# Artificial Intelligence: first quantitative study of its kind finds uptake by businesses across Europe is on the rise

The European Commission has published the first quantitative overview on the uptake of Artificial Intelligence (AI) technologies among European enterprises. This study will help monitor the adoption of AI in Member States and further assess the challenges faced by enterprises, for their internal organisation and externally.



European Commission

## AI uptake across European enterprises

The robust survey found that four in ten (42%) enterprises have adopted at least one AI technology, with a quarter of them having already adopted at least two. Almost twice the proportion of large enterprises (39%) use two or more AI technologies compared to micro (21%) and small enterprises (22%). A total of 18% have plans to adopt AI in the next two years, while 40% of the enterprises participating do not use AI, nor do they plan to in the future. Overall awareness of AI amongst companies is however high across the EU, standing at 78%.

## Challenges to AI technology adoption across Europe

The study also found three key internal barriers that enterprises are facing when adopting AI technologies: 57% experienced difficulties in hiring new staff with the right skills, while just over half (52%) said the cost of adopting AI technology was a barrier for their enterprise. The cost of adapting

operational processes was also one of the three key issues (49%). Reducing uncertainty can be beneficial, as enterprises find liability for potential damages (33%), data standardisation (33%) and regulatory obstacles (29%) to be major external challenges to AI adoption.

## Next steps

The "European enterprise survey on the use of technologies based on artificial intelligence", will be used to monitor the adoption of AI across Member States and to assess the obstacles and barriers in the use of AI. In addition, it will present an overview of AI-related skills in the workforce. It will also help the Commission to shape future policy initiatives in the field of AI.

## Background

The study was carried out for the European Commission by the market research company Ipsos together with iCite. A robust survey instrument was designed and fielded in EU Member States, as well as Norway, Iceland and the UK. A total of 9640 enterprises took part between January and March 2020. The five key performance indicators measured by the survey were AI awareness, adoption, sourcing, external and internal obstacles to adoption. The study used Computer Assisted Telephone Interviewing to obtain representative country estimates.

Artificial intelligence has become an area of strategic importance and a key driver of economic development. It can bring solutions to many societal challenges from treating diseases to minimising the environmental impact of farming. However, socio-economic, legal and ethical impacts have to be carefully addressed.

## More information

- Full study: European enterprise survey on the use of technologies based on artificial intelligence
- European Commission's policy on Artificial Intelligence
- White Paper on Artificial Intelligence: a European approach to excellence and trust
- White Paper on Artificial Intelligence: Public consultation and summary report
- Shaping Europe's digital future – Questions and Answers
- AI Watch - Evolution of AI uptake

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