

• EUROPEAN REPORT — SPRING 2026



The definitive European study on AI in HR

HR x AI

*Artificial intelligence is rewriting the contract between **people** and **work**.*

This is what Europe's HR leaders said next.

327

HR LEADERS SURVEYED

30+

COUNTRIES ACROSS EUROPE

AUTHORED BY

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FutureHR



Foreword: A Mirror HR Needed to See

This report does not celebrate. It does not condemn. It holds up a mirror.

Across 30 European countries, 327 HR professionals — the majority of them senior, experienced, and working at the heart of their organizations — answered direct questions about how AI is shaping their work. What came back was not a picture of a profession confidently riding a technological wave. It was a picture of a profession caught between awareness and action, between aspiration and reality.

The HR function has long positioned itself as a strategic partner. Now it faces a new language — one of algorithms, automation, and AI-generated insights — and the data tells us, honestly, that most of the profession is not yet fluent.

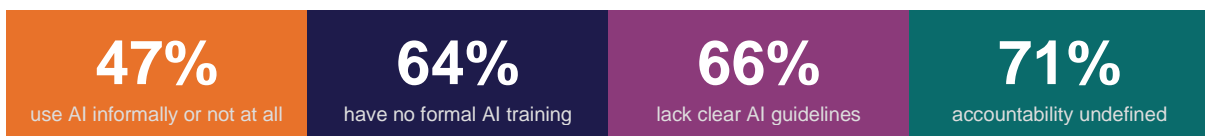
That is not a failure. It is a starting point. This report is written with deliberate honesty, because the profession deserves clarity, not comfort. Its future depends on it.

This is a story about a profession that understands the future but has not yet built the infrastructure to reach it.

The findings are organized across seven thematic sections. Each is grounded in data. Each carries honest analysis. Together, they tell us where European HR stands with AI in 2026 — and where it urgently needs to go.

Executive Summary: Seven Things You Need to Know

Before the data, before the analysis — here is what the survey shows, plainly.



01 AI adoption is wide but shallow

Nearly half use AI only informally. Only 22% have moved to genuine integration into HR tools and workflows. Most organizations are stuck in sanctioned improvisation: AI is allowed, but not managed.

02 Guidelines and governance are largely absent

Two-thirds say their organization lacks clear AI guidelines. AI is being used every day, but under no agreed rules. That is a governance gap waiting to become a liability.

03 HR is not being trained, and organizations are not investing

64% have received no formal AI training. 66% say their organization does not invest in AI competency development for HR. The profession is navigating a technological shift with neither a map nor a compass.

04 The paradox of awareness without preparation

The one bright signal: 60% understand the limitations of AI — bias, hallucinations, lack of transparency. They know what can go wrong. But knowing the risks and being prepared to manage them are two very different things.

05 Human accountability is non-negotiable — but undefined

89% agree HR decisions must remain with humans. 61% say the HR professional should be accountable when AI leads to a wrong decision. But 71% say accountability is not clearly defined. Responsibility is demanded but nobody has written it down.

06 Talent management is virtually untouched by AI

60% do not use AI in talent management at all. The most consequential HR decisions — who gets promoted, who is identified as high-potential, how succession is planned — remain almost entirely unassisted.

07 The appetite for more AI is real and growing

51% believe AI should play a greater role in HR decisions in the future. 56% believe AI will strengthen HR's strategic role long-term. What the profession lacks is structure, support, and safety.

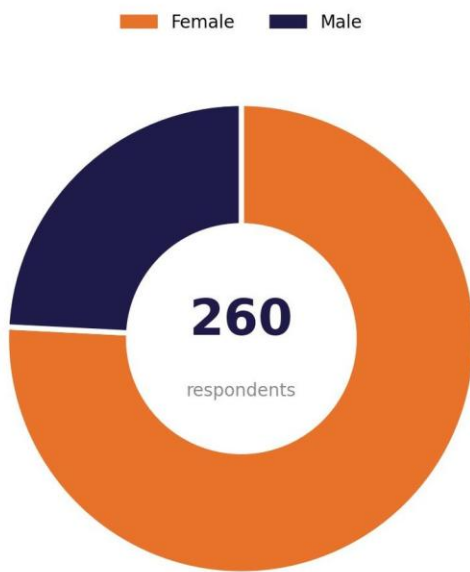
The gap is not between HR and AI. The gap is between HR's intentions and the organizational conditions required to act on them.

Who Answered This Survey

327 HR professionals across 30 European countries. The demographic profile matters as much as the responses themselves — because this is a senior, experienced sample, and that amplifies every finding that follows.

D0

A Profession Shaped by Women



D0 — Your gender

3 in 4 HR professionals in this survey are women

HRxAI European Survey 2026
EAPM × MartyHR × FutureHR



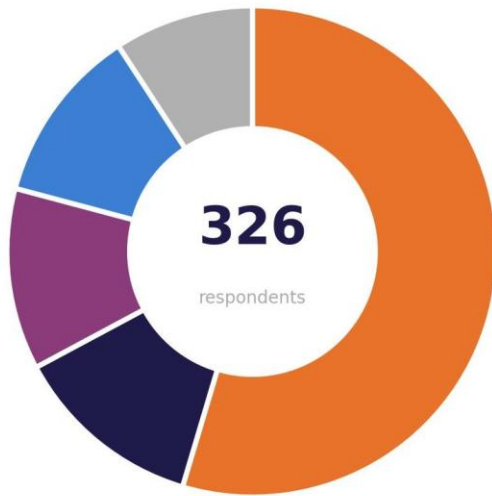
Chart: Aco Momcilovic · Source: EAPM & MartyHR · HRxAI European Survey 2026

76% female, 24% male. Reflects the broader demographic reality of the HR profession across Europe.

3 in 4 respondents are women — consistent with the HR profession's demographic across Europe. The primary navigators of AI adoption in HR are also members of a group historically underrepresented in the design and deployment of AI systems. The interplay between this reality and AI bias risk deserves far more attention than it currently receives in most organizations.

D1

Senior Voices at the Table



D1 — Primary HR role

More than half are HR Managers or Heads of HR

HRxAI European Survey 2026
EAPM x MartyHR x FutureHR



Chart: Aco Momcilovic · Source: EAPM & MartyHR · HRxAI European Survey 2026

55% are HR Managers or Heads of HR — the people who set direction, build policy, and represent HR at the leadership table.

More than half hold the most senior HR role in their organization. When these individuals say their organization has no AI guidelines, they are not describing a gap at the edges of the profession. They are describing the center of it.

D2

Mostly Small and Mid-Sized Organizations

D2 — Organization size

Most respondents come from small and mid-sized organizations

HRxAI European Survey 2026 · EAPM x MartyHR x FutureHR · n = 326

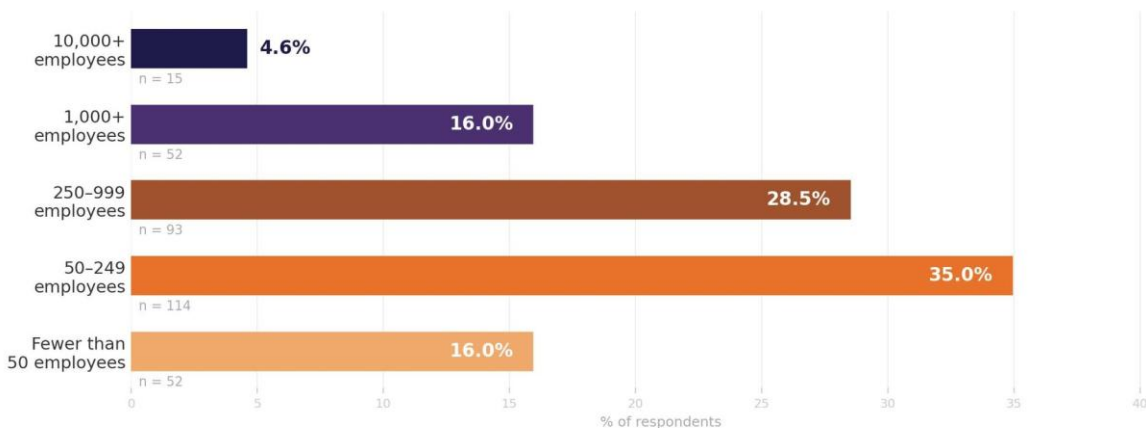


Chart: Aco Momcilovic · Source: EAPM & MartyHR · HRxAI European Survey 2026

51% from organizations with fewer than 250 employees. This is largely an SME story.

The AI adoption patterns in this report are largely an SME story — a context where resources are limited, IT support is thin, and the HR professional often operates alone. The challenges faced by SME HR are more acute and less often discussed than those of large enterprise.

D3

A Cross-Sectoral Picture

D3 — Industry

IT, Professional Services and Manufacturing lead the respondent mix

HRxAI European Survey 2026 · EAPM × MartyrHR × FutureHR · n = 327

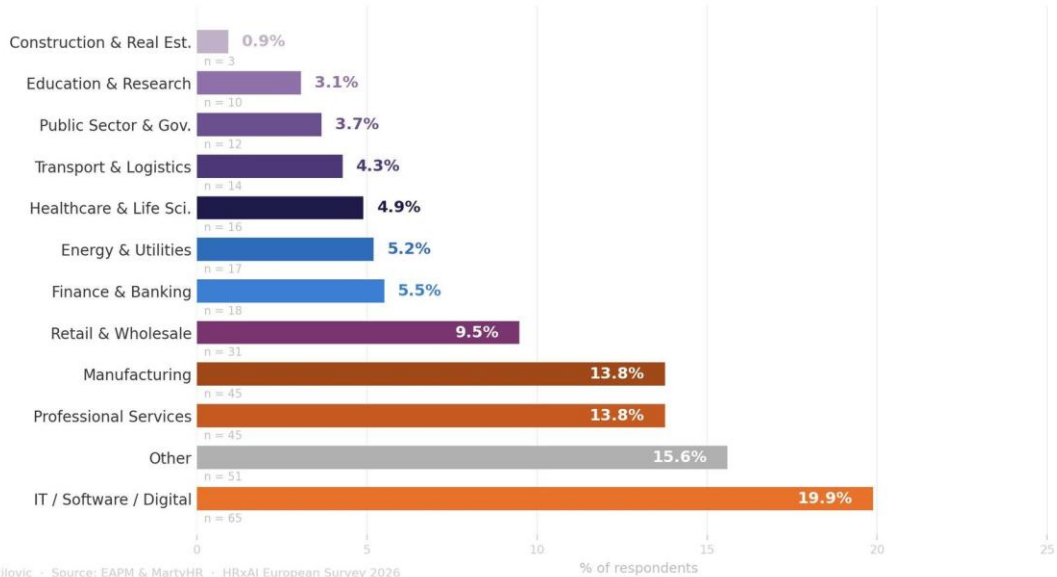


Chart: Aco Momcilovic · Source: EAPM & MartyrHR · HRxAI European Survey 2026

IT leads at 20%, followed by Professional Services and Manufacturing at 14% each. Broad cross-sectoral representation.

The sample spans 12 industries. The dominance of IT/software respondents (20%) is worth noting: this sector generally shows more advanced AI adoption, meaning the overall picture may be slightly more optimistic than the reality for more traditional sectors.

