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Generative AI: Strategies for a Competitive Advantage

Spotlight on Benelux

We have carried out extensive research to understand how the global marketplace has reacted to the generative AI (GenAI) phenomenon. In collaboration with Coleman Parkes Research, we asked 1,600 decision-makers to share their thoughts on the benefits and challenges companies are facing. Our sample included 50 respondents in the Benelux (Belgium, the Netherlands and Luxembourg). Find out where they are in this transformative journey.

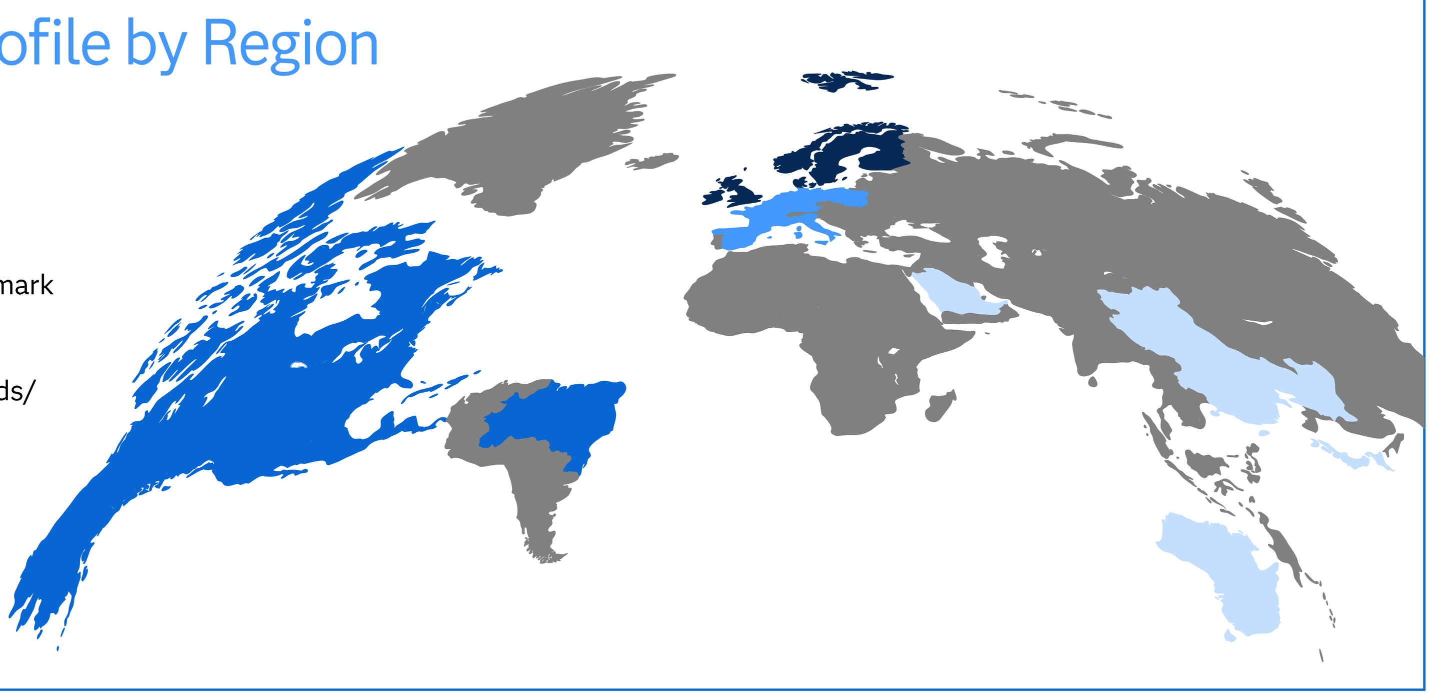
Global respondent Profile by Region

Americas 550
USA, Canada, Brazil, Mexico

Northern Europe 300
UK/Ireland, Sweden, Norway, Finland, Denmark

South West & Eastern Europe 475
France, Germany, Italy, Belgium/Netherlands/Luxembourg, Spain, Poland

