



INTERNATIONAL
INSURANCE
SOCIETY

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2026 GLOBAL PRIORITIES REPORT



Methodology

Objective

To identify what issues are most important to industry executives and to gather information to help define the agenda for stakeholders for the upcoming year.

Methodology

Online survey targeting insurance industry executives associated with:

- ▶ **International Insurance Society (IIS)**
- ▶ **Pacific Insurance Conference (PIC)**
- ▶ **The Institutes (TI)**
- ▶ **Insurance Thought Leadership (ITL)**
- ▶ **The Insurance Information Institute (Triple-I)**

Respondents were asked to select their top three issues across 6 categories of external and internal priorities: Economic, Political and Legal, Social and Environmental, Operational, Technology and Innovation, Business and Financial. Respondents were also asked to about their company's presence in emerging markets.

Outcome

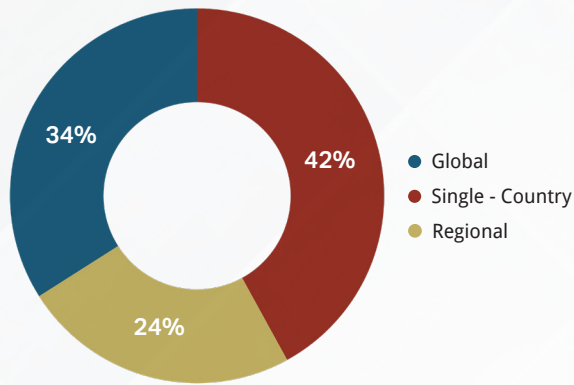
Top issues that executives were focused on addressing in 2026 included: changes in regulation, financial market volatility, technological advancement, technology modernization, artificial intelligence, and expense management.



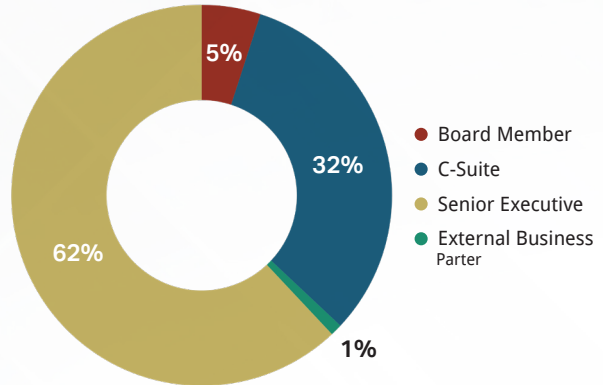
Survey Respondents

Respondent Demographics

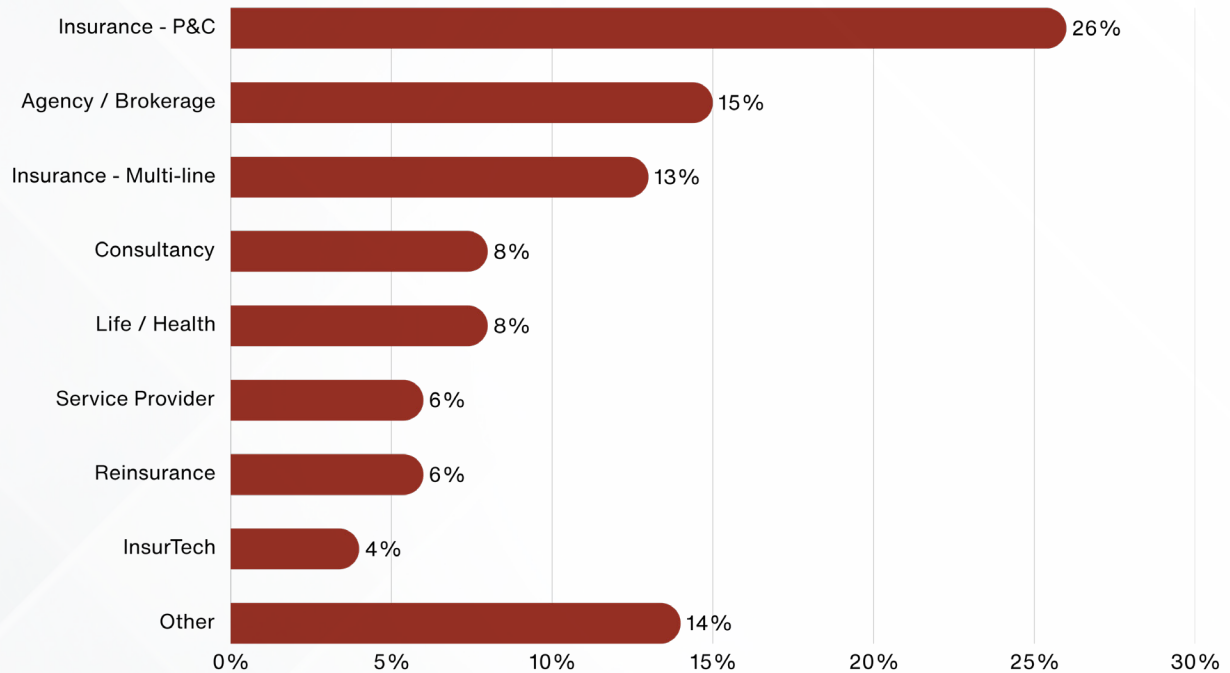
Company Scope



Respondent Role



Company Type



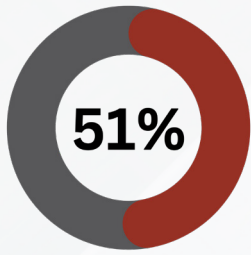
Other responses included people who worked in:

- ▶ Risk Management
- ▶ Academic / Institute
- ▶ Financial Services
- ▶ Think Tank / Association / Non-profit
- ▶ Regulator / Government
- ▶ Asset Management
- ▶ Benefits

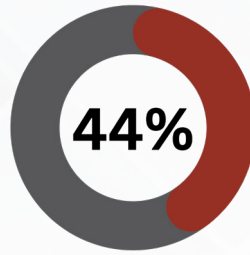
- ▶ **The AI Imperative and Technological Dominance.** The insurance industry enters 2026 with an even greater focus on AI: technological transformation is no longer a future goal but an immediate operational necessity. For the first time in the study's history, technological advancement (51%) surpassed climate risk as executive's top social and environmental priority. At the center of this shift is Artificial Intelligence (AI), which stands as the highest priority across all categories, cited by 71% of executives. This focus is driven by a dual need to enhance customer experience and achieve "smart adoption" to find operational efficiencies while staying competitive in a fast-moving environment.
- ▶ **Navigating Regulatory Shifts and Economic Volatility.** External pressures are increasingly defined by regulatory uncertainty and economic volatility. Changes in regulation now leads the list of political and legal concerns at 53%, surpassing cybersecurity for the first time in five years. Economically, financial market volatility (62%) has overtaken inflation as the primary concern, aligning with a significant 11%-point jump in recession fears. While climate risk remains a critical concern for executives, its overall prioritization has dropped to its lowest rate since the study began, as executives pivot their immediate attention toward navigating legal trends like social inflation and nuclear verdicts.
- ▶ **Addressing the Talent Gap and Operational Modernization.** Internally, the industry is grappling with a workforce transition. Many executives identified talent and leadership shortages as a top internal priority, citing an aging workforce and a shortage of specialized skills in data analytics and underwriting. To address these pressures, firms are prioritizing technology modernization (57%) to support operational efficiencies. Many are citing AI and automation as a way to streamline operations and protect profitability under tighter margins.
- ▶ **Strategic Divergence and Emerging Market Opportunities.** Strategic priorities vary by demographic and geographic scope. Carrier executives remain more focused on systemic risks like climate change and inflation, while brokers emphasize tech disruption and market responsiveness to client needs. Global firms are more likely to prioritize geopolitical instability and the rise of authoritarianism and nationalism. Furthermore, emerging market executives are three times more likely to say that emerging markets are the stronger growth opportunity (61%) compared to executives from established markets (20%). Asia-Pacific is a big focus for market growth with 2 out of 5 executives citing the region as a growth opportunity.
- ▶ **The Strategic Outlook.** Ultimately, while executives feel largely prepared to handle their top economic and technological priorities, the research identified social and political instability as executives greatest challenge: a high priority issue with a low sense that their company is prepared to address. AI also presents a unique paradox: despite its status as the top priority, 17% of executives admit their firms are still unprepared to address its full implications. This puts it above only blockchain and distributed ledger tech in preparedness, an issue only prioritized by 4% of executives. As the industry moves through 2026, success will depend on an organization's ability to scale AI responsibly while simultaneously rebuilding trust with consumers and securing the next generation of industry talent.