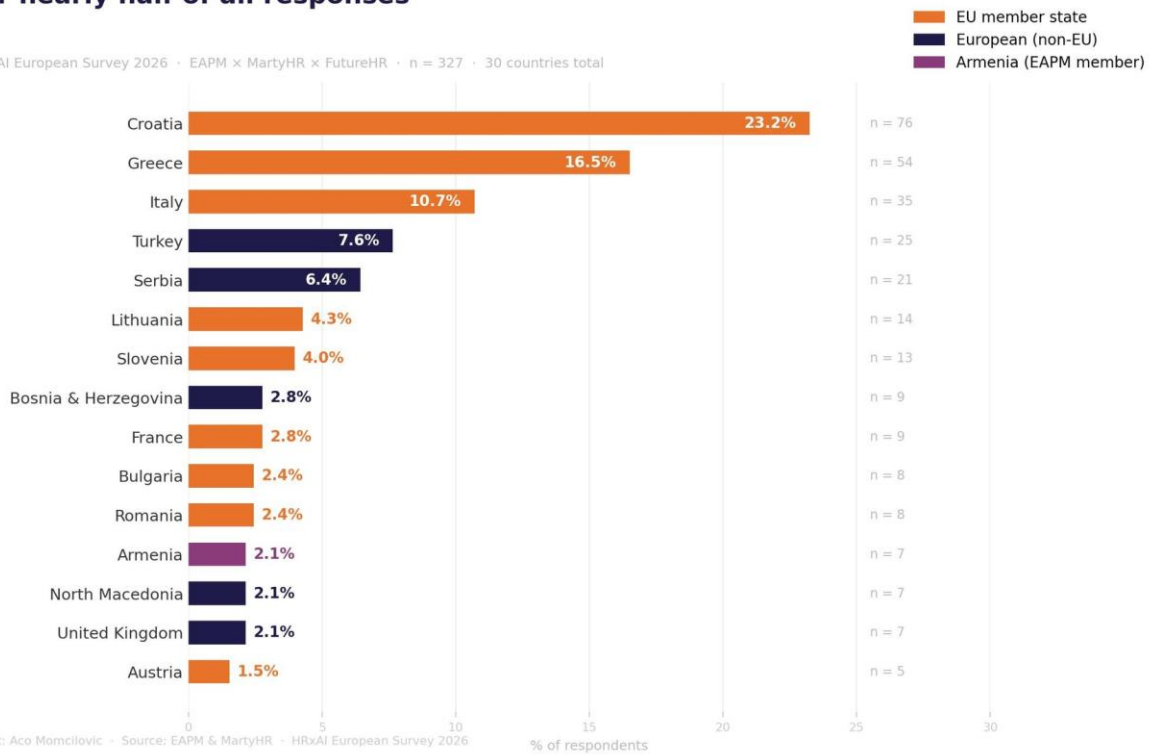
D4

30 Countries, One European Signal

D4 — Country of operation (top 15)

Croatia, Greece and Italy account for nearly half of all responses

HRxAI European Survey 2026 · EAPM x MartyHR x FutureHR · n = 327 · 30 countries total



Top 15 countries. Croatia (23%), Greece (17%), Italy (11%) account for half of all responses. Orange = EU member, navy = European non-EU, purple = Armenia.

D4 — Country of operation · all 30 countries

Representation across 30 European countries

HRxAI European Survey 2026 · EAPM x MartyHR x FutureHR · n = 327

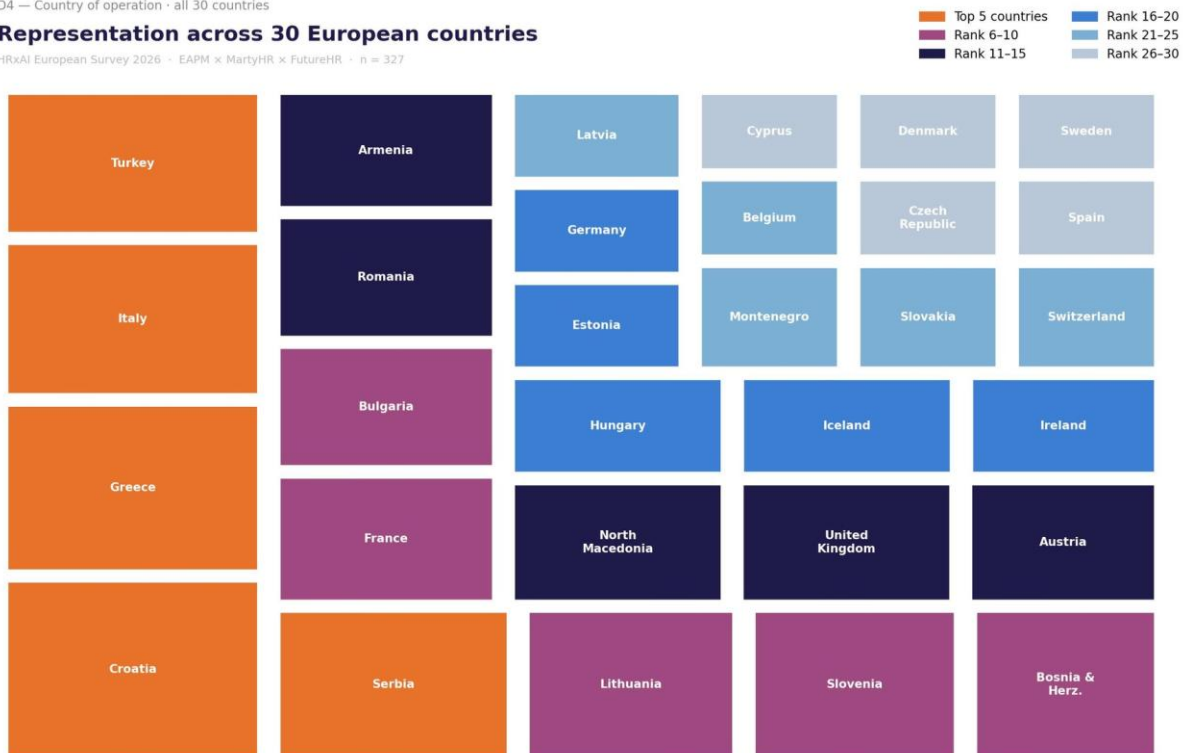


Chart: Ace Momcilovic · Source: EAPM & MartyHR · HRxAI European Survey 2026

All 30 countries. Tile size = relative respondent share. Color tier = rank by number of respondents.

30 countries are represented — from Iceland to Armenia, from Estonia to Spain. The geographic concentration in Croatia, Greece, and Italy reflects the EAPM network’s footprint and is a relevant contextual factor when reading national comparisons.

D5 A Seasoned Profession



D5 — Years of HR experience

Most respondents are seasoned HR professionals

HRxAI European Survey 2026
EAPM x MartyHR x FutureHR

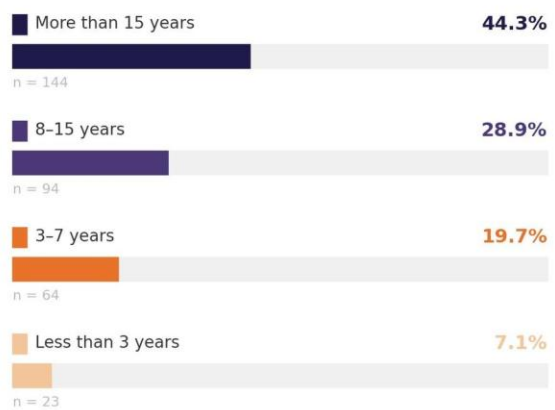


Chart: Aco Momcilovic · Source: EAPM & MartyHR · HRxAI European Survey 2026

73% have more than 8 years in HR. 44% have over 15. A highly experienced, senior sample.

44% of respondents have more than 15 years in HR. When this cohort says they lack AI training, the message carries real weight: these are some of the most experienced practitioners in European HR, left to navigate a major technological transition on their own.

The demographic profile amplifies every finding that follows. These are not bystanders. They are experienced decision-makers describing a structural failure at the center of their profession.

Present But Ungoverned

AI is in HR. What is less clear is whether anyone is in charge of it. The data in this section paints a consistent picture: widespread use, almost no governance.

Q1

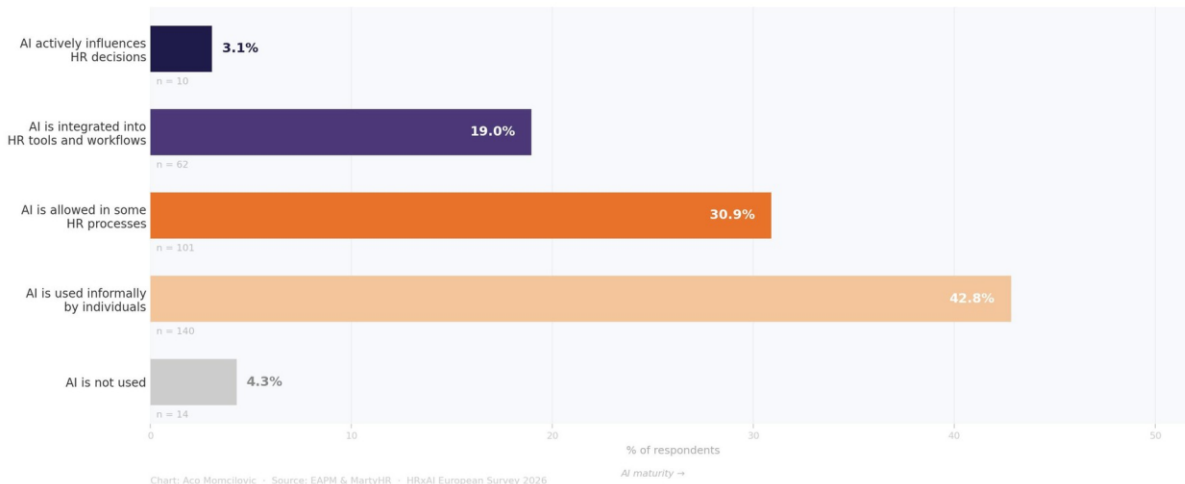
Informal, Unmanaged, and Largely Ungoverned

Q1

Which description best reflects how AI is used in your HR department?

Most HR teams are still at an informal or early adoption stage

n = 327 · Ordered as AI maturity scale — from no use to active influence on decisions



43% use AI informally by individuals. Only 22% have integrated it into HR tools and workflows. 4% do not use it at all.

43% of HR departments use AI informally — individuals experimenting without structure, policy, or coordination. Only 19% describe AI as genuinely integrated into HR tools, and just 3% say it actively influences decisions. The majority of European HR is in sanctioned improvisation: AI is allowed, but not managed.

"AI is allowed in our organization. We just don't have any rules for it."

Q2

Structure Is the Exception, Not the Rule

Q2

In our HR department, AI is used in a structured and organizationally supported way.