APAC 275
Japan, Australia, China, UAE/Saudi Arabia



Breakdown of respondents by sector - Benelux

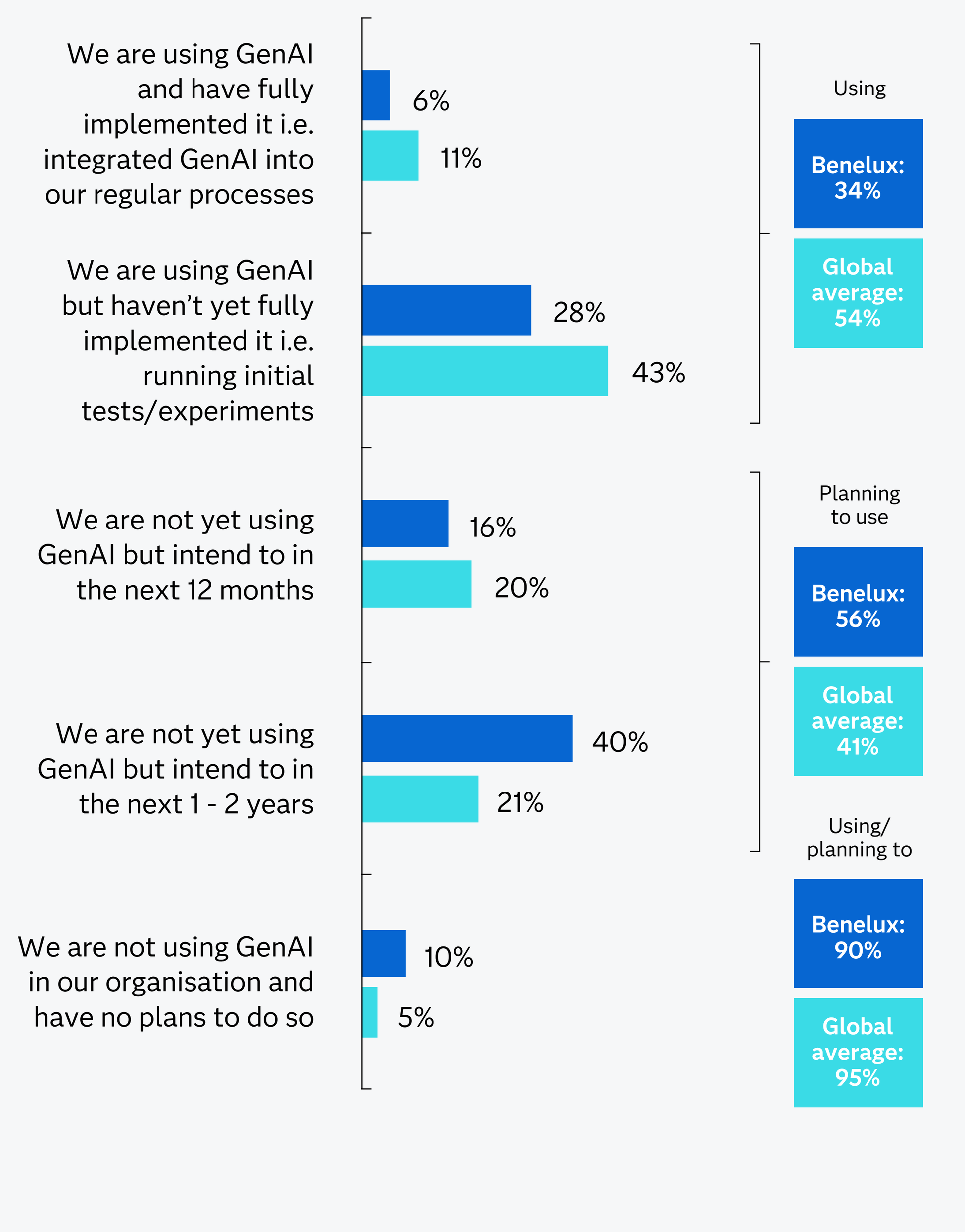
20% Public sector
16% Banking
16% Insurance
14% Life science
14% Health care
6% Telco (TMT)
6% Manufacturing
4% Energy & Utilities
2% Retail
2% Professional services

Use of GenAI in the Benelux

A third of organisations in the Benelux **(34%)** are currently using GenAI to some extent, below the global average figure of around half.