External Priorities

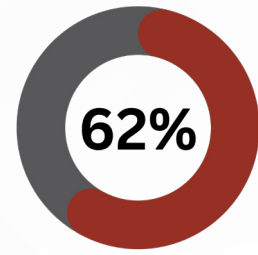
Key Findings



said that **technological advancement** was a top-3 social and environmental priority – surpassing climate risk for the first time in 6 years.



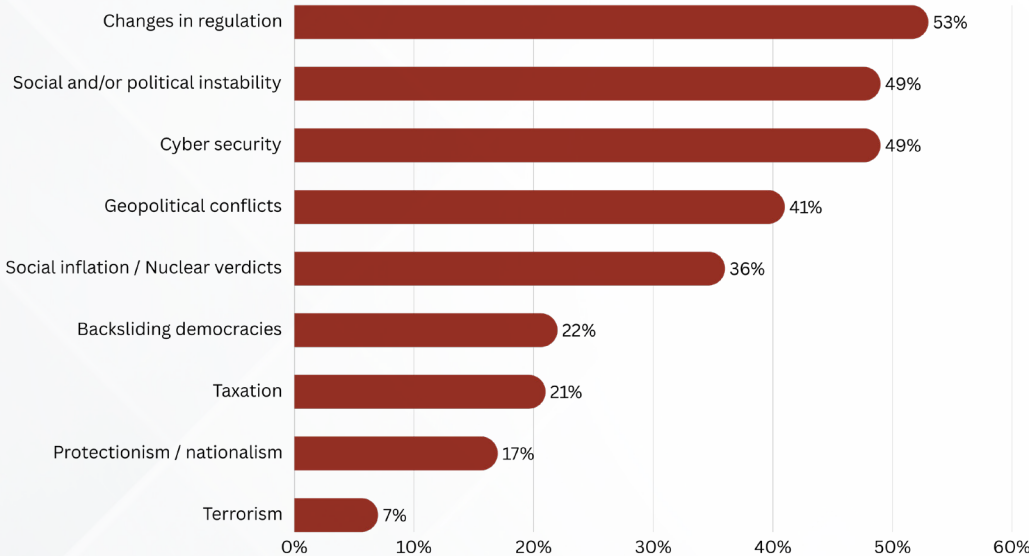
said that **climate risk** was a top-3 social and environmental priority and legal priority – down from 60% in 2024 and at its lowest rate of prioritization since the study began.



said that **financial market volatility** was a top-3 economic priority – surpassing inflation for the first time in 4 years.

Regulatory Change Tops List of Political and Legal Priorities

Political and Legal Priorities



- ▶ After 5 years of being industry executives' top political and legal priority, **changes in regulation** have surpassed **cyber security** as their top priority.
- ▶ See page 7 to learn about how executives of companies with a global scope were more likely to prioritize various destabilizing issues compared to those with a single-country scope.

One of the insurance industry's greatest external priorities is navigating the increasingly polarized political and social environment and its impact on the civil justice system. The erosion of civility and bipartisan cooperation has contributed to heightened distrust of institutions, including corporations and insurers, which in turn is influencing juror attitudes and litigation outcomes. This environment has accelerated social inflation, driving larger and less predictable jury verdicts, expanded theories of liability, and greater willingness to punish perceived "deep pockets."

– Senior Executive, P/C Insurance

Explaining the Quadrants



Understanding the Quadrants

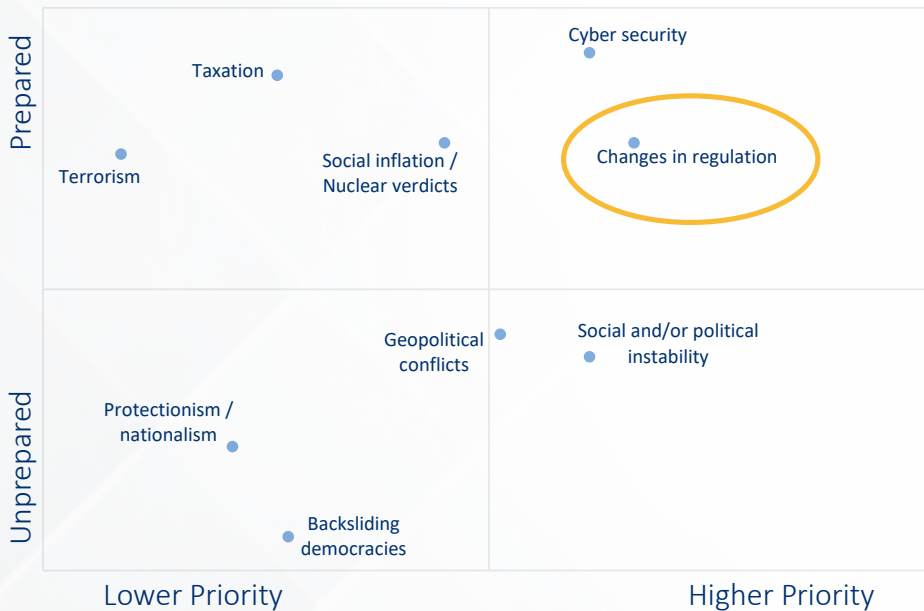
Minor Issues are items that fewer executives are prioritizing in 2026 but, of those who are, more say their company is prepared to address them.

Major Priorities are items that more executives are prioritizing in 2026 and, of those who are, more say their company is prepared to address them.

Minor Concerns are items that fewer executives are prioritizing in 2026 but, of those who are, more say their company is unprepared to address them.

Major Challenges are items that more executives are prioritizing in 2026 and, of those who are, more say their company is unprepared to address them.

Understanding the Quadrants



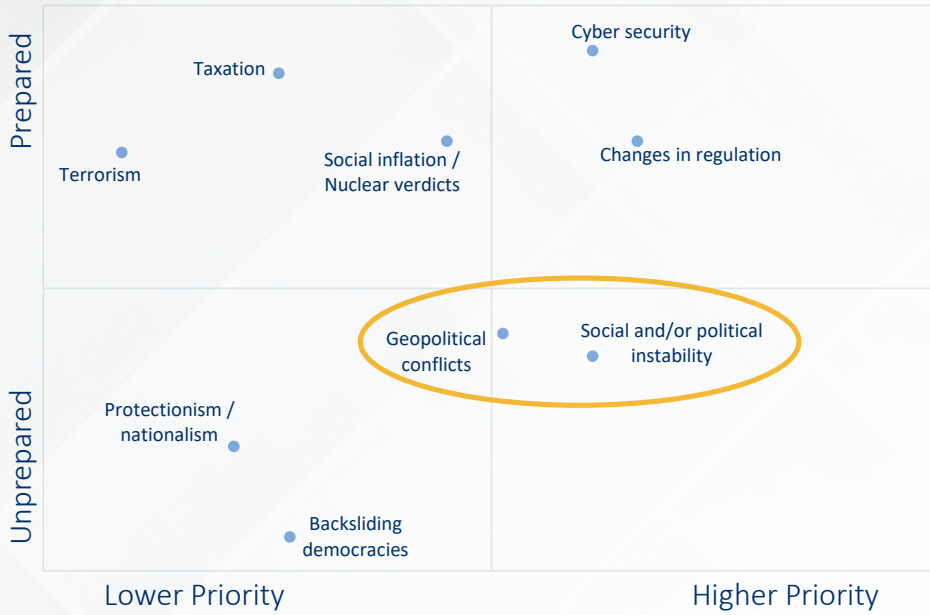
Understanding the Quadrants

Respondents were asked to select their top-3 political and legal priorities for 2026. Then they rated how prepared they felt their company was to address those three issues.