Structured AI adoption is the exception — most HR teams operate without formal support

n = 327 · Scale 1-7 (1 = Strongly Disagree, 7 = Strongly Agree)

3.30

Mean

3

Median

55%

Score 1-3

27%

Score 5-7

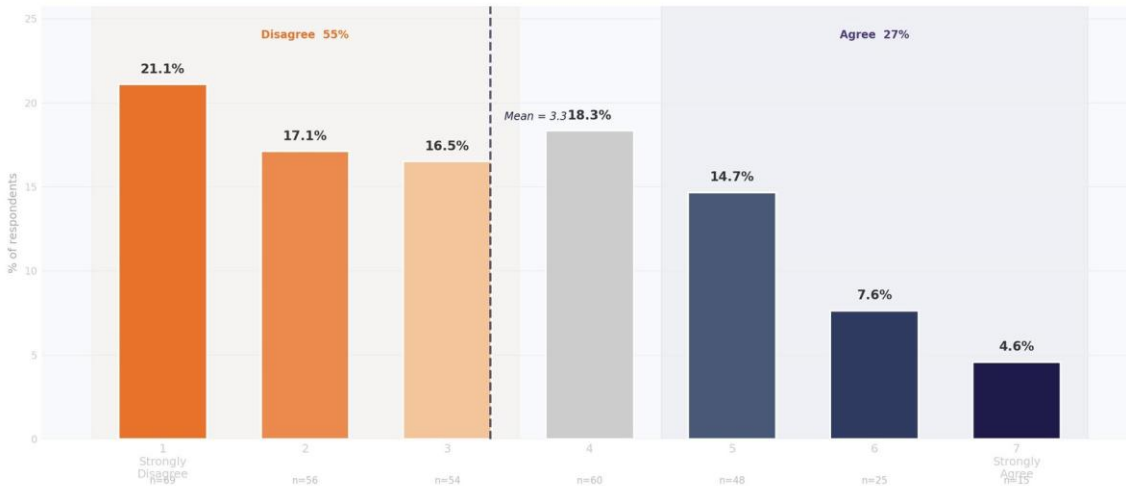


Chart: Aco Momcilovic · Source: EAPM & MartyHR · HRxAI European Survey 2026

Mean 3.30. 55% disagree. Only 27% agree. The tools are in the room; the governance framework is not.

Structured AI adoption is clearly the exception. More than half disagree. The mean of 3.30 sits below the midpoint. This is a picture of passive tolerance without design.

Q3

Two-Thirds Are Operating Without a Rulebook

Q3

There are clear organizational guidelines for the use of AI in HR.

2 in 3 HR professionals say their organization lacks clear AI guidelines

n = 326 · Scale 1-7 (1 = Strongly Disagree, 7 = Strongly Agree)

2.93

Mean

2

Median

66%

Score 1-3

25%

Score 5-7

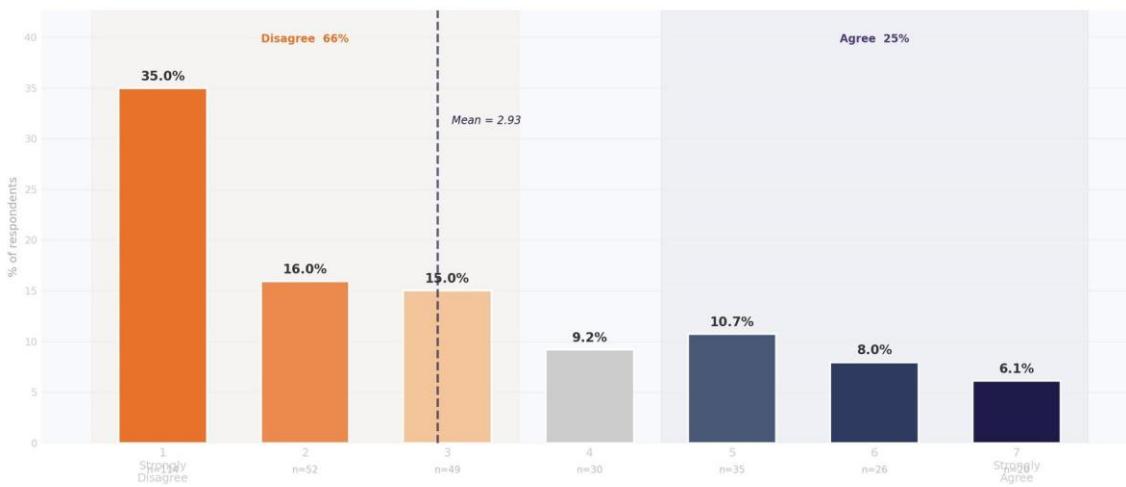


Chart: Aco Momcilovic · Source: EAPM & MartyHR · HRxAI European Survey 2026

Mean 2.93. 66% disagree. 35% gave the lowest possible score — Strongly Disagree.

One of the starkest findings in the survey. Two-thirds say there are no clear guidelines for AI use in their organization. 35% gave the absolute lowest score. For many, guidelines do not exist in any form.

This means AI is being used every day to make decisions about hiring, performance, and careers — in an organizational vacuum. No standards. No oversight. No accountability.

Having no AI guidelines is not a neutral position. It is a choice to accept maximum risk with minimum protection.

Q4 HR Is Leading — But Often Alone

Q4 Who was the main driver of AI adoption in HR?

HR itself is leading AI adoption — but in 14% of cases, nobody is driving it at all

n = 324 · Single choice

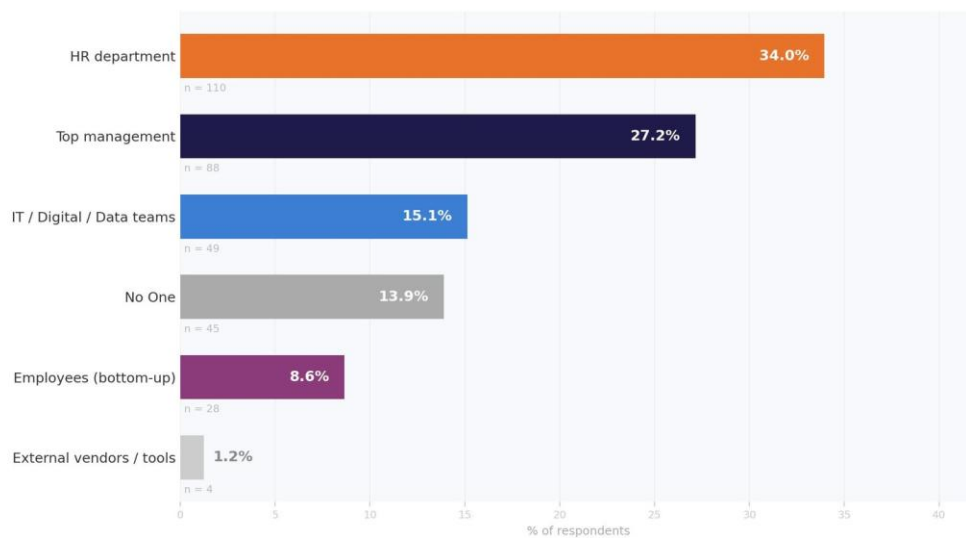


Chart: Aco Momcilovic · Source: EAPM & MartyHR · HRxAI European Survey 2026

HR itself leads (34%). Top management follows (27%). In 14% of cases, nobody is driving AI adoption at all.

HR is driving its own AI adoption in more than a third of organizations — encouraging as a signal of professional initiative. But in 14% of cases, no one is driving adoption. HR professionals in these organizations navigate a technology shift without mandate, budget, or backing.

Q5

Half Plan to Invest. Half Have No Idea.

Q5

What best describes your organization's AI investment plans over the next 12 months?

Half plan to invest — but 4 in 10 have no visibility or no budget for AI

n = 327 · Single choice

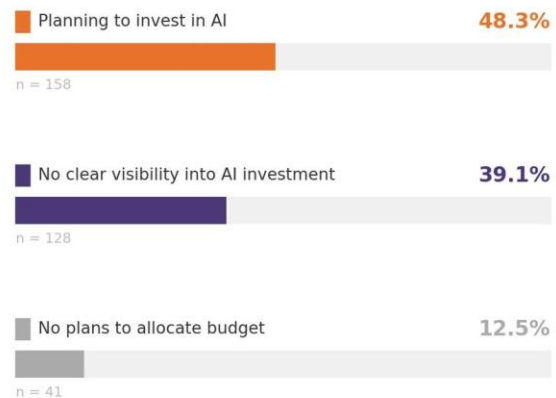
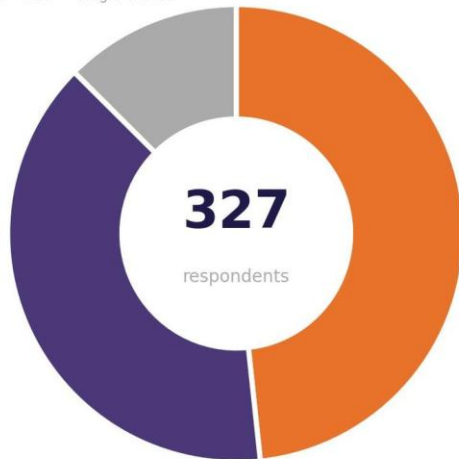


Chart: Aco Momcilovic · Source: EAPM & MartyHR · HRxAI European Survey 2026

48% plan to invest. 39% have no clear visibility. 13% plan no budget for AI at all.

48% of organizations plan to invest in AI initiatives — an encouraging signal. But 39% have no clear visibility into investment plans, and 13% will allocate no budget. For a technology already in active use within HR teams, this level of ambiguity signals that leadership has not yet decided to take AI in HR seriously as a strategic priority.

"We use AI, but we have no rules for it, no budget for it, and no one in charge of it." This is the summary of AI governance in European HR today.

The Most Visible Use Case — Still Half-Empty

Recruitment is where AI has had the longest runway in HR. So the central question here is: why does 41% of HR still not use any AI-driven recruitment features?

Q6 Resume Screening Leads — But 4 in 10 Use Nothing

Q6 In which stages of recruitment do you currently use AI?

Resume screening leads AI use — but 4 in 10 use no AI in recruitment at all

n = 321 · Multi-select (% of all respondents who answered)

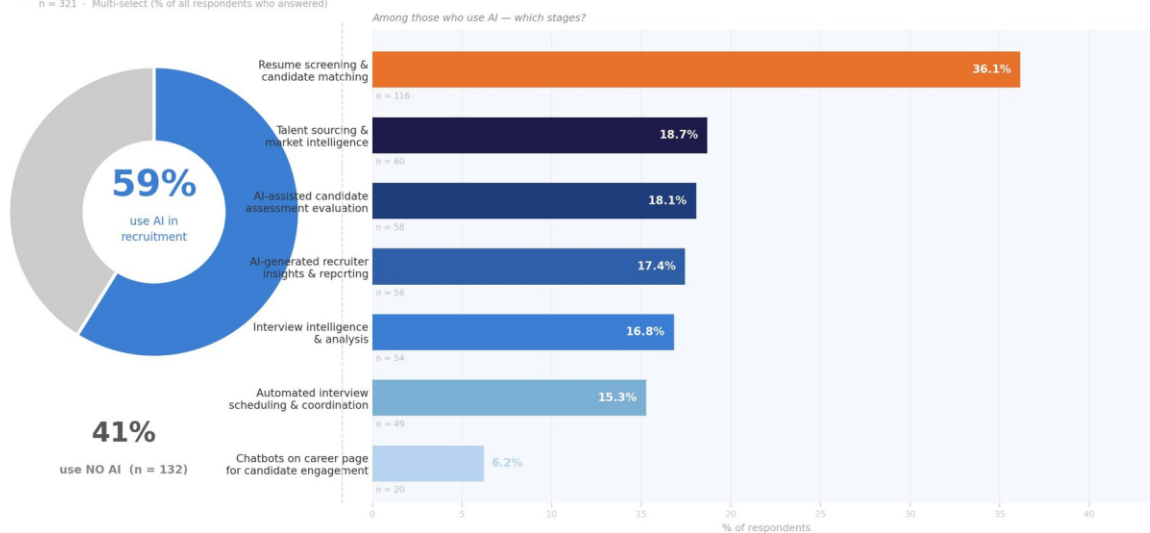


Chart: Aco Momcilovic · Source: EAPM & MartyHR · HRxAI European Survey 2025

41% use no AI in recruitment at all. Among those who do, resume screening leads at 36% of all respondents.