A strong level of interest in GenAI can be seen, with almost **six in 10** organisations planning to adopt it in the next two years. Overall, **nine in ten** companies in the Benelux are currently using or planning to adopt GenAI in in the next two years, although anticipated timescales for adoption are slightly longer than the global average.

To what extent is your organisation using GenAI?

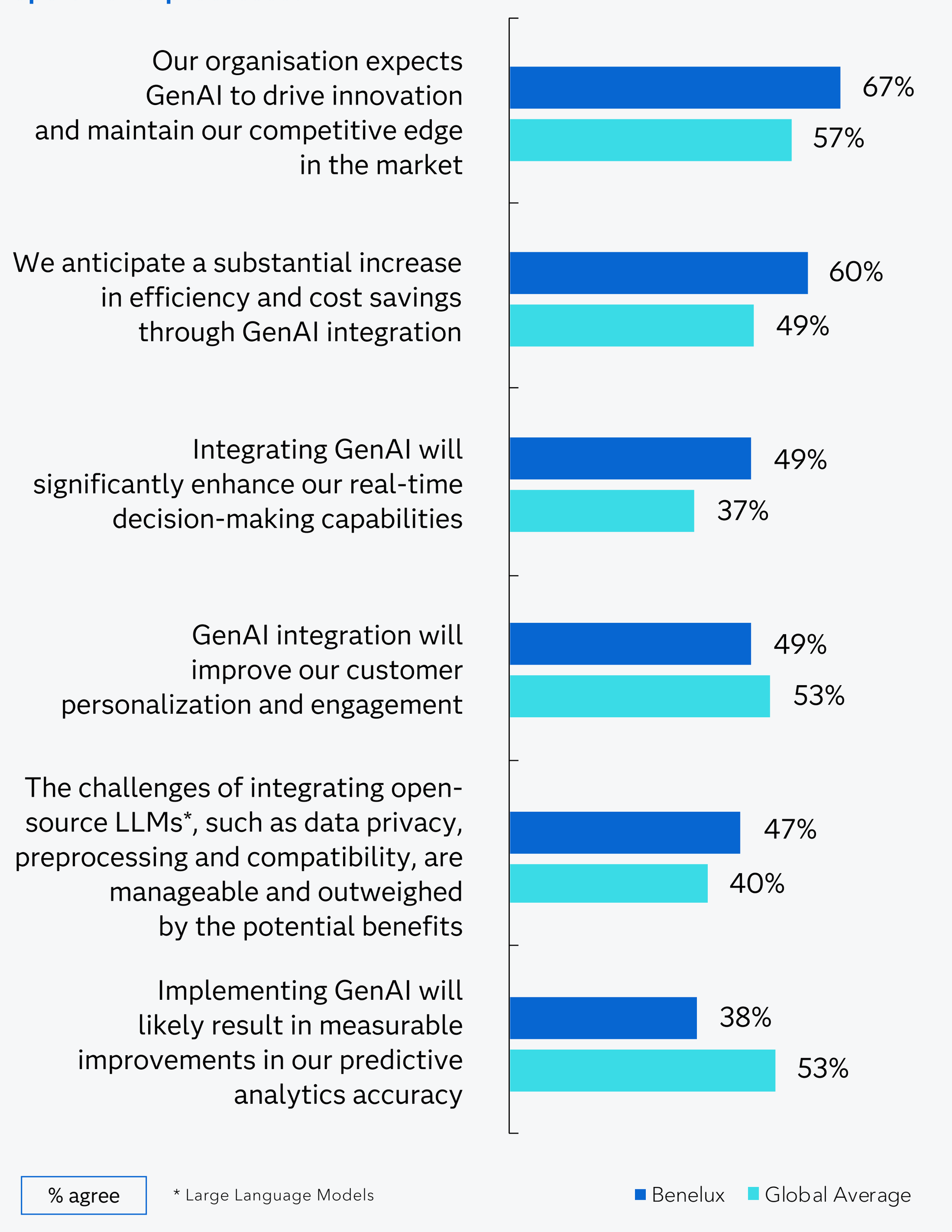


Anticipated benefits from GenAI

This strong take up of GenAI (**90%** already using or planning to) reflects high levels of optimism and positivity around what the