For example, 53% of respondents said that **changes in regulation** was one of their top-3 political and legal priorities for 2026, which places it on the right side of the **Priority Axis**.

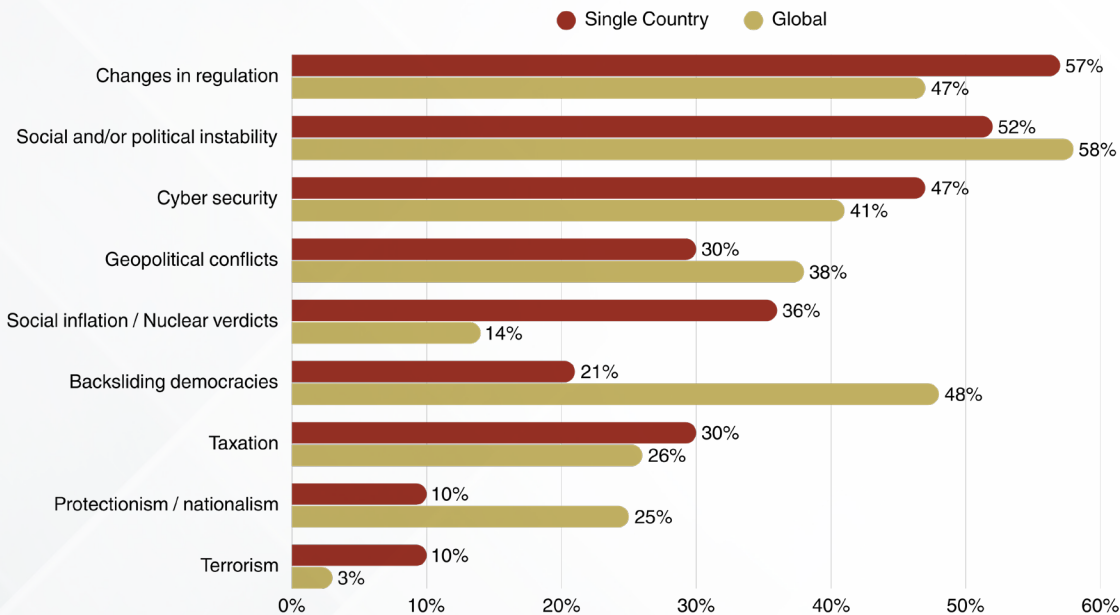
But, of those respondents, 88% said that they felt their company was at least somewhat prepared to address this issue in 2026, placing on the top side of the **Preparedness Axis**.

Political and Legal Prioritization vs Preparedness



- ▶ **Geopolitical conflicts** and **social and/or political instability** are both Major Challenges for industry executives, with only 41% and 49%, respectively, saying that their company is prepared to address these issues in 2026.

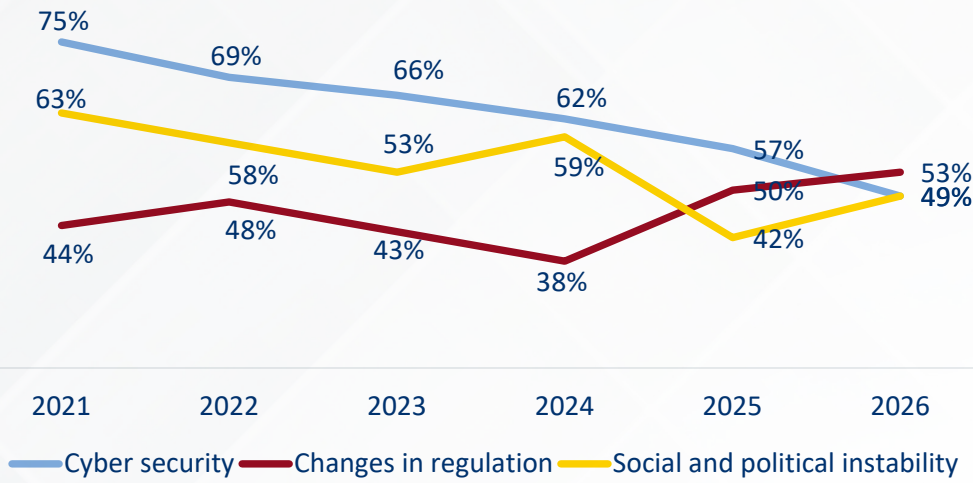
Geopolitical Conflicts More Prioritized for Global Companies



- ▶ Internationally-focused issues like **backsliding democracies / rise of authoritarianism**, and **protectionism / nationalism**, are more than twice as likely to be prioritized by executives from companies with a global scope rather than a single country scope.
- ▶ Similarly, **geopolitical conflicts**, and **social and/or political instability** are higher priorities for global executives.

Cyber Security No Longer Top Priority

Changes in Political and Legal Priorities



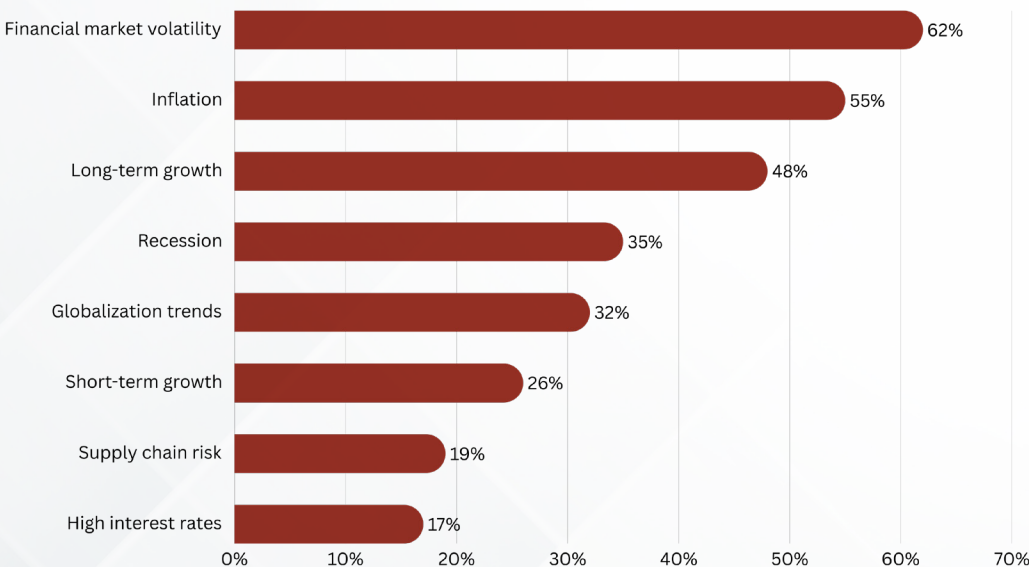
- ▶ For the first time since this report tracked it, **cyber security** is no longer the top political and legal priority for industry executives, continuing a steady decline in prioritization since 2021.
- ▶ **Changes in regulation** now tops the political and legal priorities for 2026 among industry executives.