Among the 59% who do use AI in recruitment, resume screening dominates. Other applications trail significantly. The picture is one of point-solution adoption — individual tools doing individual jobs, with no integrated AI-supported recruitment process. The 41% using no AI-driven recruitment features reflects both SME resource constraints and a genuine unresolved trust problem.

Q7 The Efficiency Promise Remains Unfulfilled

Q7 AI significantly increases the efficiency of our recruitment process.

More than half of HR teams do not see AI as a meaningful efficiency driver in recruitment
n = 313 · Scale 1-7 (1 = Strongly Disagree, 7 = Strongly Agree)

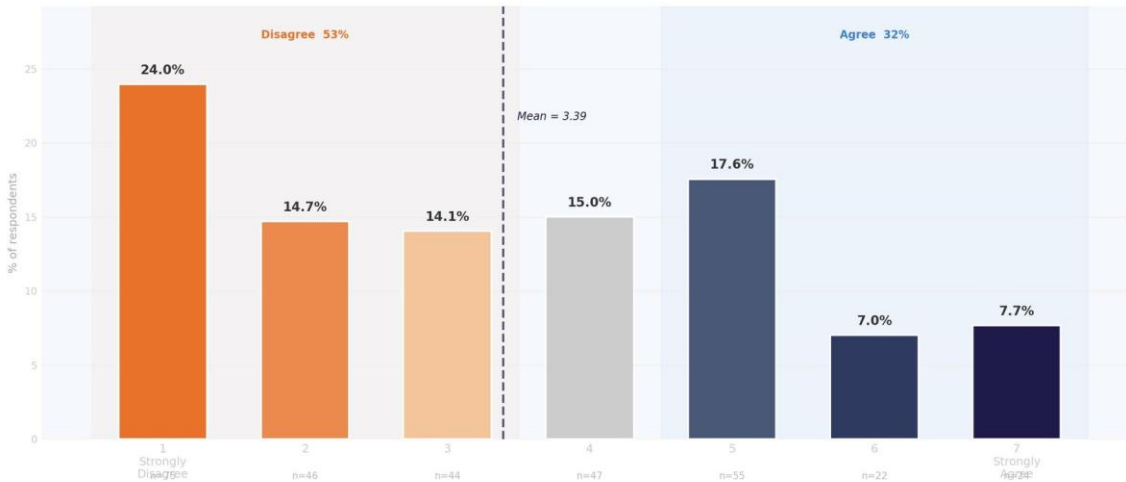
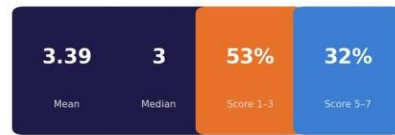


Chart: Aco Momcilovic · Source: EAPM & MartyHR · HRxAI European Survey 2026

Mean 3.39. 53% disagree. 24% gave the lowest possible score.

More than half disagree that AI significantly increases recruitment efficiency. Part of the explanation lies in the governance gap: when AI is used informally, without process integration, its efficiency benefits are also informal and unmeasured. You cannot demonstrate ROI from a tool you have not formally deployed.

Q8 Advisory at Best, Absent at Worst

Q8 What role does AI play in recruitment decision-making?

AI remains advisory — human judgment still dominates recruitment decisions
n = 321 · Single choice · Ordered by level of AI influence on decisions

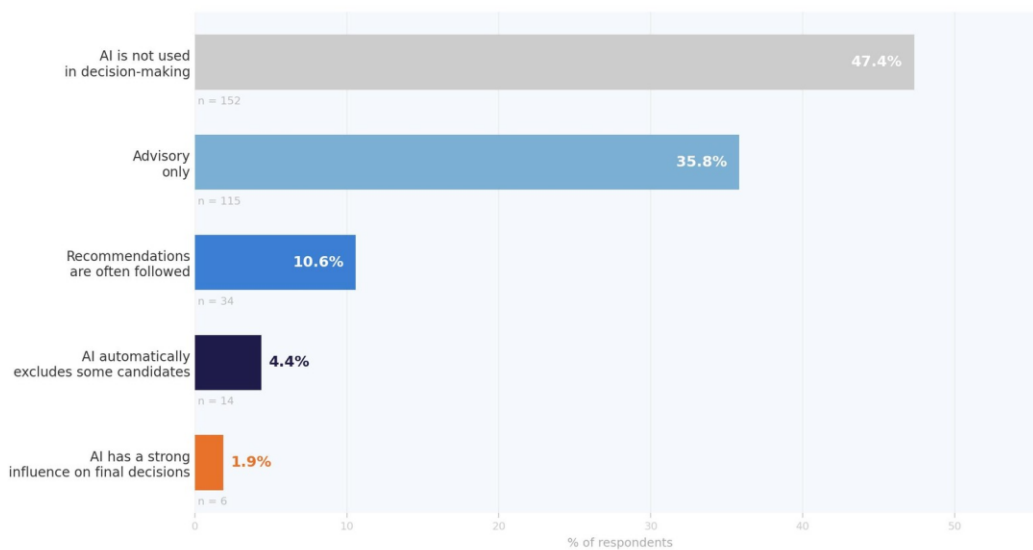


Chart: Aco Momcilovic · Source: EAPM & MartyHR · HRxAI European Survey 2026

AI influence on decisions →

47% say AI plays no role in recruitment decisions at all. 36% use it advisory only. Only 6% report strong AI influence.

47% say AI plays no role in recruitment decision-making. 36% use it advisory only. The posture of the majority is not necessarily wrong — human judgment in hiring is appropriate. But advisory input only delivers value when it is trusted enough to actually inform decisions. And that trust, as Q9 shows, is largely absent.

Q9 Only 1 in 5 Actually Trusts What AI Recommends

Q9

We consider AI-generated recommendations in recruitment to be reliable.

Trust in AI recruitment recommendations is low — only 1 in 5 considers them reliable

n = 307 · Scale 1-7 (1 = Strongly Disagree, 7 = Strongly Agree)

3.22

Mean

3

Median

56%

Score 1-3

21%

Score 5-7

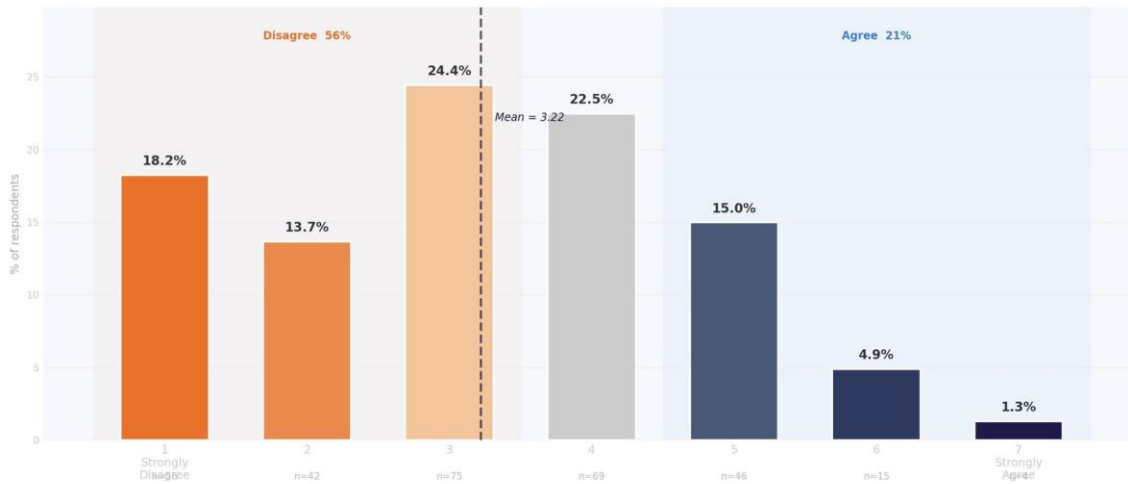


Chart: Ace Momcilovic · Source: EAPM & MartyHR · HRxAI European Survey 2026

Mean 3.22. Only 21% consider AI-generated recruitment recommendations reliable.

Only 21% consider AI-generated recruitment recommendations reliable. Score 3 is the modal response — not confident disagreement, but cautious scepticism. In a field where the decision being made is which human being gets an opportunity, this level of confidence in AI outputs is insufficient.

Q10 The Barriers Are Human, Not Technical

Q10 What are the main reasons for limited use of AI in recruitment?

Lack of trust and fear of bias dominate — followed closely by regulatory and strategic gaps

n = 318 · Multi-select, up to 2 choices · % of respondents selecting each barrier

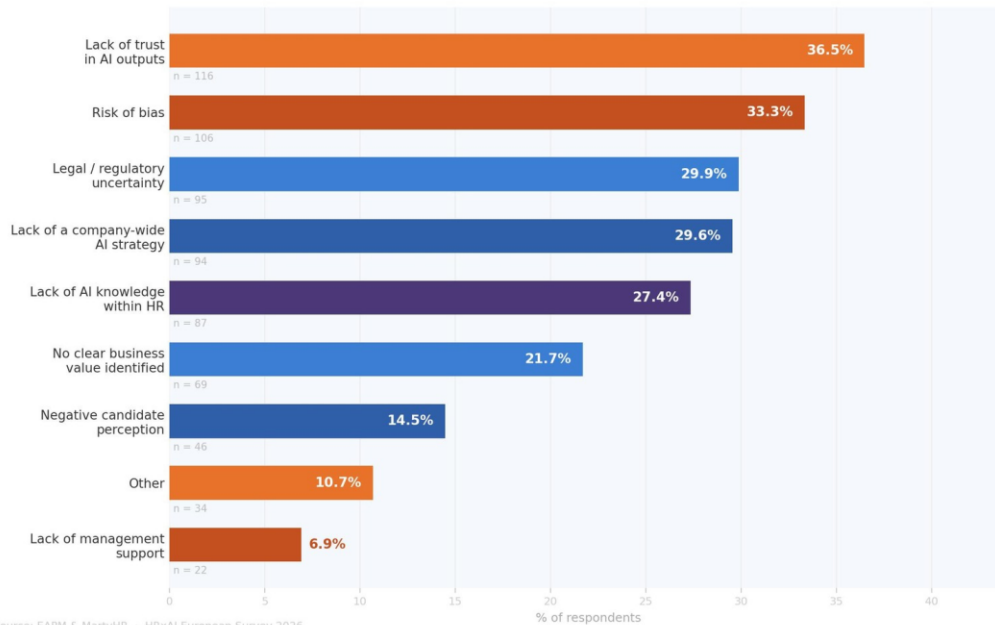


Chart: Aco Momcilovic · Source: EAPM & MartyHR · HRxAI European Survey 2026

Lack of trust in AI outputs (36%) and risk of bias (33%) top the list. All major barriers are human and governance-related, not technical.

