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Prepare your workforce for the EU AI Act's literacy obligations

"AI is already here. The question now is whether our employees know how to use it responsibly." That remark, and many like it, dominated the closed-door **roundtable** hosted by The SASIG Group and SoSafe.

"We need an AI strategy that also educates the board," one leader said. Another warned, "AI is a means to an end at the end of the day. You must be comfortable with the output and be ultimately responsible for it."

Months on, their concerns have only intensified. Across Europe, organisations are building AI literacy into everyday security culture, but progress remains uneven.

45%
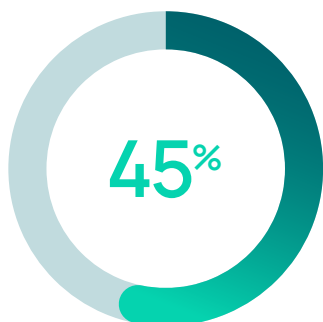
A 2025 University of Melbourne and KPMG **study** shows the split: 45 percent of employees in advanced economies feel their organisation provides the safeguards needed for responsible AI use. The other half may already be using AI without any guidance and oversight.

Around half of organisations in advanced economies lack the training and governance needed for responsible AI use.

Despite the surge in workplace AI, only two in five employees say their organisation provides guidance on how to use it. Almost one in five do not even know if such a policy exists. This reveals the gap between everyday use and its governance, one that shadow AI is quickly filling as employees experiment with new tools without oversight.

Many organisations still rely on static PDFs and slide decks that rarely get applied in daily work. They do very little to help people recognise risks, make informed decisions, or demonstrate compliance.

Safe AI use needs more than policies. It needs habits. It needs people who understand the tools they are using and the responsibility that comes with them. EU AI Act reinforces this exact shift toward AI literacy and a workforce that can use AI systems securely, transparently, and with accountability.

Leaders at the roundtable, and across the industry, are treating AI literacy as a strategic priority. Not just for compliance, but for long-term resilience, and for the ability to innovate safely in an AI-driven world.

Organisational support for AI and responsible use across countries
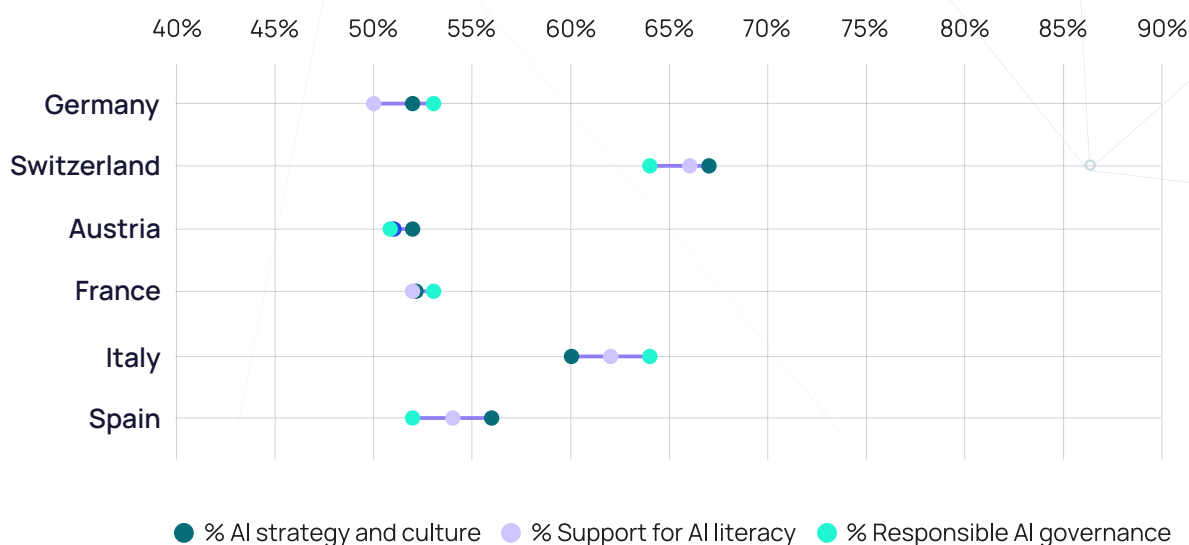
% Agree = 'Somewhat agree', 'Agree' and 'Strongly agree'; [7 point scale].
Based on employees working in organizations that are actively using AI.