As political discourse becomes more adversarial and less fact-based, the legal system increasingly reflects broader societal tensions, creating volatility that challenges traditional underwriting, reserving, and pricing models. Addressing this requires insurers to strengthen risk selection, claims strategies, and advocacy efforts while engaging constructively with policymakers to promote a balanced and sustainable legal and regulatory framework.

— Senior Executive, P/C Insurance

Financial Market Volatility is Top Priority

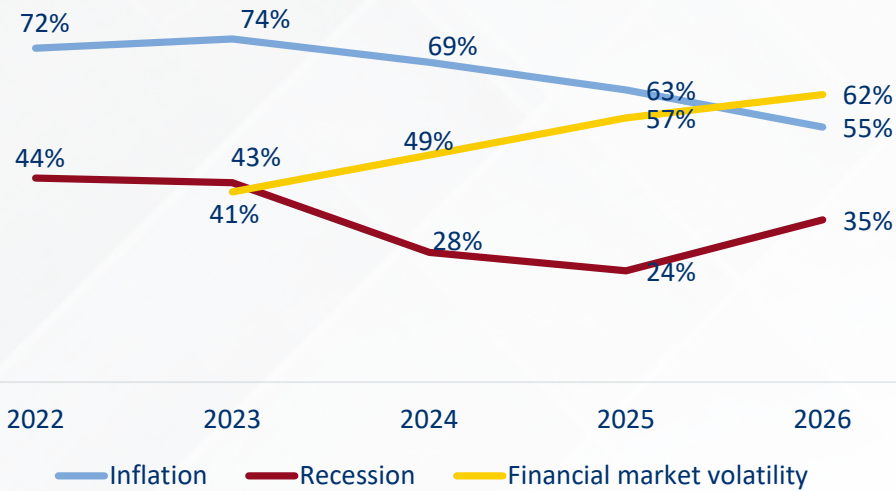
Economic Priorities



- ▶ For the first time since being included in this report in 2023, **financial market volatility** has surpassed inflation as the top economic priority of industry executives.
- ▶ This aligns with a jump in concerns over a **recession**, which increased 11%-points since last year.

Financial Market Volatility Rises alongside Recession Fears

Changes in Economic Priorities



- ▶ Fears about an economic **recession** have increased after two years of declining concerns.
- ▶ **Inflation** concerns continue its steady decline, while **financial market volatility** continues its rise among economic priorities.

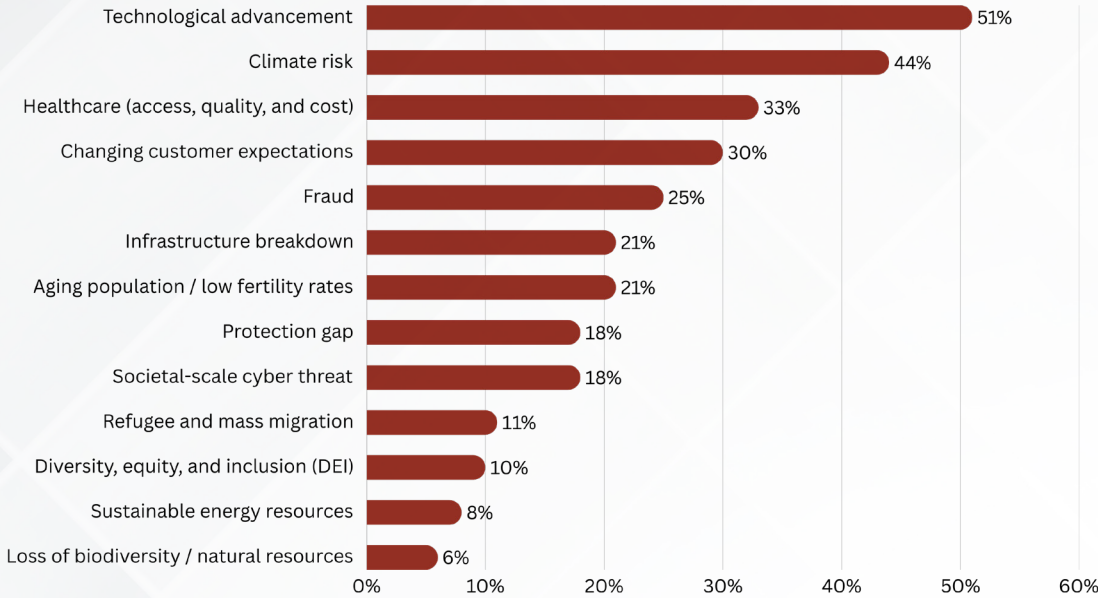
Economic Prioritization vs Preparedness



- ▶ Economic priorities is the only category that had no issues that fell into the unprepared quadrants.
- ▶ While **financial market volatility** has risen in prioritization, it is also the economic issue that executives feel most prepared to address.

Tech Advancement Replaces Climate Risk as Top Priority

Social and Environmental Priorities



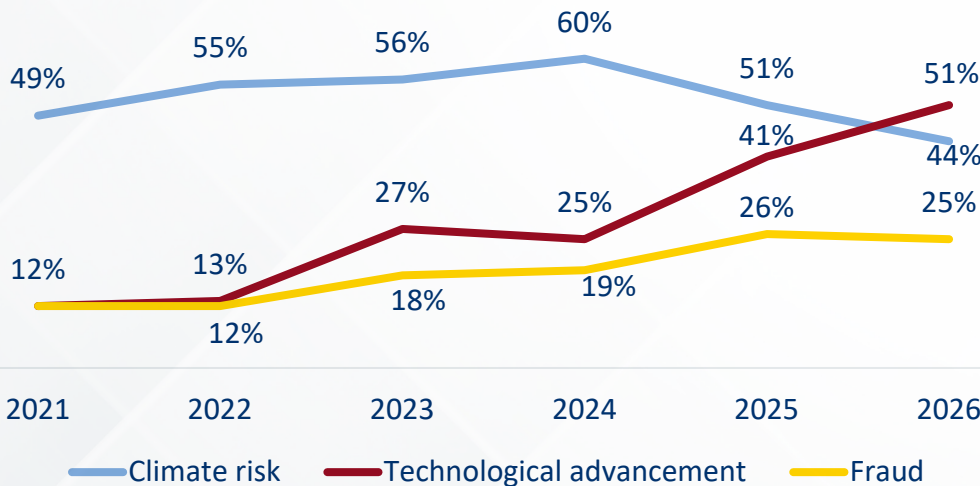
- ▶ For the first time since this survey began, **climate risk** is not the top social and environmental priority for industry executives. Instead, **technological advancement** has topped the list of issues they're focused on for 2026.
- ▶ This continues to indicate how AI and automation remain at the forefront of executives' minds going into 2026.

The evolution of technology & AI impacts customer expectations, regulation, potential fraud, efficiencies, quality, and thus ultimately can shape affordability and availability.

– Senior Executive, Multi-line Insurance Carrier

Buoyed by AI, Tech Advancement Surges in Prioritization

Changes in Social and Environmental Priorities



- ▶ **Technological advancement** continues its rise in prioritization by increasing from a quarter of respondents to 41% in 2025 and then by another 10% in 2026.
- ▶ **Climate risk** continues a two-year decline in prioritization.

Social and Environmental Prioritization vs Preparedness



- ▶ There are no major challenges in this category.
- ▶ **Climate risk** and **technological advancement** both are major priorities that executives feel largely prepared to face in 2026.