The top barriers are lack of trust (36%), risk of bias (33%), legal uncertainty (30%), and lack of AI strategy (30%). These are not technical barriers. They are human ones. No software update will solve them. They require governance, training, defined accountability, and organizational change.

Recruitment was supposed to be AI's beachhead in HR. The data suggests it has become its most visible cautionary tale: technology present, trust absent, governance missing.

Knowing the Risks, Lacking the Skills

This section contains one finding that stands above all others in this entire report: the most encouraging and the most paradoxical data point we have. Hold it in mind as you read.

Q11

The Profession Is Split on Its Own Readiness

Q11

The HR team has sufficient knowledge for responsible and critical use of AI.

HR teams are divided — nearly half feel underprepared for responsible AI use

n = 322 · Scale 1-7 (1 = Strongly Disagree, 7 = Strongly Agree)

3.67

Mean

4

Median

48%

Score 1-3

34%

Score 5-7

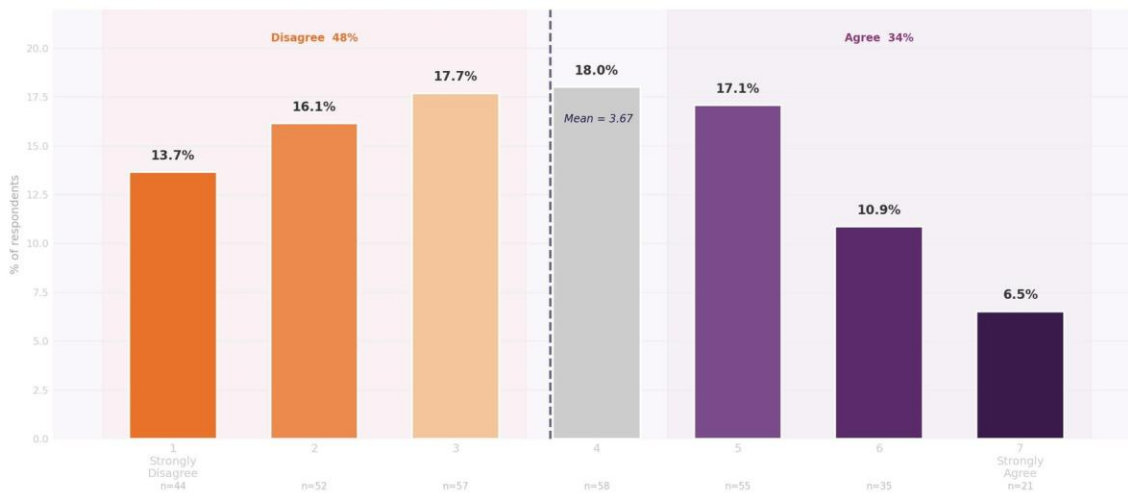


Chart: Aco Momcilovic · Source: EAPM & MartyHR · HRxAI European Survey 2026

Mean 3.67. 48% feel underprepared; 34% feel ready. Responses are distributed almost uniformly across the scale.

Responses are distributed nearly uniformly across all seven scale points. 48% disagree; 34% agree. Some HR teams have built genuine AI capability. Many have not. The problem is that organizations have no reliable way to tell the difference, because they have not invested in assessing or building that capability systematically.

Q12

64% Have Been Left to Figure It Out Alone

Q12

Has the HR team received formal AI training?

64% have no formal AI training — only 1 in 3 has received any structured preparation

n = 326 · Single choice · Ordered by level of training formality

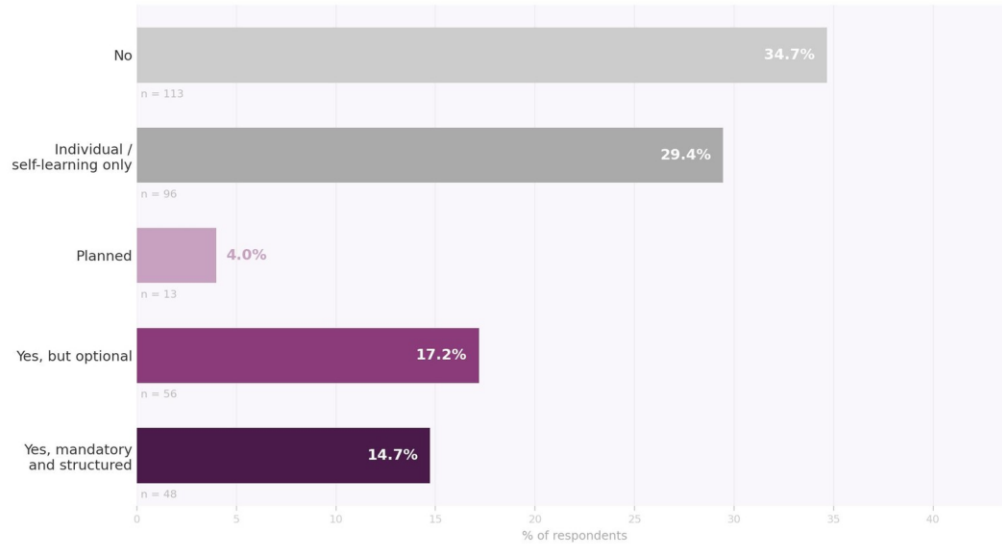


Chart: Aco Momcilovic · Source: EAPM & MartyHR · HRxAI European Survey 2026

training formality →

64% have received no formal training. Only 15% have mandatory, structured programs. 35% rely entirely on self-learning.

64% of HR professionals have received no formal AI training. Only 15% have access to mandatory, structured programs. Self-learning is not worthless, but it cannot be the primary mechanism by which an entire profession learns to use a powerful and risk-bearing technology responsibly. In a field where AI decisions affect people's livelihoods, inconsistent preparation is an ethical issue, not just a performance one.

Q13

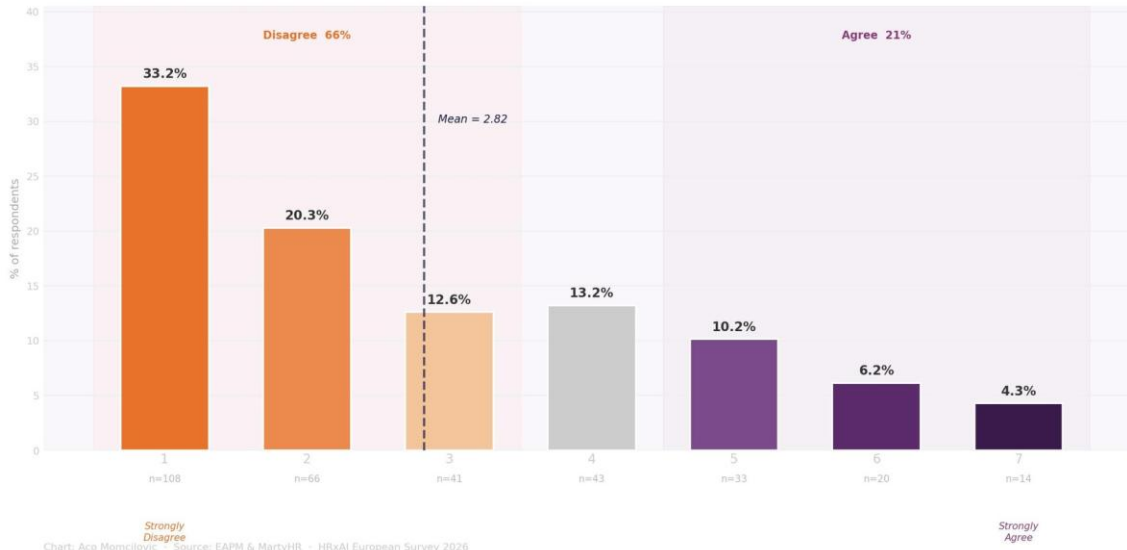
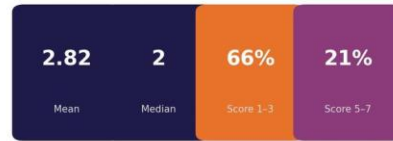
Organizations Are Choosing Not to Train Their HR Teams

Q13

The organization systematically invests in developing AI competencies within HR.

2 in 3 organizations are not investing in AI competency development for HR

n = 325 · Scale 1-7 (1 = Strongly Disagree, 7 = Strongly Agree)



Mean 2.82 — the second-lowest score in the entire survey. 33% gave the lowest possible score. 66% disagree overall.

Mean 2.82 is the second-lowest mean in this entire survey. 33% gave the lowest possible score: Strongly Disagree. Organizations are not training their HR teams because they have decided not to. Organizations that choose not to invest in AI competency development for HR now will pay a much higher price later: in errors, in legal exposure, in reputational damage, and in the irrelevance of an underprepared function.

Q14

Awareness Is High — The Only Bright Signal

Q14

We understand the limitations of AI systems (bias, hallucinations, lack of transparency).

The standout positive — 6 in 10 HR professionals understand AI's limitations

n = 322 · Scale 1-7 (1 = Strongly Disagree, 7 = Strongly Agree)

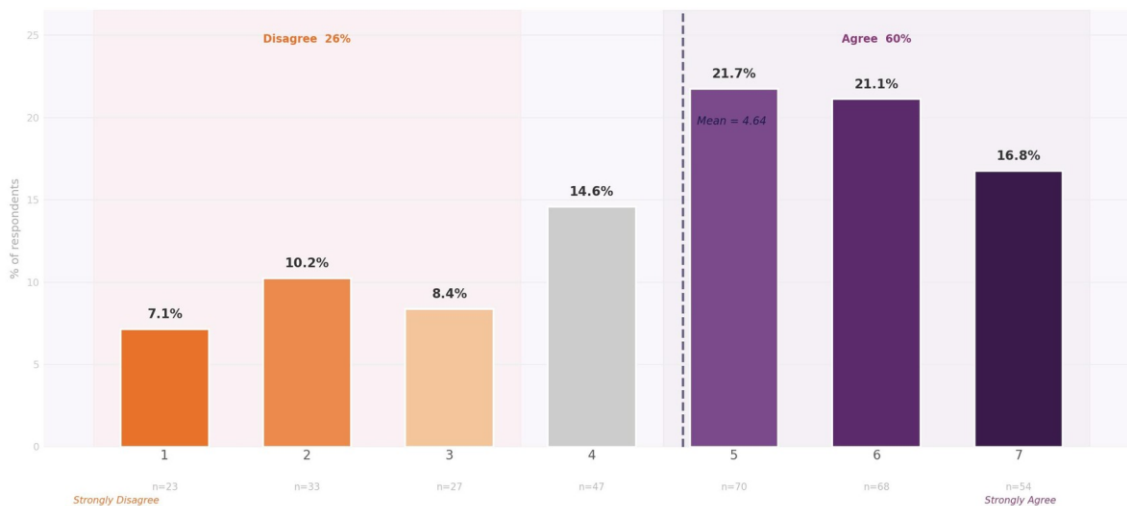
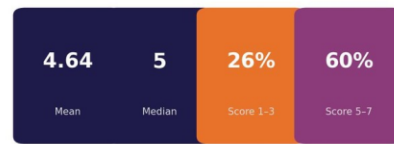


Chart: Aco Momcivovic · Source: EAPM & MartyHR · HRxAI European Survey 2026

Mean 4.64. 60% agree — the only Likert question in the entire survey where a clear majority agree. The standout positive finding.