technology can help organisations to achieve, reflecting similar views seen worldwide. Benelux businesses are particularly likely to foresee benefits from GenAI related to driving innovation and maintaining competitive edge as well as increased efficiency and cost saving.

However, in the Benelux, a lower proportion of companies than globally expect measurable improvements in predictive analytics accuracy.

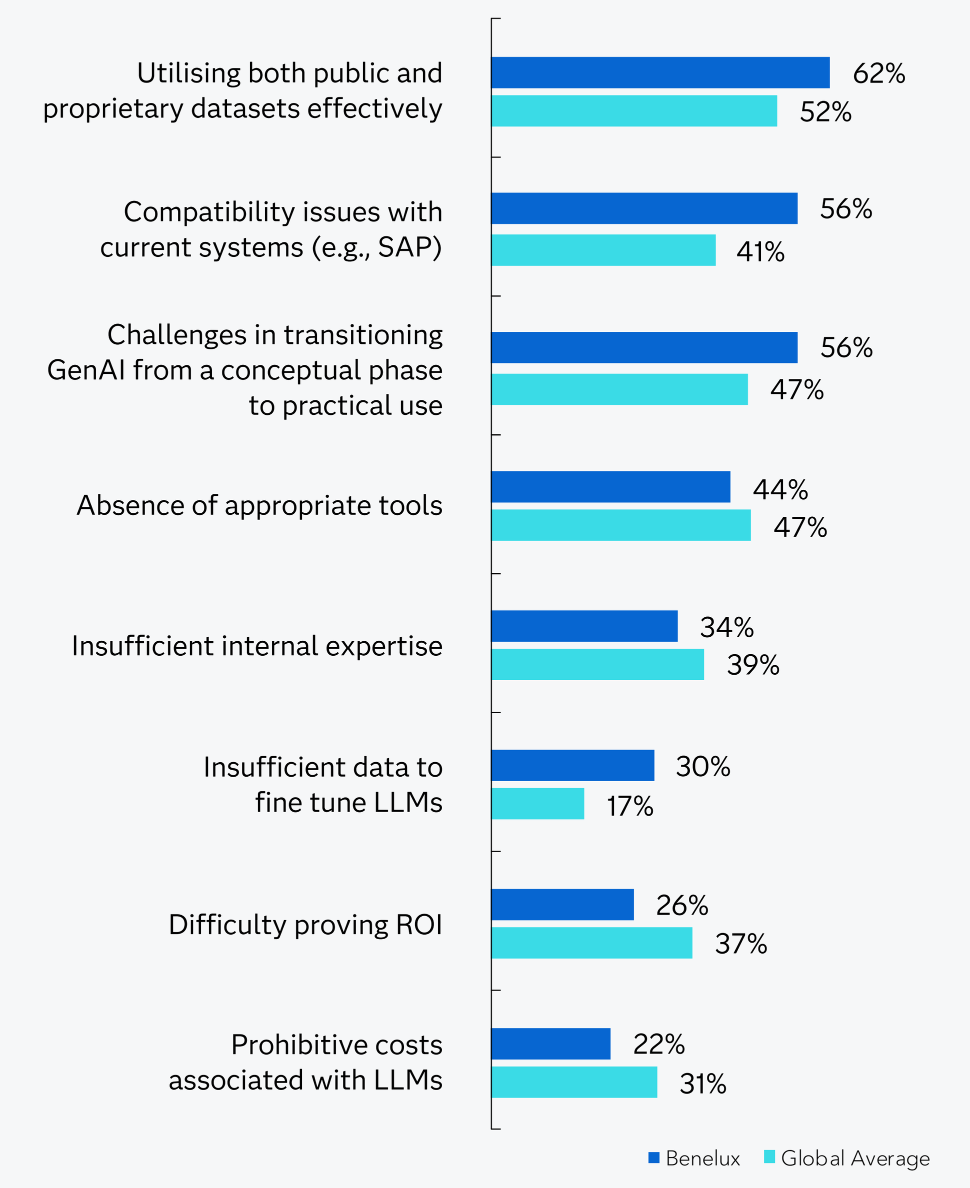
To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements regarding the integration of GenAI into your data analysis and operational processes?