Source: Trust, attitudes and use of AI: A global study 2025

Understanding the EU AI Act

The **AI Act** is the first binding, horizontal regulation on AI. It sets a common framework for how AI systems (systems that use data to generate predictions, content, or decisions) are **developed, supplied, and used** across the EU. It applies to providers who build or supply AI systems, and to deployers who buy or integrate them.

It follows a **risk based framework** that matches obligations to potential harm. At the highest level, unacceptable uses are banned outright because they manipulate behaviour or threaten fundamental rights. High risk systems face strict rules on data quality, transparency, security, and human oversight. Limited risk systems must simply make users aware that they are interacting with AI, while minimal risk tools carry no additional obligations.

Penalties follow a GDPR style model. The most serious breaches can lead to fines of up to €35 million or 7 percent of global turnover, with lower tiers set at €15 million or 3 percent.

Article 4, the human clause of the AI Act

The AI Act took effect in 2024, with its first provisions on banned AI uses and AI literacy starting in early 2025. The remaining requirements will apply by August 2026.

While much of the AI Act focuses on system safety and technical standards, Article 4 turns to the people using AI.

So, what does Article 4 actually require from your organisation?

Both developers and users share responsibility for ensuring their teams can work with AI safely, with clear training, oversight, and accountability.

The law expects demonstrable understanding from anyone interacting with AI, scaled to the risk of the system.

That responsibility spans employees, contractors, vendors, and partners, with literacy tailored to each role, from deep technical knowledge to practical business context.

Organisations also need a clear view of where AI operates, since areas like HR, analytics, or customer interaction carry different risks, and teams must understand how AI decisions affect people's rights and opportunities to ensure outcomes remain fair, transparent, and explainable.

For security and compliance leaders, **Article 4 takes governance into new territory.**

Teams that can now demonstrate safe, informed AI use will be better prepared for **audits, stakeholder confidence, and future regulatory scrutiny**. It is a practical advantage as much as a compliance requirement, and its importance will only grow as deadlines approach.

What is AI literacy?

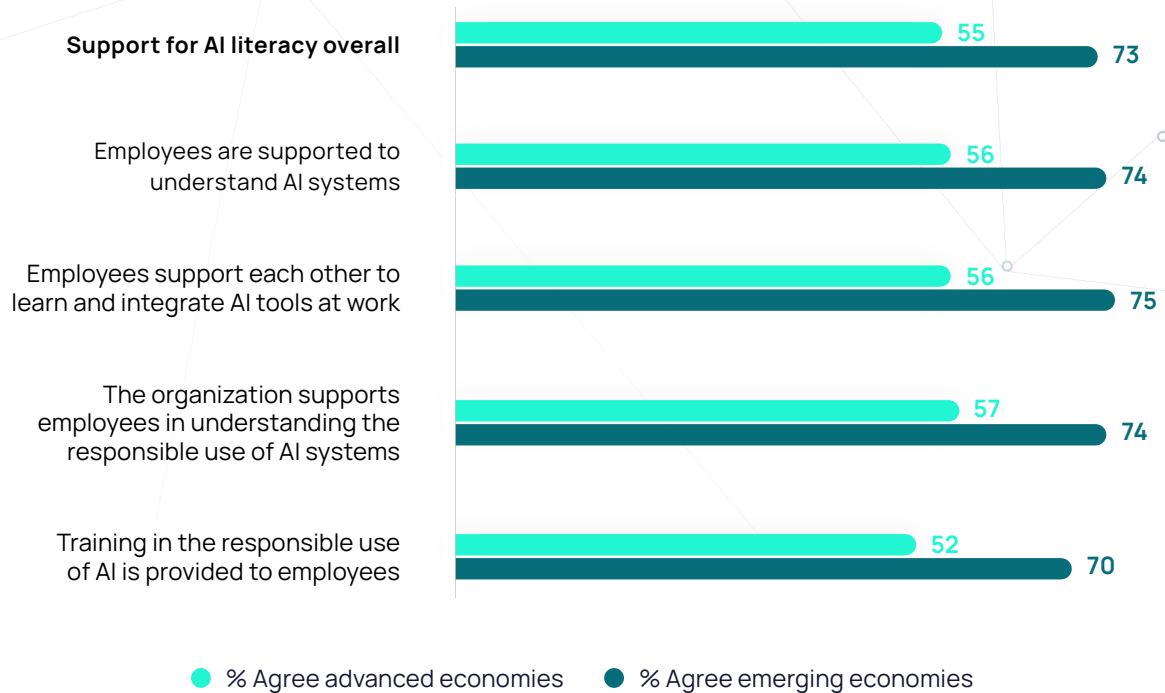**Defined under Article 3 of the EU AI Act:**