60% say they understand the limitations of AI. This is the single Likert question in the entire survey where the majority agrees. HR professionals know what can go wrong with AI — this awareness is a genuine asset and a real foundation on which to build.

But here is the paradox: knowing what can go wrong is not the same as being able to prevent it. Awareness without governance structures, training, or accountability frameworks is insufficient. The profession understands the risks. It does not yet have the organizational conditions to manage them.

You know the risks. Your organization won't give you the tools to manage them. That is the competency paradox of European HR in 2026.

You cannot govern what you do not understand. You cannot be accountable for outcomes you have not been trained to evaluate. The competency gap is not a soft issue — it is the foundation everything else depends on.

Who Pays, Who Decides, Who Is Responsible?

AI tools cost money. Someone pays for them. And that answer tells us more about an organization's genuine commitment to AI in HR than any strategy document.

Q15

1 in 10 Is Paying Out of Their Own Pocket

Q15

Who covers the cost of AI tools used by HR?

Organizations fund most AI tools — but 1 in 10 HR professionals pay from their own pocket

n = 324 · Single choice

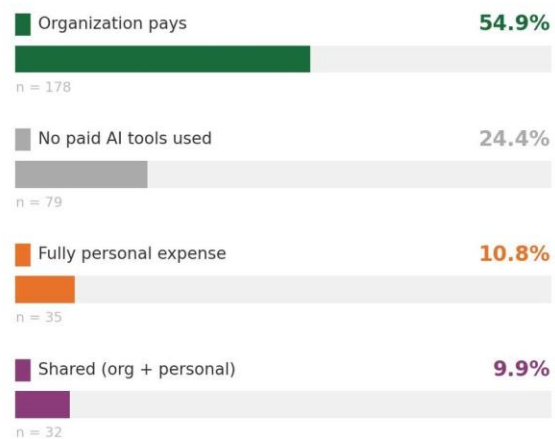
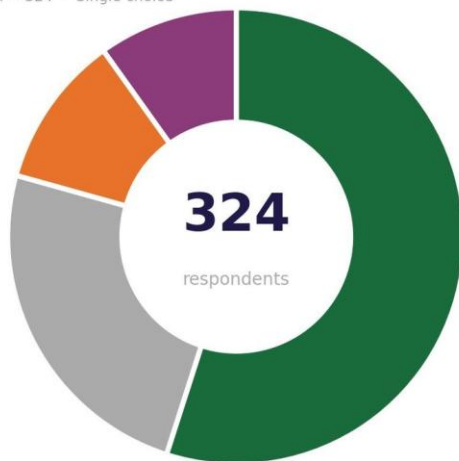


Chart: Aco Momcilovic · Source: EAPM & MartyHR · HRxAI European Survey 2026

55% organization-funded. 11% pay entirely from personal expense. 24% use no paid AI tools at all.

55% of organizations cover the cost of AI tools used by HR. That is the majority — but it is not universal. 24% use no paid AI tools, relying on free or personal-account tools. And 11% of HR professionals are covering the cost entirely from their own pockets.

That 11% figure deserves careful attention. An HR professional using an AI tool paid for personally, without organizational endorsement, without formal policy, without governance — is taking on significant personal risk. They are making a financial bet with their own money and a professional bet with their own reputation on a technology their organization has not formally validated. If something goes wrong, who carries the liability? Based on Q19 and Q20: them, under no defined framework.

11% of HR professionals are funding their own AI tools. That is not innovation. That is organizational abandonment.

The investment question cannot be separated from the governance question in Section B. Spending on AI tools without accompanying policy, training, and accountability is not progress. It is procurement. The organizations that will genuinely advance HR's AI capability are those that invest in the full system: tools, training, governance, and culture.

Organizations that leave HR teams to self-fund their AI capability have abdicated a basic management responsibility. The risk transfers entirely to the individual professional.

SECTION F

Ethics & Accountability

The Accountability Paradox

This section contains the most important tension in the entire report. It is a paradox in three parts, and its implications are profound for every organization using AI in HR.

Part one: 89% of HR professionals believe that responsibility for HR decisions must always remain with humans. The strongest consensus in the entire survey.

Part two: 61% believe that when AI leads to an incorrect HR decision, the HR professional should be personally responsible.

Part three: 71% say that accountability for AI-related errors is not clearly defined in their organization.

Read these together. HR professionals are expected to be personally accountable for AI-influenced decisions. In organizations that have never defined what that accountability means. Under no guidelines. With no training. And no organizational safety net.

Q16

The Majority Wants More AI — Done Properly

Q16

In the future, AI should play a greater role in HR decision-making.

Half of HR professionals want AI to play a bigger role — but a quarter remain cautious

n = 322 · Scale 1-7 (1 = Strongly Disagree, 7 = Strongly Agree)

4.43 **5** **25%** **51%**

Mean Median Score 1-3 Score 5-7

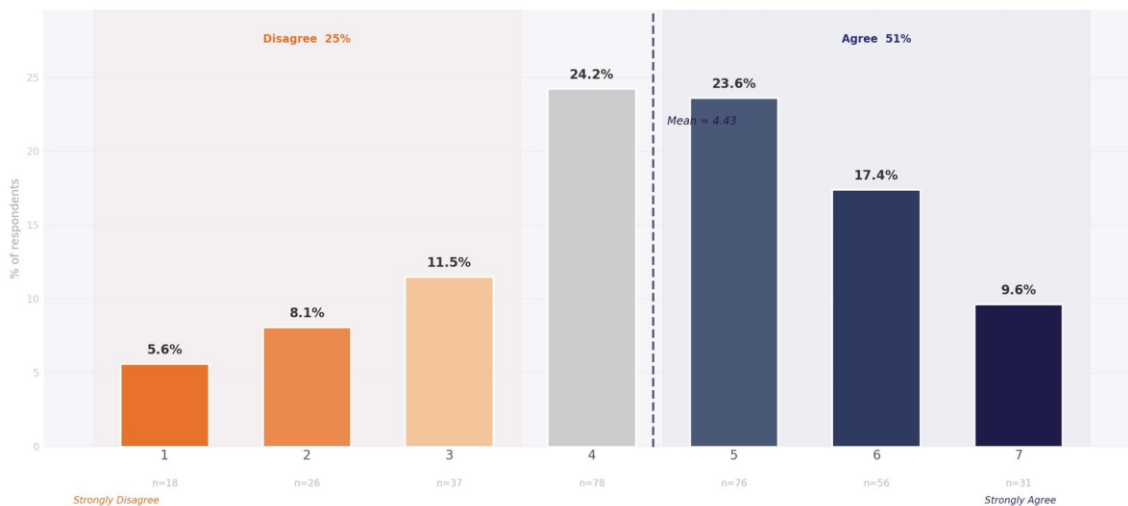


Chart: Aco Momcillovic · Source: EAPM & MartyHR · HRxAI European Survey 2026

Mean 4.43. 51% agree. Score 4 (neutral) is the largest single response at 24%.

51% agree AI should play a greater role in the future. But score 4 (neutral) is the most common single response — many are carefully weighing the question. They want more AI, but they want it done properly. Based on previous sections, they know it is not yet being done properly.

Q17 Broadly Open, Across Almost Every HR Area

Q17 In which HR decisions would you be willing to use AI as a relevant input?

HR professionals are broadly open to AI input — employee development and hiring lead the way

n = 321 · Multi-select (% of respondents) · 35 respondents (11%) would not use AI in any HR decision

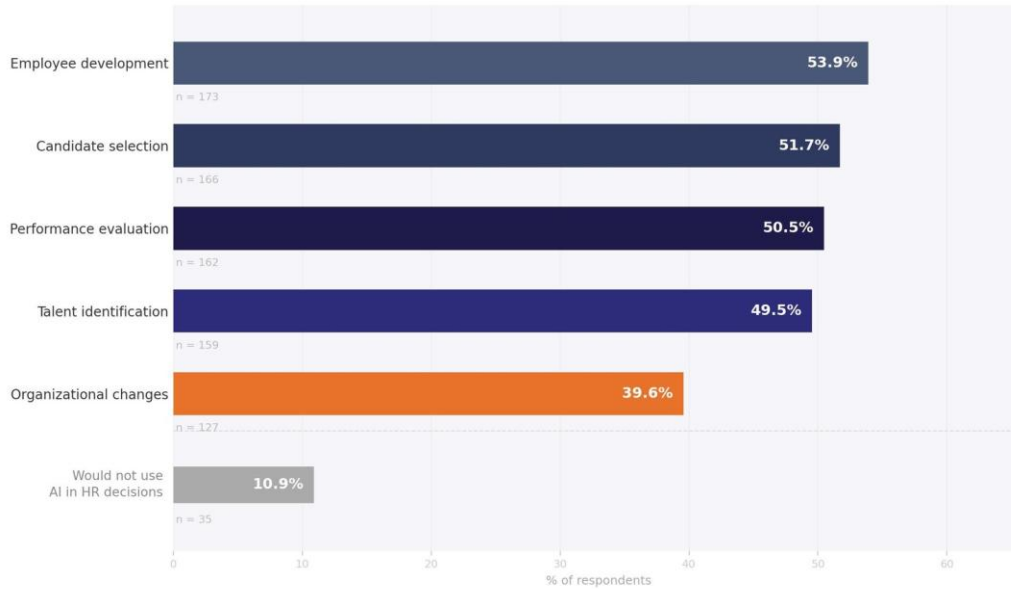
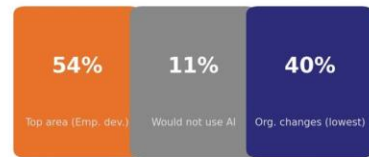


Chart: Ace Momcilovic · Source: EAPM & MartyHR · HRxAI European Survey 2026

4 in 5 are open to AI input in at least some HR decisions. Employee development (54%) leads. Only 11% would not use AI in any HR decision.

4 in 5 HR professionals are willing to use AI as relevant input in at least some decisions. Differences between categories are remarkably small: employee development (54%), candidate selection (52%), performance evaluation (51%), talent identification (50%). Only organizational changes show notably lower appetite (40%). The profession is not resistant. It is cautiously open.

Q18 Near-Universal: Humans Must Stay Accountable

Q18
Responsibility for HR decisions must always remain with humans, regardless of AI recommendations.