Obstacles to GenAI implementation

Despite this optimism, all those using or planning to use GenAI identify multiple barriers to implementation. These mostly reflect the key obstacles highlighted by businesses globally, with particular issues in utilizing public and proprietary databases effectively, compatibility with existing systems and transitioning GenAI from concept to practical use.

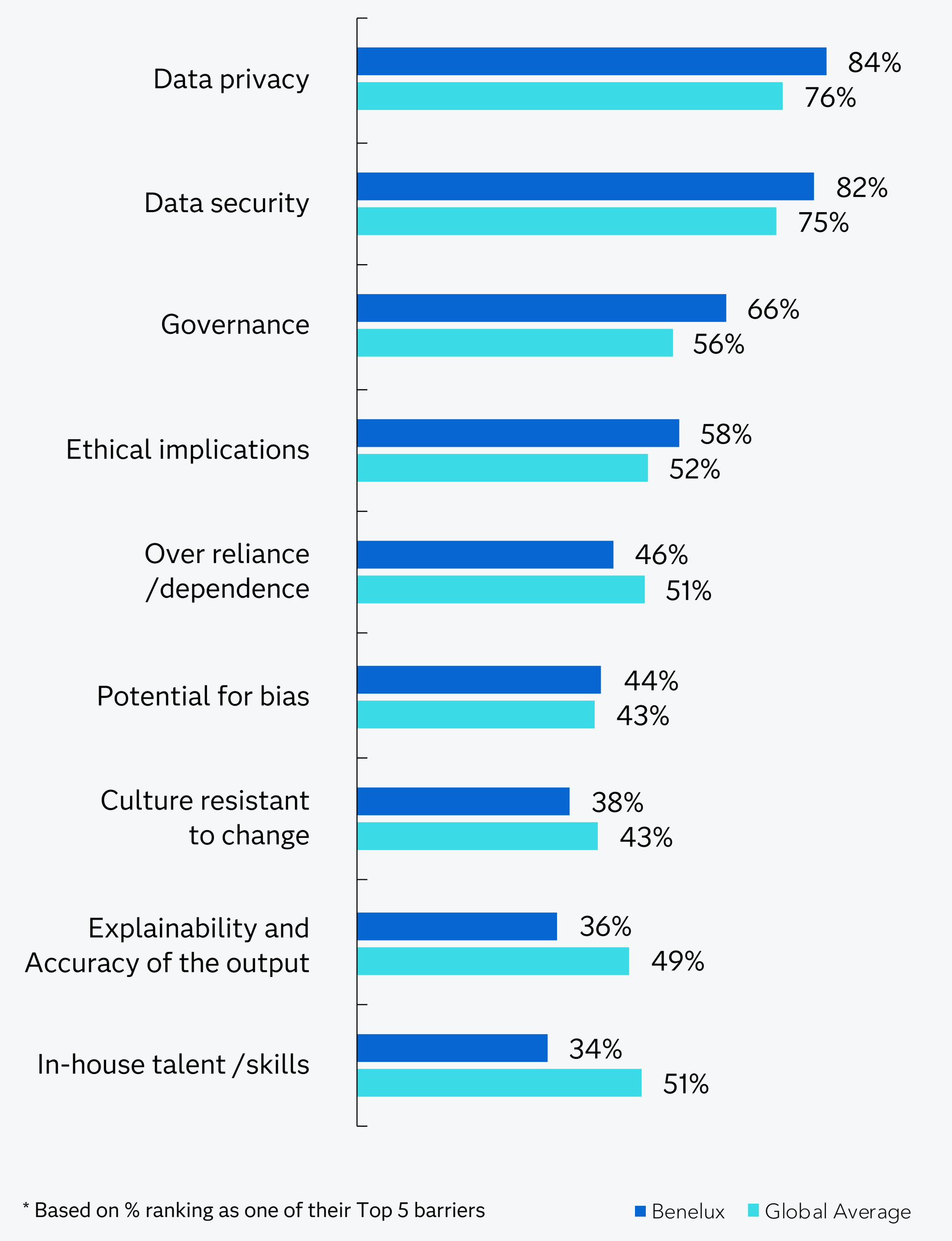
What obstacles do you foresee, or have you encountered, in the implementation of GenAI?