"AI literacy means the skills, knowledge and understanding that allow providers, deployers and affected persons to make informed decisions about AI systems, while being aware of both their opportunities and the risks or harm they may cause."

AI literacy is now a compliance obligation under Article 4. It brings user understanding into governance, ensuring AI is not just technically compliant but also handled safely across the organisation.

A recent **study** shows that in advanced economies only 52 percent of employees are trained in the responsible use of AI, and overall support for AI literacy reaches just 55 percent. Another **study** found that employees with strong AI literacy were more than twice as likely to expect positive outcomes from AI use.

Perceived organisational support for AI and responsible AI use

In relation to your organization, to what extent do you agree with the following?

	% Agree advanced economies	% Agree emerging economies
Support for AI literacy overall	55	73
Employees are supported to understand AI systems	56	74
Employees support each other to learn and integrate AI tools at work	56	75
The organization supports employees in understanding the responsible use of AI systems	57	74
Training in the responsible use of AI is provided to employees	52	70

● % Agree advanced economies   ● % Agree emerging economies

% Agree = 'Somewhat agree', 'Agree', 'Strongly agree'. Based on employees working in organisations that are actively using AI.
Source: Trust, attitudes and use of AI: A global study 2025
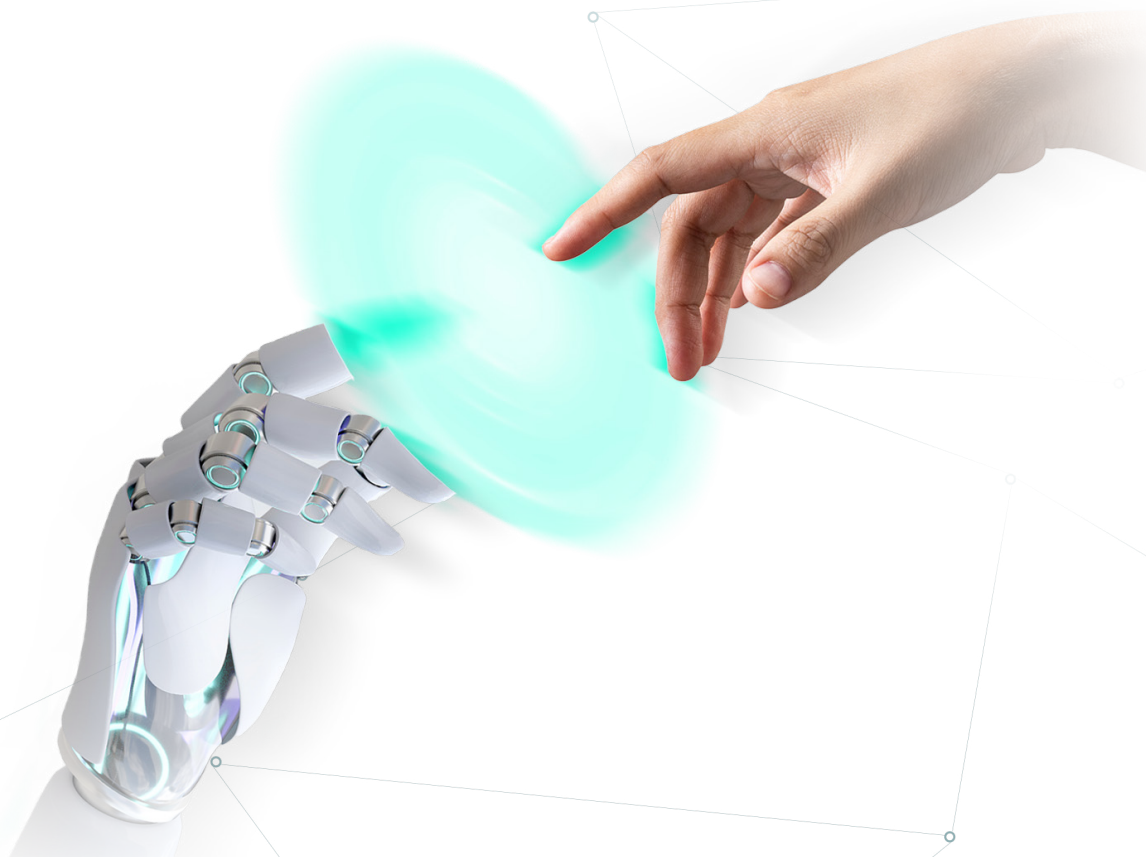
What AI-literate workforce looks like in practice

Understand AI systems:

Two-thirds of employees say they have used AI output without evaluating it. Trained teams, however, know what each system does, how it makes decisions, and when to question the results. AI-literate teams can trace an output back to its source and explain how it was reached.

Recognise risk and opportunity:

They see both sides of AI: the productivity and creativity it enables, and the bias, misinformation, or compliance issues it can create.