Near-universal consensus — 9 in 10 say human accountability in HR decisions is non-negotiable
n = 321 · Scale 1-7 (1 = Strongly Disagree, 7 = Strongly Agree)

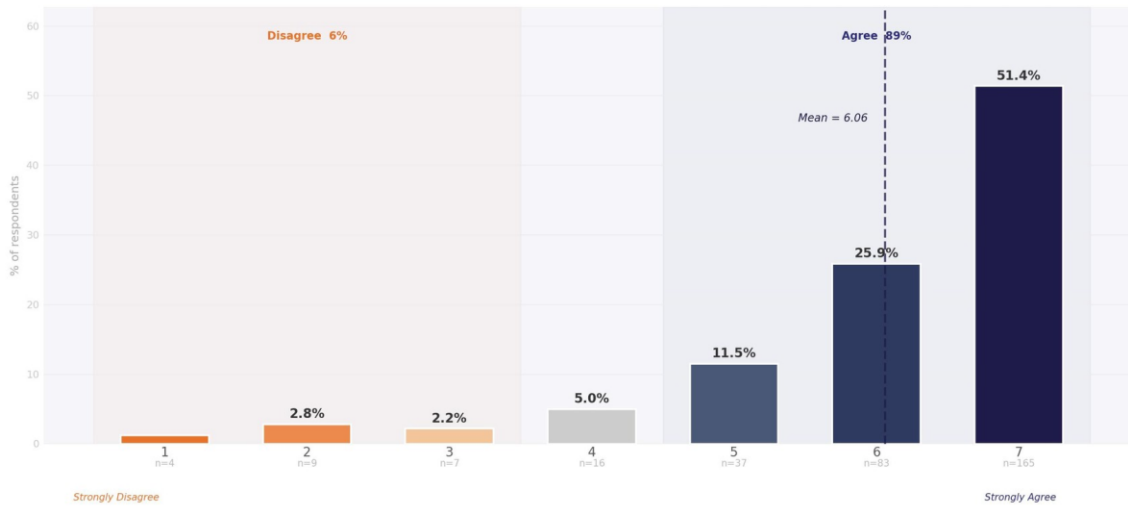


Chart: Aco Momcilovic · Source: EAPM & MartyHR · HRxAI European Survey 2026

Mean 6.06. 89% agree. 51% gave the maximum score of 7 — the strongest single consensus in the entire survey.

51% gave the maximum score. 89% scored 5, 6, or 7. This is the closest thing to unanimity in the entire survey. Human accountability in HR decisions is, for European HR professionals, simply non-negotiable. The profession is not asking to be relieved of accountability. It is asking for the governance framework that makes that accountability meaningful and manageable.

Q19 The HR Professional Carries the Can

Q19
If an AI recommendation leads to an incorrect HR decision, who should be responsible?

6 in 10 point to the HR professional — accountability stays with the human, not the algorithm
n = 321 · Single choice

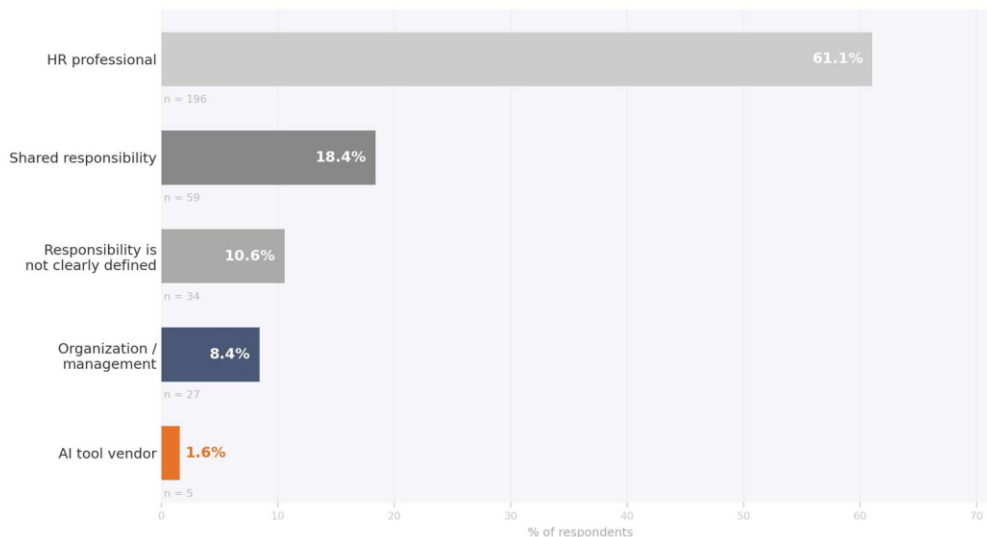


Chart: Aco Momcilovic · Source: EAPM & MartyHR · HRxAI European Survey 2026

61% point to the HR professional. Only 2% say the AI tool vendor. The accountability stays with the human.

61% say the HR professional should be personally responsible. But this raises an immediate and pointed question: responsible for what, exactly? Under what framework? Based on what standards? Only 2% believe the AI vendor should be responsible. The individual HR professional — operating without training, without guidelines, without a defined framework — is expected to carry the weight alone.

Q20

The Lowest Score in the Survey — Nobody Has Written It Down

Q20

In our organization, accountability for AI-related errors is clearly defined.

7 in 10 say accountability for AI errors is undefined — a critical governance gap

n = 318 · Scale 1-7 (1 = Strongly Disagree, 7 = Strongly Agree)

2.59

Mean

2

Median

71%

Score 1-3

16%

Score 5-7



Chart: Aco Momcilovic · Source: EAPM & MartyHR · HRxAI European Survey 2026

Mean 2.59 — the lowest Likert score in the entire survey. 43% gave the lowest possible score. 71% disagree.

Mean 2.59 — the absolute lowest mean in the entire survey. 43% gave the lowest possible score: Strongly Disagree. The paradox is complete: organizations using AI in HR decisions have not defined who is responsible when those decisions are wrong.

Accountability without a framework is not accountability. It is blame, waiting for somewhere to land.

The real ethics challenge in HR is organizational: who defined the rules, who trained the people, and who carries the responsibility when things go wrong. Right now, the answer to all three is: nobody.

The Untouched Frontier

If recruitment is AI's most visible application in HR, talent management is its least penetrated. The gap between what HR professionals believe about AI's future (Q21) and how they actually use it today (Q22–Q25) is the largest discontinuity in this entire dataset.

Q21

Optimism About the Future Is Real

Q21

The use of AI will strengthen the strategic role of HR in the long term.

Most HR professionals believe AI will elevate HR's strategic standing — cautious optimism prevails

n = 320 · Scale 1-7 (1 = Strongly Disagree, 7 = Strongly Agree)

4.58

Mean

5

Median

21%

Score 1-3

56%

Score 5-7

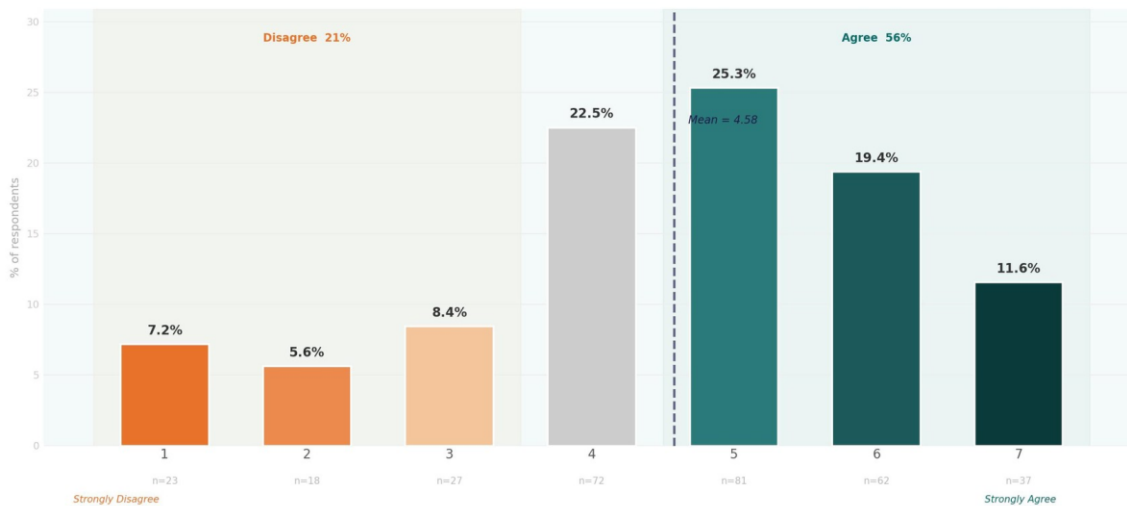


Chart: Aco Momcilovic · Source: EAPM & MartyHR · HRxAI European Survey 2026

Mean 4.58. 56% agree. The profession's clearest statement of optimism about AI's long-term potential.

56% believe AI will strengthen HR's strategic role in the long term. Mean 4.58, median 5. The distribution tilts clearly to the right. This is a genuine signal of optimism from the HR profession. But this belief sits in direct tension with the reality described in the questions that follow. The profession is optimistic about the destination. It is not yet moving toward it.

Q22

The Lowest Adoption Number in the Entire Survey

Q22

AI is actively used in our organization for talent management processes.

AI in talent management is rare — nearly half strongly disagree it is actively used

n = 321 · Scale 1-7 (1 = Strongly Disagree, 7 = Strongly Agree)

2.34

Mean

2

Median

74%

Score 1-3

14%

Score 5-7

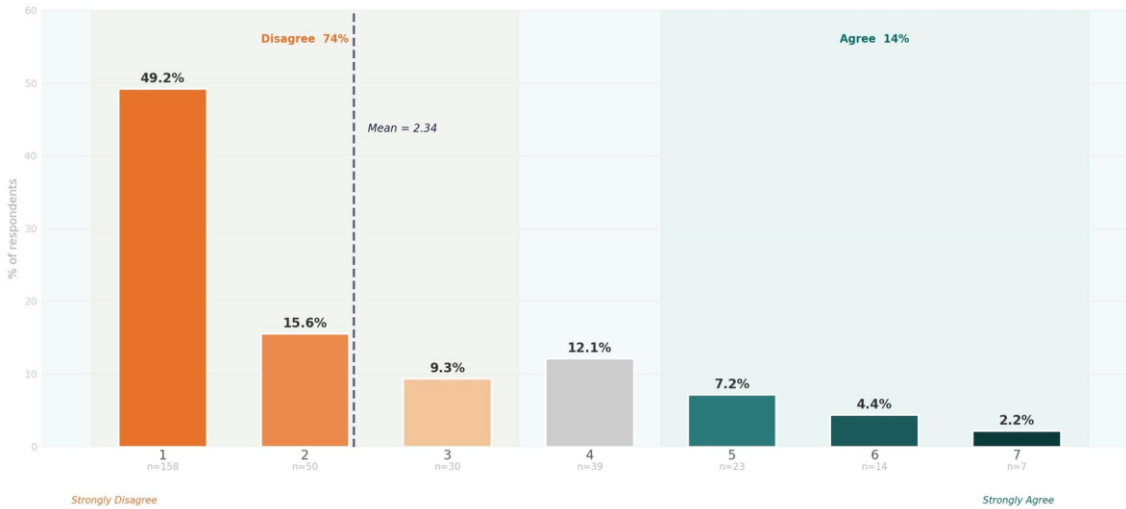


Chart: Aco Momcilovic · Source: EAPM & MartyHR · HRxAI European Survey 2026

Mean 2.34 — the lowest Likert score in the entire survey. 49% strongly disagree. 74% disagree overall.