Concerns about GenAI usage

Despite enthusiasm for GenAI, there are concerns about its usage, particularly when it comes to data privacy and security, in line with the situation seen globally. Benelux organisations appear less concerned than average about explainability and accuracy of outputs and the in-house skills needed for AI use.

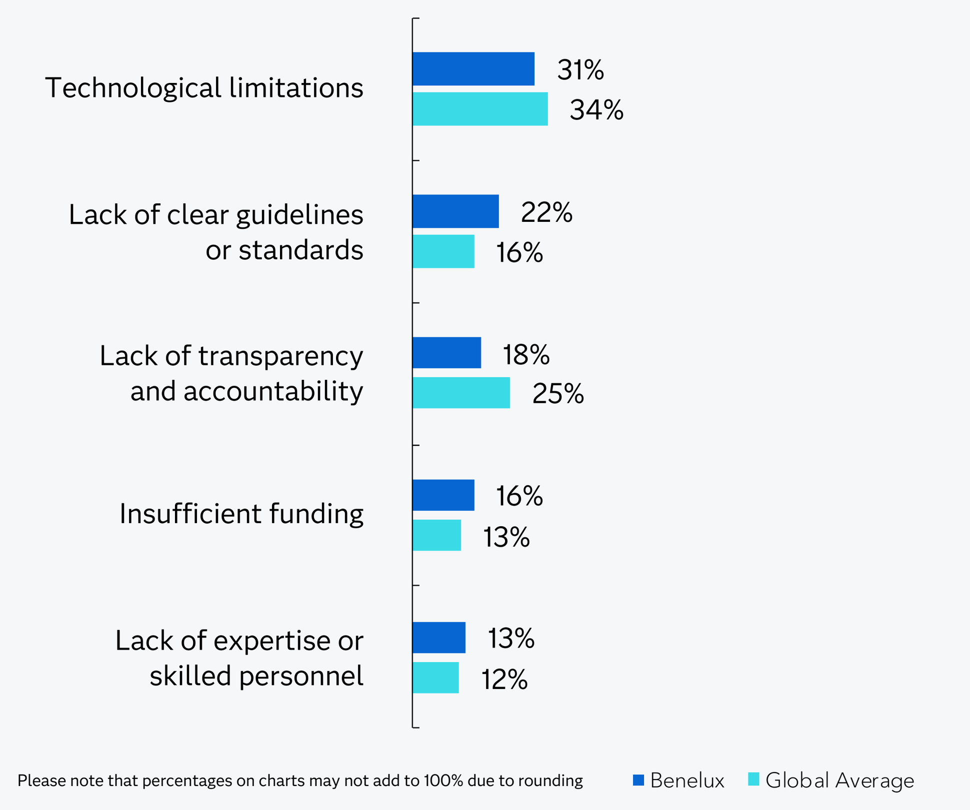
What are your concerns regarding the usage of GenAI in your organisation?