Insurance Industry's Greatest External Priorities

Overall, executives are prioritizing:

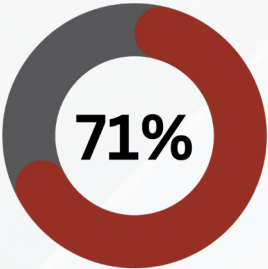
- ▶ Adapting to technological disruption and cyber risk
- ▶ Managing inflation, economic volatility, and rising claim costs
- ▶ Responding to climate-driven catastrophe exposure
- ▶ Navigating regulatory uncertainty
- ▶ Addressing litigation trends and social inflation
- ▶ Strengthening trust, communication, and workforce capacity

Differences by company and roles suggest:

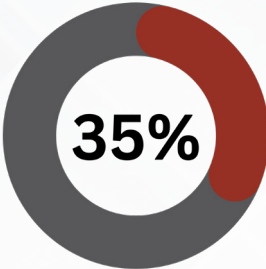
- ▶ Carriers focus more on climate and systemic risk
- ▶ Brokers emphasize tech disruption and litigation impacts
- ▶ Global firms stress regulatory complexity
- ▶ C-suite leaders frame priorities strategically, while others focus on market pressures

Internal Priorities

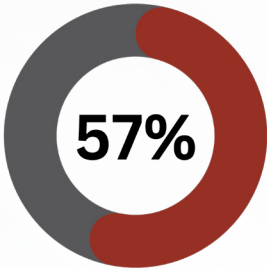
Key Findings



said **artificial intelligence** is the top technology and innovation priority for 2026 – up from 17% in 2021 and once again the top overall priority across all categories.



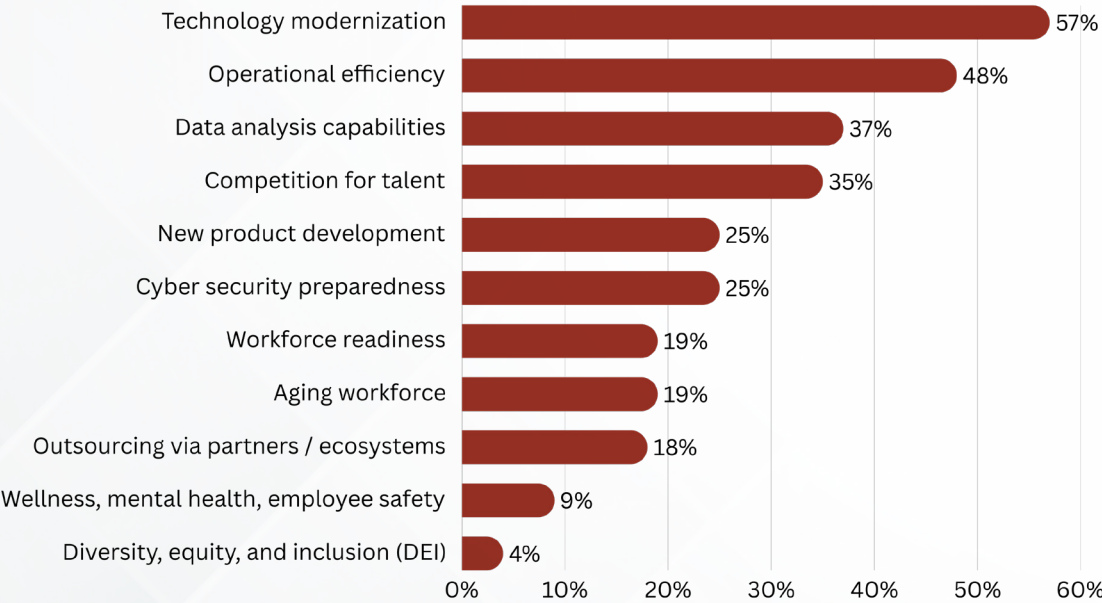
said that **data security** is a top-3 business and financial priority – about half the rate that executives said so in 2021.



said **technology modernization** is a top-3 operational priority for 2026 – surpassing operational efficiency for the first time since 2023.

Tech Modernization Tops List of Operational Priorities

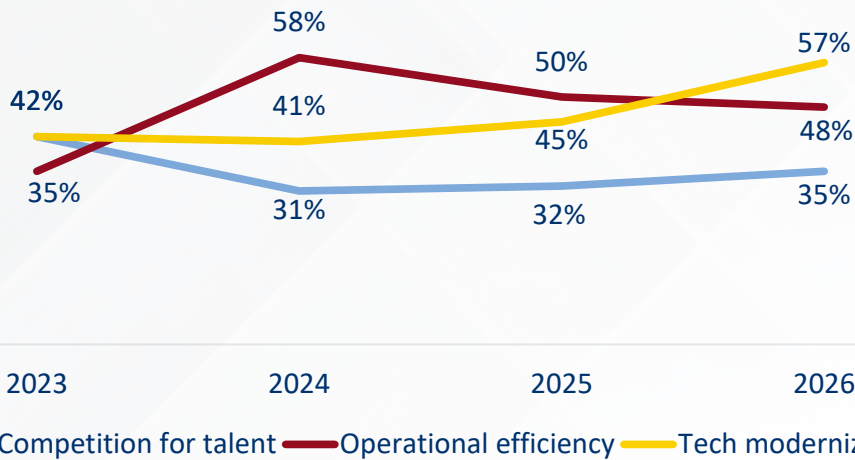
Operational Priorities



- ▶ **Technology modernization** surges 12%-points to top executives' operational priorities for 2026.
- ▶ With **operational efficiency** as a second priority, executives' focus on AI and automation to find operational efficiencies is clear.

With the AI Boom, Tech Modernization Tops Operational Priorities

Changes in Operational Priorities



▶ While **technology modernization** had been consistently highly prioritized, the rise of AI has allowed it to surge past operational efficiency in recent years to become the top operational priority for executives.

[We need] an AI-ready workforce. Companies need to actively train the workforce to utilize AI in their daily work. More focus on many short-term efficiency gains at an individual level will reap significant benefits for companies as a whole.

– Senior Executive, Reinsurance

Operational Prioritization vs Preparedness

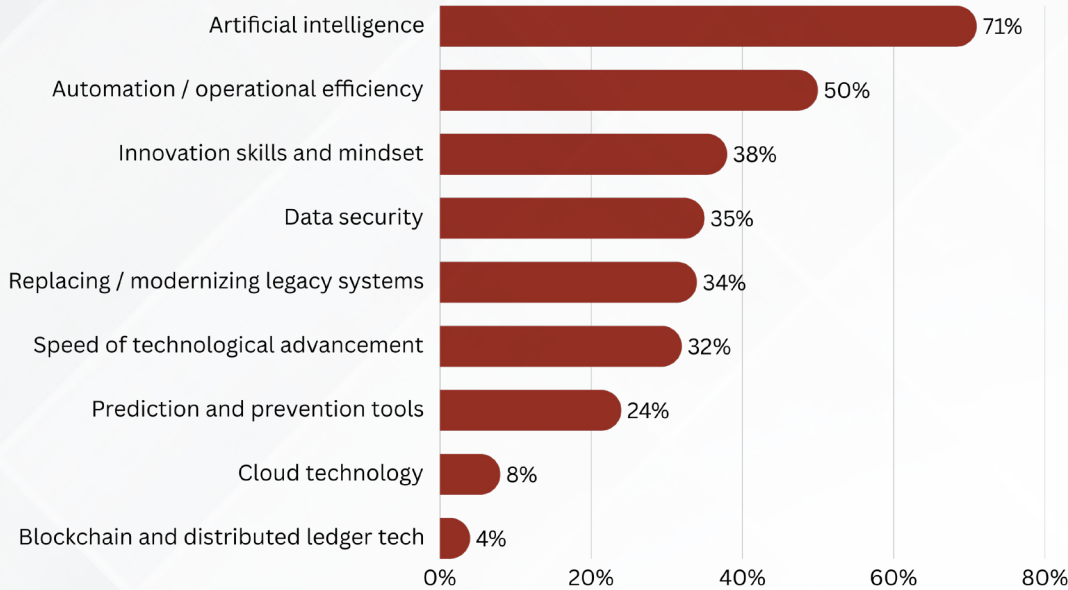


▶ Although only 19% of executives are prioritizing an **aging workforce** in 2026, about 40% of those say that they are unprepared to address it, making it a minor concern for 2026.