Mean 2.34 — the absolute lowest mean in the entire survey. 49% gave Strongly Disagree. 74% disagree overall. This is not rare use — it is essentially no use. The chasm between the optimism in Q21 and the reality in Q22 is one of the defining findings of this report. The most consequential HR processes — those that shape careers and build organizations — are almost entirely untouched by AI in European HR today.

Q23

6 in 10 Use Nothing — L&D Is the Lone Exception

Q23

In which talent management areas do you currently use AI?

L&D leads where AI is used — but 6 in 10 use no AI in talent management at all

n = 321 · Multi-select (% of all respondents who answered)

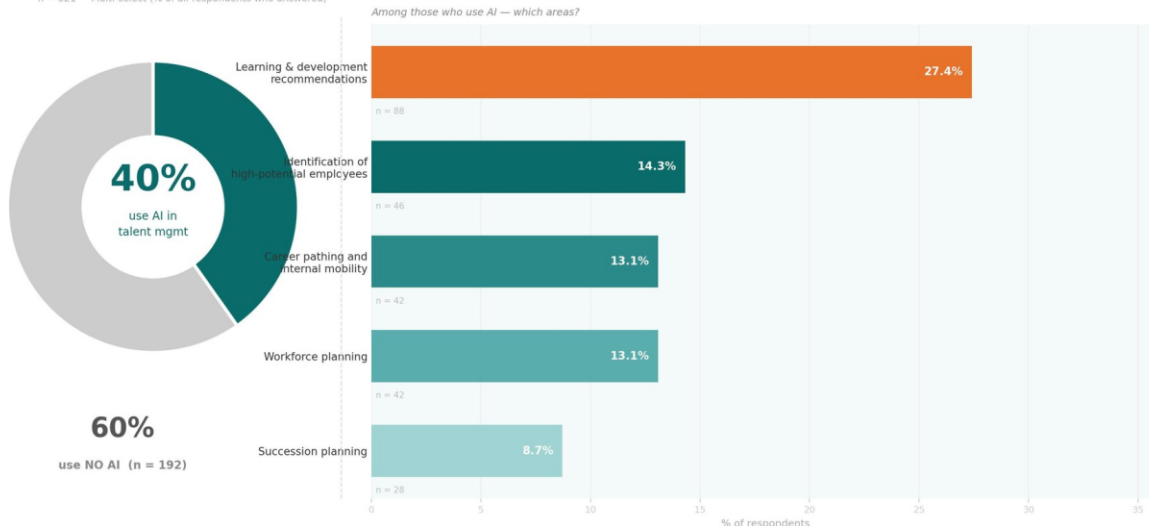


Chart: Aco Momcilovic · Source: EAPM & MartyHR · HRxAI European Survey 2026

60% use no AI in talent management at all. Among those who do, L&D recommendations lead at 27% of all respondents.

60% use no AI in talent management. L&D recommendations lead at 27% of all respondents. Identification of high-potential employees, career pathing, workforce planning, and succession planning — the highest-stakes, highest-value talent management activities — all sit below 15%. These are the exact areas where AI has the most to offer. The opportunity gap is not incremental. It is transformational.

Q24

Scepticism Dominates — Because Experience Is Absent

Q24

AI-based insights improve the quality of talent-related decisions in our organization.

Most HR teams do not see AI improving talent decision quality — scepticism dominates

n = 313 · Scale 1-7 (1 = Strongly Disagree, 7 = Strongly Agree)

3.01

Mean

3

Median

56%

Score 1-3

24%

Score 5-7

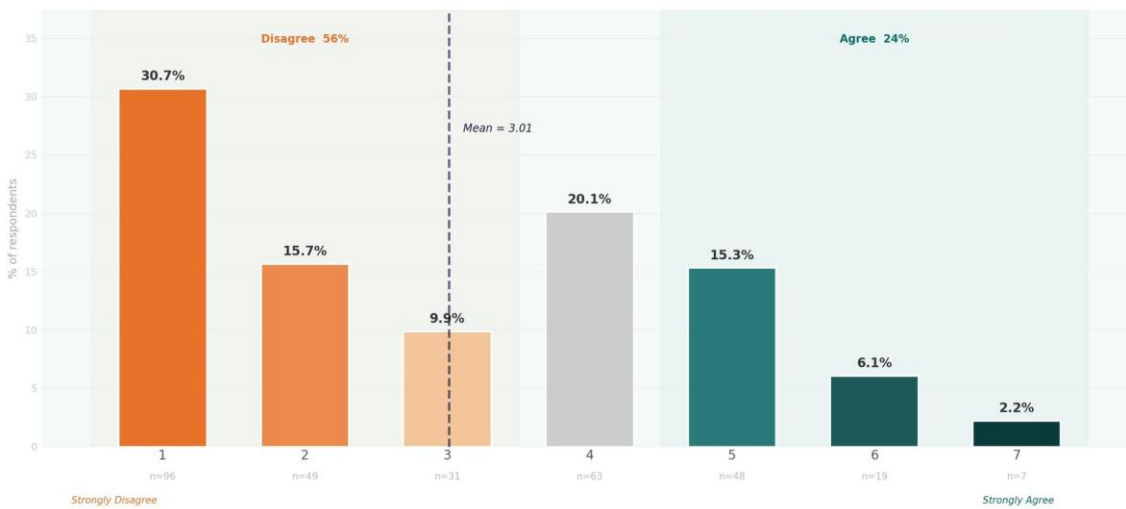


Chart: Aca Momiclovic · Source: EAPM & MartyHR · HRxAI European Survey 2026

Mean 3.01. 56% disagree. Score 1 is the modal response at 31%.

Only 24% say AI improves the quality of their talent-related decisions. The scepticism is not irrational: if you are not using AI in talent management, you cannot evaluate whether it improves decisions. Trust will not emerge without evidence. Evidence will not emerge without use. Use will not emerge without investment and governance. The cycle begins with leadership will.

Q25

Uncertainty, Not Rejection — But Neither Is Good Enough

Q25

We trust AI-supported outcomes in talent management.

e.g. potential assessments, development recommendations

Trust in AI talent outcomes is low — fewer than 1 in 5 agree with AI-driven assessments

n = 313 · Scale 1-7 (1 = Strongly Disagree, 7 = Strongly Agree)

3.06

Mean

3

Median

56%

Score 1-3

20%

Score 5-7

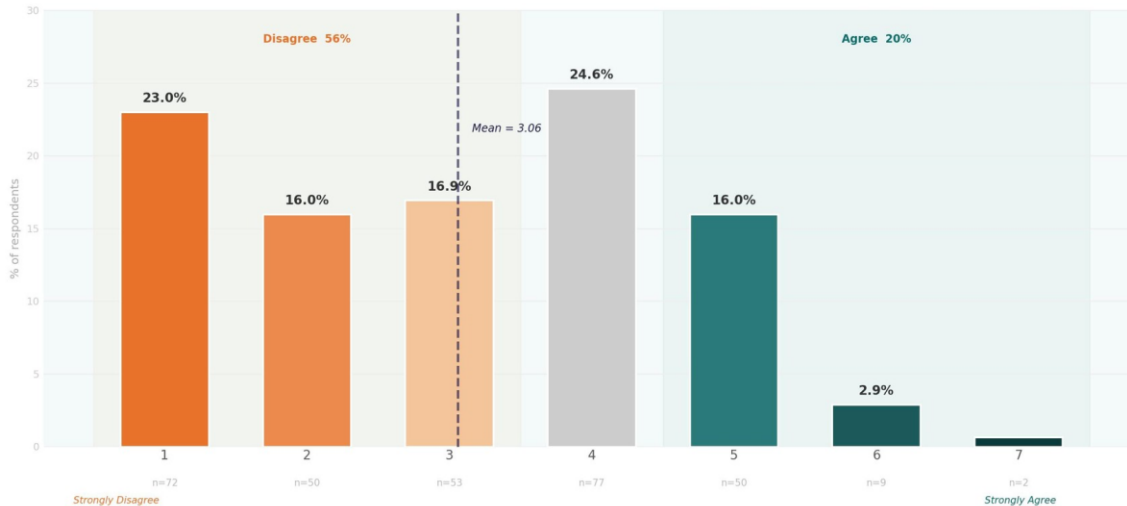


Chart: Aco Momcillovic · Source: EAPM & MartyHR · HRxAI European Survey 2026

Mean 3.06. Only 20% trust AI-supported talent outcomes. Score 4 (neutral) is the modal response at 25%.

Only 20% trust AI-supported outcomes in talent management. The dominant posture is uncertainty, not rejection — which is far more workable. HR professionals are not saying "AI is wrong." They are saying "we don't know yet, and nobody has given us the conditions to find out." That uncertainty is entirely addressable through structured pilots, transparent communication, and clear measurement.

Talent management is where the promise of AI in HR is most concentrated and most unrealized. It will separate organizations that use AI as a productivity tool from those that use it as a genuine strategic capability.

Conclusion: The Reckoning and the Opportunity

Let us be direct about what this survey shows.

European HR is not behind on AI because it lacks intelligence, curiosity, or willingness. The survey shows clear signals of openness, awareness, and genuine ambition across all these dimensions.

European HR is behind because the organizational systems that would enable responsible AI adoption do not exist. Not the training. Not the guidelines. Not the governance. Not the accountability structures. The profession has been handed a powerful technology and largely left to figure out what to do with it alone.

This is a leadership failure, not an HR failure

When 66% say there are no AI guidelines in their organization, that is not HR's fault. When 64% have received no formal AI training, it is not because they refused to learn — it is because their organizations

made a decision, explicit or by neglect, not to invest in teaching them. The accountability paradox, where HR professionals are expected to be personally responsible for AI-influenced decisions under no organizational framework, is a failure of executive leadership.

But HR must also hold itself to account

If HR aspires to be a strategic partner — and 55% of respondents are Heads of HR or HR Managers — then it cannot wait for permission. Strategic functions do not ask to be taken seriously. They demonstrate it. That means advocating for AI governance frameworks, building the case for training investment, defining accountability structures before an incident forces the issue, and leading the AI conversation in their organizations, not following it.

Five things that need to happen now

- Establish AI guidelines for HR. Every organization using AI in HR decisions needs a written policy, regardless of how informal current usage appears. This is not a luxury. It is a professional baseline.
 - Fund structured AI training for HR teams. Self-learning is insufficient. Organizations need to invest in verified, role-specific AI literacy for the people making decisions about other people's careers.
 - Define accountability before it matters. Who is responsible when AI contributes to a wrong HR decision? Write it down. Make it clear. Before the incident, not after.
 - Start structured pilots in talent management. Design deliberate experiments, define success metrics, measure outcomes, and build the evidence base for trust.
 - HR leaders must lead, not wait. The organizations that will benefit most are those where HR leaders take ownership: building governance, advocating for investment, and modelling responsible adoption.
-

This survey captured a profession in transition. Not yet transformed, not standing still. Somewhere in between, navigating real uncertainty with limited organizational support, armed with genuine awareness and real ambition.

The HR professionals who answered these questions are not the problem. They are the solution — if given the conditions to act.

The time to act is now, while the norms are still being written and the profession still has a chance to shape them.

The future of HR is not a technology question. It is an organizational will question.

HRxAI

Thank & you.

*327 HR leaders. 30 countries. One shared question — **how do we make AI work for people?***

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