsible for compliance is equally diverse, spanning multiple functions.

Reporting line

Q: What area of the business do you currently report into? Base: All Respondents (1,802)



For those reporting into Compliance, Risk Management or Finance & Accounting, the compliance areas they were most likely to be responsible for included:

Compliance

- Anti-bribery/corruption (74%)
- Corporate governance (64%)
- Data protection (60%)
- Anti-trust and competition (48%)

Finance and accounting

- Financial management (74%)
- Corporate governance (55%)
- Vendor & payment management (49%)
- Anti-bribery/corruption (38%)

Risk Management

- Corporate governance (60%)
- Anti-bribery/corruption (56%)
- Data protection (56%)
- Third party supply chain (49%)

PwC Contacts

Global Compliance Survey team:

- Shaun Willcocks**
Global Risk Services Markets Leader, Japan
shaun.s.willcocks@pwc.com
- Rob Stephenson**
Director, UK
rob.stephenson@pwc.com
- Paul Sculthorpe**
Senior Manager, UK
paul.sculthorpe@pwc.com

Risk Services Network Contacts:

- Sam Samaratunga**
Global Risk Services Leader, UK
sam.samaratunga@pwc.com
- Darren Henderson**
Americas Risk Services Leader, Canada
darren.henderson@pwc.com
- Jennifer Ho**
APAC Risk Services Leader, Hong Kong
jennifer.cw.ho@hk.pwc.com
- Robert Paffen**
EMEA Risk Services Leader, Germany
robert.paffen@pwc.com

Industry contributors:

- Financial Services**
 - John Sabatini**
Partner, US
john.a.sabatini@pwc.com
 - Rami Feghali**
Partner, France
rami.feghali@pwc.com
- Health Industries**
 - David Andersen**
Partner, UK
david.c.andersen@pwc.com
 - Michelle Horton**
Partner, US
michelle.r.horton@pwc.com
- Industrials & Services**
 - Kolja von Westerholt**
Partner, Germany
kolja.von.westerholt@pwc.com
- Technology**
 - Jason Pett**
Partner, US
jason.pett@pwc.com



PwC's Global Compliance Survey 2025

pwc.com/gcs2025

© 2025 PwC. All rights reserved. PwC refers to the PwC network and/or one or more of its member firms, each of which is a separate legal entity. Please see www.pwc.com/structure for further details. This content is for general information purposes only, and should not be used as a substitute for consultation with professional advisors.

At PwC, our purpose is to build trust in society and solve important problems. We're a network of firms in 149 countries with more than 370,000 people who are committed to delivering quality in assurance, advisory and tax services. Find out more and tell us what matters to you by visiting us at www.pwc.com.