▶ **Operational efficiency** and **technology modernization** continue a trend of executives feeling largely prepared to address their major priorities in 2026.

The Influence of AI on Prioritization Continues to Grow

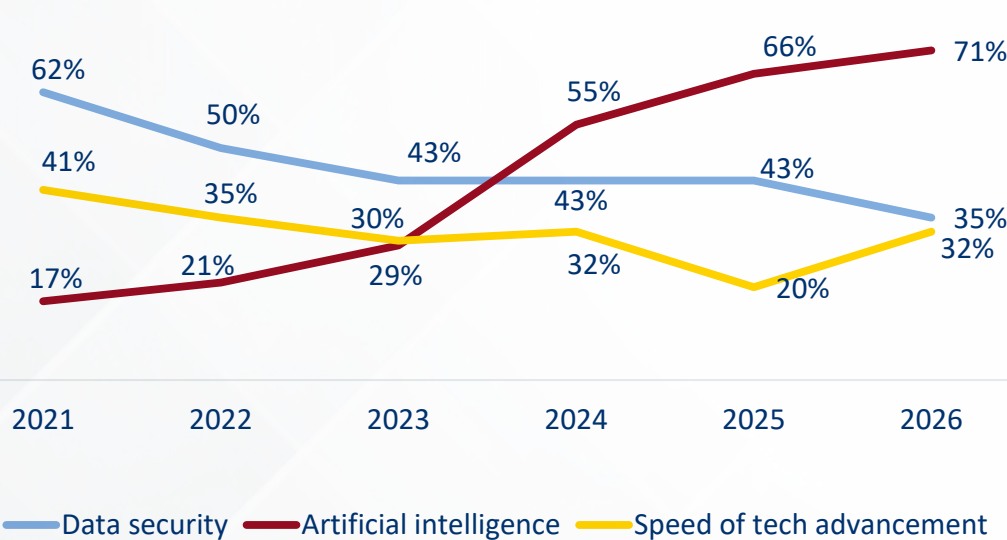
Technology and Innovation Priorities



- ▶ **Artificial intelligence** continues to top the list of technological priorities, but also remains the top priority across all categories by a nearly 10%-point margin.
- ▶ Its impact on other categories is clear, as technology-related priorities surge across categories.

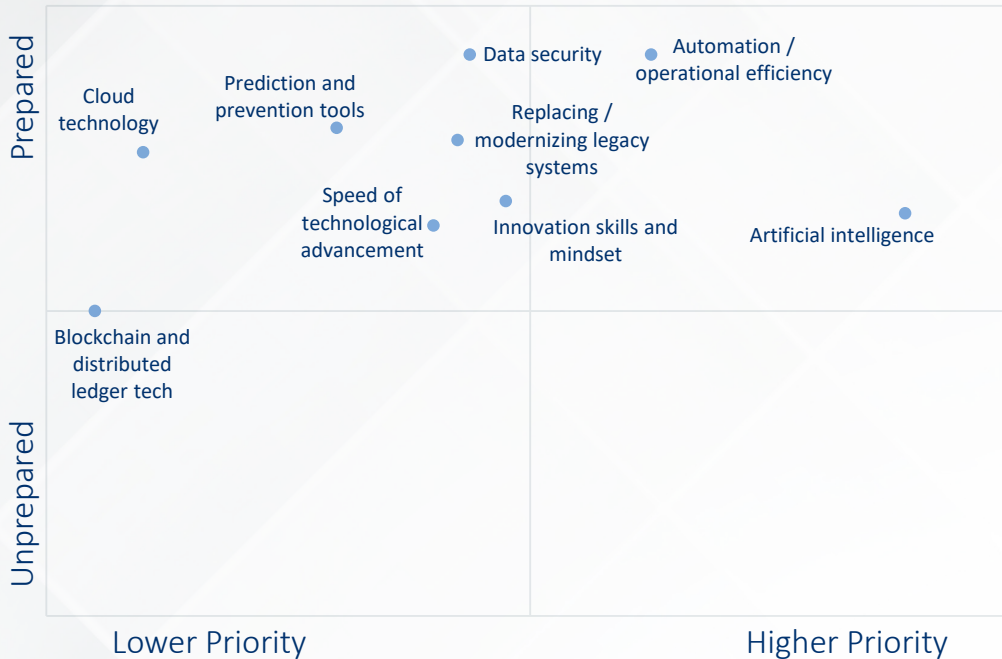
AI Keeps Rising in Prioritization; Influences Other Categories Too

Changes in Technology and Innovation Priorities



- ▶ The story of the industry continues to be the rise in **artificial intelligence** and automation as a priority.
- ▶ This chart clearly shows how the shift that began in 2023 is still influencing how executives are strategizing in 2026.

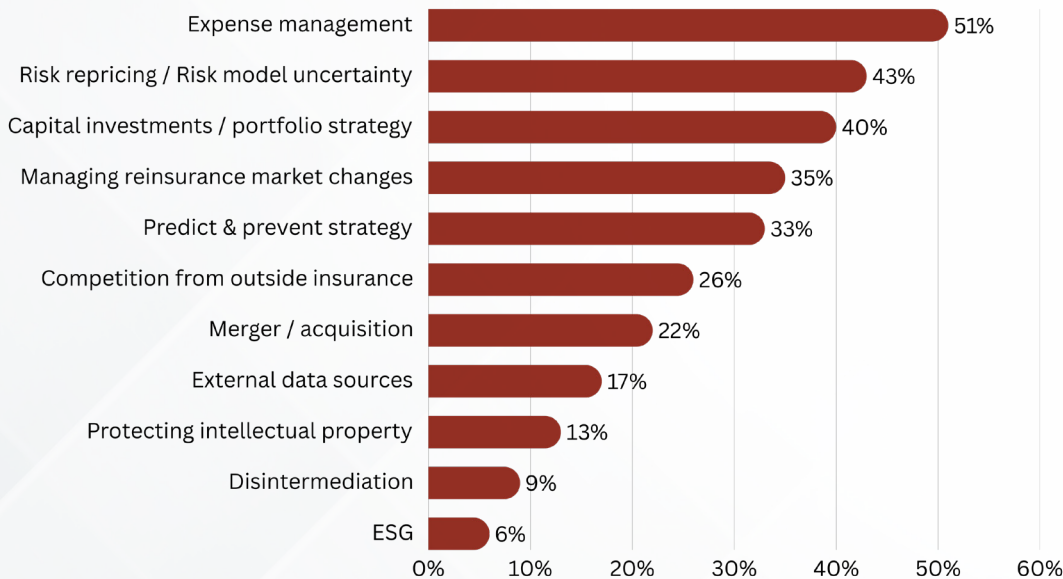
Technology and Innovation Prioritization vs Preparedness



- ▶ For an issue that has dominated the industry landscape for the past few years, 17% of executives still feel their company is unprepared to address **artificial intelligence**.
- ▶ This puts it above only **blockchain and distributed ledger tech** in preparedness – an issue only prioritized by 4% of executives.