Challenges in ensuring effective governance and monitoring of GenAI

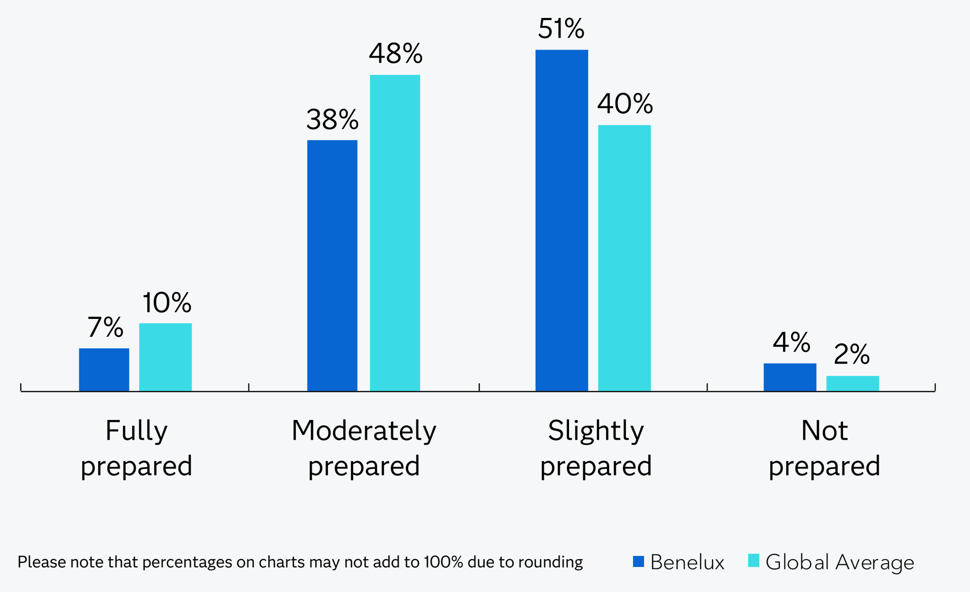
Benelux businesses face challenges implementing effective governance and monitoring for GenAI, particularly technological limitations and a lack of clear guidelines or standards.

What would you say is your biggest challenge in implementing effective governance and monitoring for GenAI?



Reflecting these challenges, our research finds that **91%** of businesses in the Benelux lack a comprehensive governance framework for GenAI and **less than one in ten** (**7%**) has undergone the full preparation needed to comply with current and upcoming GenAI regulations. This means that the majority of businesses are at risk of regulatory non-compliance in regard to this technology.

How prepared is your organisation to comply with current and upcoming regulations concerning GenAI?



Blueprint for Gaining Competitive Advantage

In light of the findings outlined above, SAS recommends the following key principles when using GenAI:

Accelerated innovation: Seamlessly integrate GenAI models into decisioning workflows, AI/ML applications and existing business processes, by leveraging decisioning flow tools like Intelligent Decisioning as part of SAS Viya.

Data protection: Ensure user privacy and security with robust data quality measures, including synthetic data generation, data minimisation, anonymisation and encryption, meaning that sensitive information remains safeguarded.

Trustworthy and Explainable results: Data experts can apply natural language processing techniques to preprocess data, and explain the generated output, minimising hallucinations and token costs.

Enhanced governance: Use built-in workflows that validate the entire life cycle of LLMs, from regulatory compliance to model risk management.

Concluding Thoughts

"The Benelux has taken a cautious approach for GenAI, in which governance and compliance are included in the implementation and processes from the start. There is no doubt that this will give us long-term advantages. These technological advances will give unprecedented productivity gains and competitive advantages on a global scale. The faster we adopt, the bigger the advantage. Developing a forward-thinking and well-thought-out strategy and investing in technology that enables integration, governance and explainability of Large Language Models are crucial steps that will be indispensable globally in the future."

Véronique Van Vlasselaer,
Analytics & AI Lead South West & East Europe at SAS

Further Information
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