Apply ethical and legal judgement:

47% percent of employees admit to using AI in ways that may be inappropriate. Informed teams, by comparison, make AI decisions with an awareness of fairness, privacy, accountability, and real-world impact

Work within governance frameworks:

They understand how AI fits into existing risk and compliance processes. They report issues, follow internal policies, and know who to contact when something doesn't look right.

Maintain human oversight:

They know when to rely on automation and when to take control.
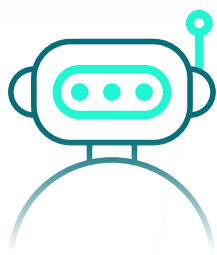
Checklist to build AI literacy across your organisation

Across Europe, organisations are beginning to treat AI literacy as an organisational muscle. Many have joined the [European Commission's AI Pact](#), where companies test and apply responsible AI practices ahead of regulation, from tech firms to telecoms, energy providers, and financial institutions. Their experience shows that progress comes when AI literacy moves beyond traditional training and is embedded directly into everyday workflows and decision-making.

Here is how your organisation can build the AI literacy required for compliance and a fully AI-ready workforce.

Start with acknowledgement and alignment:

Begin with a shared why. Acknowledge concerns about accuracy, privacy, and job impact, and make ownership clear so teams feel safe and informed before training begins.

Integrate AI literacy in everyday decisions:

Build training and guidance into daily processes, ensuring every project and product decision reflects responsible AI thinking.

Workday includes responsible AI checkpoints in its product development lifecycle, prompting teams to review ethical and security aspects during planning and testing.

Telefónica relies on "Responsible AI Champions" within business units to ensure responsible AI principles guide everyday decisions.

Role-specific literacy:

Design your AI literacy programme around responsibility by matching training to the level of risk each role carries.