Expense Management Top Business & Financial Priority for Second Year

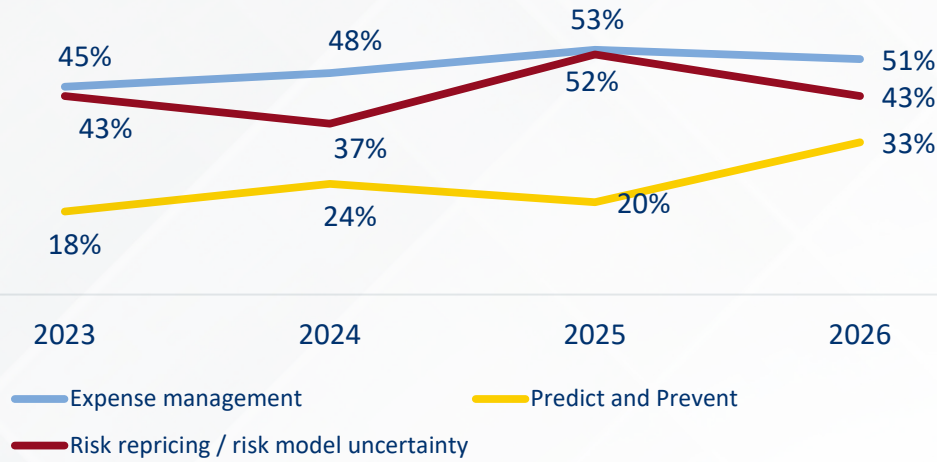
Business and Financial Priorities



- ▶ **Expense management** tops executives' list of business and financial priorities for the second year in a row.
- ▶ This highlights the continues interest in finding efficiencies and savings across categories.

Predict and Prevent Sharply Rises in Prioritization

Changes in Business and Financial Priorities



► **Predict and prevent** nearly doubles in prioritization since 2023, including a 13%-point jump since 2025.

Business and Financial Prioritization vs Preparedness



► There are no major challenges in this category.

► Across issues, executive prioritization aligns with how prepared they feel their company is to address them.

Insurance Industry's Greatest External Priorities

Overall, executives are prioritizing:

- ▶ AI and digital transformation dominate executive thinking as the central internal priority.
- ▶ Talent and workforce sustainability is the second major concern, especially for broker and smaller firms.
- ▶ Carrier executives are more risk-focused, while agencies emphasize people and relationships.
- ▶ Global firms discuss transformation at scale; domestic firms focus more on continuity and staffing.
- ▶ Regulation is present but not top-of-mind compared with technology and talent disruption.

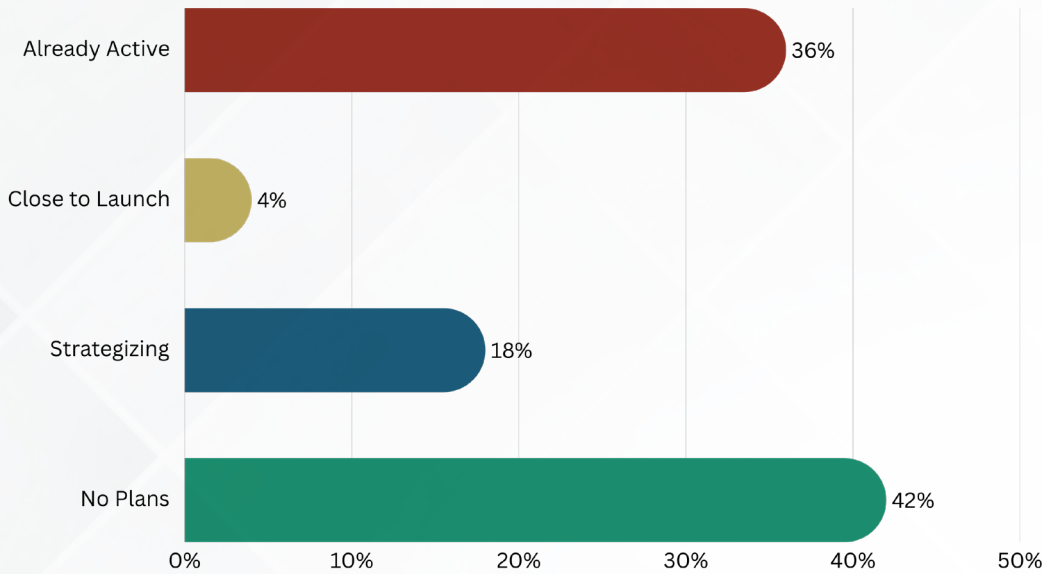
Differences by company and roles suggest:

- ▶ Carriers focus more on AI for underwriting and claims
- ▶ Agents and brokers were more likely to discuss a focus on customer relationships
- ▶ Global firms discussed how to scale AI responsibly

Emerging Markets

Company's Position in Emerging Markets

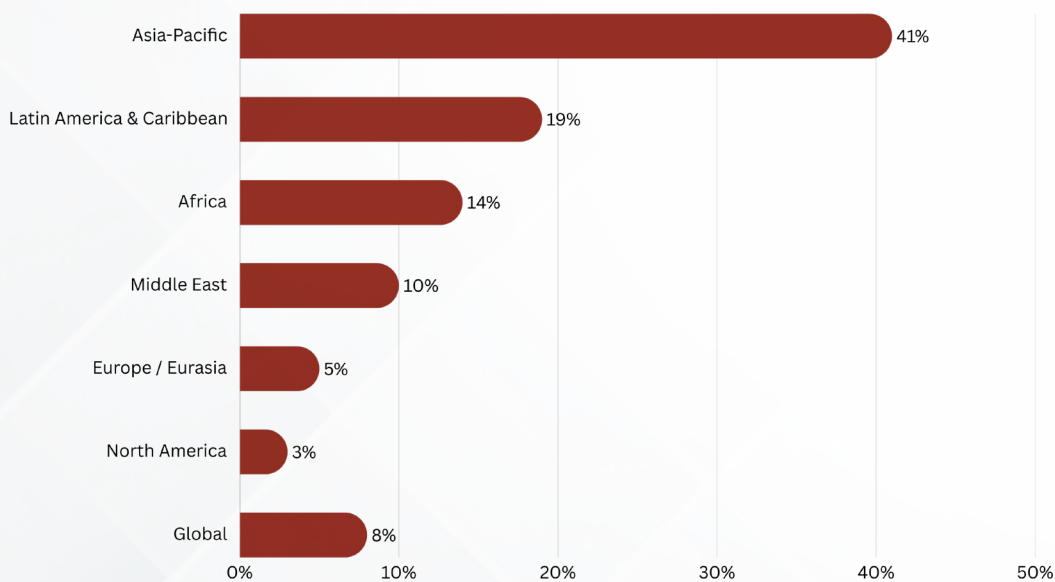
Company's Position in Emerging Markets



- ▶ A third of executives say that their company is already active in emerging markets, with another 22% strategizing or close to launch.

Asia-Pacific Market Where Companies Are Actively Doing Business

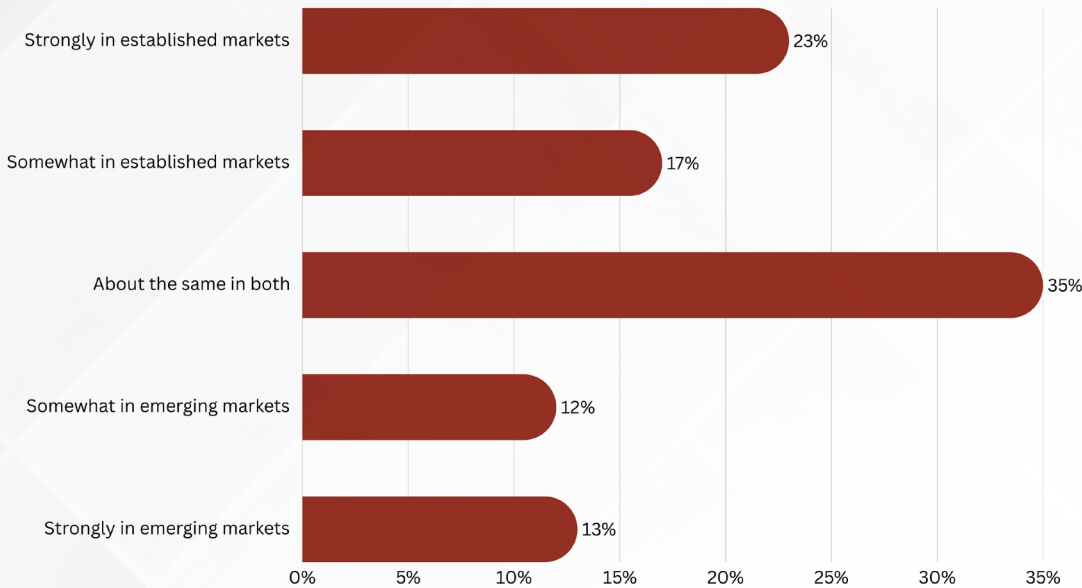
Emerging Markets that Companies are Active In



- ▶ 41% of the markets where companies are actively doing business are in the Asia-Pacific region, double that of Latin America – the next most common focus for emerging market activity.
- ▶ India and Southeast Asia were two key sub-markets commonly listed by executives.

Emerging Markets Have Greater Growth Opportunity

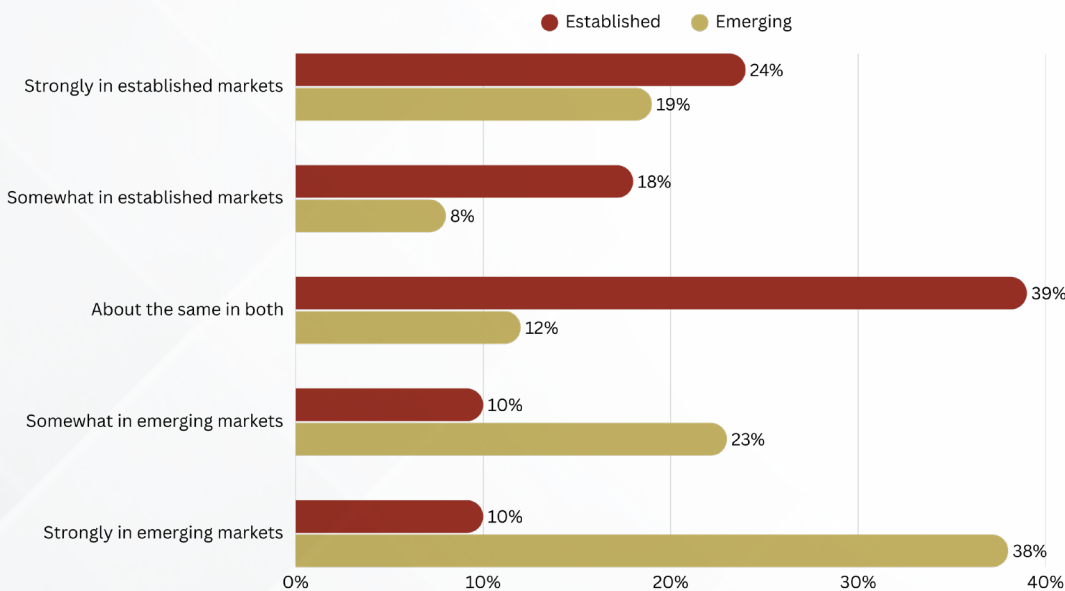
Greater Growth Opportunity



► 40% of executives said that established markets have the greater growth opportunity, compared to 25% who said the same about emerging markets.

Emerging Markets See Growth Opportunities in Emerging Markets

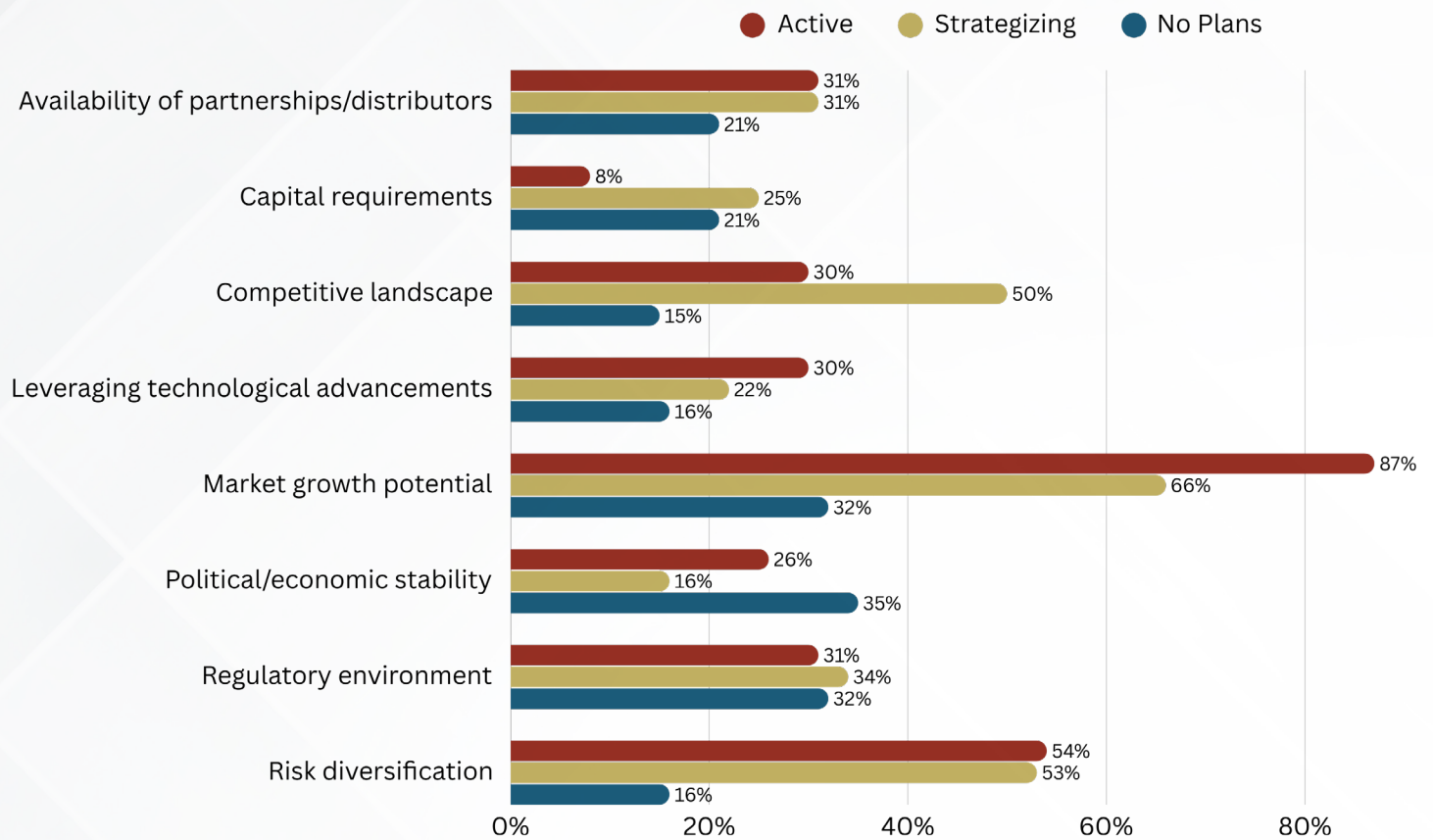
Greater Growth Opportunity



► Executives from companies based in emerging markets see a much stronger opportunity there than those from Established Markets

Growth Potential is Key Factor for those Active in Emerging Markets

Factors Influencing Emerging Market Decision



- ▶ Growth potential was a key factor for 87% of executives whose company is active in emerging markets. Only a third of those with "no plans" to enter agreed.
- ▶ A third of executives who have no plans to enter emerging markets cite political and economic stability as an influential factor to avoid the market.