Fastweb appoints departmental AI contacts who assess risk and guide colleagues.

Workday tailors materials for developers, executives, and risk managers so each audience learns what matters to them.

Learning-by-doing:

Integrate your AI literacy measures into how teams review and approve AI systems.

Collibra trains staff to spot new AI features in third-party tools and send them for legal or security review.

Fastweb's intake platform doubles as a learning tool, asking employees to define purpose, data sensitivity, and user impact before submitting a new use case.

Build communities:

Make AI literacy social. Peer learning and open dialogue drive stronger engagement than formal training alone.

VERBUND runs monthly "FrAIday" sessions where teams share real AI cases and lessons learned, reaching a quarter of its workforce in under a year.

TIM and Telefónica rely on internal "AI Tribes" and ambassadors who maintain local engagement across teams.

Make training engaging and accessible:

Replace one-off sessions with short, practical formats that fit into daily work. Use real examples and interactive learning to keep it engaging and continuous.

SAP delivers short, scenario-based video modules that show how AI principles apply in specific roles, helping employees connect training to their own tasks.

Enel uses gamified learning experiences that test employees on real use cases, making it easier to spot risks and good practices.

Orange complements formal training with micro-learning videos and internal communication campaigns.

ING blends self-paced learning with interactive quizzes that focus on recognising AI-related risks in common workflows.

Measure literacy:

Track how AI literacy improves oversight and reduces risk to prove its real value to the business.

Enzai tracks how long it takes to review new AI use cases.

Collibra monitors how many systems are documented and approved for compliant use.

Fastweb records how many risky AI projects are identified and stopped before deployment.

Build the foundation for company-wide AI literacy with SoSafe

AI literacy is becoming a core part of compliance and security readiness. Under the EU AI Act, training becomes part of risk management, and staff are expected to provide human oversight for higher-risk systems.

The risks of not doing so are already visible.

51%
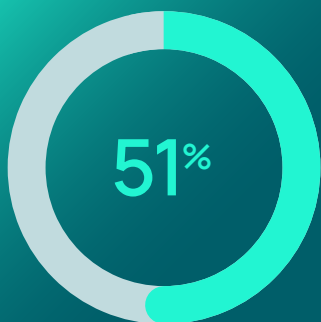
A recent **survey** showed that **51 percent of organisations using AI have experienced at least one negative consequence, and one-third linked it to AI inaccuracy.**

A structured literacy programme helps leaders turn scattered AI use into something governed, auditable, and far less likely to introduce downstream risk.

SoSafe's ready-to-deploy modules make AI literacy practical and measurable, which can be tailored to your organisation's context through placeholders.

SoSafe's AI awareness bundle

Module	How it helps you manage and reduce AI risk
Fact-Checking AI: The Truth About Its Intelligence (~3 min)	Helps employees understand AI's limits so they rely on it appropriately and apply human judgment.
Creative Technology: Using AI Safely at Work (~8 min)	Reduces unapproved use and data-sharing risks by turning policy into practical, everyday behaviour.
Communication with AI: Successful Prompting Made Easy (~5 min)	Improves quality and safety of AI-driven work by teaching effective prompting without exposing sensitive information.
AI Hallucinations: Navigating Between Fantasy and Truth (~6 min)	Strengthens accuracy and decision-making by helping employees spot false outputs and verify information confidently.

32
languages

custom
placeholders modules

Available in 32 languages, the modules include custom placeholders so you can add internal contacts, policy links, or escalation channels directly within the lessons.

SoSafe does not make you instantly compliant with the AI Act, no provider can. But it gives you the first, evidence-based step toward it.

Move away from training formats that rarely change how people use AI day to day. With an AI literacy programme in place, you will notice fewer unapproved tools, clearer decision-making, and staff who understand the limits of the systems they use. It also makes it easier to prepare for audits, since training evidence and progress become far more visible.

If you want to explore how this might work for your organisation, our experts can walk you through it in a demo.

Get started